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Quarterly Magazine
Canberra Bushwalking
Club



November 2024
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Canberra Bushwalking Club Inc
GPO Box 160, Canberra ACT 2601
www.canberrabushwalkingclub.org



Climbing a pagoda beside Goochs Crater, Blue Mountains NP, NSW

Photo by Meg McKone

CBC Committee 2024-25

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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 6 February 2025, 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 don’t use unusual fonts, which may not be available in Publisher.
- 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.)
- The deadline for contributions to the next Quarterly Magazine will be 6 February 2025, 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.

Christmas Party, January BBQ, ACT Public Holidays 2024/25

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

Christmas Day: Wednesday 25 December 2024

Boxing Day: Thursday 26 December 2024

New Year's Day: Wednesday 1 January 2025

Australia Day pub hol: Monday 27 January 2025

Canberra Day: Monday 10 March 2025

Easter: Friday 18 April – Monday 21 April 2025

ANZAC Day: Friday 25 April 2025

Reconciliation Day: Monday 2 June 2025

King's Birthday: Monday 9 June 2025

Labour Day: Monday 6 October 2025

Christmas Party

Come along and join your fellow Club members for our annual backyard Christmas Party!

Venue: At Janet's place, 19 Gamor St, Waramanga

Date: Sunday 15 December, from 6.00pm.

Please bring: a folding chair, cutlery, plate, cup, drinks and all your food. The Club will provide some salads.

BBQ facilities are available for those who wish to barbeque.

Jumble Sale: Bring along any of your camping gear you wish to sell, or you can donate the funds to the Club. Please write your name and the price clearly on the items you wish to sell.

There will also be tasty chutneys, relishes, jams for sale in aid of a Landcare group known as MOTH to which some CBC members belong.

January Club BBQ

The annual CBC BBQ - our traditional January Meeting - is on **Wednesday 15 January at 6pm at Black Mountain Peninsula**. Simply turn up with your own food and drink, meet your bush walking friends, share your recent trips and enjoy. If BBQs are disabled because of fire danger, or the forecast weather hampers BBQ activity (possible late afternoon / evening thunderstorms), there are some shelters available.

We will meet at the circle at the end of the Garryowen Drive.

Follow the CBC signs on Garryowen Drive.

No booking is required. Family and friends are welcome.

Committee 2024-2025

The returning officer for 2024 was Mark Peirce.

President	Noelia Pinto
Treasurer	Jenny Arnold (now replaced by David Donovan)
Walks Secretary	John Evans
Assistant Walks Sec	Garry Boxsell
Membership Secretary	Andrea Coomblas
Conservation Officer	Michael Clisby
General Secretary	Alison Killen
Social Secretary	Liwei Meakin
Training & Safety Officer	Salih Ozgul
Editor	Meg McKone
Publisher	Ana Vrancic
Web Manager	Keith Thomas

The appointment of the new Committee was confirmed by the meeting.

What a busy year it has been!

I've had big boots to fill, following on from the tireless Terrylea Reynolds, but have done what I can within my time constraints.

Some of the year's highlights, in no particular order, are as follows:

We've had many great trips put on by many leaders, a mix of experienced leaders and quite a few new leaders. We thank you all for your time, effort and dedication! A huge thank you to John Evans as Walks Secretary, leader and strategist. John seems to be dedicating every minute he can to our wonderful Club, and we are eternally grateful for his dedication. Just one example of John's tireless endeavours is his drive to increase the number of CBC leaders so that we can better cater for the high demand for all types of activities.

We also had a new Assistant Walks Secretary, Garry Boxsell, who has helped John with the provision of first aid training to our Club members, as well as being a leader and organising the upcoming super week of walks in Namadgi. Garry has been a great source of support for John.

Keith Thomas moved from his prior role as Assistant Walks Secretary to Web Manager in 2024, taking over from Andrew Meers. Keith has taken on his new role with gusto, assisting with many aspects of the Club's IT needs, including moving the Club's website from JustHost to Canberra Web. Keith has also provided a great deal of general assistance to all committee members and with Bilby with all manner of issues.

The Club has continued with its proud history of involvement with other stakeholders in the bushwalking community, including:

- Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve
- Namadgi National Park
- Joint walks with BBC and NPA

Our family and toddler's walks continue to be run, providing encouragement to a whole new generation of bushwalkers. 2024 saw the baton being passed from Linda Groom to Dianne McDean. Other leaders such as Jacqui Rosier and Terrylea Reynolds have also assisted with Family Walks.

The variety of activities that we have had has been nothing short of phenomenal. We've had strolls, walks, wanders, toddles, saunters, rambles, forays, ascents, bashes, circuits, circumnavigations and loops. We've had morning walks, evening walks, all-day walks, multi-day walks, local walks, interstate walks and overseas walks. But there haven't just been walks! We've had bike riding, paddles, navigation training, bird identification, rock climbing, caving, and on and on the list goes. How brilliant!

Our Membership has grown to its highest number ever (424 at last count!), due to a number of factors, including the efforts of our extremely capable Membership Secretary, Andrea Coombas, who has done so much work assisting new members and evaluating membership trends. She was also the main instigator behind the recent membership survey, to help the CBC deliver the best experience possible to both current and prospective members.

Andrea has also been taking a lead role in the much-needed review of the CBC's current constitution to bring it up to date. This process has commenced via our membership with Volunteering ACT and is progressing well.

I would also like to thank Melinda Brouwer who has worked hard as our treasurer to make sure that the CBC stays in good financial shape, and that we comply with all the applicable regulations. Melinda will be retiring after many years of hard work, and we welcome Jenny Arnold into the role.

Marlene Eggert became our General Secretary in 2023, taking over the role of ensuring that all official Club correspondence and records are kept on the Club's Committee Google Shared Drive and that Committee meetings are documented and held in the proper fashion. This makes sure that all important documents are accessible by all committee members and helps the Club to be accountable and transparent in its activities. Marlene, like so many capable and generous people, had various commitments during 2023-2024, one of which was as a snake handler in the Queanbeyan area. Unfortunately for the CBC, Marlene is only one of a few snake handlers, and her services in that regard have been in high demand. As a result, she has had to make the difficult decision to stand down from her role as General Secretary, and the CBC is actively searching for a suitable replacement for her role. If you know of someone who could take over this role, let us know!

In 2024, we were lucky to have Michael Clisby as our Conservation Officer. Michael has brought passion to his role and ensured that the Club has remained active on the conservation and environmental front. Michael has coordinated or assisted in coordinating a number of submissions, including:

- the Federal Inquiry into Red Imported Fire Ants in Australia;
- the Campaign to restore Lake Pedder; and
- in relation to the Notice of Intention to Grant a Lease by the NSW Government within the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area.

Michael will also be coordinating the CBC's input into the current review of the Tidbinbilla Plan of Management 2012.

Training and Safety continued to be of utmost importance to the Club, with activities such as river crossing training, snake awareness, First Aid and navigation courses. These activities would not have been possible without the involvement of numerous CBC leaders, some organising and others delivering the training. Our Training and Safety Officer, Diana Terry, continued to make sure that the CBC followed due processes to minimise both the number and severity of any incidences.

Another important role is that of Editor of our quarterly magazine, *it*. A big thank you to Meg McKone for continuing to provide her services in this regard and for continuing to produce a publication for our membership that we all enjoy reading! This is a big deadline-driven role, and Meg has done exceptionally well to continue to provide a publication packed with articles and beautiful photos, whilst continuing to lead several exciting multi-day trips for the Club.

Supporting Meg McKone in her role as Editor, has been Terrylea Reynolds as the CBC Publisher. Terrylea has also been making sure that we are all informed monthly of any important updates, as well as being that person who always jumps in to help and to try and solve whatever issue has arisen. Terrylea has been on the Committee for at least seven years now, and her previous roles included President and Walks Secretary. Terrylea's depth of knowledge on all CBC matters is second to none, and we will sorely miss her as she takes time out to concentrate on other very important matters, such as bushwalking!

Ana Vrancic has continued doing a stellar job as Social Secretary, organising our monthly get-togethers and suitable presenters. This is a much more time-intensive job than it may sound – it takes time and effort to formulate presentation ideas, approach presenters, and organise the events. Further, we have started to dabble with online presentations and online attendance by members. 2024 also saw Ana take on a lead role with what we now call our Social Media team.

Speaking of Social Media – there are a number of people involved that need to be thanked in this regard. Joe Carmona passed on the baton of Facebook Coordinator to SenFei Lam, due to his calling to explore the Caminos. The CBC then moved forward and ventured into the world of Instagram. A huge thank you to Cynthia Burton for assisting us with that process and providing her invaluable expertise, which she has endeavoured to pass on to both Ana Vrancic and Kirk Hone. Whilst Kirk and Lam have recently had to take a step back due to work commitments, Greg Buckman has taken a step forward to be a member of our Social Media team, providing a certain flair that only an accountant can. A big thank you to all the people who have been involved with our Facebook and Instagram posts – those whom I have specifically mentioned, as well as leaders for taking the time to write a post and select photos, having already spent time organising and leading an activity. These posts make what we do visible to other members and the general public, and help share the joy of Club membership and the great outdoors.

I am proud to say that last week our Facebook followers reached 7,310, surpassing the number of the NPA ACT followers! Ana has now set her sights on achieving as many followers as ACT Hikers – ACT Hikers has 7,900 followers. Not that we are being competitive! In terms of Instagram, we now have 164 followers. Our big challenge now is to make sure that we try and meet the expectations of our members and followers. We will take the results of our recent membership survey and use that data to help us plan and deliver our activities in the best way possible.

Finally, a big thank you to all our wonderful members. Without members, there is no club or sense of community.

A big thank you to the outgoing Committee of 2024, and best wishes to the incoming Committee of 2025.

Bring on 2025!

Noelia Pinto, President

Noelia and Greg display their new “A Woman’s Place is On Top” t-shirts on the summit of Mount Morgan. They were originally produced in 1978 to finance the first all female expedition to Annapurna 1, one of the world’s fourteen 8,000 metre+ peaks *Photo by Garry B.*



Report:

The Web Manager, on behalf of the Treasurer, presented budgeted and actual Income and Expenditure for 2023-2025, and the 2024-2025 Budget. The Club's total cash balances remained strong, with \$11,341 in the Operating Account at the end of June 2024.

Budgeted Receipts and Payments 2023-2025

Operating account

	2023-24 Budget	2023-24 Actual	2024-25 Budget
Opening Bank balance		\$21,312.00	\$11,341
Receipts			
Membership subscriptions	\$16,800	\$15,496.29	\$16,400
Bank Interest	\$0	\$0.00	\$0
Other revenue	\$500	\$1640.00	\$300
Total Receipts	\$17,300	\$17,136.29	\$16,700
Payments			
Meetings and Xmas party	\$2,000	\$1,945.43	\$2,000
Post box rental	\$250	\$274.00	\$300
Postage and stationery	\$320	\$0.00	\$100
Bushwalking NSW affiliation fee	\$3,500	\$2,888.60	\$3,300
Public liability insurance	\$2,500	\$1,995.88	\$2,400
Registrar general	\$50	\$0.00	\$50
Training and safety	\$500	\$2,340.00	\$1,500
Publicity	\$1,300	\$1,000.00	\$250
Other expenses (Greg Buckley, newsletter)	\$450	\$11,284.00	\$200
Recognition of leaders	\$650	\$622.80	\$700
Donations	\$1,000	\$0.00	\$0
Bilby and Web management	\$4,000	\$4,466.37	\$4,000
Repair and maintenance	\$100	\$0.00	\$100
Conservation	\$750	\$140.00	\$150
Honorarium for auditor	\$150	\$150.00	\$150
Volunteering Assoc. Membership	\$0	\$0.00	\$175
Capital Outlays			
New laptop (inc. speaker)	\$1,000	\$0.00	\$1,500
Canyoning gear	\$0	\$0.00	\$1,400
Total payments	\$18,520	\$27,107.08	\$18,275
Opening Balance + Receipts		\$38,448.29	\$28,041
Closing Bank Balance		\$11,341.21	\$9,766

Notes:

1. \$1095 was accidentally credited to our account. It was repaid to the member.
2. The committee reallocated underspent funds to Training and Safety to cover a first aid course.
3. \$10,000 was transferred into a new Term Deposit account.

