

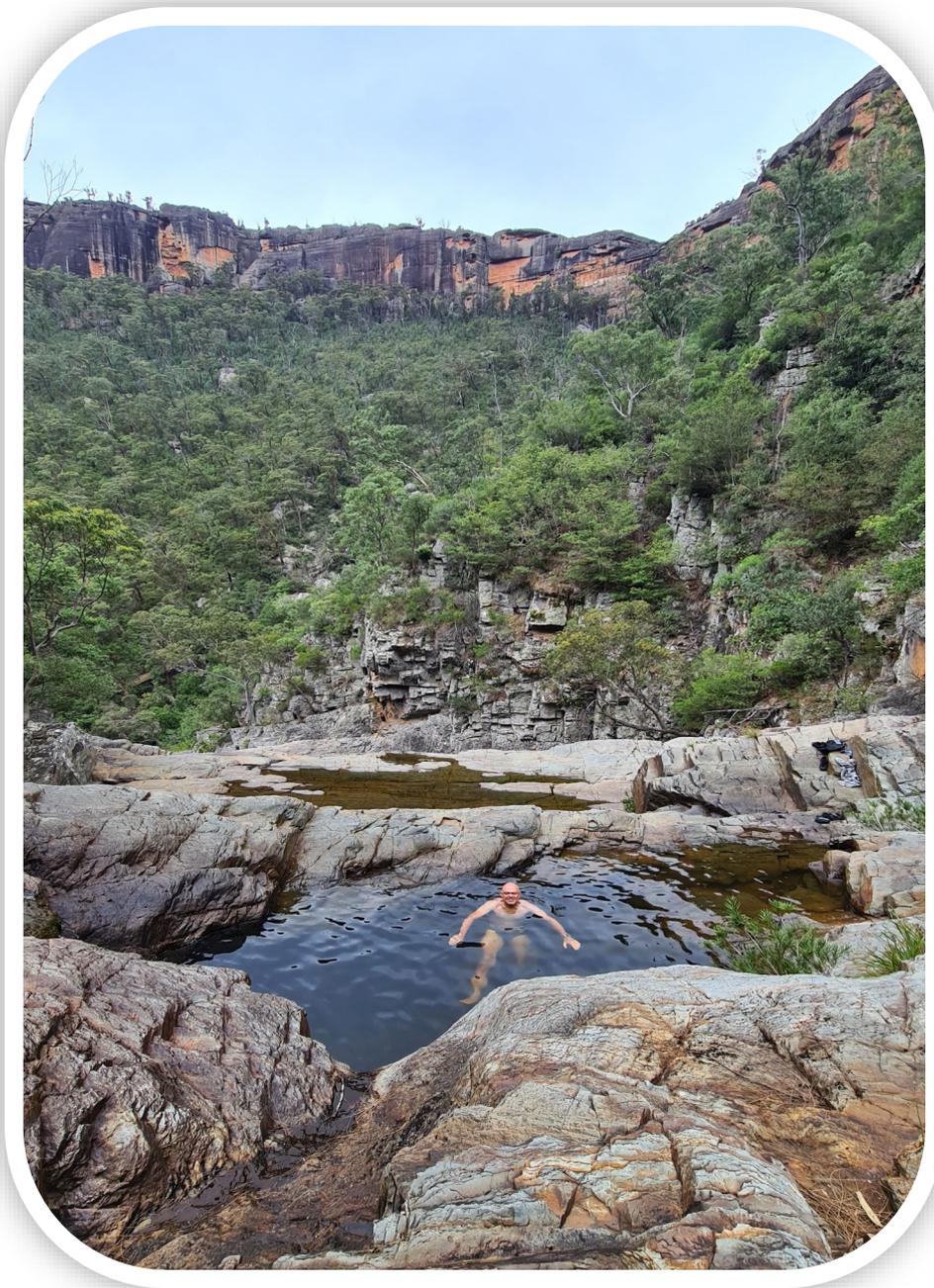
it

Quarterly Magazine
Canberra Bushwalking
Club



February 2025
Volume 61 Issue 1

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



Scott takes a dip in a pool with a view, backed by the cliffs of Ettrema Gorge

Photo by Monika Binder with Scott Bartley's camera

CBC Committee 2024-25

Acting President: Andrea Coombas
president@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Treasurer: David Donovan
treasurer@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Walks Secretary: John Evans
walksec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Assistant Walks Secretary: Garry Boxsell
awalksec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

General Secretary: Alison Killen
gensec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Membership Secretary: Andrea Coombas
membsec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Social Secretary: Liwei Meakin
socsec@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Editor: Meg McKone
editor@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Web Manager: Keith Thomas
webmanager@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Training and Safety Officer: Salih Ozgul
training@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Conservation Officer: Michael Clisby
conservation@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

Publisher: Ana Vrancic
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 May 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

CONTENTS

CBC Committee 2024-25	2
Guidelines for Contributions	2
Contribution Guidelines	3
ACT Public Holidays 2025	4
CBC Committee Change	5
CBC Constitution Update	6
Walks Waffle	12
Membership Secretary's Report	14
Editor's Effusions	15
Honorary Life Membership for John Evans	16
Nadgee Howe Wilderness	17
Bonza Blue Mountains Bushwalks, 20-26 October, 2024	22
Five Days Exploring in Ettrema Gorge	30
A Week in the Snowy Mountains	35
CBC Social Media	38
Equipment Hire	39
Bulletin Board	40

Contribution Guidelines

Continued from page [2](#)

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 8 May 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.

