

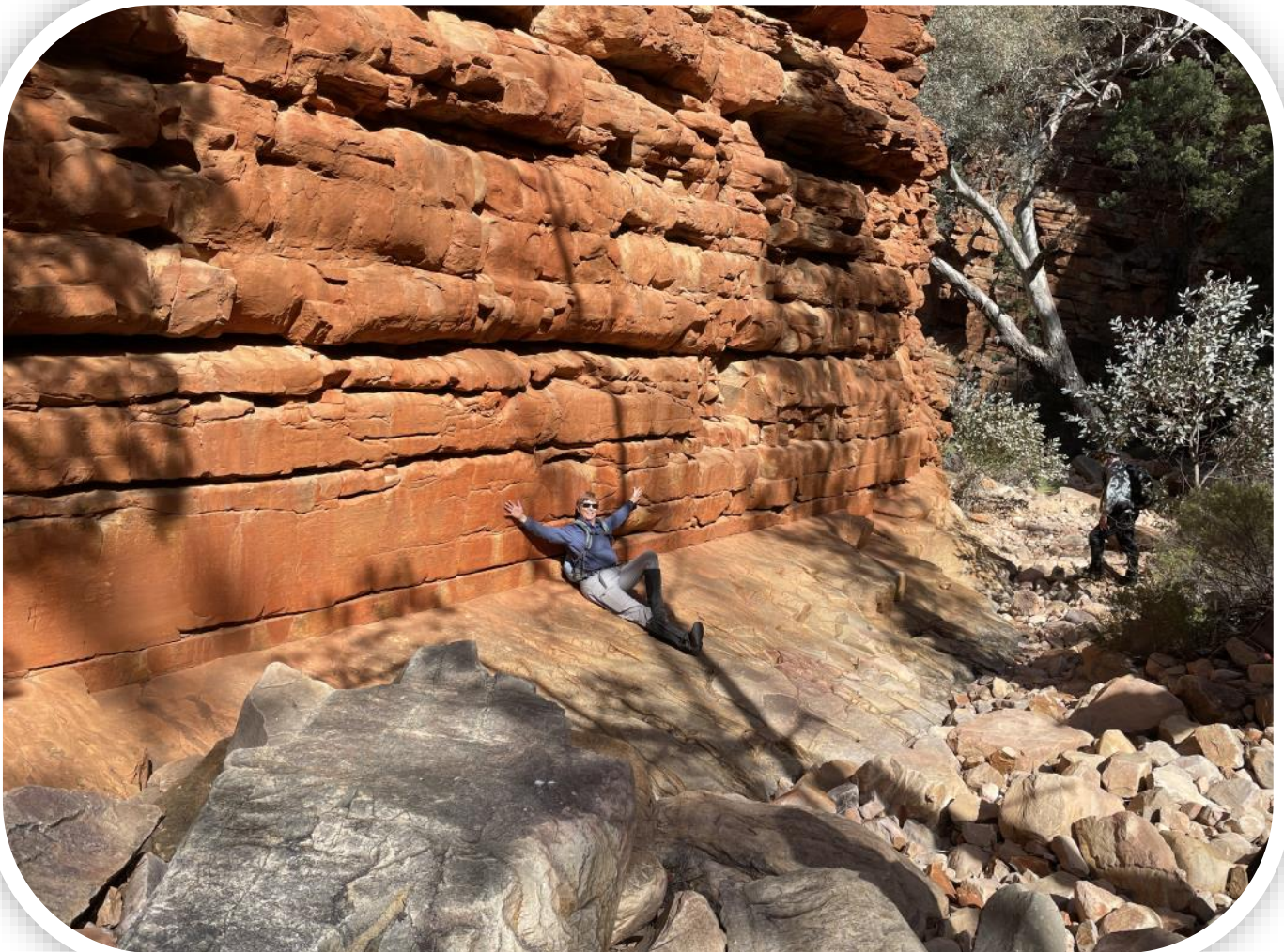
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Quarterly Magazine
Canberra Bushwalking
Club



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Canberra Bushwalking Club Inc
GPO Box 160, Canberra ACT 2601
www.canberrabushwalkingclub.org



A sunny break in a gorge in Vulkathunha-Gammon Ranges NP, South Australia

Photo by Ute Foster

CBC Committee 2023-24

President: Noelia Pinto

president@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Treasurer: Melinda Brouwer

treasurer@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Walks Secretary: John Evans

walksec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Assistant Walks Secretary: Garry Boxsell

awalksec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

General Secretary: Marlene Eggert

gensec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Membership Secretary: Andrea Coombas

membsec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Social Secretary: Ana Vrancic

socsec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Editor: Meg McKone

editor@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Web Manager: Keith Thomas

webmanager@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Training and Safety Officer: Diana Terry

training@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Conservation Officer: Michael Clisby

conservation@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Publisher: Terrylea Reynolds

publisher@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Guidelines for Contributions

Members' contributions are welcomed – articles, poems, recipes, photos, artworks and other items related to bushwalking, conservation and allied activities. Articles may be up to approximately 2,500 words in length, although most will probably be considerably shorter. Those describing long trips, especially if they are exploratory or unusual in some way, may need to be longer in order to be useful to readers interested in the areas described.

Please send all contributions to:

contributions@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

If you would like a short message to be published in the Monthly Update, please mark it as **URGENT**.

Disclaimer: Any opinions expressed by individual authors do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor, the Committee or members of CBC.

Deadline for contributions to the next Quarterly Magazine will be 8 November 2024, though earlier would be appreciated.

Please follow the **Detailed Guidelines** on page 3 when making a contribution.

All members of the committee can be contacted in one email to:

committee@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Website:

www.canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Social Media contributions:

facebookadmin@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

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Contribution Guidelines

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Please follow these **Detailed Guidelines** when making a contribution

- The most acceptable text software is Word. Please *do not* use Publisher, or send via Google. I mostly use Calibri 12.
- Please ensure your articles have been thoroughly edited and spell-checked, and use only basic formatting (paragraphs and headings, if needed; no boxes. or dividing lines)
- Please make sure any photos have captions and the photographer's name. If a photo is not yours, make sure you have permission to use it.
- Photos should be high resolution, though I would appreciate it if you could straighten seriously oblique horizons.
- Please specify the topic of your contribution in the Subject line of your email, and send only one article / contribution per email. (More than one photo can be sent in an email, depending on the file size.)
- The deadline for contributions to the next Quarterly Magazine will be 8 November 2024, though earlier would be appreciated.
- If you are considering writing a walk report, please check with the Editor first so that we don't end up with more than one article describing the same walk.

ACT Public Holidays 2024/25

Why not take advantage of the long weekends to run some extended overnight walks?

Labour Day: Monday 7 October 2024

Christmas Day: Wednesday 25 December 2024

Boxing Day: Thursday 26 December 2024.

New Year's Day: Wednesday 1 January 2025

Australia Day: Monday 27 January 2025

Canberra Day: Monday 10 March 2025

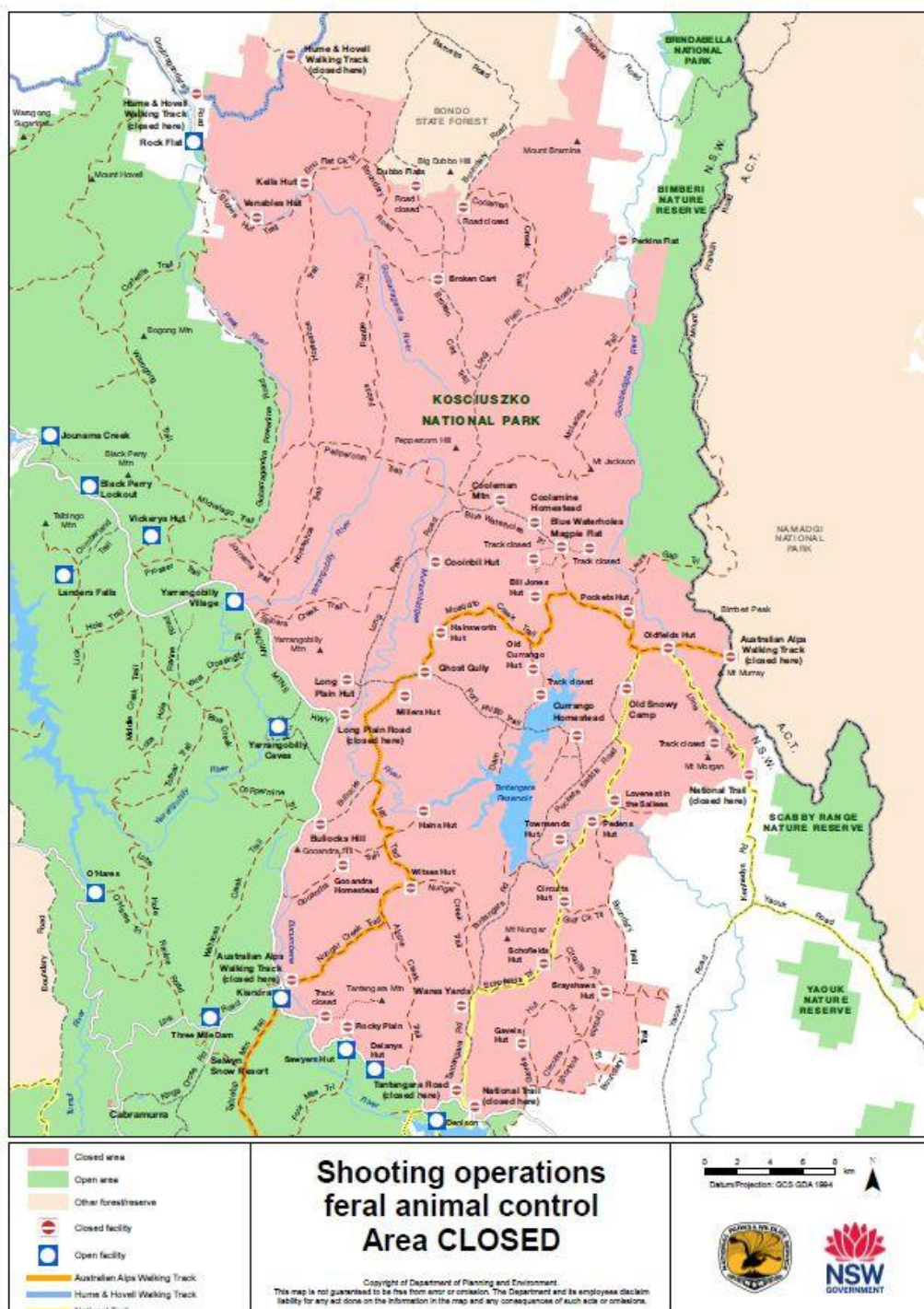
Easter: Friday 18 April – Monday 21 April 2025

ANZAC Day: Thursday 25 April 2025

Reconciliation Day: Monday 2 June 2025

King's Birthday: Monday 9 June 2025

KNP Closures for Feral Animal Control 4 April to 4 October, 2024



Committee Member Roles

The next Canberra Bushwalking Club Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 September, 2024.