Financial Motions:

Financial Statements 2023–2025

That the Club adopt the Income and Expenditure Statement for 2023–2025 and the Budget for 2024-2025 as presented at the meeting.

Moved: Michael Clisby

Seconded: Greg Buckman

Motion carried

Transport rate 2024-2025

That the transport rate for the 2024–2025 year be kept at 45c per kilometre (per car).

Moved: John Evans

Seconded: Frank McKone

Motion carried

Members' subscription 2024–2025

That the subscription for the 2024–2025 year remains at \$40 per member.

Moved: Meg McKone

Seconded: Ian Wright

Motion carried

Appointment of Reviewer

Motion: That Peta Bergmeier be appointed Honorary Reviewer in line with Clause 6.6 of the CBC Constitution.

Moved: Greg Buckman

Seconded: Garry Boxsell

Motion carried

The Year That Was

The AGM year that is - September 2023 to August 2024.

At the September 2023 AGM CBC had 420 members. This number went down during the final quarter of 2023, and the calendar year ended with 402 members. There's been a steady climb during 2024, and at the end of August CBC had 424 members.

In the 12 months to 31 August 2024 181 guests attended their first activity. Of these 88, or 49%, went on to join the club.

Current membership

There's been quite a sharp increase in membership since the end of August, and at the time of writing (we have 436 members. Whether this is a continuing trend is yet to be seen. The coming silly season and hot weather will no doubt have an impact.

New Members

Welcome to the following new members who joined since 13 August 2024, when I reported for the last newsletter:

Sally S

Dianne G

Tanya L

Sherenne G

Jennifer N

Andreea A

Melissa D

Christine H

Laura E

Phillip W

Garry C

Cathie B

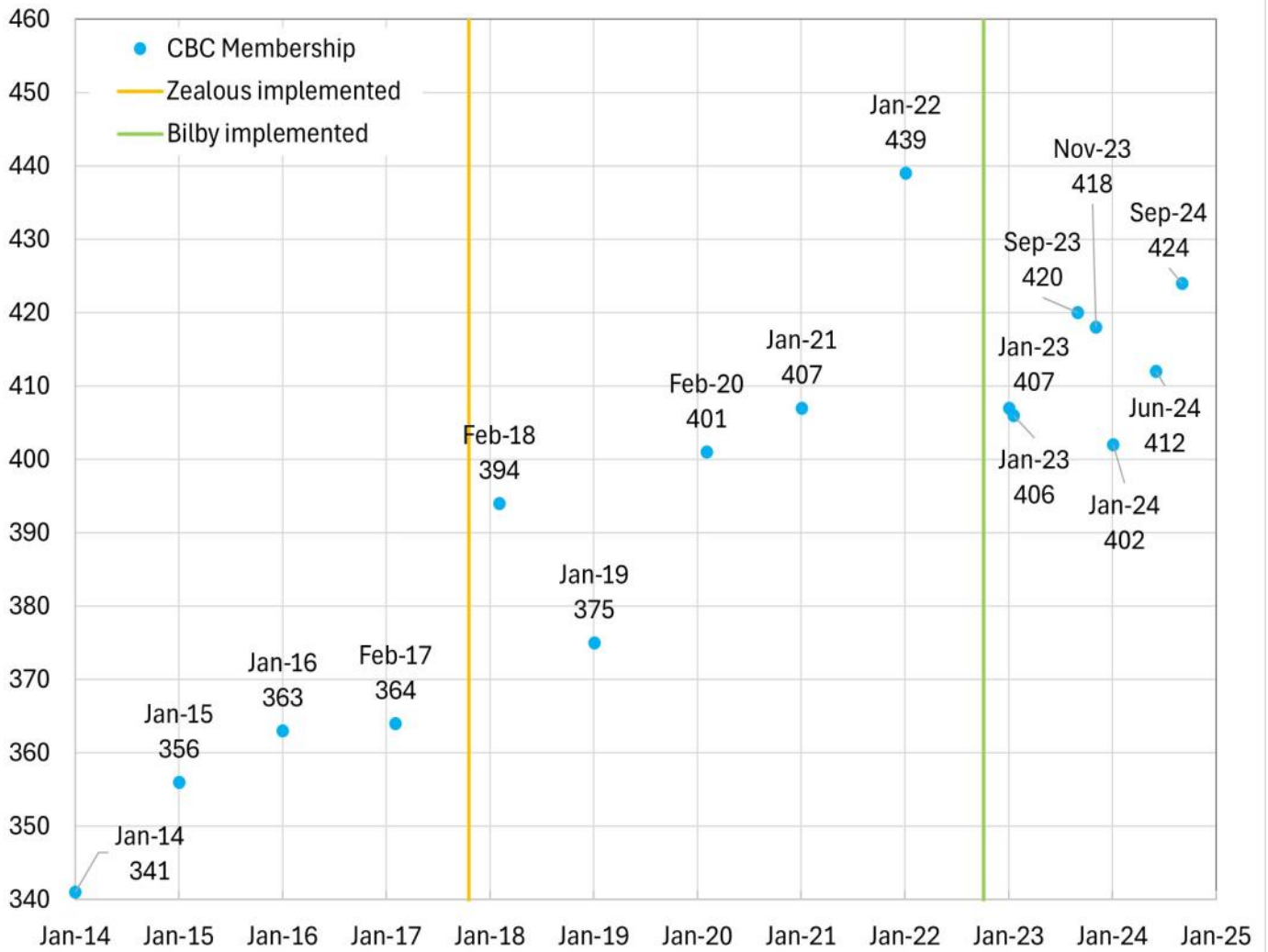
Liana S

Andrea Coombas, Membership Secretary

20 November 2024

CBC Membership 2014 to 2024

(some numbers from the Zealous era are inflated; most notably, Feb-18 and Jan-22)



Andrea Coombas

Membership Secretary

Your Privacy

CBC Privacy Policy Update

The [CBC Privacy Policy](#) has been updated to:

- add information about Bilby Privacy Settings and who can access your personal details in Bilby
- add links to the Bilby Privacy Policy, and
- update terminology to match current privacy legislation.

Please have a look at the updated policy on the CBC website [here](#), and contact us if you have any questions or feedback.

Can my Bilby Privacy Preferences affect my activity bookings?

Short answer is yes.

You control who sees what of your personal details via your [Privacy Preferences in Bilby](#). However, Activity Owners can decline your booking if they can't see your name, phone number (in case they need to contact you outside of Bilby, for example when there is a last-minute change to arrangements) or emergency contact.

To reduce the risk of your booking request not being accepted it's recommended you make at least your full name, contact, and emergency contact 'Visible to any activity owner'. 'Visible to admin officers only', means only a few committee members can see the information.

It's also worth noting that if your full name is not 'Visible to any active member' (which is perfectly acceptable, as there are many good reasons to keep your full name off the internet) your fellow walkers will only be able to see your Bilby username. You might want to make your username something you are happy to be called!

As always, any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to email

committee@canberrabushwalkingclub.org.

Andrea Coombas

Membership Secretary

20 November 2024

The 2023-24 Club year (1Sep23-31Aug24) included a **great year of activities**. There has been a high number of quality trips and other activities offered during the year. On some weekends, up to seven or eight activity choices have been available. Activity styles include something for everyone, a real smorgasbord. There were:

- Overseas expeditions
- Interstate multi-day trips and car camps
- Pack walks in the ACT and other regions
- Local day and part-day hikes, off-track in the bush and track walks
- Specialist activities such as family activities, canyoning, water-based activities, mountain bike riding, snowshoeing, geocaching
- Training activities such as river crossing, snake familiarisation, bird recognition, smart phone navigation. And the highly sort after Navigation Refresher Course
- Wednesday Walks. CBC leaders facilitate E-M and M-H Wednesday Walks on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month. Wednesday Walks are extremely popular, with the E-M walk sometimes attracting around 30 walkers. CBC introduced the occasional eXtraH Wednesday Walk.

My **special thanks** to the following members who support the delivery of Club activities:

- Garry Boxsell, our Assistant Walks Sec, particularly for organising First Aid Training
- John Danaro as the Wednesday Walks Coordinator for organising the CBC leaders roster and posting Wednesday Walks to Bilby
- Linda Groom for coordinating Family Activities. And Di McDean who readily took up the baton as the current Family Activities coordinator. And those who assist in this area
- Rob and Jenny Horsfield for navigation and bushcraft training. Their Navigation Refresher Course has run every year since 2003 (except for Covid years) and is solidly booked out for later in this year
- Jeff Bennetts who coordinated the daylight savings evening walks
- All those who contributed special skills in providing specialised training activities.

Communication initiatives:

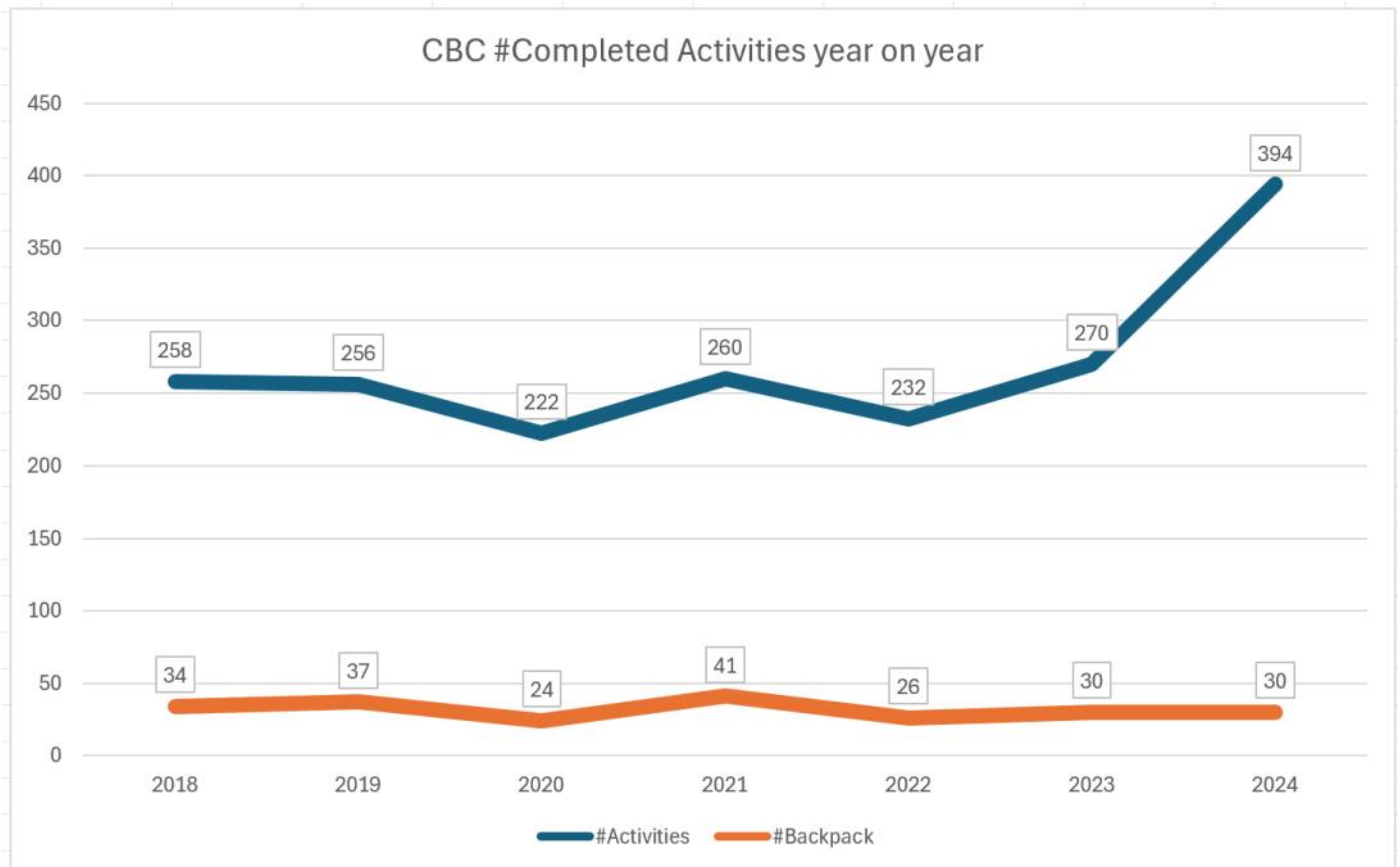
- Sunday evening email listing to all members of upcoming activities in the next fortnight. Thanks to Keith Thomas our Web Manager, for providing an easy extract of activities from Bilby
- Monthly email to walk leaders containing items of interest. Nothing secret – anyone can view them on the CBC website, just search for “Leaders Letters”
- A recent survey sent to leaders
- 2024 Training Plan on the CBC website > What's on > Training activities.