ACT Public Holidays 2025

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

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 Day: Thursday 25 December 2025

Boxing Day: Friday 26 December 2025

New Year's Day: Thursday 1 January 2026

Australia Day: Monday 26 January 2026

A photo from Janet Duncan's recent Kosci trip:



Water drops, sparkling like crystals on alpine grasses. We had a storm and rain the previous evening and the following day was calm and clear, perfect for our walk – Charlotte Pass to Porcupine Rocks
Photo and text by Ailsa Brown.

New Arrangements for President

Noelia Pinto has done a sterling job as President of CBC since September 2023. However, due to increasing family and work commitments, she has regrettably decided to step aside, as she can no longer give the role the time and attention it deserves.

Finding committed volunteers can be challenging, and Noelia was one of the most dedicated. Despite already working full time and managing a busy job and family, she took on the role of President with diligence and care.

Under Noelia's leadership, the Club has thrived—membership numbers have reached record highs, the activity program is more diverse than ever, and our Facebook following continues to grow, among other achievements.

To ensure continuity until the next AGM, the Committee has appointed Andrea Coombas (Membership Secretary) as Vice President. While CBC's [Constitution](#) prevents any committee member from holding more than one position, it allows the Committee to appoint one of its members as Vice President to chair Committee meetings and to represent the Club in the President's absence.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or the Committee.

Once again, Noelia, many thanks. I'm confident I speak for everyone in wishing you all the best and hoping to see you out and about on one of CBC's many adventures!

Andrea Coombas
Membership Secretary
Vice President

The CBC Committee will be asking members to vote to update the CBC Constitution.

Why update?

The Committee decided a comprehensive review of the CBC Constitution was needed because:

- It's been around for many years and hasn't been updated since November 2020. In 2025 we have more members, recruiting volunteers is still difficult (maybe even more so) and we use a different online tool to manage booking and membership. Was the CBC Constitution still fit for purpose?
- In February 2024 a new set of model rules for Associations such as CBC was released by the ACT Government. The model rules are a blueprint that Associations may use to ensure they are compliant with the Associations Incorporation Act 1991. CBC's current Constitution does not include many of the model rules or has less detailed variations.

This raised questions for the Committee. Are we confident the current constitution is covering all our legal obligations? Does CBC have a complete, clear and easy to access set of rules on how we manage our club? Will our constitution help us manage difficult situations such as disputes?

How did we come up with the updated draft Constitution?

As this was such a large (and frankly quite daunting) task, the Committee decided to join Volunteering ACT so we could access pro bono legal advice. Synergy Law, who specialise in governance, took on the task and worked closely with us to draft a new Constitution.

Synergy Law not only saved the Committee a lot of time and effort by drafting a new Constitution for us, but their legal expertise gives the Committee a high level of confidence that what we propose addresses all our legal obligations and will serve CBC long into the future.

What's different?

The [draft Constitution](#) is much longer than the [current](#) one because most of the model rules have been added. While CBC has (with minor exceptions) been following these rules, they either weren't in the constitution (such as our legal requirement to keep a register of members) or were in the Constitution but with less detail (such as how we run meetings) or were elsewhere (such as processes around dispute resolution).

There are two new rules that we recommend to members:

Composition of the Committee:

- Current CBC Constitution states we must have 12 committee roles.
- Proposed CBC Constitution states we must have three roles (which is the minimum legal requirement and for CBC will be the President, Secretary and Treasurer) and may have the remaining nine roles, and the functions of these remaining roles are determined by the Committee.

This gives us greater flexibility should we be unable to recruit 12 volunteers or if a Committee member must stand aside.

Eligibility Nominations for Membership:

- Current CBC Constitution requires two members to nominate and second guests before they can become members.
- Draft CBC Constitution requires one member to nominate.
- This is the same as the model rules, and simplifies the application process for guests, leaders and the committee, while retaining vetting of potential members.
- Current CBC Constitution requires a person to have completed one club Trip, which is defined as bushwalking or allied outdoor activity.
- Draft CBC Constitution requires a person to have completed one club Activity.

This broadens eligibility for membership to a person who supports the Objects of the Club (membership applications will include a statement to this effect), and has completed any club Activity, regardless of whether it is a bushwalk or outdoor. This change means membership is open to anyone who is able to support or contribute to the Objects of the Club, even if they are unable to or prefer not to participate in a bushwalk or allied outdoor activity.

In Summary

By incorporating the model rules, the proposed Constitution gives CBC a single and comprehensive reference point for managing the Club and confidence it will guide us to legally and fairly manage our day-to-day operations as well as unusual and difficult situations.

The proposed new rules allow greater flexibility in recruiting volunteers and managing our Committee functions, and simplified membership applications.

What's Next?

The draft Constitution is on the [CBC website](#), and a table comparing each section of the current Constitution with its equivalent in the proposed is in the table below. Please read, provide feedback and ask questions. The current Constitution is on the CBC website [here](#). We will also explain the changes, discuss and answer questions during at least one of our monthly presentations.

We will call a general meeting, with at least 21 days' notice, to put a Special Resolution to update the Constitution to the vote. To be adopted, a Special Resolution requires 75% of attendees to support it.

A decision on the timing and format of this meeting will be informed by your feedback and questions.