Here is an outline of the positions up for election at each September AGM. If you would like more information about one of these positions, please contact the current office holder or the President.

President

Oversees all Club activities, chairs the Committee Meetings and is responsible for ensuring that important issues are considered by the committee or are otherwise dealt with. Represents the Club in many of its dealings with outside bodies especially Bushwalking NSW Inc. Assists other officers where needed. Frequently must deal with enquiries, suggestions and complaints. Contributes regularly to *It*. Member of the training and safety sub-group. The maximum term is two years.

General Secretary

Takes minutes of Committee Meetings and records the formal business of General Meetings, including the AGM. Maintains official records of correspondence. Prepares correspondence for signature by the President, if requested, and works closely with the President on matters of general importance to the Club. Prepares annual returns and updates to Committee member information for the Office of Regulatory Services.

Treasurer

Manages the Club's finances. Maintains day-to-day accounts and financial records; prepares the annual Financial Statements and draft Budget; advises the Committee and Club members on financial matters including membership rates and transport rates; acts as Administrator of the Bank Accounts, Merchant Facility and Stripe in regard to changes in authorisations and access by other officers to those facilities; manages investments and cash transfers between the credit facilities and bank accounts; pays all accounts; issues invoices and deposits cash receipts as needed.

Walks Secretary

Responsible for organising the Activity Program. Encourages members to lead Club activities, checks that Activity Owners/Leaders have the skills needed to undertake the walks they propose and seeks out new Leaders. Manages the Register of Leaders. Contributes regularly to *It*. Member of the training and safety subgroup.

Membership Secretary

Responds to queries about membership applications and renewals; processes applications for membership submitted via Bilby; adds manual receipts for membership fees to Bilby; coordinates completion of annual questionnaire from Bushwalking NSW for Renewal of Insurance Cover. Member of the Training and Safety sub-group.

Editor

Responsible for the preparation of the quarterly newsletter. Seeks, encourages and receives written contributions and photos and follows up receipt of regular reports. Edits content as necessary. Designs and prepares the layout for publication. The newsletter is currently prepared using Microsoft Publisher.

Committee Member Roles *continued*

Training & Safety Officer

Develops and implements a training and safety programme consistent with the Club's objectives and responsibilities. Manages the updating of the Club's notes for Activity Owners/Leaders and participants, where necessary. Contributes regularly to *It*. Manages the activities of the training and safety sub-group.

Social Secretary

Manages the social program of the Club including the Christmas party, the January BBQ, any celebrations relevant to the Club and anything else that enriches the community spirit of the Club. Chairs the general meetings, identifying and introducing guest speakers. Ensures the blurb for each presentation is obtained from the speaker and is sent promptly to the newsletter editor, website manager and Facebook manager. Ensures that a bottle of wine or other suitable gift is presented to speakers. Responsible for setting up the hall, and for supper at general meetings. Is the contact for the managers of the meeting venue and is responsible for the venue keys and re-booking the venue for the following year. Has custody of the Club laptop, ensures antivirus software is up to date, and brings the laptop to general and committee meetings.

Conservation Officer

Coordinates the Club's conservation activities. Advises the Club on conservation issues, campaigns and projects. May represent the Club at other conservation meetings such as those of the ACT Conservation Council. Prepares submissions on important conservation matters.

Assistant Walks Secretary

Responsible for obtaining pre-trip documentation from Activity Owners/Leaders before walks and ensuring Leaders check in after activities. Sometimes has to contact 'forgetful' Leaders to check that the party has returned. First point of contact for Leaders in case of emergency. Obtains completed Acknowledgement of Risks and Obligations Forms from Leaders and keeps them for the record. Maintains statistics on trips; assists in identifying potential new leaders. Responsible for obtaining incident reports and for making recommendations to the committee based on these. Member of the training and safety sub-group.

Publisher

Responsible for coordinating and disseminating the Monthly Update to members; central point for maintaining 'all member' email list in Mailchimp and liaising with the Editor to send out the Quarterly Club Magazine '*it*'.

Web Manager

Responsible for the maintenance and development of the CBC system, databases and website.

One of the great things about living in Canberra is our beautiful sunny winter days, and this weekend, we have been lucky enough to have two of those. Perfect weather for walking and other outdoor activities!

Our Club has continued to offer a variety of activities over the last few months, both locally and further afield. Recently we have been lucky to experience the new Ginninderry walking tracks that were officially opened on 21 May 2024, covering 10kms and including Canberra's first swing bridges.

This week, we reached an all-time high number of members of 420! This is wonderful news, and we are proud that people are seeking out membership of our club. With an increase in membership, comes a call for action to all our leaders. Whilst we have many members who are leaders, the vast majority of the activities are being organised by a core group.

If you have not organised a walk in a while, we need you! We ask that you consider organising a walk or two – within your level of comfort and capability of course. Even if only a dozen of our more dormant leaders were to do this, it would help expand the breadth of our program.

Mulligan's Flat Night Foray *photo by Noelia Pinto*



As well as offering walks and outdoor activities to our members, one of our roles is to support the establishment and preservation of national parks and wilderness areas. When we were advised that NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service had re-published a Notice of Intention to issue a lease to Wild Bush Luxury Experience to construct accommodation and supporting buildings at three locations within the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area, we made our voice heard by lodging a submission against the issuing of the lease.

We are also happy to have been asked by Namadgi National Park to help celebrate their 40th anniversary during their celebratory week from 30 September 2024 to 6 October 2024. To this end,

John Evans has put together a program of walks for the public that will also involve a number of other CBC leaders volunteering their time to assist with the walks. Garry Boxsell will also be organising a week of Namadgi walks around that time – keep an eye on Bilby so you don't miss out!

Finally, we are always striving to improve the level of service that we can provide to our members. There have been a number on enhancements to our booking system, Bilby. For example, now when you click on the Activities tab on our website, you can select to view Activities either with details or as a list of names, and you can more easily search for past or upcoming activities.

CBC has also recently sent out a member survey seeking feedback about what we do well and what we can do better. We will be using this information as the basis to improve on what we do.

Until next time, happy walking!

Noelia Pinto, President



Introduction to Rock Climbing and Abseiling:
CBC Instructional Day *photo by Noelia Pinto*

Leaders and helpers wanted for Namadgi National Park's 40th Anniversary walks 28 and 29 September, 5 and 6 October

Our club has been asked to provide some walks for members of the public to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the declaration of Namadgi National Park. The hikes will be on Saturday 28, Sunday 29 September and Saturday 5, Sunday 6 October. A number of leaders/member helpers are needed to chat with participants and keep walkers safe. Want to be an ambassador for CBC? **Contact me.**

CBC's Super Week of Walks: Namadgi NP 40th Anniversary 7-13 October

The 40th anniversary of the declaration of the Namadgi National Park (NP) will be celebrated in October this year. In support of ACT Parks and Conservation and ACT National Parks Association celebrations currently in planning for this milestone, **Garry Boxsell** will be running a series of walks in Namadgi NP over a super week of walks 7-13 October 2024. The intent is to join in the 40th Anniversary celebrations, promote CBC and bushwalking in general.

Accordingly, he is seeking leaders' support in proposing and leading a series of walks for each day 7 to 11 Oct, and 13 Oct. Walks for 12 Oct are not required at this stage. He'd like a mix of Easy/Medium and/or Medium/Hard walks for each day starting 7 Oct and all walks being in Namadgi NP. So could leaders put on your thinking caps and nominate yourself to lead a walk or walks and on which particular day. You can lead one walk, or multiple walks, up to you.

Garry will be coordinating the walks, so **please email him** at garry102@gmail.com with your nominations. Once all days are filled with walks, he'll then ask leaders to advertise their walks in Bilby.

Tidbinbilla Open Day – CBC Stall 29 September

On Sunday 29 September, the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve will be holding its annual Open Day! It will be from 10 am to 2pm. The goal of the Open Day is to encourage a greater awareness of our natural areas and to educate the community on park use. It's a great opportunity for the CBC to showcase the wide range of activities that we provide to the community.

Michael Clisby will be setting up a small stall and would greatly appreciate any assistance you can offer! Assistance could include:

- Providing your expert knowledge of what we should display that would be of interest to the general public, as well as any items of interest!,
- Helping with the set up of the stall well prior to 10 am,
- Helping with the dismantling of the stall after 2pm,
- Staffing the stall for a period of time,
- Popping by to say hello!