Bilby is our Club's activity and membership management system. It provides:

- Trip descriptions which allow participants to book on activities suitable for their capabilities and time constraints
- Privacy levels available to users, an important matter in the modern world
- Most leaders, members and guests are using Bilby effectively
- Constantly being enhanced with CBC suggestions taken into account.
“I found Bilby easy to use, I wish the systems we had at work were as easy to figure out” (new member and leader).

Metrics

- 394 activities this year, 46% more than in 2023
- These are completed activities, not including meetings, social activities and Wednesday Walks not led by CBC

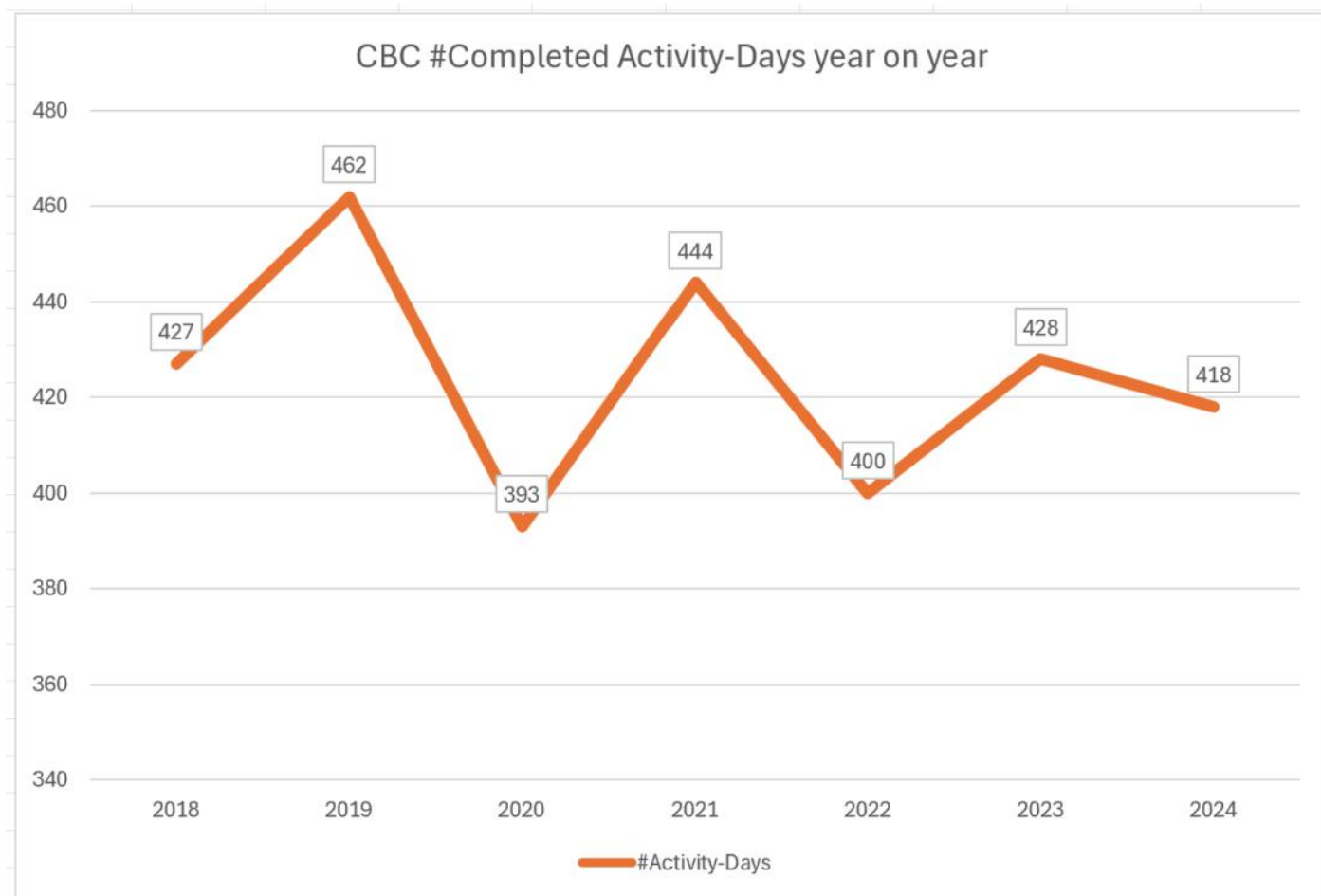


- The number of backpacking activities has not decreased.
- 418 activity-days this year, 2% decrease from 2023
- Reflects more half-day hikes. Does not include significant attendances on all Wednesday Walks, as these metrics are not captured in Bilby.

[Graph of Completed Activity Days on following page]

Walk Leader Appreciation

- Our Club has 91 registered leaders. 62 led activities this year
- The following 13 members completed leader training and were recognised as new leaders during the 2023-24 walking year:
Dave Abela, Michael Clisby, Chris Day, David Donovan, Henry Gardner, Laeli Hogan, Kirk Hone, Richard Hurley, Craig Lilley, Stephen Marchant, Di McDean, Beat Oppikofer, Jannette Schwarz.
- We thank the following who have led 8 or more activity-days in the past Club year 1Sep23–31Aug 24. (The noting of number of activities completed/number of activity-days is not for comparison but to show you the huge effort our volunteer leaders make):
Jenny Arnold (25/15); Monika Binder (6/14); David Briese (2/14); Garry Boxsell (5/12); John Danaro (8/11); Linda Groom (15/22); Jenny Horsfield (7/11); Rob Horsfield (23/16); Stephen Marchant (9/20); Meg McKone (4/18); Dick Morton (21/21); Salih Ozgul (30/25); Terrylea Reynolds (12/15); Andrew Struik (17/8); Ian Turland (2/31); Ian Wright (14/14)
John Evans (51/45).



2024 Greg Buckley Award

- [The Greg Buckley Award](#) was instituted in memory of Greg who died on a Club trip in Nepal in 1990. You can read about it, the Greg Buckley Award selection criteria, and a list of awardees on the CBC website
- The 2024 awardee joined the Club in 2007. They have booked on 183 trips and led 42. They have a particular interest in nature connectedness and emphasise that appreciation on their hikes and training activities
- Congratulations to the 2024 Greg Buckley awardee – **Salih Ozgul**.

Bilby: membership and activity management

- Bilby was launched in October 2022, and has now been in use for two years.
- Our experience overall has been positive, despite a few minor teething problems.
- Frequent updates have added many useful features.
- Other bushwalking clubs are considering subscribing to Bilby, which will increase its long-term viability.
- Bilby as a subscription service improves security and reliability and reduces committee workload.

Website Hosting

- We have changed our website host to a local hosting service – Canberra Web.
- The new hosts are expected to provide a more reliable and responsive service.
- This was effectively a cost-neutral exercise.
- The changeover was accomplished with only a short loss of service.

Website

Further work is being done on the website to make it more attractive and easier to navigate. This is a long-term project, which is expected to take at least the next 12 months.

Keith Thomas

Web Manager

Strong Walks Program

Thanks to our incredibly hard working volunteer leaders, the CBC activity program is very strong. August – 35 completed outdoor activities, September – 32, October – 55.

Leaders getting us overseas, interstate, out in the bush and on tracks were: Dave Abela, Jenny Arnold, Bruce Barnett, Jeff Bennetts, Monika Binder, Garry Boxsell, Greg Buckman, Cynthia Burton, David Campbell, Michael Clisby, Peter Conroy, Andrea Coombas, John Danaro, Chris Day, David Donovan, Gerald Dodgson, Janet Duncan, Henry Gardner, Philip Gatenby, Kirk Hone, Jenny Horsfield, Rob Horsfield, Richard Hurley, Stephen Joske, Dagmar Kelly, Diana Kirby, Stephen Marchant, Di McDean, Meg McKone, Quentin Moran, Dick Morton, Lauren Ogden, Beat Oppikofer, Sal Ozugul, Mark Peirce, Noelia Pinto, Terrylea Reynolds, Jannette Schwarz, Phillip Starr, Derek Synnott, Sandra Teffer, Keith Thomas, Ian Turland, Ana Vrancic, Ian Wright, John Evans.

New Leaders

Jannette Schwarz, David Campbell and Dagmar Kelly have stepped up to lead trips. You can get to know them [here](#) and [here](#). Better still, book on their walks!

Celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Declaration of Namadgi National Park

Three events were conducted for members of the public in conjunction with this celebration. Thank you to contributing leaders. It was great to have accompanying Rangers share their views and information.

Continuing the theme, Garry Boxsell coordinated 9 trips in a ‘Super Week of Walks’.

Rob and Jenny’s 2024 Navigation Refresher

This six session course is underway, booked to overflowing. Hopefully new walk leaders will emerge in return for the effort. An adjunct practical map and compass navigation exercise runs whenever requested – just ask me.