Questions and Feedback – email committee@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

CBC Committee

February 2025

Current	Proposed	Summary of Differences/Comment
1. Name	1. Name of the Association	None
2. Objects	3. Objects of the Club	None
3. Membership	4. Membership	<p>Proposed 4.2(a)(ii) requires a person to have completed one Club activity to apply for membership. Current 3.1 requires a person to have completed one Club trip. The requirement for membership is being broadened to remove the requirement to participate in a Club trip (bushwalking or allied outdoor activity) and allow people to apply for membership if they support the Objects of the Club and have participated in at least one activity. This allows a person who cannot or prefers not to participate in bushwalking or an allied outdoor activity to apply for membership as long as they have participated in any activity offered by the Club.</p> <p>Proposed 4.2(b) requires that new applicants be nominated by a current member. Current 3.1.1 requires new applicants be proposed and seconded by two current members.</p> <p>Proposed 4.3 states the membership fee is payable by a date determined by the Committee, which is consistent with current practice. Current 3.1.2 states that the fee is paid with the application, which does not reflect actual practice.</p> <p>Proposed 4.4(b) includes grounds for rejecting an application (as per model rules), there is no equivalent in current.</p> <p>Current 3.3 around disciplinary procedures are covered by proposed 7.1.</p> <p>The Notes proposed in 4 cover the legal requirement for a Register of Members and to give members the right to restrict access to their details. Bilby complies with both. There is no equivalent in the current Constitution.</p>

Current	Proposed	Summary of Differences/Comment
6. Finance	13. Financial Matters	<p>The references in the current Constitution to define a financial year, for the Treasurer to keep accounts, to present audited accounts at the AGM and have a reviewer (Auditor) appointed have been removed. These items are either superfluous or covered by the enabling legislation that governs associations in the ACT, and still apply.</p> <p>A new section on funding sources has been added, limiting our funding sources to Membership fees, donations, and other sources allowable under the governing legislation.</p> <p>New requirement to bank funds received promptly and issue a receipt. This is current practice.</p> <p>The narrative around the ability to use the Club’s funds has been substantially expanded upon, however, in practical terms, has not changed.</p>
7. Meetings	11. Committee Meetings 12. General Meetings	<p>Proposed 11 has much more detail on procedures than current, broken down into the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11.1 frequency (minimum 3 times a year), when, method 11.2 notice and business 11.3 chair 11.4 quorum 11.5 voting 11.6 minutes 11.7 records <p>Proposed 12 has much more procedural detail than current, broken down into the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12.1 general meetings - frequency, when, method 12.2 AGMs – notice and business 12.3 other general meetings 12.4 authorising proxy 12.5 chair 12.6 quorum 12.7 voting 12.8 minutes 12.9 adjournment
8. Publications	No equivalent	No longer required; use of funds is covered by proposed 13 Financial Matters.
9. Amendments	15. Amendments 2.1 Definitions – Special Resolution	None

Current	Proposed	Summary of Differences/Comment
10. Seal	18.3 Common Seal	None
11. Public Officer	14. Public Officer	None
12. Miscellaneous	18.2 Records and Other Documents 18.4 Winding Up	None
13. Dispute Resolution	6. Dispute Resolution 7. Disciplinary Action 8. Appeals	It is a legal requirement that Associations have documented dispute resolution procedures. Proposed brings all processes, as per model rules, into the Constitution. Current includes much less detail, stating procedures for resolving disputes must be published on the website.
<i>Clauses not in the current Constitution</i>	2. Definitions and Interpretation	No equivalent in the current Constitution.
	5. Register of Members	These are legal requirements. No equivalent in the current Constitution.
	5.1 Club to Keep Register	5.1(a) specifies what details are kept in the register. Bilby meets these requirements. Proposed 5.1(b) specifies committee members must notify any change of address.
	16. Policy	No equivalent in the current Constitution. Gives authority to the committee to create policies for management of the Club and to advance objects of the Club.
	17. Jurisdiction	No equivalent in the current Constitution. Specifies this constitution is governed by laws of the ACT.
	Annexure Proxy for meeting form	No equivalent in the current Constitution.

New walk leader Jan Ho

“Hello everyone, my name is Jan and I have been walking with the Club for six years. My first walk was Red Rocks Gorge led by Phillip Starr. It was a beautiful misty morning as we set off, and as the fog lifted to reveal the landscape in front of us I remembered thinking, my gosh! This was here the whole time! I wonder what else is out there to discover? I have been on many walks since, many types of walks, met a lot of amazing people and I’ve learned a lot from other leaders. Six years later, I am grateful to say that by walking I have gained an invaluable new set of skills, and a purposeful and inspiring point of view. I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to now lead walks and hope to create space for other walk-

ers to discover more about themselves and our beautiful natural environment as I have. There is a Swahili saying that goes, “If you want to go fast go alone, but if you want to go far then go together”. Through my own walk experiences I have found that it doesn’t matter so much where you walk, but that you just walk and it’s better to walk together.

“Therefore as a preliminary introduction, my aspiring style of walk is a ‘high chill factor/low gravity’ kind of walk. Interested to find out more? Oh well, guess you will just have to book on one of my walks, won’t you?”

“Happy Walking and look forward to adventures and opportunity in 2025!”

Jan’s first-led walk was Lake Ginninderra Walk and Xmas Morning Tea. She has quickly progress to lead more challenging trips, the latest being

[Byangee Walls & Pigeon House: Panoramic views of the Budawangs!](#)

Activity Program

Our activity program continues to be strong, with an amazing number and variety of trips on offer. This was particularly the case during the wet and hot December, and hot January.

Your volunteer leaders who led activities over recent months were:

Jenny.A, Bruce B, Jeff Monika B, Garry B, Andrea C, John D, Chris D, Gerald D, Allan D, David D, Janet D, Henry G, Linda G, Jan H, Kirk H Jenny H, Rob H, Dagmar K, John K, Diana K, Stephen M, Julie M, Di McD, Meg McK, Quentin M, Dick M, Sal O, David P, Jannette S, Phillip S, Andrew S, Derek S, Sandra T, Ana V, John E.

We currently have 93 leaders, although many are not active.

Would you like to develop your activity leading skills?