Check your calendars and if you are free on Sunday 29 September and are able to be of assistance, **please contact him** via email on clisbymichael@gmail.com

New Family Activities Coordinator

Huge thanks to Linda Groom who some years ago initiated Prambulations, Toddlers Toddles and Family Explores. What better way to ensure future generations appreciate and preserve our natural environment than to engage children.

Linda has passed the baton to **Di McDean** who, with a small band of leaders, puts on these activities. One such activity is a fabulous [family camp](#) at Honeysuckle Creek Camping Ground on 5-6 October. Get in quick and soon to reserve your campsite.

Are you a leader and want to help conduct Family Activities? **Contact Di, our Family Activities Coordinator.**

Are you the right 'fit' for an activity?

Activity leaders work hard to provide information to allow you to assess your suitability to book on a trip. As well as a description of the activity, they can show estimated finish time, grading, distance, climb, terrain. Final arrangements can include what to bring and wear, weather forecast. Their concern is to balance the cohesiveness of the group.

So please read the activity description in full and assess whether you are up for the activity. If your current fitness and experience does not match, try booking on a less strenuous trip and work up from there.

Activity leaders can question your fit for a trip via a 1-to-1 Bilby note, or check your record of completed activities with the Walks Secretary when vetting your booking. They want safe and enjoyable walking for all.

Urban Tracks

Have you noticed the improvements to many urban Nature Reserve tracks? Parks and Conservation Service have done a great job with new stone and timber steps and track improvements.

A smorgasbord of activities in the last 3 months

You've enjoyed a large number of activities in the past June and July. Here are the volunteer leaders who provided them:

Jenny Arnold, Monika Binder, Mike Bremers, Cynthia Burton, Robin Cayzer, Andrea Coombas, Peter Conroy, Luisa Dal Molin, John Danaro, Chris Day, David Donovan, Henry Gardner, Philip Gatenby, Kirk Hone, Jenny Horsfield, Rob Horsfield, John Kelly, Stephen Marchant, Di McDean, Meg McKone, Jonathan Miller, Quentin Moran, Dick Morton, Beat Oppikofer, Sal Ozgul, Mark Peirce, Noelia Pinto, Terrylea Reynolds, Jacqui Rosier, Sandra Teffer, Ana Vrancic, Ian Wright, Tim Wright, John Evans.

See graph of completed and projected activities on next page

Wanna know your Weeds?

[ACT-Weeds-manual-Nov 23 \(sactcg.org.au\)](http://sactcg.org.au)

Are you sponsoring guests? A reminder of the process from the Membership Secretary

The Membership Secretary assumes the leader of a guest's first walk is happy to nominate them for membership, unless they let the Membership Secretary (membsec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org) know they have concerns and don't want to nominate.

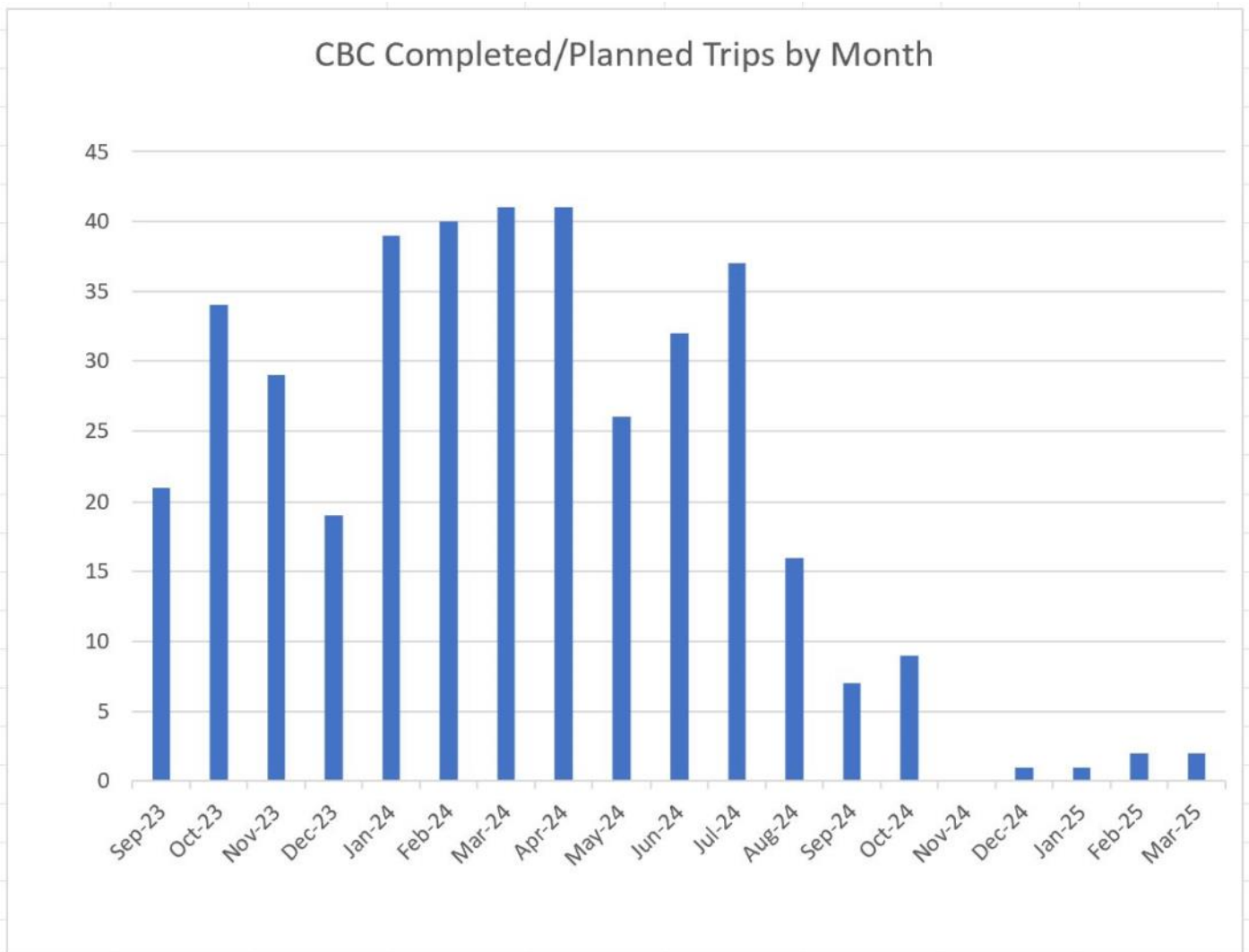
Some guests apply to join CBC very soon after completing a walk, so if you have concerns send that email at the same time you finish your Activity in Bilby. No concerns - you don't have to do anything, and the Membership Secretary or another member will second the guest.

Some background for our newer leaders:

The CBC Constitution requires guests be nominated and seconded by two current members before they can join.

Many guests didn't know about this, or were shy about asking someone to nominate or second them, or thought they couldn't apply to join unless they had the names of two sponsors. So to make membership applications easier, mostly for the guests but also for walk leaders and the Membership Secretary, at the December 2023 meeting the Committee decided to adopt this assumption model.

Any questions about this, or any other membership matters, **please contact the Membership Secretary.**



A very warm welcome to the following members who joined since I wrote for the last newsletter (30 April 2024) to the time of writing for this edition (13 August 2024):

Damian Spencer	Amanda Woodbridge	Melissa Marshall
Eugen Vencovsky	Johannes Kostka	Wendy Carpenter
Lena Hoffman-Raap	Rosemary White	Alison Killen
Ruth Grovenor	Ashok Pothen	Phillip Money
Stefano Pittau	Teresa Ang	Tracy Squires
Babs Fairchild	Marguerite Saw	John Murphy
Julia Vinckx	Nadege Kennedy	Damian Spencer
Leanne Cole	Anna Gane	Anthea Bollard
David Donovan	Natalia Weir	

At the time of writing we have 420 members, up from 402 at the beginning of 2024.

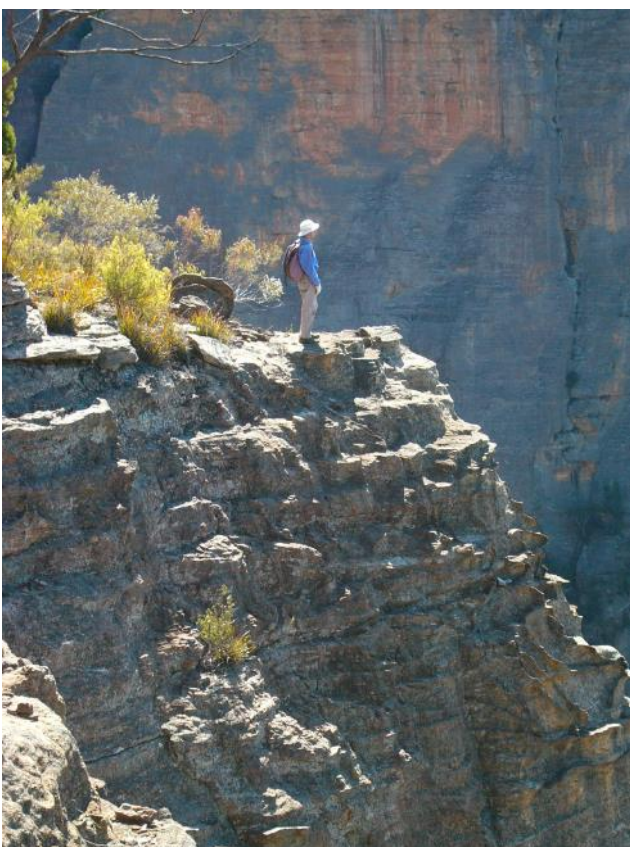
While it's great that in 2024 so far we have many more people joining up than leaving, it does present a challenge – keeping up with demand! We also need growth in volunteers who are willing and able to lead walks and other activities, or to help in other ways. A good problem to have, but one that still needs a solution.