Daylight Savings Short Walks

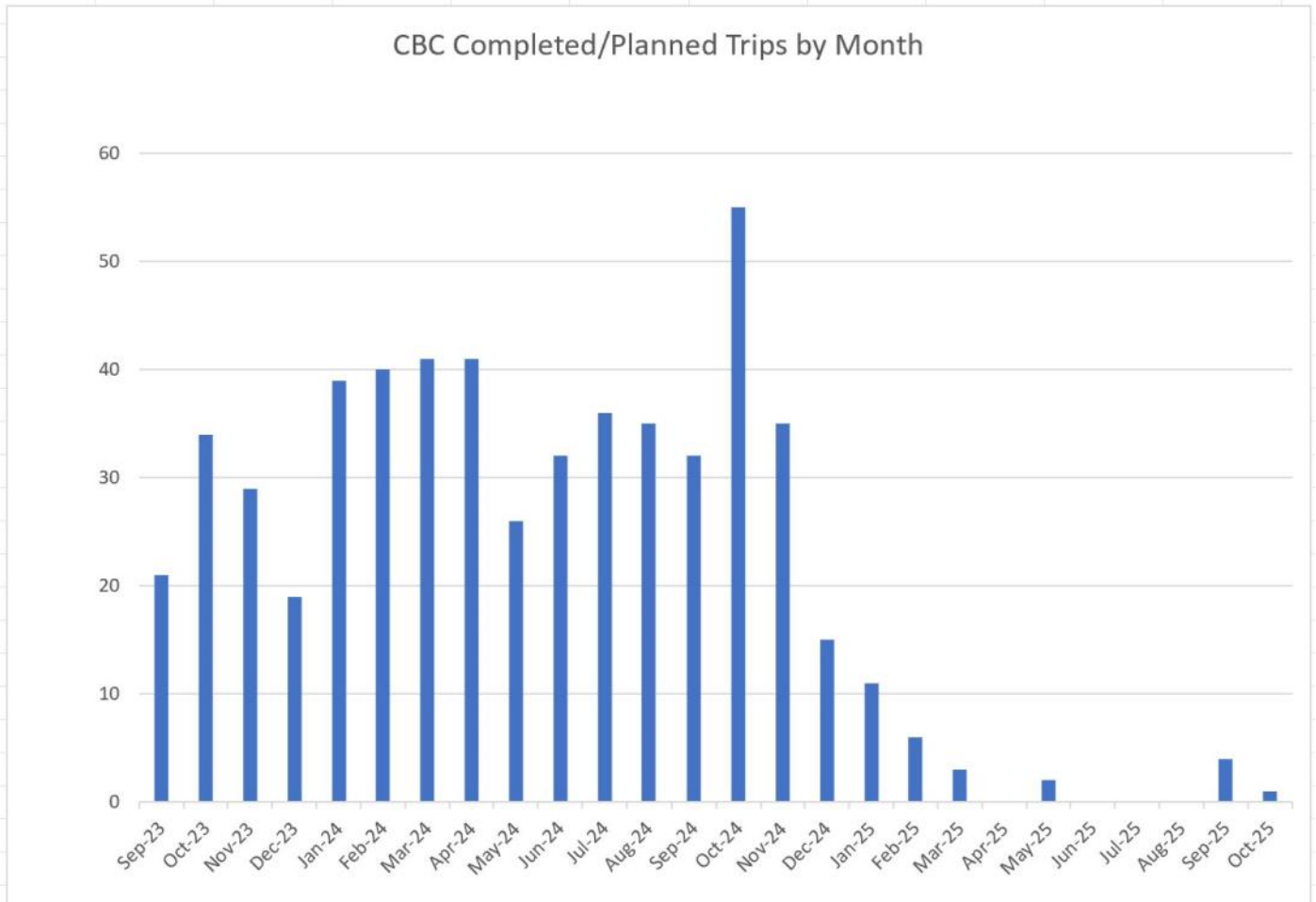
Thursday evening daylight savings walks are happening, coordinated by Sandra Teffer. A new series, ‘Get Fit’ short walks (the same walk repeated weekly over 4 weeks, as suggested in the recent member survey) is attracting participants. Thanks to Lena Ostrovskaya for coordinating.

Wishing you good walking!

The summer and holiday seasons are great opportunities for enjoying the outdoors. Start early in the day, go high or wet, don’t overdo it, stay hydrated and protected from the sun. Give snakes a wide berth.

Happy Christmas and have a fantastic New Year.

john evans
Walks Sec



Bushwalking has come a long way in community acceptance from the late Fifties when my father and I were walking back from Narrow Neck to Katoomba with our overnight packs and a carload of louts wound down their windows and yelled abuse at us—a not uncommon type of occurrence in those days.

With the increase in understanding of the pleasures and benefits, physical, social and emotional, of exercising outside in nature, bushwalking is no longer regarded as an activity for weirdos. I would guess that being liberated from our homes during and after Covid has played a big part in its rise in popularity. A walk on any of the tracks around Canberra (Black Mountain, Mount Tennent, Square Rock, Gibraltar Peak) won't be completed on your own, even during the week! Now that we hear that dementia is perhaps less likely in people who are physically fit, can we expect an influx of baby-boomers into walking clubs?

Enter Bilby, intent on keeping us mentally as well as physically agile! For leaders to download the participants list, they now go north east to *Options*, east to *Download CSV* (what is a CSV in this context?), then south to several options to select *Bilby Report Participants*. Then they progress to a spreadsheet with cells that are too small to hold all the information, so a moving of margins is required to print a meaningful list. Just when you're in a hurry to get ready for a walk! Good for training in patience, perhaps!

This month, with all the Annual Reports to publish, we've only had space for two trip reports, a timely warning on how we interpret our GPS data, and the updated CBC Privacy Policy. Please keep your contributions and walk reports coming, whether they be about day or longer trips.



CBC Party in the camping cave near Goochs Crater, Blue Mountains NP *photo by Peter Eland*

Stage Seven – The Final Stage: Wonboyn NSW to Mallacoota Victoria

Introduction:

With a short walk up a ramp onto the transfer boat at Mallacoota, David Brieese, with the support and participation of Pennie Brieese, completed the 660 km GSCW from Bundeena to Mallacoota for a second time. The first was when David and Pennie completed the walk in more adventurous times twenty years ago.

Also walking that ramp were Ian Turland and Jan and Philip Gatenby, who completed the GSCW for the first time. Several others completed one or several stages of the walk from February 2021 to May 2024. Overall there were 15 participants. The GSCW enjoyed marvellous logistical and transport support from Pennie Brieese and Marg Sharp, and fabulous co-ordination and leadership from David Brieese.

The seven stages of the GSCW were:

Stage 1: Sydney (Bundeena) - Gerroa

Stage 2: Gerroa - Shoalhaven Heads – Huskisson

Stage 3: Huskisson - South Durras

Stage 4: South Durras – Batemans Bay – Moruya Heads – Narooma

Stage 5: Narooma - Tathra

Stage 6: Tathra - Wonboyn

Stage 7: Wonboyn - Mallacoota

Location maps on page 31



Arrival Party, eastern end of Wonboyn Lake

L-R: Jacqui, Berno, Ian, Philip, David, Jan, Greg *photo by Lois Padgham*

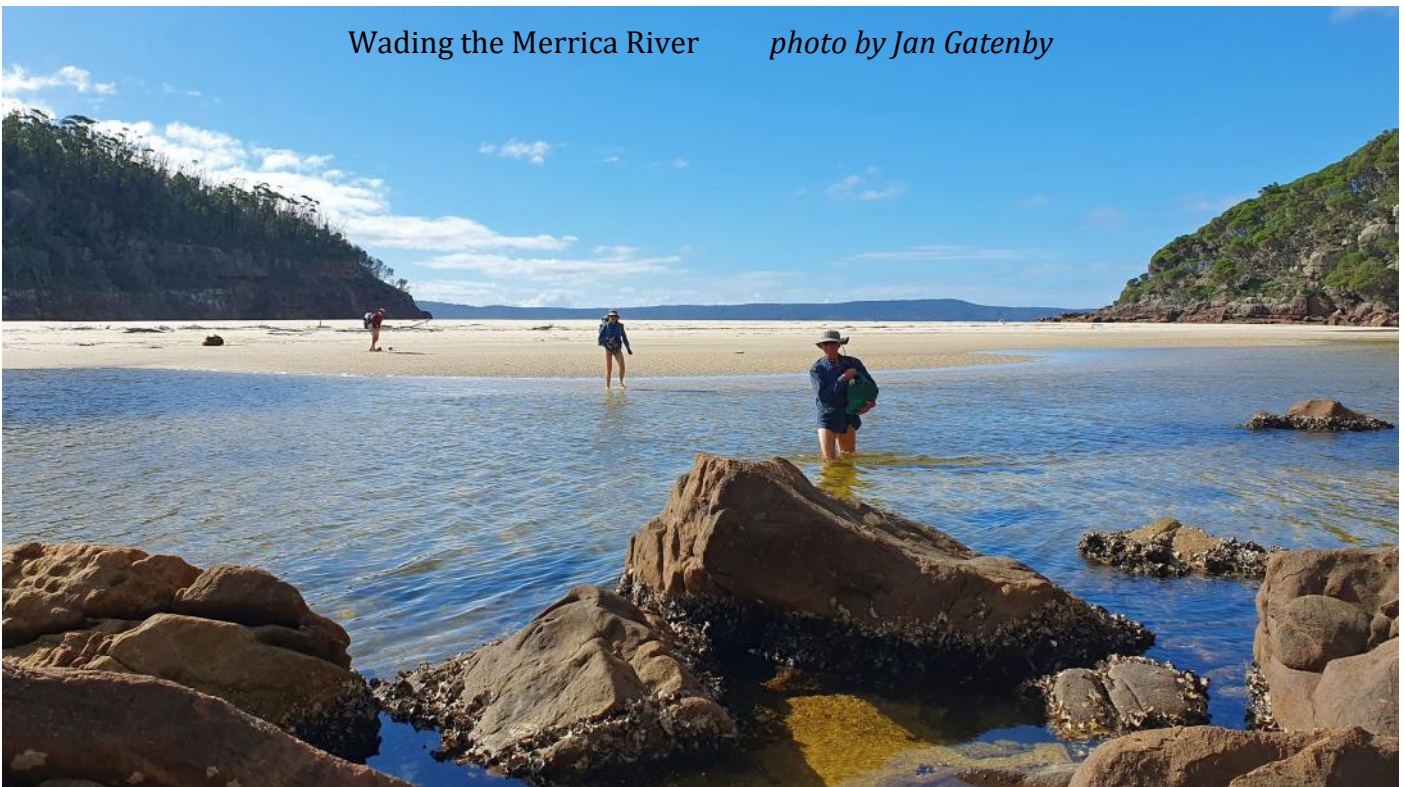
Stage Seven is the last stage, a 64 kilometre unassisted trek through the Nadgee Nature Reserve and Croajingolong National Park to Mallacoota, in Victoria.

Stage Seven traverses Yuin Country, more particularly Guyangal Yuin, or 'South-Yuin'. The Yuin population before 1788 between Cape Howe and Batemans Bay was estimated at 11,000. Elder Guboo Ted Thomas described the Yuin as 'sharing the one walkabout from Mallacoota to the Shoalhaven River'. Nadgee Nature Reserve and the adjoining Croajingolong National Park form one of only twelve World Biosphere areas in Australia. The Nadgee to Mallacoota Inlet section is identified as an 'Important Bird Area' by BirdLife International because it supports populations of bristlebirds as well as other significant fauna.

Day One:

Each stage commences where the last finished. And so it was. After two boat trips to ferry our party across 5 kms of Wonboyn Lake, the Stage 7 walking party arrived on the same beach that signalled the end of Stage 6. We had stayed overnight in a comfy cabin in the Wonboyn Caravan Park, so we were relaxed and clean.

To get to Mallacoota we needed full bushwalking packs and plenty of water. The first thing though, was to leave the burdensome packs where we had landed and make for the Wonboyn Beach, just over the dune from the Lake. Soon we'd be heading south via an inland route behind Wonboyn Beach to the Wonboyn



Hill headland. Over the headland was the Merrica River – our destination. A strategic water drop had been made the previous night at the Greenglade Picnic Area adjacent to the headland, using various wine bladders lent by David. His investment in the GSCW adventure had no ends!