There is an almost insatiable demand for more activities as our membership grows, ranging from local part-day walks through to multi-week overseas expeditions. Why not pay a bit back (or is it forward?) and step up to leading? We have a [staged process](#) that you will be fully supported through, with training, mentoring and an experienced co-leader available if you want.



Canberra Bushwalking Club

-  Account
-  Bookings
-  Activities
-  Payments
-  Notifications
-  Privacy Settings
-  Membership
- My Account
-  Password
-  Help & Support

Bilby Help and Support

If you would like help or support with Bilby, use the [Help & Support](#) link in your My Account view. Selected members of the CBC Committee will be notified of your issue.

Hadi Nazari Rescue

Most will be aware of the recent rescue of Hadi Nazari in Kosciuszko National Park. It is not wise to speculate or comment on Hadi's experience until the full facts are known. However, in general, our [Guidelines for Leaders](#) and [Guidelines for Participants](#) recommend that party members stay in contact and move as a group, and that staying put if lost is preferable to attempting self-rescue.

Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve Skyline Trail

Construction has begun. It will be opened in October 2025 when the Reserve will have longer daylight savings opening hours.

New Satellite/SOS Offering

Might this be a competitor to Garmin's inReach tracking, messaging and SOS devices? Have a read about HMD's OffGrid device [here](#).

Self guided walks

Did you know that there are more than ten self-guided walks on the CBC website? Check out the details by going to the [website](#), then using the menu items What's On, Self-guided walks. Or click [here](#). Each has a downloadable gpx/kml file.

Extra Value in your CBC membership!

Newer members may not be aware of the online training offered through our club from Bushwalking NSW. It's billed as '[Enriching the Team Spirit & Nature Connection of Leaders & Participants](#)' within Canberra Bushwalking Club. You'll find it towards the top of the activity program. You do it at your own pace, around 2-3 hours in total.

Attracted by those glossy guided hiking brochures (such as [here](#))? They can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars! Provided you meet the fitness requirements, similar trips are available to CBC members for \$40 per year!!

Great Walks Mag reviews ACT Walks

The Great Walks Mag reviews 5 ACT walking tracks and MTB at Stromlo [here](#). They are bread and butter for CBC walkers.

Membership is growing strongly. On 25 February 2025 CBC had 452 members, a net increase of 14 since 1 January 2025, and of 48 in the 12 months since 1 February 2024.

A very warm welcome to the following new members who have joined since publication of the last magazine:

Denis H

Kerry M

Jo C

Emma R

Helen T

Sarren G

Sarah T

Robert D

Gale F

John R

John M

Tanya W

Juliet S

Phillip W

Kylie B

Matt N

Steward D

Luke O

Adrian P

Mona R

Julie D

Andrea Coombas

Membership Secretary

25 February 2025

This issue of the Quarterly *it* Magazine contains important information about proposed changes to the Club's Constitution, which will be voted on at a General Meeting, possibly in May. A lot of work has gone into this, so please take the time to read and consider it.

Making any gains in conservation is usually only after a prolonged effort, so it was pleasing to have a minor win. The online *We are Explorers* recently contained a short piece about accessing the remarkable Goochs Crater in the Blue Mountains, which a party from the Club visited last October (see pp 25-26). To my horror they suggested that a somewhat clear spot within the Crater itself was a suitable place to camp. I wrote to them, pointing out that this would destroy some of the vegetation, cause erosion and result in pollution within the enclosing Crater walls, and was pleased to receive the following reply from Tim Ashelford, their Managing Director:

"Thanks for reaching out about this. I've been to the crater myself and camped in the cave, and seen the top end location where people have camped. I think you raise a very valid point, so I've tweaked the wording to encourage people to camp in the cave and avoid camping in the crater to prevent unnecessary degradation."

The walks reports in this issue take us to a wide variety of marvellous bushwalking locations, all easily accessible from Canberra – the NSW South Coast, the Blue Mountains, Kosciuszko and Ettrema, which all lend themselves to extended pack walks, or easier day walks from a base camp, or anything in between. There's something for everyone. We bushwalkers are so lucky to live in this part of the world!



Jacqui, Meg and Deborah on a pagoda at the Lost City, Blue Mountains *photo by Bill Gibson*

Honorary Life Membership for John Evans

*I am so pleased that at a general meeting on 19 February 2025 CBC members voted to award John Evans [Honorary Life Membership](#) of CBC. Honorary Life Membership is for exceptional service, which John has provided over many years. The nomination and assessment will be added to the CBC website; it tells quite a story of a very special man that CBC is so lucky to call one of their own.
Andrea Coombas, Vice President.*

John Evans has been a member of the CBC since July 2004.

According to Bilby, John has led 208 activities, but this is unlikely to capture walks led pre-Bilby. In any event, not only has he been an extremely active leader himself, he has done a huge amount of work in encouraging other members to become leaders.

John has been a Committee member since September 2023, serving as Walks Secretary, which is a big role. He has undertaken that role with a great deal of passion and vigour, and the Club's number of activities has increased as a result of his hard work. John has taken this role extremely seriously, and he is always very prompt with his replies and never hesitates to provide encouragement and assistance to all leaders.

There is no doubt that John has made a significant contribution on the Club's behalf outside the Club. He has always sought to be involved with activities in our local parks and reserves, he has done radio interviews, assisted Bushwalking NSW, and many people outside the Club are aware of his Johnny Boy Walkabout Blog and the detailed information he provides there of his numerous walks over the years.

John Evans is a shining star in our Club, and it would be an honour for us to have him as an Honorary Life Member.



A five day through walk, (4)5 to 9 October, 2024

Leader Bruce Barnett, with Monika Binder, Scott Bartley, Melinda Brouwer, Inga Doemland, Janice Ho, Daniel Parsons and David Sweeting spent five days hiking the coastland of the Nadgee Howe Wilderness from Greenglade Picnic Area near Wonboyn Beach to Mallacoota Inlet.