Those of us who haven't been bushwalking for very long may take our National Parks and Conservation Areas for granted, not realising that most of them were not declared out of the inherent goodness of politicians' hearts (though there are notable exceptions), but only after many years of lobbying by bushwalkers and conservationists. Most people would be aware of the extraordinary efforts to save Lake Pedder (unsuccessful, though there is now a *Restore Lake Pedder* movement) and the Franklin River (successful).

However, even when we think our National parks are safe, it is not necessarily so. Who would have thought when the hard-hoofed cattle were removed from the headwaters of Kosciuszko, one of Australia's main water catchments, in the 1940s, that in this century we would need to spend years fighting for the removal of feral horses, a fight that continues with people like Club member, Linda Groom, still, after many years, organising actions to totally rid Kosciuszko of these environmentally destructive animals.

There are other types of threats to our scenic and ecologically important wild places. National Parks are seen as cash cows for private companies who wish to provide accommodation and tracks in areas that were originally (after long occupation by the indigenous people) explored by bushwalkers, thus removing sections of public land from public use. One such area is in the unique, newly declared (after decades of activism by conservation groups) Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area, accessible to Canberrans after half a day's drive. Here, two commercial leases are proposed: one to Wild Bush Luxury Pty Ltd (the same company that wants to develop high-end accommodation in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area) which would impinge on the public's wilderness views and areas of high conservation value; the other to Trees Adventure Holdings Pty Ltd who aim to create multi-adventure activities such as zip lines, via ferrata and suspension bridges amongst the pagoda formations for which the area is renowned.

Our Club, along with many other bushwalking and conservation organisations, has submitted an objection to these proposals. National Parks and Conservation Areas should be for the protection of the environment and the benefit of the public not only for now, but into the future.



(I'm planning to visit the Gardens of Stone on my Bonza Blue Mountains Day Walks trip in October).

Meg McKone, Editor



Cliffs and pagodas in the Gardens of Stone
photos by Meg McKone, taken on CMW walks in 2007 and 2008.

The May 2024 issue of the Canberra Bushwalking Club Quarterly Magazine featured past and present trips to Ginini Falls. Another Club trip to the falls on Sunday 26th April, 1987, is also of interest as this trip led to the CBC introducing a limit on the number of participants on a trip. This all off-track walk, which approached the falls from below, began at Corin Dam and involved some 600 metres of ascent. As there were 25 participants the leader, Keith Vallard, divided the party into two groups, with the second group to follow 15 minutes behind the first group. Being off track, travel was slow, with the second group reaching the falls by late lunch time.

Shortly after beginning the return trip one member of the second group badly injured a knee. As this member could only hobble slowly, and required frequent rest stops, progress was extremely slow. By the time this group reached Stockyard Spur, where they met up with the first group sitting around a fire, it was dark. Some time was spent looking for the track that led from Stockyard Spur down to the dam – but without success.

Consequently the 25 members were lined up, each was told to keep in contact with the person ahead and, with two small torches (one at the front and one at the back – there was no moon) the group headed directly (and steeply) down. The group eventually reached the river below the dam and then followed the river upstream to the dam wall and back to the cars – reaching them just after midnight, with participants arriving home post 1.00 am. As there were no mobile phones at this time, the failure of the participants to return on time caused much concern amongst their relatives and friends, with the Club president apparently receiving many calls. At a subsequent CBC committee meeting it was decided that a limit of 16 participants should apply to Club trips.

Greg Lawrence (who led the second group)

Although we live in an era of reassuring electronic gadgets, knowing how to light a fire in an emergency is still an essential skill that all bushwalkers should learn for their own safety. In dry weather not much skill is required, but in cold, wet, and windy conditions it is challenging.

My introduction to bushwalking was with the Melbourne Bushwalkers in the 1970s. On overnight trips one or two people always got up early and skilfully managed to get a fire going, even when the bush was damp with rain. The technique is generally as follows:

What to Carry

I take these items on every bushwalk; the weight is minimal.

- A disposable cigarette lighter and/or a box of waterproof matches.
- A piece of plastic hose, about 20 cm long, 1cm diameter.
- Pieces of car or bicycle rubber inner tube, cut into strips of about 5 cm x 2 cm. I prefer rubber pieces, rather than fire-starter blocks, as the rubber burns very hot, does not absorb water, and is easy to carry. *[If you're an ultra light weight walker or a non-cyclist, rubber bands also work—Ed.]*



Kindling

Look in tree hollows and under logs for drier leaves and twigs. Dead twigs and branches on trees will sometimes be drier. If it is raining, construct a small roof of firewood (about 50 cm wide) to keep the rain off and then build the fire underneath it.

Starting

Light one or two rubber strips and start adding small amounts of leaves and other kindling. Use the hose like a bellows to blow on the base of the fire until it is well alight, and do not smother the flames with too much kindling. The rubber will burn intensely for a few minutes, by which time the larger kindling should be alight. Once the fire is well established, damp wood can be added.



A campfire on a sandbank by the Genoa River. When you're leaving, put out your fire and scatter sticks but don't bury it. People have received serious burns from walking over buried fires, which stay hot for hours. *Meg McKone*



A pile of the 2005 WBB boots

All photos by John Evans unless otherwise indicated

As well as being forward looking, our Club has a great history of special events. One such activity is the Worn Boot Bash. It continues to attract participants who are willing to commit to “around 30km and a few hills”.

The WBB was the brain child of Rob Horsfield in **2002**:

Can you imagine wading the Murrumbidgee River through chest-high water, early in the morning of a cold winter's day? A quick up and over of the Bullen Range, another dip in Paddys River, then a climb up the eastern flank of the Tidbinbilla Range. Reverse it all to get home!

2003 was similar. **2004** was Kambah to the Cotter, returning via the Bullen Range. It was “guaranteed to loosen every limb”.

I plucked up courage to join the **2005** WBB. Thankfully no river crossings were involved and the lap of Woden's high points seemed manageable.

Nearly 20 years ago, I suspect Rob measured planned distances using a piece of string laid over a printed map. Nine souls (that's 18 soles) crossed the finish line in 2006 to a welcome cup of tea. The sun had long set and we'd covered over 42km.

2007's guarantee was to “stimulate both respiratory and circulatory systems”.

2008 saw a new leader. It was a simple walk, from Uriarra Crossing to the National Museum via the Molonglo River. But we still clocked up over 33 kms, and hills like Mt Stromlo, Dairy Farmers Hill and Black Mountain saw us climbing a tad less than one kilometre.

This is what the Arboretum looked like then:



The **2009** Worn Boot Bash was an epic hike – a loop day walk to Mt Kelly. We went in via the Gudgenby saddle and up Sams Creek, out via Middle Creek. Ever fluid, Rob described the planned distance as "Parameters are variables that function notionally as constants for a given consideration; if need be we can make them plastic and it'll be interesting to see what a bread-crum measure will be." Interestingly, the 'bread-crum measure' was a couple of kilometres shy of 30, the climb as 2008's. But the view (and the scrub) – magnificent!

The 2009 gang on Mt Kelly



Under threat that the first WBB with Murrumbidgee River crossings would be repeated this year, a milder alternative on the Tidbinbilla Range was walked in **2011**. The years **2012** and **2013** used the northern parts of the then new Canberra Centenary Trail.

Epic walking returned in **2014** with a trip up Middle Creek to Mt Namadgi, combined with my birthday drinks up there. In **2015**, **2017** and **2018** the walking area switched to the ACT's eastern border. Mt Clear was the destination, followed by a descent via spurs to Horse Gully Hut. There were stops along the way.



Lauren on Sam Aboud's dunny

2019 was a relatively easy WBB, following the Australian Alps Walking Track in from Orroral Valley to the Namadgi Visitors Centre. But we still clocked 34km and 1500m of climb.

After the Covid years, a new kid on the block rose to the leadership challenge. Noelia led the **2022** WBB to Sentry Box Mountain and in **2023** on the Brindabella Range. Urban fringe versions were also run in those years to cater for walkers less inclined to bash the bush, but still looking for decent distances and climbs.



Above: Happy WBBers at the end of the 2023 Bash.....
photo by Garry Boxsell

Right: The first WBB advertisement

You can find CBC's [Worn Boot Bash trips here](#), with links to most trip reports.

I wonder where this year's Worn Boot Bash will go?

[Jump To TOC](#)

WALKS PREVIEW

SAT 24 AUGUST - Inaugural "Order of the Worn Boot"

Recipients of the order will be awarded a handsomely scrolled card to record their participation in a piece of early spring madness.

The walk is Kambah to Pearce's corner (a top on the Tidbinbilla range) and return. It is ~39 km, crosses two rivers and the Bullen Range twice as well as climbing the Tidbinbilla Range. Teams are groups of three or more. Some may choose to run it, but the main criterion for the award is to complete the trip as a "day walk". A reasonable time is between 8 and 10 hours.

Why?---Why not? We've plenty in the club who can do such a bash when it suits. With prior notice some can put on a little condition for it.

Refreshments will be available at a First Aid point on the Tidbinbilla Road and at the finish at Kambah.

Rob Horsfield 

Features and highlights

Stage 6 was a long one with a greater feeling of remoteness, good company along the long and sandy way, convivial weather, goannas, echidnas, Bell Miner birds, very long beaches, very red rocks, three memorable water crossings, a crazy dog, more goannas, ticks, a Beach Stone Curlew, Hooded Plovers (critically endangered) Pied Oystercatchers, Crested Terns, White-bellied Sea Eagles, a Diamond Python and more. There was a thrilling speedboat ride, the great unknown number of actual kilometres each day, a song composed by Berno while walking along, sea life including a seal and dolphins, wildflowers including orchids and the almost ubiquitous Hop Goodenia, the spectacularly coloured cliffs of the Pinnacles, Lynne's unexpected biscuit treat, the inventive nibbles at the end of the trip, and the amazing restful cabins after the walk at Wonboyn. And of course the trip was superbly organised and carried out by David and Pennie. That's it in a nutshell, but if you want to do the long haul like we did, then read on.