The walk over the headland to the Merrica River is less than 2 kilometres, but with full packs, extra water, an overgrown path and a set of rises and falls, the great adventure was already feeling challenging. Joy

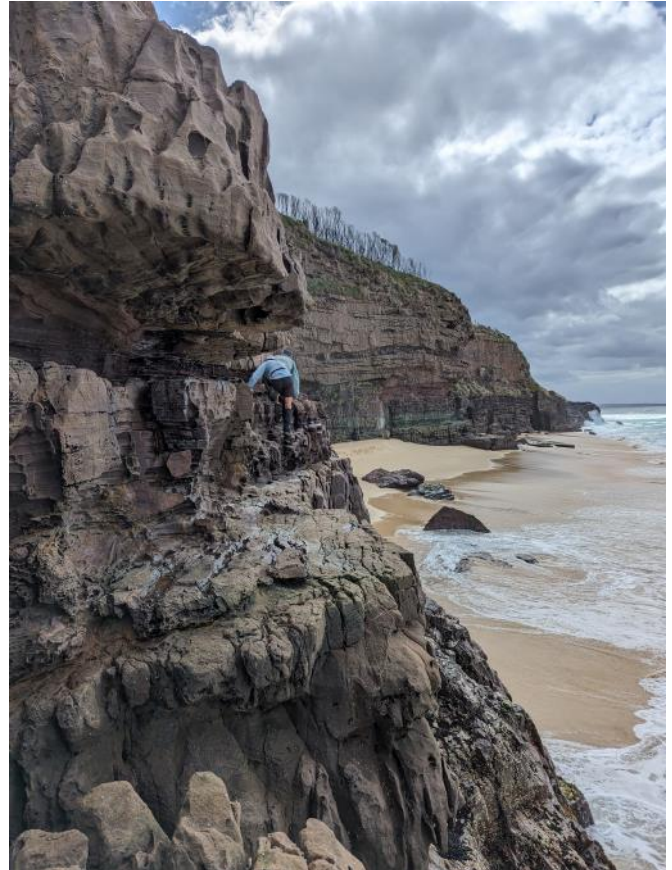
soon however returned with arrival at the magical Merrica River. The tide was slightly up, so we sat on the beach and enjoyed lunch and sea breezes. Eventually we reduced the formal walking attire to the bare essentials and waded across a narrow section of the inlet, then along a rocky edge to gain a wonderful camping area by the river. Large fish in sizable schools did traverses along the river bank. The Merrica River rises on the northern slopes of Mount Nadgee and runs for 19 kms. By the camp, the river expresses a range earthy hues - emerald, lime, ochre and cream. While the river continued to run, we set camp and slept.

Day Two:

The early light out to sea from the campground was glori-

Right: Sea Caves access *Jacqui Rosier*

Below: Newtons Beach Sea Caves *Bernard Morris*



ous and with energy revived, we donned our packs and water and set forth, passing the skull of a deer by an old campfire before we headed up to a fire trail. This was forest trail walking, uphill, hot and sweaty, and onwards. We diverted to the northern end of Newtons Beach to visit the magnificent sea caves. The tide was in so it was a slightly exposed rock scramble.



Little River Camp *photo by Greg Buckman*

We ventured on along the inland Wilderness Coast Walking Track covering a range of vegetation types and habitats, including fire affected coastal heathland, taller forest and open heathland. Some patches were quite overgrown, a case of pushing through and carefully maintaining navigation – thanks to Philip and David for their directional diligence.

In good light we came to Little Creek and campground, a beautiful site. Across the creek and over the dune, the pounding ocean beckoned for a

swim, although the creek was itself delightful. We set camp amongst the eucalypts, tea trees and sedges, lit a fire, made dinner and chatted under a bright moonlit night.

Day Three:

The NPWS has left a canoe at the campground for those in need of fresh water – paddle upstream until it is fresh enough to slake a thirst. We didn't opt for that as the Day One wine bladders still held sufficient water. Nonetheless, we made use of the canoe to cross Little Creek, Lois taking command of the various paddle strokes to carry willing passengers across the deep. A few opted for a wade closer to the outlet – so the canoe could be left on the northern campground side for future users.



This was an eventful day taking in Harrys Hut, Nadgee Beach and Nadgee Lake on the way to Bunyip Hole. This route took us inland and thus avoided a crossing of the Nadgee River Inlet. The walk towards Harrys Hut included traversing through thickets of enveloping tea tree and tall forest, and beyond towards Nadgee Lake, across open heathland. Nadgee River and Nadgee Lake (and Little Creek) are Pleistocene deepened valleys which are now sand filled. The Nadgee River rises on the southern slopes of Mt Nadgee and generally flows east over 21 kilometres, descending 319 metres. It has two tributaries, delightfully named Daylight and Wombat Creeks.



To get to Harrys Hut there was a narrow crossing of the upper Nadgee River – this involved a well-placed and prepared log that did however require some steady footing!

Harrys Hut is fairly well equipped for a remote hut – many chattels, metal framed beds for the brave, a cold shower space out the back for the even more brave, and a bizarre-looking toilet some distance from the hut. It has had regular use over the years, including by some well-regarded CSIRO and NPWS scientists studying Nadgee fire ecology, like Lunney, Recher, Fox and Catling. Apparently, Harrys Hut is the only standing

Top: Walking the Nadgee River log.....*photo by Jan Gatenby*

Bottom: Harrys Hut.....*photo by Jacqui Rosier*



A few of the many species of flora seen on the walk:

Tall forest tree near Nadgee Beach Bernard Morris; Flowers Jan and Philip Gatenby

structure of any historic interest in Nadgee. It is reported that originally the hut was used as a buggy shed, being adjacent to a former Homestead (Palmer's), and it is also said to have been rebuilt by fisherman Harry Redman, hence the name. The hut was extended by the NPWS and later used by the aforementioned researchers. It is close to the Nadgee River and in a wonderful tall forest setting. A sign in the Hut reads: *Remove nothing from the Park except Nourishment for the Soul; Consolation for the Heart; Inspiration for the Mind.* We stopped for all of these, and something to eat as well.

Following the respite at the hut and before the open heathlands, we passed through tall forest and made a brilliant group decision to divert temporarily to Nadgee Beach. This is an isolated gem and well worth

the diversion. Somewhat astonished at the beauty of landscapes and habitats, we ventured on to Nadgee Lake, whereupon we stopped for lunch by the immense lake, another extraordinary feature. We noticed several deer tracks along the lake edge – the presence of deer is regular throughout the reserve.

Tracking eastwards along the lake's edge we then crossed the expansive sand bar and trekked inland across low open heathland, flushing as we went two rare Ground Parrots. Pushing through some burnt taller heath vegetation towards the end, we emerged at the Bunyip Hole, a soak. Here we replenished

The northern side of Nadgee Lake, looking east towards the inlet *photo by Bernard Morris*



water bottles with coloured fresh water that was nonetheless sweet tasting. The water was adequate but not plentiful and the soak appeared affected by animal disturbance, likely deer. A short distance on and we arrived at the campground, set on the vegetated dunes of the most southerly sand beach in NSW.

Day Four:

This day we crossed the border into Victoria, encountering a distinct contrast between the vegetated dunes in NSW and the huge mobile and unvegetated dunes in Victoria. David noted the change in sand dune placement since his last GSCW in 2004 – 20 years can make a huge difference to landscapes dominated by aeolian dunes. The unvegetated dunes are thought to have resulted from an actively receding coastline and to be a natural evolutionary feature.

In the dunal areas at the southern end of the Bunyip Hole beach, we found better water seeping out of the dunes – we emptied and re-filled our containers. The traverse used in 2004 by David was now impenetrable regrowth, so we headed along the coastal edge and soon arrived at the border marker. These days this is a pile of rocks with a nearby tripod and flag (navigational markers). In 2004 the site had a fabulous rather phallic marker, all signs of which have since disappeared.

Just over the border to our surprise were the extensive unvegetated dunal systems which created enthusiasm for all, and for me, recollections of Patrick White's 'Voss', trudging across what seemed (at least temporarily) like immense landscapes. It was quite entrancing. On the way we encountered a lone scorpion on a high dune and water seepages on the lower dunes. After making a high point, we headed back down to the beach and commenced a long walk past Cape Howe, the SS Iron Prince ship wreck, Lake Wau Wauka and Gabo Island to make the Lake Barracoota campsite by late afternoon. The Iron Prince ran



aground in 1923 on the way from Devonport to Newcastle carrying limestone. Some of its remains can be seen close to the shoreline.

The party's bird specialist, Philip, photographed many shore birds along the way, including migratory Red-necked Stints over-wintering in Australia.

Red-necked Stints (*Calidris ruficollis*) on the beach (not to be confused with Sanderling (*Calidris alba*)) *Philip Gatenby*

Red-necked Stints are small migratory waders. At 13-16 cm in length and 25 grams in weight, they are the smallest shorebird in Australia. The species can be found along most of the Australian coastline with large densities on the Victorian and Tasmanian coasts. Red-necked Stints breed in Siberia and sporadically in north and west Alaska. It is a common migrant through Japan, the Korean Peninsula, China, Taiwan, Hong



Lake Barracoota, the largest coastal freshwater lake in Victoria

photo by Lois Padgham



An immense landscape of sand dunes dwarfs the walkers *photo by Jan Gatenby*

Kong, Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines and West Micronesia. It spends winter in Australasia, mostly in Australia, with smaller numbers in New Guinea and New Zealand. Small numbers are known to spend winter in east India, the Gulf of Thailand, the Malay Peninsula and Indonesia. During the non-breeding season over 80% of the global population (260,000) resides in Australia.

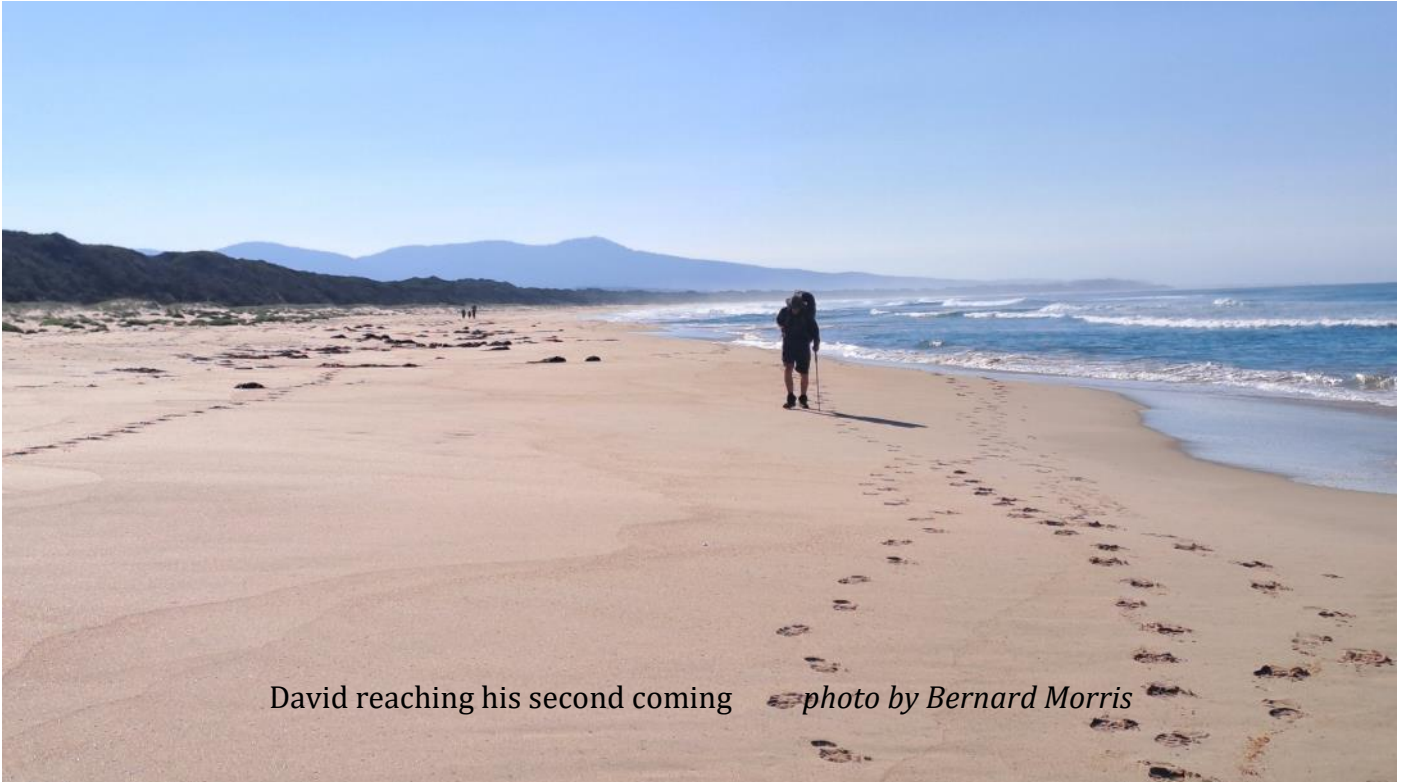
To access Lake Barracoota there is a site marker on the dune front (opposite Tullaburga Island), then a north-westerly foot track over the dunes, involving about 600 metres of dunal sands with thick vegetation patches.