The group at Lake Howe, dressed for the Westerlies *Photo by Scott Bartley*

Though the “official track” on the NPWS site measures 55 kilometres (see map on page 21), my Strava app showed that we did around 74 kilometres with 1590 metres of climbing. This difference was due to our starting route on Day 1 (along the coast instead of inland), as well as undertaking a number of exploratory side trips such as to the many remote rock platforms including Black Head, the sea caves north of Newtons Beach, and the extensive sand dunes behind Lake Barracoota.

The weather behaved itself with mostly fine yet cool and mildly windy days. There were minimal showers. Going south around Cape Howe, we met the full force of the southerlies. Groups we met coming from Mallacoota queried our decision to go south – “Why are you going this way?” – but leader Bruce was keen to avoid the sun in our eyes.

During the walk, there were lots of Spring flowers to see, particularly up on the moors. I counted some 30 different flowering plants including a marvellous display of rock orchids atop a sandstone boulder, two different species of *Correa* (light green and red), *Dampiera*, *Patersonia* and *Olearia*.

Our walk coincided with the southerly migration of the humpback whale, and we were frequently entertained by whales blowing and breaching. Our beach camps at Jane Spiers Beach and Nadgee Beach allowed us to easily watch whales at dusk and in the early morning. There were often yells of “Ooh!” and “Ahh!” and “Wow! Look at that!” from the group.

We saw seals too. There was a group of seals in the water just north of Cape Howe on their backs, flippers in the air. There was also a seal colony on the spit just south of Cape Howe. We had a close encounter



Seal watching *Photo by Bruce Barnett*

with a lone, possibly hurt seal on a rock platform north of our Bunyip Waterhole beach campsite. A dead pup was nearby.

The sea birds were plentiful – oystercatchers; a pair of magnificent sea eagles above the beach near Lake Barcoota; a flock of little grey sea birds huddled near the spit seal colony; black swans with



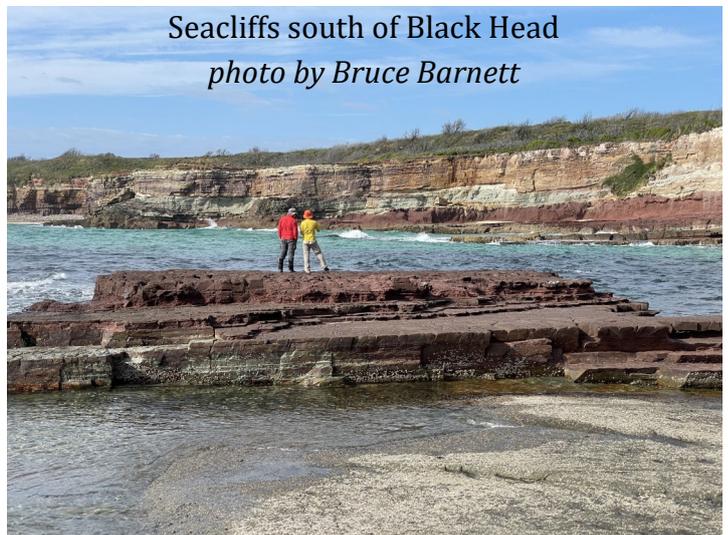
Walking along Jane Spier's beach *photo by Monika Binder*



Inside a sea cave near Newtons Beach
photo by Monika Binder



Getting the boat across to Mallacoota
photo by Bruce Barnett



Seacliffs south of Black Head
photo by Bruce Barnett

their cygnets at Nadgee Lake feeding on bright green sea grass; shearwaters perched on rock platforms. We could also hear and see birds in the forests behind the beaches and lakes, but not being a “twitcher” I could not identify them.

Sadly, there was evidence of cat prints in the sand and we understood from Dale, our Mallacoota ferryman, that these are likely to be responsible for the demise of some of the ground parrots in the area. He was also concerned about the potential impact of avian flu on the Nadgee Lake black swans.

At Little Beach, where we had lunch by the estuary, we were approached by a woman resembling someone out of a James Bond movie, wearing a bikini with a knife and small baseball bat type thing clipped around her waist. She was with her family group fishing for Australian salmon off the beach. The baseball bat thing was to hit the caught fish on the head to kill it humanely. Perhaps next time Bruce, a fisherman himself, might bring a telescopic rod to catch some salmon too!

The group was hyper-vigilant for ticks and sandflies and came prepared with the necessary treatments, but the nasty critters still managed to find some of us despite frequent tick checks. Because of the tick risk we camped on the sand, which tended to work well. We also didn’t spot any at the flowering tea-tree camp south of the muddy Bunyip Waterhole. At Lake Barracoota, however, Bruce, Melinda and I retreat-

ed to the protection of the forest out of the wind and sun, where – no surprises here – a tick found its way onto Melinda’s tent.

During our last night at Lake Barracoota, I received mobile phone alerts that an Aurora was predicted and best viewed after 8pm. Into the dark with a head torch, I led the way up a sand dune that I had previously scouted for its excellent southerly view over the ocean. Just at sunset, we started taking photos. Soon after, I was rewarded with a sighting through the camera lens of my iPhone of a magnificent Aurora. It made a magical trip even more magical!