The party on a short section on the Bundian Way, south west of Eden

All photos by Lois Padgham

Friday 17 November - Drive to Eden, stay at Reflections Eden Holiday Park

That evening there was a coup with a successful takeover of the camp kitchen by nine Canberrans. The punters - David and Pennie, Jacqui Rosier, Ian Turland, Jan and Philip Gatenby, Rivera, Bernard Morris and Lois Padgham. Rivera was new to the group, the rest of us having walked together before.

Sat 18 November - Tathra to Hobart Beach, 15km

The group stood dutifully out on the road at 8.30am waiting for the maxi taxi to take us to Tathra pub, where we left off last time. The laughably regular sized taxi was sent back and a larger one arrived 15 minutes later. A sense of excitement pervaded the bus as we headed north for the start of the sixth leg of the Great South Coast Walk, the longest leg so far with 115-120kms ahead of us.

After a procrastinating coffee at the Tathra Pub, David led us around Tathra Head to Kianinny Bay and on to the Kangarutha Track towards Hobart Beach. For a coastal walk there were surprisingly many ups and downs but mercifully short. Delightful rocky beaches, at one of which we had morning tea.

A side trip took us to White Rock where there was, amazingly, a layer of white rock!



Goannas were out in force, even on the rocky beaches. Around two thirds of the way along, a suitable lunch spot was found at a rocky beach (unfortunately there was a much better spot the next bay along). At Wallagoot Gap, we rested on a seat platform overlooking a slime-green pool with a view through a rocky gap to the blue ocean beyond. After a beach walk and swim, we arrived at Hobart Beach campsite and settled in near a convenient shelter.

Bell Miners chimed non-stop and made use of the puddle below the tank to drink and bathe. Evening visits to Wallagoot Lake revealed crabs and a few shrimps attracted by the torch-light and an interesting cloud that looked like a goose.

Sunday 19 November - Hobart Beach to Pambula, 20-21km

Departure was at 8.30am after packing up camp. We walked slightly inland of the beach through avenues of teatree and yellow Senecio daisy, past Bournda Lake and along the banks of Sandy Beach Creek, past Bournda Island and along a short 3km beach walk to Tura. Up the stairs to a lookout, a friend of Jan's (Lynne) was waiting to greet us with delicious home-made, still warm biscuits - not just one, but two sorts - what a treat!

With replete bellies, we strolled around Tura Head Coastal reserve, past echidnas and giant moths (Lynne had turned into our guide as well as cook). Now we were following the Wharf to Wharf walk, along Short Point beach for just over a kilometre, then slightly back from the beach and onto a pointy headland jutting out into Back Lagoon for lunch. The next bit of the track followed the northern shore of the lake through coastal forest and then into Merimbula, crossing Merimbula Creek the easy way (via a bridge).

At the coffee stop at a local cafe by the mangroves, Rivera rescued the table order number after it got blown into the sea. Continuing on across Boggy Creek Bridge and along a horrendous hot, sunny, sandy stretch under some power lines, we mercifully got onto the beach and into a cool breeze. We strode three kilometres down Merimbula Beach to the welcome Pambula Caravan Park and a cold beer and shower. The vast caravan park had a cafe/restaurant which we attended later in the day. The food was excellent and they accommodated our quirky requests by some "special" people ("A fish burger with beetroot, please!").

Monday 20 November - Pambula to Eden, 22km

A red eye special 7.30am start to catch the low tide crossing of Pambula River. After meandering past the bin chickens at the cafe (two unruly kangaroos eating rubbish and bamboo), we reached the beach, through Pambula Beach Reserve and Jiguma Nature Area and down onto the banks of the Pambula River. Two hundred metres from the mouth, we came upon some locals who had just taken a refreshing dip

(they do it every morning so they told us). A suitable crossing point was identified and after bagging up our packs into a dry bag (is it a dry bag or a wet bag?), waded most of it and swam across a narrow channel without too much difficulty. Ian displayed a cunning adaptation with two dry bags of gear tied together which acted like water wings. He was able to swim easily with his much coveted flotation device.

Gee it's hard to get that sticky sand from between the toes!

Fully dressed again after swimming across the Pambula River



We picked our way through the gorgeous brilliant red rocks and shiny black mussels along the shoreline of the recently renamed Beowa National Park (meaning orca or killer whale in the Thaua Aboriginal language), formerly Ben Boyd NP (Mr Boyd enslaved south sea islanders to work on his stations).

The track led higher up and around Ioala Point through a desiccated looking forest, and on to Haystack Rock for morning tea. Then it was 4.5kms of beach walking on Haycock Beach with a big mob of Crested Terns hanging out on the beach. The unforgiving soft sand gave the legs a stern workout, so it was a relief to stop at the Pinnacles, down packs and explore the richly coloured formations in the gorge back from

the beach. The area reminded me of Lake Mungo. A further two kms of beach and we ascended some steps to have lunch at the top on a seat platform talking to fisherpeople from 'Czechoslovakia'. They didn't call it the Czech Republic because they left when it was still Czechoslovakia.

From beach to Ironbark and Old Man Banksia forest with a colourful diverse understorey of Rice Hand Flower, Matt Rush



Crested terns on Haycock Beach

and pea flowers. At Calle Bay, we took a narrow bush track marked with the odd dab of yellow paint to Aslings Beach and the familiar Reflections Caravan Park on the shores of Curalo Lagoon at Eden. A diverse and beautiful day was had by all.



Exploring the Pinnacles on Haycock Beach south of Pambula

Tuesday 21 November - Eden to Boydtown, 10km

This is a mere 10km day, half a day's walk with a couple of car shuffles thrown in, oh and a dog called Loco.

The streets of Eden were fairly serene at 8.15 in the morning with several churches, indicating a devout lot. David then led us through a rather rundown, trashy site and into coastal forest bordered by houses and the ocean. We walked a short stint of the Bundian Way with many interpretation shelters along the way. A dog adopted David and proceeded to follow us, trying to get someone to throw a stick in its direction. We waded, walked, climbed and stumbled around the ragged but colourful rocky coastline with the dog in ever present pursuit. David tried a tricky manoeuvre around a deep bit of water but fell in and lost his sunglasses. Morning tea was on a beach with the dog doggedly staring at Rivera to entice her to throw the stick. She didn't budge.

After morning tea, there was an inland bit following a powerline steeply up and down, a dry crossing of the Nullica River over a bridge, shaking off the dog who found better stick throwing suitors on the beach, and then into the Boydtown Caravan Park. Another big park. Gee it must get awfully crowded at Christmas time.

Worried about a forecast storm, Pennie kindly booked a couple of cabins so we could stay dry. After a short car shuffle to pick up the cars from Eden, we enjoyed lunch in the camp kitchen before moving into the cabins. Some of us drew the short straw to do another car shuffle to get the cars to Wonboyn at the walk's end. The rain finally arrived and we were very grateful for the dry accommodation.

Wednesday 22 November - Boydtown to Saltwater Creek. The longest day, 25km

Today has everything - a long walk, a water crossing, driftwood, crabs and history. But first, a good breakfast to get us away by 8am. Onto yet another glorious beach followed by rock scrambles by the water around Torarago Point and a short grassy stretch to get to the landward side of Whale Spit and the edge of the Towamba River. This area had a really isolated, remote feeling to it.

Half way along the spit, we took to swimming a short way to a tiny island filled with soft muddy sand and tiny crabs, then another longer wade/swim to a sandy area where a beach stone curlew glared at us and moved on, obviously disgusted at being disturbed. One last wade and we were home and hosed on dry land again. With shoes and walking clothes back on, we headed to the old Davidson whaling station for morning tea and to explore the artefacts and old buildings. A couple of kilometres on dirt roads and we arrived at Fisheries Beach with Edrom Lodge at the far end. Edrom Lodge was the home of turn of the century businessman J.R. Logan and his large family until 1942 when it became a guesthouse for the well-to-do. Building started in 1910 and was completed in 1913.

More road walking out from the lodge, past a huge pile of logs by the woodchip mill and along the road to Boyds Tower where we met Pennie for lunch. New infrastructure has been installed around the tower - an information shelter, fancy walkways, a formal carpark and a toilet.

After a good long morning's walking we had yet another good long afternoon's walking ahead of us along the beautiful track to Saltwater Creek campground. Evidence of the 2019-2020 fires was everywhere but regrowth was crazy too. Views of the contorted brilliant red rocky coastline appeared every now and then along the way. This section of the Light to Light walk was closed for construction, but we didn't notice.

The weather was heating up so it was opportune when an idyllic beach appeared just before Mowarry Point. In a flash we were in the cooling water. Only a mere four kilometres more before we reached the campground where we discovered a group of 30 adolescent boys from Pambula camping across the road from us. As well as a plethora of boys, the ticks were also very abundant.

After a cooling dip in the nearby Woodburn Creek, it was dinner from the scraps in the food bag, a briefing for the next day and falling asleep quickly. Some light rain overnight.

Thursday 23 November - Saltwater Creek to Bittangabee Bay, 10km

Bittangabee – pronounced using 'Tang' as in Tang Dynasty, not slurred to a 'tange' – according to an NPWS worker busy repairing the BBQ.