Lake Barracoota is remarkable. It is a natural permanent freshwater lake up to 240 hectares in size – the largest freshwater coastal lake in Victoria. Sand continues to spill into the lake along the southern shore. We set up camp in a secluded site adjacent to the lake, swam, and enjoyed a fire on the beach. A Rakali (Water Rat) came by, completely unperturbed by our presence.

Day 5:

The last day. It was so serene to awaken by the lake edge. Today was the beach walk to the boat pick up point, about eight kms away. On the way we came across a sizable 'Paper Nautilus' shell. Profoundly (and disturbingly) I later discovered an 11cm one was for sale on ebay for \$450! We trudged on...

This was a notable time. David Briese, ably assisted and supported by Pennie who also did the GSCW with him in 2004, was about to complete the walk for the second time. Accompanying him were three first timers – Ian Turland and Jan and Philip Gatenby



David reaching his second coming *photo by Bernard Morris*

We all readily reached the ferry pick-up point, and soon enough the ferry arrived with barefooted Dale at the helm. We cruised around Goat and Horse islands, witnessing a seal along the way. Once re-landed, we headed straight for a coffee van. Then the bus (also with Dale) back to Wonboyn.

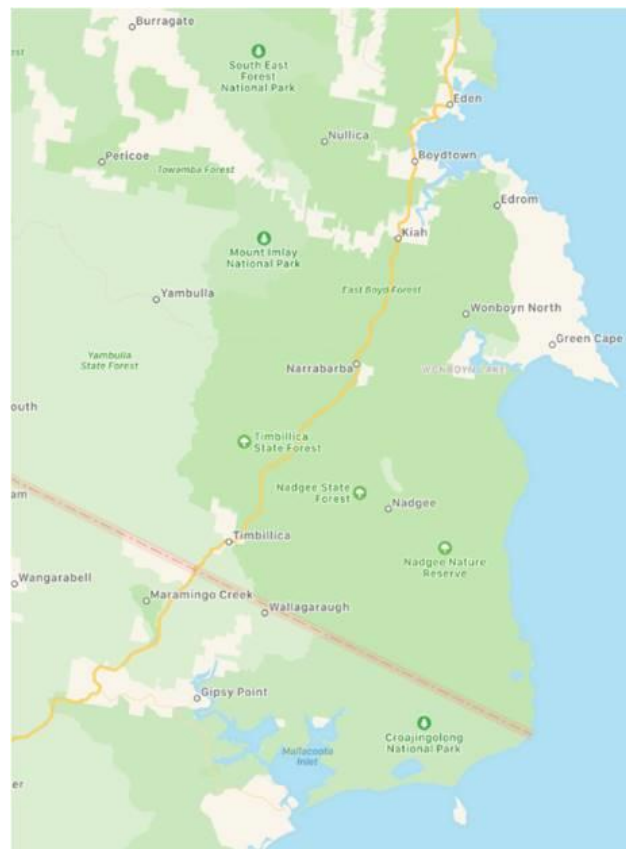
So it was, without fuss and with coffee in hand, the GSCW ended. About 660 kms of sheer beauty, joy and adventure. Thanks to all the walking friends, and particularly to the organisers and supporters, David, Pennie and Marg. Apparently David isn't so keen on a third time?

Notes:

- A Great South Coast Walk 'All Stages' table is available. This details each stage, all days, dates, accommodation, crossings, distances etc. If a copy is wanted of this, please contact Bernard Morris at wozboz@bigpond.net.au
- If you'd like to try all or part of the GSCW for yourself, have a look at:
<https://greatsouthcoastwalk.net/>



Researchgate.com Nadgee Map



Nadgee NR and Croajingolong NP

Awe *photo by Salih Ozgul*



Training and Safety Officer: Bio

We know that being in nature is good for us, physically, emotionally and mentally. My philosophy when it comes to bushwalking is simple. For me a good bushwalk is one that is undertaken safely, it is immersive i.e., it encourages a more intimate connection with nature and is an enjoyable and fulfilling experience. Thus, it will not come as a surprise to members that when I have had the pleasure of sharing walks with others in the role as Training and Safety Officer, the question that is at the top of my mind is how might we be able to support members in developing/enhancing their skills, confidence and resources to be able to undertake safe, immersive and enjoyable bushwalks that encourage a deep connection and caring for country while sharing a positive experience with fellow hikers. I would be pleased to receive suggestions re how we may be able to make our activities safe for all and training/educational activities that members will enjoy and benefit from. I would love to hear from and be deeply grateful to members who would be willing to share their knowledge/expertise with others by facilitating training activities. So please get in touch at training@canberrabuswalkingclub.org. Keep well and happy trails. Sal.

The Highlands of Central Queensland: Carnarvon Station Reserve and Mount Moffatt

Meg McKone

Joint CBC and CMW trip, 25 August – 7 September, 2024

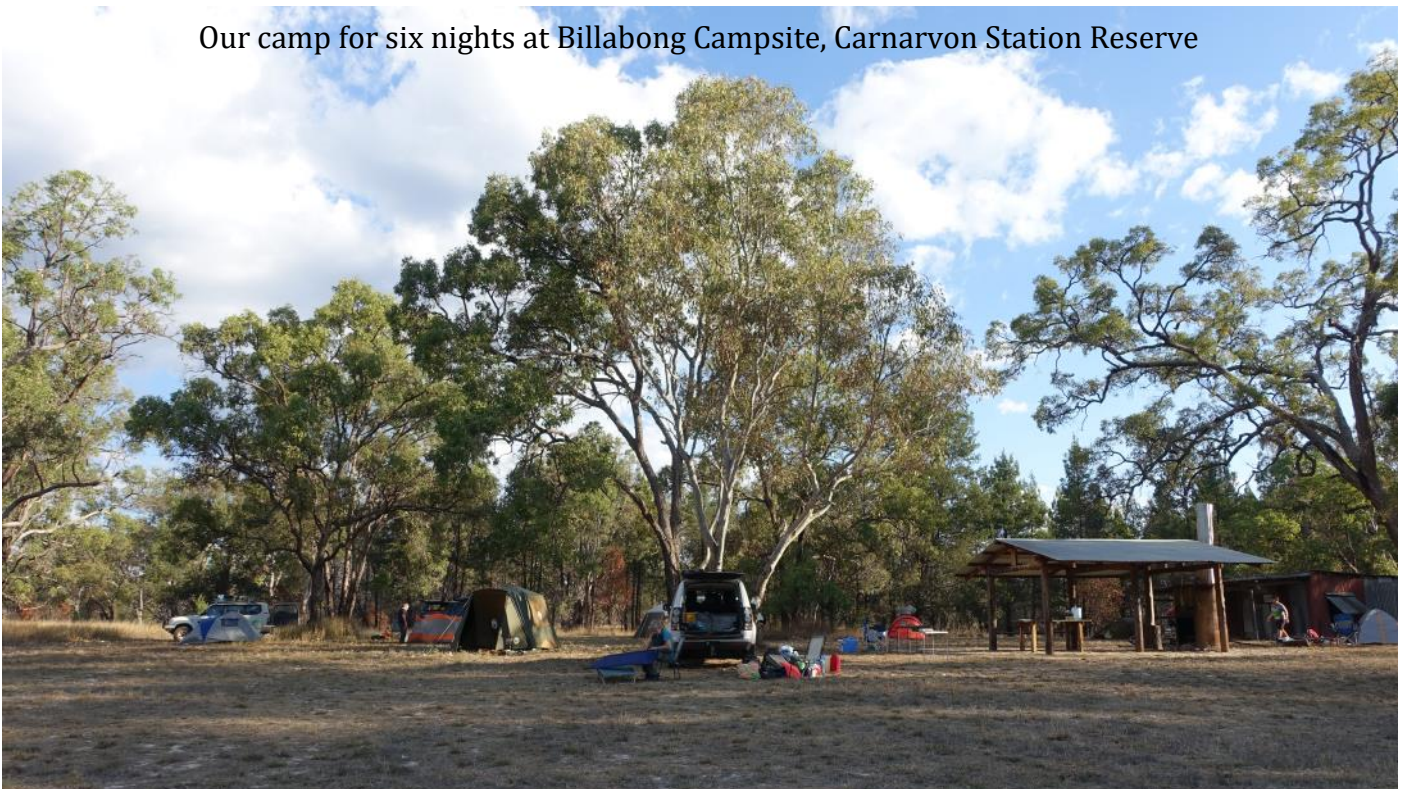
Participants: *Meg McKone (leader, CBC and CMW), Frank McKone (CBC and CMW), Jeff Howard (CMW), Sara Maywood (CMW), Geoff Moxon (CMW), Agnieszka Moxon (CMW), Quentin Moran (CBC), David Springthorpe (CMW), Peter Oliver (CMW), Wahyu Sutiyono (CBC).*

West of Bundaberg, the Great Dividing Range swerves sharply west then north, rising to heights of over 1200 metres and forming the watershed between the headwaters of the Darling and Fitzroy Rivers. Around 27 million years ago, the Buckland volcano erupted, covering ancient beds of sandstone with thick layers of basalt. As the basalt eroded, deep gorges were formed, some narrow, others broad, edged with spectacular cliffs and evocative rock formations. In this east meets west, north meets south land, a huge variety of flora and fauna have found their home. Bit by bit over the past 90 years, much of this area has been preserved in Carnarvon National Park with its various sections, the main ones being Carnarvon Gorge, Ka Ka Mundi, Salvator Rosa and Mount Moffatt. Carnarvon Station Reserve, one of Bush Heritage Australia's conservation properties, snuggles up between Ka Ka Mundi and Mt Moffatt, providing extra connectivity for native plants and animals over a large area.

CARNARVON STATION RESERVE (CSR):

There's nothing like a spot of car trouble on a long trip to keep the adrenalin pumping. Our ungrateful Prado, despite lots of recent and highly expensive TLC from our local mechanics, was refusing to start at irregular intervals, and two of Geoff's tyres inexplicably blew out their valves. Undeterred, we managed to leave Augathella only a couple of hours late and drove the slow 203 kilometres over dirt roads that were better than expected to the Reserve. After blasting the cars with bore water at the wash down to remove any weed seeds, we drove on to set up camp at the Billabong Campsite, a haven for birds and the only camping allowed in the Reserve.

Our camp for six nights at Billabong Campsite, Carnarvon Station Reserve



CSR stretches over 50 kilometres NE to SW along the valley of Channin Creek, and is roughly 20 kilometres wide. Broad grasslands are flanked by a maze of hills (they'd be a nightmare to get lost in), with their tributary valleys opening up into higher plains. Much of the hilly country is covered in beautiful woodlands supporting a huge variety of trees. In the west and north are sandstone cliffs, while in the east the high country still has a thick, cliffed spine of basalt. The CSR managers, in cooperation with scientists and the Traditional Owners, the Bidjara People, are doing a wonderful job in re-establishing the original flora and fauna since this pastoral and crop-growing station was acquired in 2001.