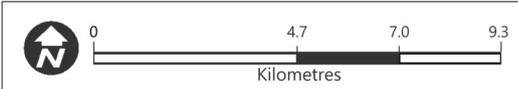


Searching for the Aurora near Lake Barracoota *Photo by Monika Binder*



Nadgee wilderness walk

Overview map



MAP INFORMATION
This map does not provide detailed information on topography, alerts or opening times and may not be suitable for some activities.
Map Published: 05-May-2021



The party: Deborah, Pete, Jacqui, Rose, Anna, Nadege and Bill at Perrys Lookdown

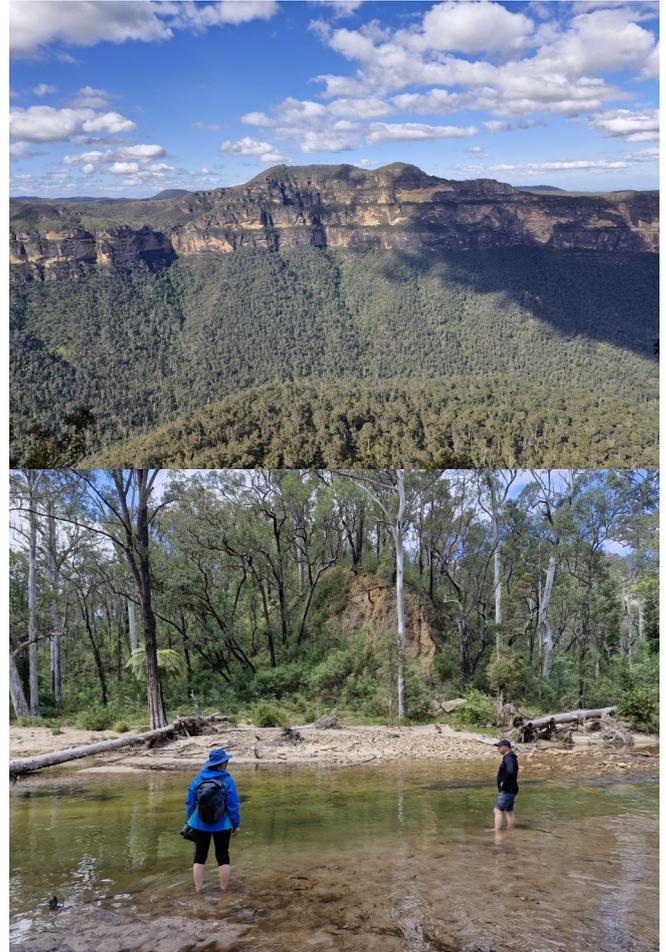
Photos by Meg McKone unless otherwise indicated



The Blue Mountains of NSW offer superb bushwalking within easy reach of Canberra, and walkers don't need to venture far away from towns and roads to experience spectacular views and adventurous activities.

Our party of 10 based ourselves at the Blackheath Glen Tourist Park, which provided comfortable cabins and powered sites (with ensuites if required) in attractive surroundings for our six-day trip. The birdsong would have been lovely if we could have heard it above the stridulations of hundreds of cicadas, desperate to reproduce before they died. Luckily for us, they weren't so loud or numerous on our walks.

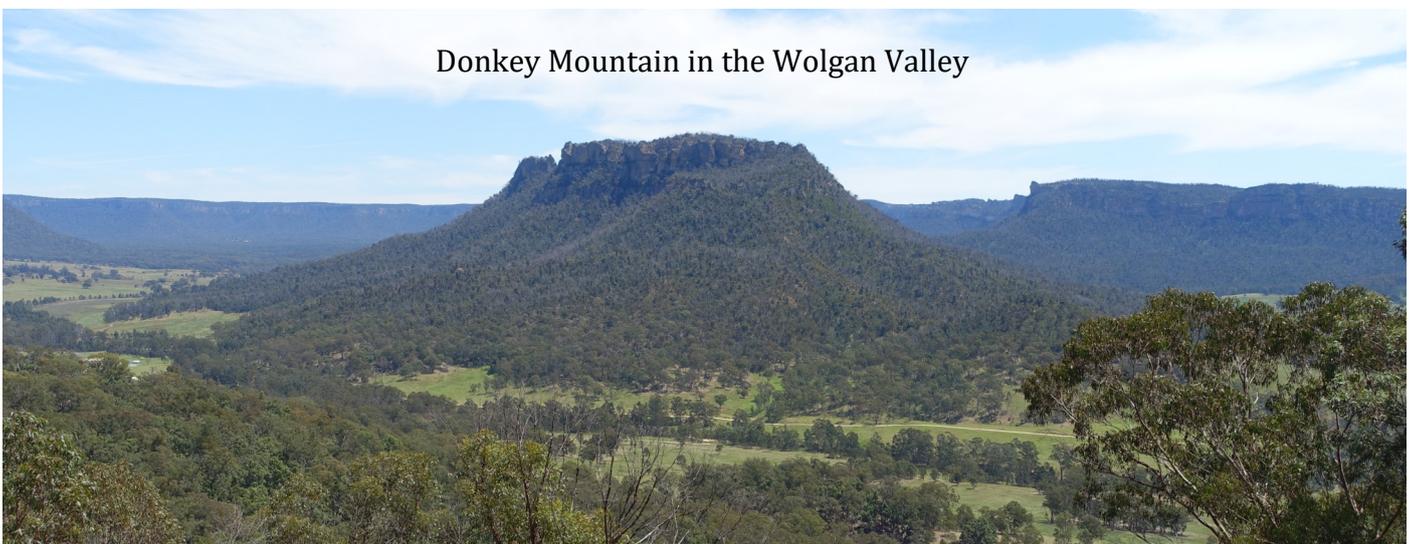
Our first walk was to the Blue Gum Forest which lies at the junction of the Grose River and Blackheath Creek. In the 1950s and 60s, the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs used to hold annual reunions there, on the bracken and short grass beneath the trees in the triangle of river flats on the true left of the Grose. Blue Gum was the site of the first conservation efforts in the Blue Mountains, when in 1931 a small group of bushwalkers from the Mountain Trails Club and Sydney Bushwalkers happened to be visiting the Forest, and found the lessee starting to ringbark the trees. They persuaded him to desist if they could buy the lease, which they managed after a huge effort – it was during the Depression and funds were short. Later, in 1961, the Forest was included in the Blue Mountains National Park. After the resident cattle were cleared out, near to impenetrable scrub grew up beneath the soaring trunks of the *Eucalyptus deanei*, so foot traffic and camping are now deflected to Acacia Flat along Blackheath Creek. There are still plenty of forest areas to enjoy, and the clear, cooling waters of the Grose where Anna and Nadege ventured in for a swim.