Thank goodness for an easy 10km day to rest the sore feet, heal the blisters and enjoy the gorgeous coastline. Starting a bit later at 9.15am to avoid the crush with the boys, and for Jan and Philip to dry off after a morning dip in the ocean, we headed south along an easy pathway (the boys had already departed in full kit including matching gaiters, to Bittangabee Bay by 7.30am). A pebbly beach at Hegartys Bay proved ideal for morning tea. Yet another school group, this time 15 year old girls, was also resting up at this bay. Jan and Philip discovered a deep spherical rockpool 100m to the north along the rock platform. More rock scrambling on our way south and the discovery of the Creeping Brookweed (*Samolus repens*), a delicate herb with white flowers, growing in the very shallow soils in rock crevices by the ocean. That'll survive the holocaust.

Rounding the red ragged rocks, we marched into Bittangabee Bay, over the creek and into camp. The camping area is located on the southern side of the substantial bay. Lots of new infrastructure adorned the place.

After lunch in the shelter, it was swim time, followed by a warm brackish-water rinse in a pond behind the beach.

Friday 24 November - Bittangabee Bay to Wonboyn, 19km. The last day of walking.

This last day will be challenging due to a few injuries, accumulated fatigue and its duration - 19kms.

Due to a pressing appointment with a river at low tide, our party left at 7.40am - the same time as the Pambula boys (luckily the leader held them back by 10 mins so we wouldn't be trampled by the stampede). Jacqui departed for home that morning due to other commitments so we were down to seven walkers.

The first port of call, after a pleasant ramble through forest and past green waterways, was Pulpit Rock for a quick sermon by the sea. Rather interesting with a wall of rocks, the last one resembling (if you use your imagination) a pulpit. Morning tea was spent watching the mesmerising spray of waves crashing onto the rocks. Jan, Philip and Ian explored every nook and cranny while Bernard selected a rock eyrie to make his famous coffee.

Back onto the main track, a fine rain was falling as Bernard quietly composed a song while using the rhythm of his footsteps as the beat. Once a drummer, always a drummer.

Built in 1883, the Green Cape lighthouse was Australia's first concrete lighthouse tower and the southern-most lighthouse in NSW. At 29 metres tall, it is an impressive, enduring structure.

A six km trudge along the lighthouse access road took us over Skelton Hill and on to Disaster Bay Lookout. From here, a faint track (i.e. non-existent except for a few token ribbons), down a ridgeline, past a snake and we were suddenly on remote Disaster Bay and able to sniff the end of the walk. Just two kilometres along the beach was our final water crossing of the Wonboyn River. Merely a deep wade with the briefest of swims and we were across. David called Pennie to send the boat while we ate lunch and waited in the drizzle, scouring the hazy horizon for its approach. The boat ride took us whizzing past oyster farms as we ducked and weaved through the channel. Pennie was there to meet the boat and guide us to our cabins.

Saturday was spent doing very little. Home sweet home on Sunday.

It's kind of sad for a long distance, endurance walk to come to an end after so many shared experiences, joys and hardships. It's also a relief to know there is an end and a great sense of achievement that you have held together and made it. The wild coastal places we still have in Australia are hanging on despite many pressures to degrade and destroy them. Nature is amazingly resilient and a powerful immersive healer that takes you away from the norm. It's where we all should be constantly.

Thank you to David and Pennie and all the participants for a wonderful opportunity to get to know our fabulous coastline.



Exploring the sea cliffs near Pulpit Rock

Day Walking in the Northern Flinders 13-26 May, 2024

Meg McKone

Participants: Meg (leader) and Frank McKone, Terrylea Reynolds, Laeli Hogan, Richard Hurley, Bill and Deborah Gibson, Ute Foster, Garry Boxsell, Robyn Bilson, Judy Zhu, Janet Duncan, Jenny Horsfield, Jacqui Rosier, Rivera Morton.

An evening cuppa at the dusty campsite as a brilliant sunset lingers on Mount Chambers

Photos by Meg McKone unless otherwise stated.



The Flinders Ranges consist of a series of ridges and valleys, cliffs, chasms and domes, snaking 420 kilometres north from Crystal Brook to Mount Hopeless in South Australia. Their vivid colours and spectacular scenery make them a prime destination for bushwalking. However, pockets of ferocious scrub, precipitous spurs and deep gorges, combined with a general lack of water (you may find a dead goat in that eagerly-awaited spring) make overnight walking a difficult undertaking more suited to younger, stronger walkers. So I planned to visit three very different locations where we could get a taste of the variety and beauty of the Flinders on moderate day walks with the option of harder walks for our more energetic participants.

Mount Chambers Gorge:

It's a long drive for us Easterners to Melrose where we all met up for the night before driving to Mount Chambers Gorge, our first walking destination. The gorge cuts through an outlying ridge to the west of the main Flinders spine. On top of this narrow plateau perches Mount Chambers itself, some hundreds of metres above the campground, which was disappointingly dry and dusty, much drier than on my visit 10 years previously with Frank, and John and Margaret Cooper. We spent the afternoon visiting a side gorge which was filled with rock engravings belonging to the Adnyamathanha people (the remnants of several clans who were dispossessed by European settlement). It was heartening to see a noticeboard explaining the meaning of the engravings (basically a site for boys' initiation ceremonies) and know that not all their cultural knowledge has been lost. We topped the day off with a poetry reading from Jenny and a musical number from Laeli (on her phone) as the sunset flamed on the cliffs above us.



A CBC first ascent of Mt Chambers, S.A
Photo by Richard Hurley

On my last visit I'd been attracted to the idea of climbing the mountain, but it looked very steep, I wasn't aware of any track and we were running out of time. We were all geared up ready to walk down through the gorge when Ute knocked on our caravan door with a map of the area on her phone showing a suitable track to the summit. She'd recently downloaded it on an app in Germany! It didn't take much persuading to change our plans for the morning and we were so glad we did. The views on the way up and from the top were amazing – along the narrowing ridge to the north which ended abruptly in the gorge, the indigo ridgeline on the western horizon and a jumble of gentler hills and valleys to our east painted in delicate peach, lime and ochre pastels which indicated variations in the geology beneath, and way beyond, the white salty line of Lake Frome. Some of us continued along the ridge towards the gorge, looking for the elusive Mount Chambers Chasm which we'd seen described rather cryptically online. Richard and Laeli must have turned back just before reaching it close to the end of the ridge.

In the afternoon we walked several kilometres downstream through the gorge, marvelling at its soaring cliffs and vivid colours. Though there were only a couple of pools of stagnant water, the river red gums and various shrubs were hanging on. They obviously had their roots deep into the water table. We explored a little side gorge hoping it would turn into the Chasm, but no; that must be one of the narrow cracks visible in the upper cliffs near the plateau's end.



Top L-R: Aboriginal engravings; Bluff with the Chasm (somewhere); in the Mt Chambers Gorge.
 Bottom L-R: View from Mt Chambers Ridge; rolling hills east of the summit; a remnant pool in the Gorge.

Time to move on, though I felt there was some unfinished business in not having found the Mount Chambers Chasm. The road to Arkaroola, much of it bumpy, corrugated dirt, tested our vehicles and our driving skills. We stopped at Blinman, formerly a derelict mining town, for lunch and were overwhelmed by hundreds of cyclists. Still, we managed to grab some of the famous miners' pasties – veges at one end, apple at the other. Times have changed!

Lunch on Mt Warren Hastings above its northern cliffs—a goat-free haven for Grass Trees



Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary is the brainchild of the late geologist extraordinaire Reg Sprigg, who in 1968 purchased a run-down pastoral lease in the northern reaches of the Flinders. Familiar with its beauty from his geological explorations, he saw that the only way to protect its unique geology and ecology was to make it a sanctuary, financed mainly by carefully managed eco-tourism. It now offers plane flights and 4WD tours as well as providing free transport to the start of some of the walks. The walking tracks are well signposted with information poles describing the remarkable geological history and flora and fauna of the area.

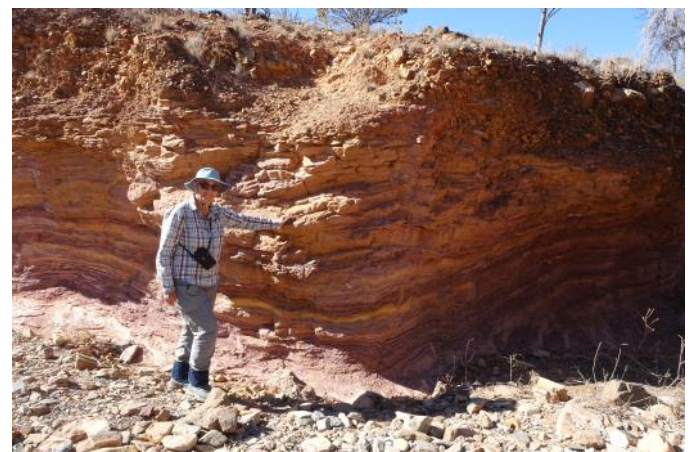
In our four and a half days there, we covered quite a bit of ground (some more than others). We could also retire to the restaurant for a meal or a coffee, or something stronger, and hold planning get-togethers there when we weren't at Terrylea and Laeli's spacious motel. Hot showers, toilets and washing machines were appreciated after two nights at the facility-less Mt Chambers campground (which is part of a lease with no charges, so one can't complain).

Our first walk was our longest – the 15.2 kilometre Oppaminda Nudlamutana through-walk which climbs 340 metres (plus extra ups and downs) to the top of Mt Warren Hastings with its panoramic views to Lake

Frome, Mount McKinlay and Mount McKinlay Bluff in the Gammon Ranges, and north into the most rugged part of the Northern Flinders, including the aptly named Armchair. Despite the dry conditions, the Xanthorrhoeas (Grass Trees) were thriving on its cliff face where feral goats couldn't get at them. After recuperating with drinks and nibbles we went to see the rare yellow-footed rock wallabies which come down from Griselda Hill each evening to be fed special pellets during droughts to prevent their extinction.