Acacias and Cycads in Ironbark woodland



Woodland with native grasses



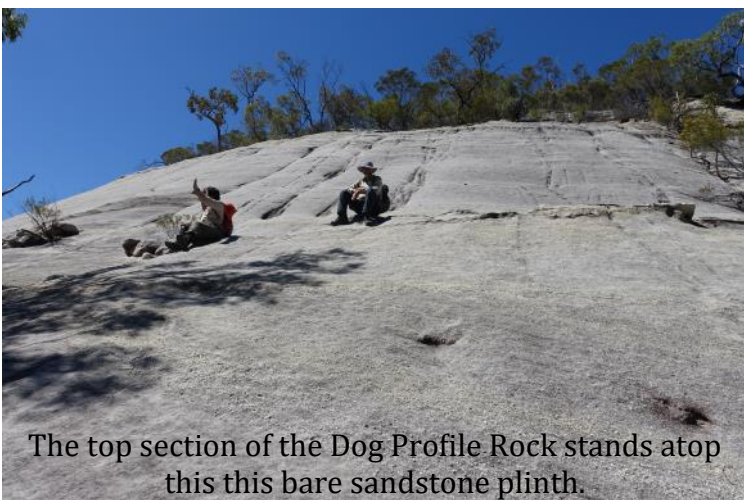
The White Stallion, a remnant spire of sandstone

Although shortly before we arrived the highlands had been in the grip of frost, we hit a heat-wave. But we still managed to do some bushwalking in 35 degree heat. During several trips to Ka Ka Mundi I'd been intrigued by a bent finger of rock on the eastern horizon which had eluded all attempts to reach it due to horrendous scrub and hidden, crumbly cliffs. Then a Ranger friend from Qld (Felicity, now a CBC member) told me it was called the White Stallion, and a road in CSR ran close by it, so we visited it on my 2020 trip. On the way we found an Aboriginal stone quarry (one of others in the region), where the basalt flow has metamorphosed the soft underlying sandstone to a hard quartzite suitable for making tools. The Stallion lies part way down a valley at the foot of a spur, an erosional remnant that can't last much longer. Though impossible to climb, it sits on a rocky plinth that allows circumnavigation with a clear view west to Cave Hill and Mt Mooloolong, two of the major peaks of Ka Ka Mundi Section.

The Dog Profile Rock is actually in Ka Ka Mundi Section, though we reached it from CSR.



A few days later, we followed the cliff towards another isolated sandstone peak, unnamed, as far as I can ascertain. I've reached its base from Ka Ka Mundi, from where it looked like a spire, whereas from the south it has the appearance of a terrier's profile. After we staggered along the ridge through thick grass that hid lumps of basalt, Jeff found a way through the cliffline. We were descending steeply to a creek which seemed to flow in the right direction, when we came upon – a track! Quite a shock when you think you're exploring uncharted territory. We knew not whence it came (I now suspect Den Yards in KKM) or where it was going, so after some discussion we decided to continue down to the creek. A little further on we hit the track again, so took the easy option and followed it, fortunately to the base of the Dog Profile Rock, though it was a bit vague in places.



The top section of the Dog Profile Rock stands atop this this bare sandstone plinth.

Like many big outcrops in this region, the Rock rose up from a steep, smooth sandstone plinth. We tried walking clockwise around the base and came to an impassable drop, so headed anti-clockwise to lunch in the shade. I suspect it would be possible to find a route up to the top of the plinth and do the circumnavigation from there, but by now we were wilting in the heat and needed to nut out a sensible way to return. So instead of climbing back up through the cliffline, we followed its base south through pleasant open woodland for a few kilometres



Drink stop beneath the Dog Profile Rock

to where we would surely meet the road? The road was long in coming, and finally Quentin took a bearing on his device and declared the cars were less than 500 metres away to the west. We reached them none too soon, before any of us succumbed to heat exhaustion.

At the end of most days, we'd drive back to one of the bores to collect water for washing – we'd had to bring in all our own drinking water. Some of us would get others to give them a blast from the hose, while some took their water for a more discreet wash back at camp. Then we'd have a quiet time checking out the birds followed by drinks and nibbles, dinner, fiery sunsets and starry nights. It was too hot to bother with lighting the fire.

In the heat, we were happy to intersperse our walks with drives, which offer the main way of exploring CSR and require high clearance 4WDs. An offshoot of The Bull Flat Tour took us to The Paint Pots (pictured below) where a bend in the creek has revealed a cliff of multi-coloured ochres of white, yellow,



orange, brown and purple, mined, used and traded by the Bidjara people. They still take their young people there to grind and use the soft ochre for traditional purposes. We passed through forests of Coolabahs and Ironbarks underpinned with lush grass and glowing golden Acacias. I was surprised to see how sparse the Coolabahs' canopies were. Perhaps there is an irony in the poor old swagman's camp by a billabong under the "shade" of a Coolabah tree! We went searching for Myall Spring and found cascades, a pool and flowing water in a gully surrounded by vine thickets, one of the threatened ecological communities on the Reserve, preserved by a regime of cool burning over a carefully planned timetable in conjunction with the Bidjara people to prevent their destruction by wildfire.

The Lorikeet Springs Tour took us into the high country, with the darkly treed basalt plateaus above us reaching 1200 metres. On my 2020 trip we'd climbed up to the tops and walked along part of the Bidjara Track, used by the local people for thousands of years, but on this trip a strange lethargy had overtaken us, for which we blamed the heat. In parts the Zamia Palms (*Macrozamia moorei*) were prominent, reaching heights of 11 metres. Since they grow approximately one centimetre per year, some of them could be about 1000 years old. Their bright orange seeds were an important food source for the Aboriginal people, after being ground into flour and soaked in running water to remove the toxins. One wonders whether people also played a role in spreading the seeds around to increase their food supply.



Clockwise from main: Driving down the Jump-up on The Bull Flat Tour, with a tall Cycad on the right;
One of the springs in the hills; Bull Flat seen from the top of the Jump-up



Aboriginal scar tree



Approaching The Police Barracks

On our final day we did The Police Barracks Tour which covered some very interesting country. I stopped to photograph a particularly outstanding Ironbark and found that a huge slab of bark, about three metres long, had been cut out of the trunk, with footholds on the opposite side – obviously an Aboriginal scar. After dropping steeply down a gully in the sandstone escarpment, the country opened up to plains along the banks of Channin Creek, with The Police Barracks, a large, squarish sandstone outcrop, about half a kilometre from the road. It got its name from its use by police as a lookout point as they searched for the give-away smoke of cattle duffers and bushrangers. We waded through high grass, across the dry creek and through low shrubbery to reach its base. Though the summit outcrop was unclimbable, we gained excellent views of the countryside from beneath the cliffs for miles around. We continued the tour through magnificent forests of Eucalypts, Angophoras and Budgeroo trees, passing a grove of elegant *Xanthorrhoea johnsonii* (Grass Trees) along the way.

We'd seen lots of birds, including currawongs, butcher birds, cuckoo shrikes, kookaburras, squatter pigeons, parrots, finches and a bustard and experienced a long and melodious dawn chorus every morning. Animals included kangaroos and wallabies, a whole lot of small nocturnal creatures which we didn't spot, and one lone feral horse. Though horses used to be a serious problem throughout the Carnarvon Ranges, many years of culling has cut their numbers almost to zero. The total number of tree species and genera was remarkable but though the wattles were either blooming or a bit past their prime, we hadn't seen as many spring flowers as I'd hope for. Now, after, six nights in this lovely place, it was time to go. We drove out to Augathella, where Frank and I picked up our caravan while Jeff and Sara returned their hired 4WD to Charleville. The next day, after shopping in Roma, we drove to Injune in preparation for our trip to Mount Moffatt.

MOUNT MOFFATT SECTION of CARNARVON NP:



View of Mount Moffatt from near the Rotary Shelter Shed

The road into Mt Moffatt was half narrow tar, half dirt, and was in far worse condition than the road to CSR, though not as far. We set up camp for four nights at West Branch Camping Area, which is on the Great Carnarvon Walk route and a bit out of the way for vehicular traffic, so there were not many other people there. It's a pretty spot – large, treed and grassy, with tap water but no pools in the river, so we didn't have many birds - except for the father emu who brought his beautiful striped chicks around. The first morning he had seven, but only four next time, so either three had met a dire fate or it was another family.



The Looking Glass



The Chimneys

Mt Moffatt Section is famed for its spectacular rock formations, most of which are on the route of a very pleasant walking track which can easily be done in a day. After a short walk to the elephant-skinned Cathedral, we set off for The Chimneys (three tall sandstone pillars), then on to the Tombs. Here the local Aboriginal people wrapped their dead in the bark of the beautiful, tall Budgeroo trees which grow prolifically in the area, tied them in

possum skins and placed them in natural hollows in the rock; sadly, all have been stolen. However, there is a boardwalk which allows the visitor to observe the ochre stencils on a section of overhang.

We moved on a respectful distance to have lunch in a forest of tall, rosy-barked Angophoras (*A. leiocarpa*). It was serenely restful to lie back and admire the sparkling, sun-tipped leaves silhouetted against the bluest of blue skies. On again, following an unobtrusive track through beautiful grassy woodland to The



Clockwise from main: Approaching The Tombs; Aboriginal stencils at The Tombs;
Under an Angophora



Marlong Arch and Marlong Plain



Looking Glass (also called The Duchess), a large rock with a big hole through its top level, then over the sandy bed of the Maranoa and back to the cars. We drove on to perhaps the most spectacular formation of all, the Marlong Arch, which is big enough for people to have driven cars through it back in the day. That morning we had been told by a group of Aboriginal elders taking their young people around their significant sites that there was a birthing area on the far side, so we had a close a look and found women's genitalia carved into the soft sandstone - happily celebrating their births, no doubt.

We ended a full day by visiting Marlong Plain, a serene, broad, grassy valley surrounded by low, darkly wooded hills and white cliffs.



In the upland Mahogany Forest

So far, we'd only visited the lower lands of Mt Moffatt Section, so next day we drove to the heights in the north at Top Shelter Shed and beyond, parts of which are along the top of The Great Divide. The views are tremendous – north to the basalt cliffs, gorges and plateaus of the Buckland Tableland, south to the conical peak of Mt Moffatt itself and south west across the lower areas of the



Above: Views from the Great Dividing Range:
Left: South to Mount Moffatt; Right: North to the Buckland Tableland

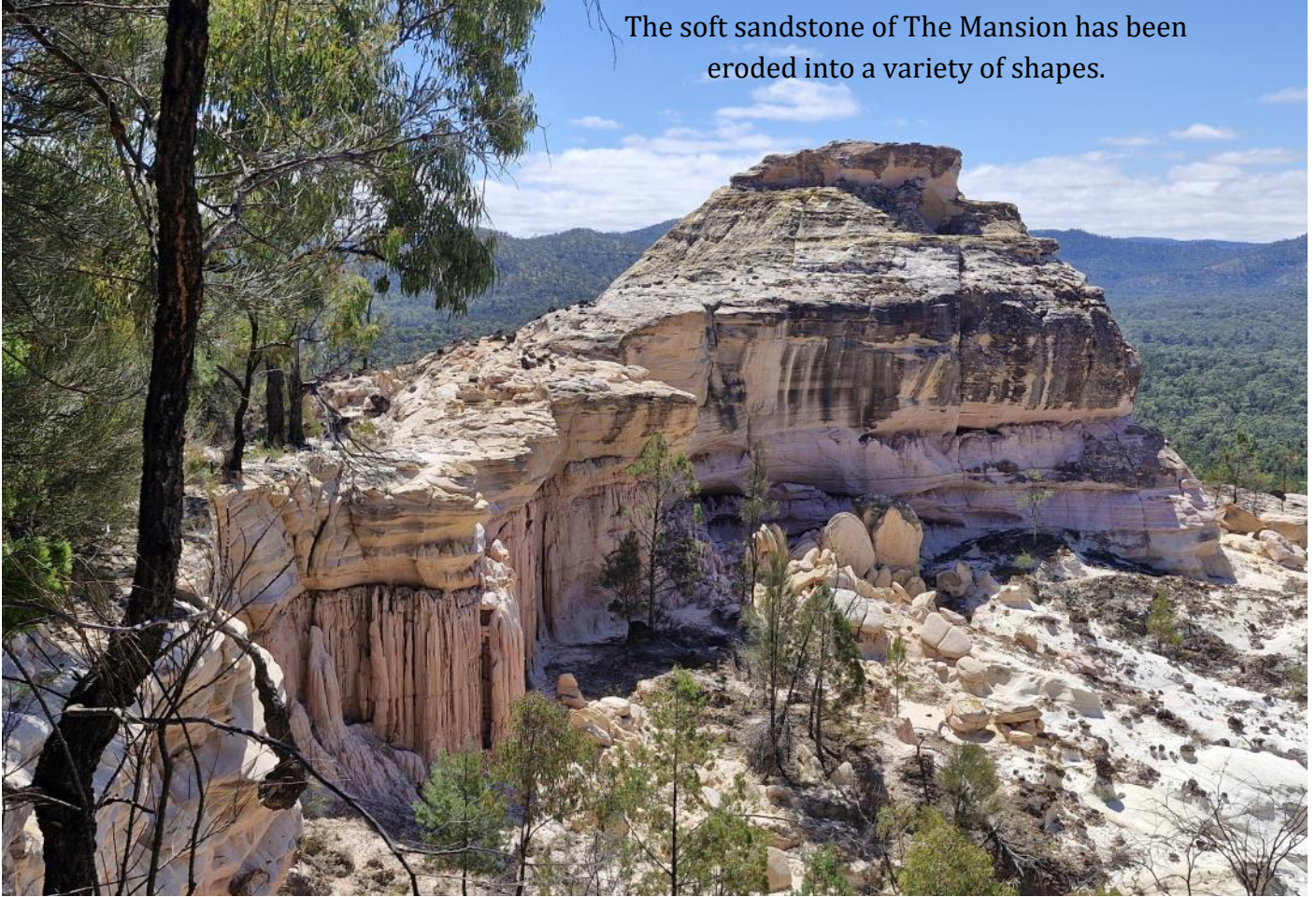
Below: Flowers form a colourful carpet in the Mahogany Forest:
Left: Hardenbergia; Right: Swainsona