Clockwise from main: Lunch at Acacia Flat, Blue Gum Forest; Mount Banks looms over the Grose River Valley; at the junction of the Grose River and Blackheath Creek

We took the quickest route to access Blue Gum – down Perrys Lookdown, 600 metres of steep, knee-destroying slopes, steps and scrambles to the bottom. Some of us had stiff thighs for days afterwards.

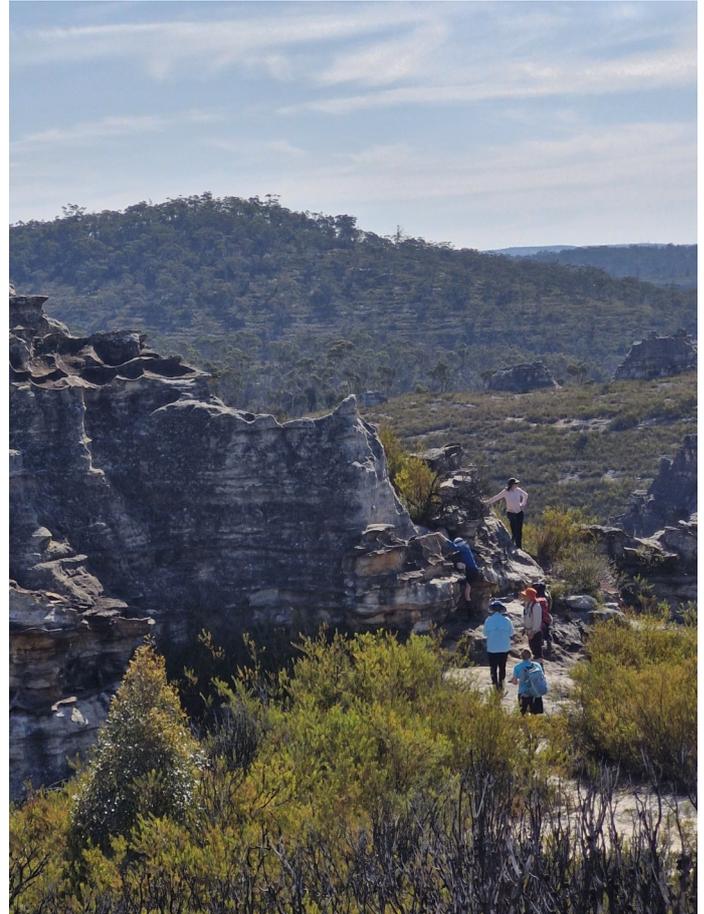
Next day we drove out along the Newnes Plateau north of Lithgow to the Glow Worm Tunnel, which has in recent years become a popular tourist attraction. There is now a well signposted circular track of about eight kilometres, past some of the famous pagodas, through the cliffs with views over the Wolgan Valley, beneath some high cliffs whose attractiveness to rock-climbers was shown by the presence of climbing



Donkey Mountain in the Wolgan Valley



Approaching the Glow Worm Tunnel via a tree fern gully



Climbing pagodas at the Lost City

bolts, then up a little gorge full of tree ferns to the Tunnel, which was excavated through the cliff to take shale oil from of the Wolgan mines. We walked quite a distance through the darkness before the glow worms appeared, but they finally put on a good effort of resembling a starry night.



Mount Hay Canyon, a shadowy slit in the cliffs of the Grose Valley

On the drive back, we detoured to the Lost City Lookout, a wonderful place to view a clutch of pagodas (remnant sandstone outcrops) lining the gorges and erupting along the ridges. The party was obviously in need of a little excitement — they'd climbed to the tops of the closest pagodas before I could reach them.

On Day Three we drove from Leura along the Mount Hay Road through masses of spring flowers, then walked to a cliff edge for views down into Blue Gum Forest and along the almost unbroken cliff lines above

Govetts Creek and the Grose River. I was keen to look into Mt Hay Canyon, now called Butterbox Canyon, which I'd descended a few times in the distant past, with its abseil onto a huge chockstone (make sure



Lockley Pylon overlooks the confluence of Blackheath Creek and Grose River Gorges and is at the start of an extremely steep descent to the Blue Gum Forest