Perhaps the most beautiful walk was the seven kilometre Bararranna Circuit which sidles round the hillsides on its way to Arkaroola Creek. Unfortunately, the prolonged drought had dried up most of the waterholes and desiccated a lot of the vegetation, but the geological features were fascinating – an old copper mine, an ancient reef on top of a hill, 700 million year old glacial tillite embedded with erratic rocks, glacially scratched boulders and massive cliffs of sedimentary ripple rock. Some of the schists were one billion years old! On the drive back it's worth stopping at the Ochre Wall to admire the multi-coloured layers of this soft rock.



Clockwise from upper left: Morning tea in Arkaroola Creek by a dry waterhole; Folds and ripples in the cliffs of Arkaroola Ck; Practising our swimming strokes in a dry waterhole; the Ochre Wall

I was also impressed with the Acacia Ridge walk, only 5.6 kilometres but with the best views north, including a precipitous knife-edged ridge and a peak, whose name I couldn't ascertain, fronted with cliffs barricading its western side. The walk finishes with a delightful narrow ridge heading down the valley towards the settlement. Jenny and I had a worrying half hour or so when we thought we'd lost Frank, but it turned out he'd passed us on the narrow track when we were taking photos and talking to some other walkers. We hadn't registered that he was now ahead. Rather like the psychology experiment of the unnoticed gorilla in the room when people are concentrating on something else!

View of the precipitous mountains and ridges northeast of Acacia Ridge, Arkaroola



There were other good track walks and Garry took a group off-track exploring up "Garry's Gulch". Some people climbed Griselda Hill (named after Reg Sprigg's wife) multiple times, to appreciate the view and look for the yellow-footed rock wallabies, or just for fun. Most of the walks were short enough to do two or more in a day, if one were so inclined, and we hadn't exhausted all the possibilities.



Griselda Hill
Left: View of
Arkaroola Village.
Judy Zhu

Right: on the
summit.
Bill Gibson



The Gammon Ranges:

Mt McKinlay and Mount McKinlay Bluff seen from the road to the Gammons



We had another dusty drive to the Weetootla Campground in the Gammon Ranges, the last several kilometres along the bone-jarring rocks of the riverbed. The campsite, however, was very pleasant with a newly installed toilet, tank water, good sites and much more greenery than at Arkaroola. Most of the party walked through Weetootla Gorge and back in the afternoon, while I poked around in the creek bed, listening to the birds, reading the signs about the local vegetation and surprising a yellow footed rock wallaby. The cloudy morning cleared to a bright, moonlit night. In all, it was an attractive spot to spend several nights.

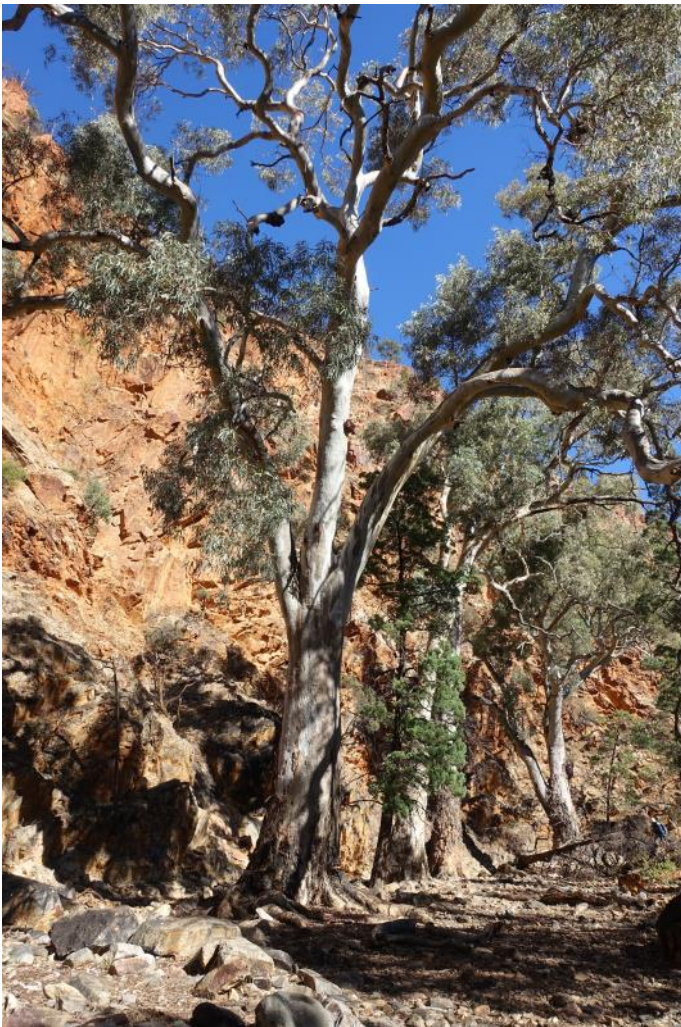
I was keen to revisit Mount McKinlay Basin with its superb view of the eastern face of this prominent peak, so next morning we drove to Italowie Creek Campground. It looked quite different from my previous visit, but there was a clearly marked track and we headed into a prominent gorge with good going, the track taking us mostly up on the river banks while avoiding the tea-tree scrub, instead of over long

stretches of foot-punishing river rocks. After several kilometres the route didn't look quite right, but I didn't twig until we reached a sign post showing us to be on the eastern side of the Rampart Range instead of the western. We were in Italowie Creek instead of the parallel Dr Chewings Creek, which gives access to the Mount McKinlay Basin, but which is now not mentioned in any National Park information. However, a pleasant through walk has been



Near the gap on the track to Mount McKinlay Spring

created to Mt McKinlay Spring and thence on to Balcanoona Creek. Climbing up the track out of Italowie Creek, we passed through a geologically significant gap (a fault zone with black ironstone on one side and red quartzite on the other) with views of Mount McKinlay Bluff, then dropped down into the side creek on the other side. We found only a small seep where we expected the spring to be, so Laeli explored upstream to the Pinch Point and found a long pool, reflecting the hills beyond, hidden between sheer red rock walls. The hares in our party continued on north towards Balcanoona, while the rest of us returned to our cars, followed by the hares. Despite my initial mistake, we'd had an interesting day and traversed some new ground.



The creekbed where we expected to find the Spring was almost dry.



Several hundred yards further upstream we found a pool at the Pinch Point.

The next day, to our great disappointment, Frank and I needed to leave, so I left the rest of the trip along with maps and other information in Garry's capable hands. On their way home via Copley (where there's excellent quandong tarts and coffee at the roadhouse) on the final day of the trip, Garry, Robyn, Ute, Laeli and Terrylea found the start of a track up Dr Chewings Creek Gorge, a bare half kilometre west of Italowie Creek Gorge. But it's not sign-posted, and the track to Mt McKinlay Basin may have fallen into disuse.

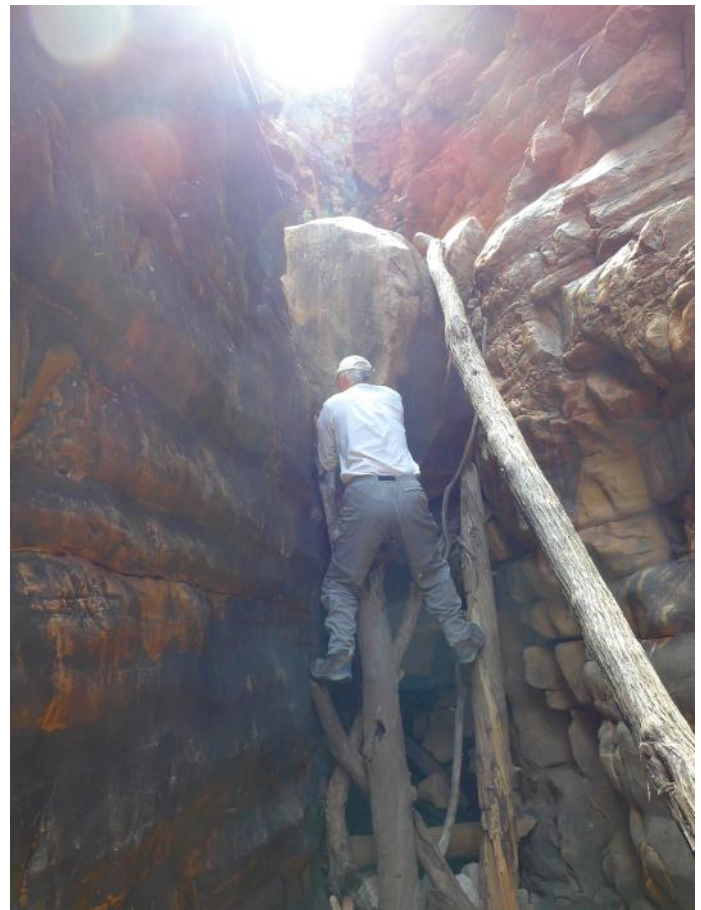
23 May: Bunyip Chasm *by Garry Boxsell*

On this day, we attempted a walk to the remote Bunyip Chasm which is noted for being one of the best walks in the ranges with rock scrambling and spectacular red rock gorge views. After a long and bumpy, dusty drive with 4WDs to the track head at Lock Ness Well, dodging a few kangaroos and emus along the way, we headed off up Balcanoona Creek. Once again, the weather was fantastic with mild temperatures and blue skies making for very pleasant walking conditions. Like most of the walks in the area, the walking was made relatively easy with a footpad that wound along the dry creekline with hills either side. As we progressed up the creek, the footpad gradually disappeared, replaced with small rocks, boulders and rock ledges requiring a slowing of the pace to find the best route ahead. The red rock walls and cliffs on each side gradually closed in providing shade and excitement as we rounded each bend wondering what we would see next. Majestic mature-age gum trees dotted the creek and ever present goat droppings appeared here and there.