Section. The 1200 metre contour marks the crowning glory of the Mahogany Forest, where these tall, rough barked Eucalypts rise up from a tangle of pink Swainsonas, purple Hardenbergias and white Clematis. We passed a sign advising us of the headwaters of Carnarvon Creek, an innocent little gully which a few kilometres further on has dug its way into a spectacular gorge.

It's uplifting to leave the best till last – an off-track walk to The Mansion, a multi-hued sandstone outcrop on a northern spur of basalt-topped Mt Moffatt. After driving to Top Moffatt Camp, a lovely remote, flat, grassy, treed site on the banks of the West Branch of the Maranoa, we climbed up to the eastern shoulder of the mountain then contoured around until we could drop down a spur to The Mansion. Here an arc of the soft pink, white and ochre sandstone, left bare by its recently eroded cap of basalt, has been carved out of the spur leaving delicate columns, tree root patterns and a variety of other shapes which are better seen than described. It has a WOW! factor that has to be seen to be believed. No one was keen to return over the steep, cliffy top section of the mountain, so we dropped down on the northern side and after about two kilometres heading east through the bush, crossed the river, which was actually flowing in places, and hit the management trail back to the cars.

The soft sandstone of The Mansion has been eroded into a variety of shapes.





Returning to the cars at Top Moffatt camp, on the eastern side of Mount Moffatt

On the way home some of us called into Timmallallie N.P. near Coonabarabran for the spring flowers, which didn't disappoint, and two nights in the Warrumbungles. It was a good way to break up the long drive home. We'd had a most enjoyable trip in a beautiful part of Australia which is full of possibilities and rewards for bushwalkers of all abilities.

All photos by Meg McKone



Intro

Many of us in the Canberra Bushwalking Club love our maps. Being able to read them, especially topographic ones that show contours and heights as well as surface features, gives us a reasonably accurate means of determining where we are as we walk through the bush. Combined with a compass and some map-reading skills, we are able to navigate our way to desirable locations and back again.

Changes to the way that map-makers present their maps have caused some confusion over the past forty years or so. This article hopes to throw some light on why the changes were necessary, and how they affect us as bushwalkers.

History

The first thing we need to realise is that **all maps are based on some conventionally accepted datum**. The earth is not a perfect sphere, and is slightly squashed in at the poles. It has been described as slightly pear-shaped. The mathematical figure that best represents it is an **ellipsoid**. Prior to the introduction of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technologies in the 1980s and 90s, each country in the world adopted a datum and an ellipsoid that best fitted the shape of the earth **within its own jurisdiction**. But there was no spatial correctness between adjoining jurisdictions. A coordinate in Australia was not spatially correct in relation to a coordinate in Asia, or Europe.

In 1966, Australian geodesists (scientists who study the shape of the earth) after many years of field observations, calculations and discussion, adopted the datum **AGD66 (Australian Geodetic Datum 1966)** for Latitudes and Longitudes, and soon after that they established the Level Datum **AHD (Australian Height Datum)** for expressing heights above sea-level.

But the next step in map-making, once every point is represented by a Lat and Long on the adopted curved ellipsoid surface, is to project those values onto a flat surface (the map). Most projections represent these points on a surface at sea-level, and the resulting coordinates of these points are often expressed as **Eastings and Northings**. The coordinate system adopted here was called **AMG (Australian Map Grid)**. Having Eastings and Northings helps us determine distances on the map, as metres are much easier to deal with in the field than Lats and Longs, although the latter still appear as tick marks on the edges of the map.

But when decision makers realised GPS was the way of the future, mapping had to make some major adjustments.

Today

Many people jumped at the chance to obtain a hand-held GPS unit when they became available. How fantastic! You could find out exactly where you were on the map without any map-reading skills. No more guessing what ridge I'm on, or which creek I just crossed. Well, a few people were caught out, and for a few different reasons.

One, GPS works on a coordinate system that has its origin at the centre of the earth as defined by the orbiting satellites. This is known as a **geocentric system**. Every point on the earth's surface, irrespective of

which jurisdiction it lies in, could now be accurately defined relative to each other by a Latitude, Longitude and height above or below the ellipsoid surface (or X, Y and Z coordinates). Now scientists could start undertaking global studies like measuring the movement of tectonic plates, and accurately determining sea-level rises due to climate change. The world realised how critical this sort of information was to the future of the planet, and now they had a tool that could record the changes to a degree of accuracy that could not be refuted.

Secondly, people overlooked the fact that GPS positions from a hand-held unit are really only accurate to about **+/- 10 metres**. It may show the coordinates to the nearest metre, but this is nonsense. You can test this by placing your unit on a fence post for 15 minutes and noticing how the coordinate values change on the screen despite the unit not moving. Heights determined by GPS have about **twice the inaccuracy** as E and N values. GPS signals can also be affected by tree cover and surrounding structures like buildings. Unless your unit can receive corrections from a base station whose position is known (as survey-accurate GPS units can do) the resulting coordinates are still floating around in this +/- 10 metre circle of uncertainty. Even so, this is not critical when all you want to do is find your car!

But the biggest issue was the **difference between the values depicted on your map with those showing on your GPS unit**. Using an AGD66 based map was confusing when using GPS because the localised AGD66 ellipsoid was so different from the WGS84 (World Geodetic System 1984) positions determined by the satellites. It made a difference of **about 200 metres** to your position on the ground. You could stand next to a Trig Station on top of a hill, but the GPS unit would indicate you were 200 metres to the north-east of that position!

It wasn't until the introduction of a **new datum for mapping in 1994** that things started to make sense. This datum, **GDA94 (Geodetic Datum of Australia 1994)** was very closely aligned with the ellipsoid determined by the GPS satellites. Finally, the position as determined by GPS matched where it put you on the map. Moreover, more and more countries started putting their own navigational satellite constellations into orbit, so your GPS had more satellites available to it to fix its position. This was essential, because so many new commercial uses for accurate positioning services were being established, including transport, navigation, even autonomous cars.

So far so good, but another problem exists. The Australian continent is drifting in a north-easterly direction at a rate of **over 6 centimetres per year**. The ellipsoid is fixed, but points on the earth's surface are constantly moving! By 2020, the continent had moved about **1.6 metres** NE from its 1994 position, so to keep up with the public and commercial users' expectations, the datum **GDA2020** was introduced. If you are going to have autonomous trucks in convoy barrelling along the freeway at 100 kph each separated by a five-metre gap, you want to ensure their GPS guidance system is placing them exactly in the middle of their lane, and not a metre and a half off-centre!

The obvious next step for the spatial industry is to adopt a **dynamic datum**. This means coordinate values in GPS units will be displayed in real time, derived from corrections sent from surrounding GPS base stations. We can predict where these base stations are going to be at any point in time based on our past observations of movement in Australia's tectonic plate. Luckily Australia is a relatively stable continent

that moves at a reasonably consistent rate – the situations in earthquake zones like New Zealand, Indonesia and Japan must cause enormous problems for their geodesists and map-makers!

Conclusion

Whew! Too technical for us mere bushwalkers? Perhaps, but having an understanding of how maps are made, and the way GPS works and its limitations, cannot hurt. If you rely on a hand-held GPS device when bushwalking, it should be obvious now that you should have the latest map based on GDA2020 where possible. However, using a GDA94 based map will still be adequate. Using GPS over an AGD66 map will still cause you great confusion.

Although your GPS unit's values are still +/- 10 metres, this satisfies the accuracy requirements of most bushwalkers. No doubt as technology develops, the accuracy of mobile GPS devices will improve even further. But there is still a **very strong case** for having a good map, map-reading skills, compasses, and looking about us, and using common sense! GPS is a great tool, but treat it with some discretion. And if the battery goes flat, or you drop it on a rock, or in the creek, well, say no more!

Mike Lavis, Retired Registered Surveyor, ACT

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 party member 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.

Social Media Team

[Jump To TOC](#)

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

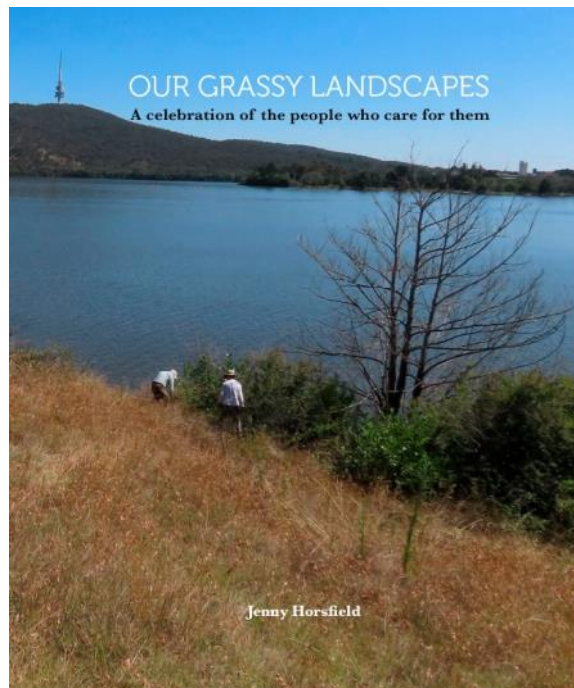


When it's cold, wet and misty, you need good gear. *Photo by Ian Wright*

Bulletin Board

The Bulletin Board is for members to advertise (at no cost), goods for sale, private trips or other 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.

Our prolific local historian, author and Club member Jenny Horsfield is about to have yet another of her books launched at the National Library of Australia, on a topic which will no doubt interest many of our members.



Our grassy landscapes. A celebration of the people who care for them

This new book by Canberra historian and LandCarer Jenny Horsfield tells an extraordinary story of ecological change, pioneering settlement, science, politics and volunteer action, moving from the mountains and tablelands of the Monaro to our own beloved landscape and growing city.

The book is richly illustrated with historic and recent photographs and with the black-and-white drawings of local conservationist Michael Bedingfield.

The book will be launched at 6pm on Tuesday 10 December at the National Library bookshop by Dr Charles Massy.

Dr Massy is a regenerative farmer, scientist and author of *Call of the Reed Warbler*.

The event is free but the Library requests that you book on the following link:

https://www.stickytickets.com.au/11zwp/author_signing_jenny_horsfields_our_grassy_landscapes.aspx