After about an hour and 40 minutes, we approached our first major obstacle, a narrow gorge with a large chock stone blocking part of the gorge, three metres vertically above the base of the gorge. The only way up for us non rockclimbers was to scale a worn, battered and rotten log placed almost vertically next to the chock stone. This proved to be too risky without extra gear so it was decided to have lunch at the start of the narrow gorge. After a pleasant lunch admiring the steep red rocks and trees, we backtracked to the cars, passing an old windmill. On our return drive, we stopped at Grindell Hut admiring this stone house which has been converted into a guest house available for rent.



Impossible to climb without more logs. The turn -back point in 2024. *Photo by Ute Foster*



What a difference two extra logs make! John Cooper scaling the drop in 2014 *Meg McKone*



Weetootla Spring—an oasis in the dry ranges *photo by Garry Boxsell*

24 May: Monarch Mine/Weetootla Gorge Loop *by Garry Boxsell*

On this day we broke into two groups to walk the Monarch Mine/Weetootla Gorge Loop with a fast group going clockwise around the loop track, and a not so fast group heading in an anticlockwise direction. Both groups started from our campsite at Weetootla Gorge Campground and headed up through Weetootla Gorge where the fast group continued up Balcanoona Creek, and the second group peeled off up Weetootla Creek. The creek proved to be an oasis in the dry ranges with thick stands of healthy bullrushes, pools of clear running water and stands of wonderful mature red gum trees. As part of the anticlockwise group, we then departed the creek and steadily climbed to the top of the ridge for some wonderful views across the ranges. The halfway point was near an old copper mine site, 'Monarch Mine', where the two groups passed with some cheerful banter exchanged.

Both groups continued with their respective clockwise and anticlockwise walks with the not so fast group heading down off the ranges and back along a return loop via Weetootla Gorge. The gorge proved to be entertaining and full of surprises at each turn of the creek with wonderful red rock cliff faces, water worn rocks and majestic ancient river gums. Some old exploratory mine entrances sealed with bars to prevent entry were also spotted part way along the creek. Surprisingly, both groups regrouped near the junction of Weetootla Creek and returned as one group back to the campground. Along the way, several emus accompanied us for a few kilometres, providing some entertaining emu antics. Overall, it was a very enjoyable, scenic walk encompassing gorges, mountain views and running creeks with some cheerful group competition and banter thrown in.

As in many outback trips, the rough roads took their toll of the vehicles – a broken brake cable, a non-functioning fridge, and engine reluctant to start and two ruined trailer tyres. But my lasting memory is of a great trip in beautiful country with a lively, adventurous and enthusiastic party. I'd be happy to return, perhaps in slightly warmer weather, and after some decent rain.



Make sure you bring spares! *Photo by Deborah Gibson*

Discord—chat forum trial

It has been expressed by some members that it would be good to have a way of chatting with other members, outside of bushwalks, about bushwalking ideas, or to be able to ask questions eg does anyone know how high Sallee Creek is at the moment? I need to buy a new stove – what do people recommend? etc. It may be that new members will find this tool more beneficial, as they may not yet have their own personal network of people that they can ask questions of.

This online forum is for CBC members only, and it is a free tool.

Discord is an instant messaging and VoIP social platform which allows communication through voice calls, video calls, text messaging, and media and files. Communication can be private or take place in virtual communities called "servers".

It was originally set up for gamers, but non-gamers make use of its features.

Chris Day has very generously offered to moderate the use of Discord.

How to access

You can access Discord either via the website, or via an app on your phone or on your desktop.

Here is an invitation link so that you can check it out:

<https://discord.gg/kB9UCqGhGt>

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Arriving at our accommodation in Katapola

The now headless goddess Minoa



The final destination of Terrylea's hiking trip to Great Britain, Poland, Slovakia and Greece was to the Island of Amorgos. In the afternoon of 5 October 2023, 12 of us continued our trip and took the ferry from Naxos to Katapola, which is the main port of Amorgos and one of the most popular seaside villages. Apparently Amorgos became popular with the French due to a Luc Besson movie filmed here in the 1960s, *Le Grand Bleu*.

On 6 October, the whole group caught a bus from Katapola to Chora, the capital of the island. Having finally found the starting point of the walk, Fotodotis Café, through a labyrinth of lanes, there was a coffee coup and not another step was taken until coffee cravings were satisfied! We walked along hills, passed the vivid blue ocean where the famous movie 'The Big Blue' was filmed and explored the ruins of the Acropolis of Minoa (1100 BC).

It was a bit challenging for us to work out our way back to Katapola, but the beautiful views were compensating us. A few of us decided to visit the sculpture of the mythological Princess Erato who welcomes the visitor on the southwest side of the entrance of the port of Katapola (the muse Nausikaa is on the north side of the port).

On 7 October, we formed two groups. The majority group walked from Chora to Chozoviotissa Monastery (1100 AD) which is a labyrinthine structure clinging onto the side of a limestone cliff. From there they headed back into Chora to spend time exploring the wonderful Greek cobbled and colourful alleys and to climb the Castle of Chora of Amorgos (~1200AD). They met lots of wonderful cats. :)

Jacqui, Noelia and I took the last opportunity for a long walk at Amorgos. We climbed up from Katapola to Chora, then walked down to the ocean side and then climbed up again to the famous Chozoviotissa monastery. It was quite windy when we were on the top of Chora and Noelia's hat was blown away; fortunately a low bush did a good job of saving it. We didn't see the road down until Noelia went to pick up her hat. Things happen for a reason, for sure.

It was nice that we bumped into the members of the majority group at the entrance of Chozoviotissa Monastery. Jacqui and Noelia had to put skirts on, even though they had long pants. The monks offered water, a liqueur they make themselves, and Turkish delight. When I was standing outside to wait for them, I was feeling overwhelmed with the cats wanting me to feed them while worrying that the strong wind would blow the stones off from the top



Top: Statue of the mythological Princess Erato overlooking Katapola Harbour;
Middle: Chozoviotissa Monastery clinging to the hillside;
Bottom: Noelia's hat, saved by a prickly bush (and Noelia).

We then continued our journey and walked along the coastline to the other port, Aegiali. It was hot, there was no shade, and we were very tired when we got there. Once we had recovered with some cold refreshments, we walked around the bay where Jacqui and Noelia decided the water was too inviting not to have a quick dip. We took the bus back to Katapola and dined with other CBC members.

8 October was the last day on Amorgos. Jacqui, Noelia and myself spent half a day explored the Northside of the hills at Katapola. We followed an old, dilapidated walking trail which was in very poor condition. Still, it was nice to have a look of the port, Chora, and the ancient Minoa from a distance.

The highlight of the day was the farewell dinner. We would not have this wonderful experience without Terrylea's hard work and patience.



Clockwise from main: Terrylea's "thank you" scarf; Time for a swim on a hot afternoon; Katapola Harbour; Sunset at the Port.

All photos by Judy Zhu

CBC Social Media



Have you checked out CBC's social media posts recently? You'll find them on the [CBC Facebook page](#).

They're a great way to show the wonderful places we visit and perhaps encourage people to join the Club. You can even share posts to your personal Facebook page to let family and friends know what you're up to.

If you are a walk leader, or have a walker who has a camera/phone, and would like to share your trip in this way, just check with party members during your pre-walk briefing that everyone is happy to be included in photos.

Write up a short and appealing description and email it to facebookadmin@canberrabushwalkingclub.org, along with a small selection of attached photos. Provide captions for the photos and indicate the order in which they are to be posted.

The Club also has an Instagram Page which you can reach at

<https://www.instagram.com/canberrabushwalkingclub/>

Simple, and with a great result.

SenFei Lam CBC Facebook Admin

Equipment Hire:

Please note that **\$20 deposit** is required for all items. **First overnight loan of gear gets a free loan.**

Tents: \$15 per weekend, \$40 per week: 2 person Olympus tent, 2-person Macpac tent, 1-person Microlight tent, 2-person snow tent

Liner and mat: nil cost

Metho stove and fuel bottle: \$5 per weekend, \$15 per week

Snow shoes: \$10 per day, \$25 per week; **Climbing gear:** \$10 per day or weekend per person

Pack: \$5 per weekend, \$15 per week

PLB, GPS: nil cost

Borrowers are requested to look after the gear and return it promptly.

Contact Rob on 6231 4535 or robhorsfield@bigpond.com



When it's cold, wet and misty, you need good gear. *Photo by Ian Wright*

Bulletin Board

The Bulletin Board is for members to advertise (at no cost) goods for sale, private trips or other personal bushwalking-related matters. The Club is not involved in, takes no responsibility for, and does not endorse, the activities or goods advertised here. Hence, if people participate in any activities advertised here, they do so as private individuals, not as members of the Club, and will not be covered by the Club's insurance.

Join Brigitte Muir on an inspirational trek through the heartland of the lower Solukhumbu supporting AHF and women's health in Nepal

I am NOT a mountaineer, but I am inspired by the scenery and culture of Nepal. This ladies only trip led by Brigitte Muir (acclaimed Australian Mountaineer, now a resident in Nepal) combines mindful trekking, meditation, cultural interaction and purpose. It is organized by The Australian Himalayan Foundation, through World Expeditions (not a CBC walk). We would be walking trails less visited, enjoying unrivalled views across the entire Himalayan range, visiting monasteries and immersing ourselves in the life of local communities.

After confirming its suitability for someone with no prior altitude experience, I have just registered for the April 2025 trip and would love a few other CBC ladies to share the experience with me. For more details, go to: [Women 4 Women Empowering Didi* Trek \(humacharitychallenge.com\)](http://humacharitychallenge.com)

You can register through the same website if interested.

Laeli Hogan (CBC member)