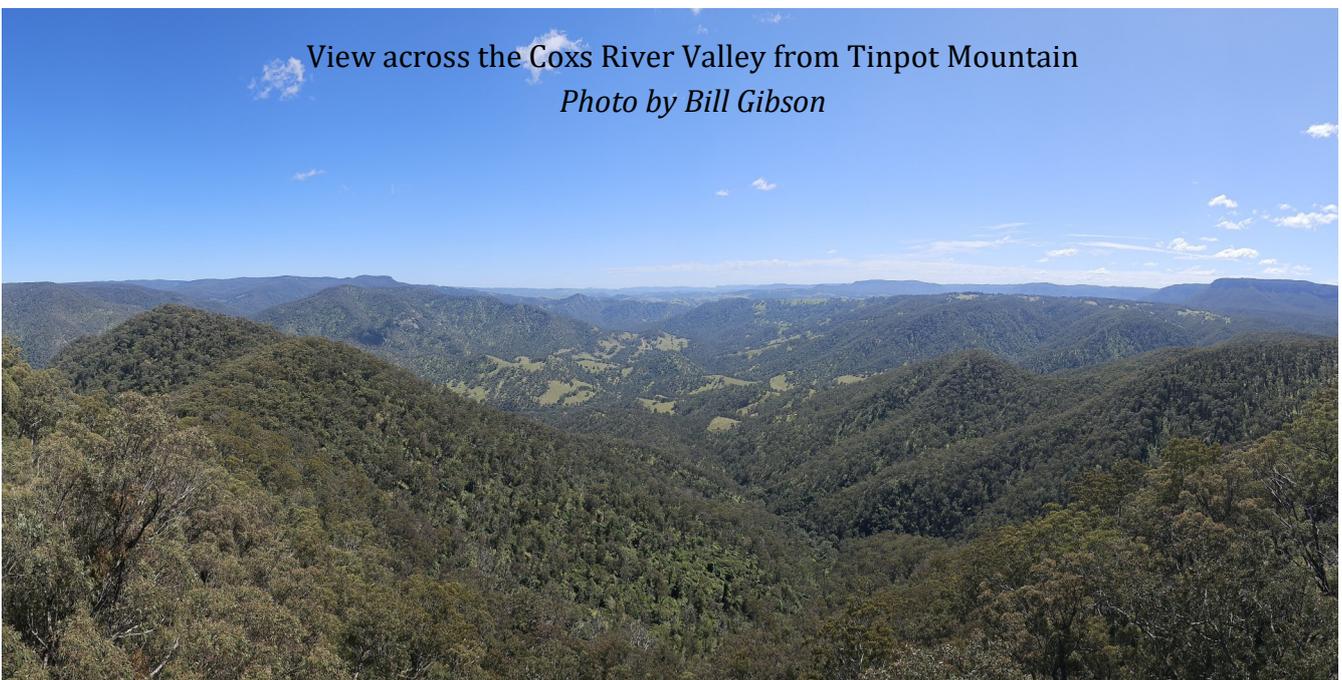
you continue down on the outside, not the inside of the chockstone, or you'll be trapped!) and rather hairy rock climb out. So we scrambled down a steep slope and descended to a ledge which halted us at a vertical drop of about three metres. Deborah, however, found a hidden ledge which provided the necessary footholds and so we continued the descent to a small saddle, then climbed up onto a narrow spur to peer into a black slit which hid the inner canyon from prying eyes. Darned if I could see how we'd ever climbed out of it! On the way back we took a slightly different route and were rewarded by a grove of sweetly scented pink Boronia.

With plenty of time left, we drove back to the start of the track sidling the Pinnacles and walked out to Lockley Pylon, whose pointed crest we had seen from Perrys Lookdown. We had a different version of the same mesmerising view, with Mount Banks looming over the Grose Gorge below. On the way back we spied some waratahs, their heavy scarlet blooms bright against the dull green of the gums.

On Day 4 I'd planned to visit geologically different country, beyond the southern end of the Megalong Valley, where steep ridges and creeks slope down to the Coxs River. However, there was a forecast of storms in the afternoon and some of us were feeling like a break, so we split into several groups. The energetic people headed out from Dunphys Camp over Ironpot Mountain as I'd intended, then drove back to Mount Victoria to do a circuit of Fairy Bower, Coxs Cave and Mount Piddington. Rose visited the lovely

View across the Coxs River Valley from Tinpot Mountain

Photo by Bill Gibson





Mount Tomah Botanic Gardens, checking out the tracks around Mount Banks on her way back. Frank and I, after a late start, drove out to Dunphys Camp to find the beginning of the Ironpot track, then were waylaid by a copious morning tea at the Megalong Tearooms before driving as far as we could along Narrow Neck to find the start of the track to Castle Head with its view of Mount Solitary for future reference.

Frank enjoying a Devonshire Mocha at the Megalong Tearooms

Having mentioned Mount Solitary, I was very disappointed to find that any tracks to the Knife Edge up the western end of this justly famous isolated plateau in the forefront of the view from Echo Point, are presently closed due to landslips. Nor is it possible to walk much of the newly opened cliff top track from Wentworth Falls Echo Point and beyond without having to deviate into the suburbs for the same reason. It's also worth noting that parking in this area is prohibitively expensive – more than \$6 for 15 minutes! However, there is a tourist bus which services the area.

Our final day was the longest (around 16 kilometres with close on 700 metres of climbing according to someone's device) and perhaps the most rewarding. Goochs Crater is a remarkable feature north of the upper Wollangambe River, an emerald green swamp of reeds and rushes surrounded by high cliffs with just a small outlet at the lower end, formed when an ancient volcanic neck decayed leaving an oval "hole"

Lunch at the northern end of Goochs Crater



Above: Ridge leading to the Wollangambe R.
Below: Log crossing over the Wollangambe R.





in the surrounding sandstone. Bill and Deborah had recently checked out the shorter access from the Newnes Plateau, only to find that the final several kilometres to the start of the track were too rough to drive, so we took the longer route from the Sandham Road near Bell. The broad ridge to the north starts off through forest before opening out to sandstone woodland and heath, covered in many species of Spring flowers. At the end of the ridge, the track becomes rather vague as it drops down to the upper Wollangambe River, which we either teetered or strode across, according to our confidence and capabilities, on a broad log perched high above the water.



The route up the other side was even vaguer, though occasional cairns showed us we were heading in the right direction. After another stretch along a heathy ridge, we descended diagonally into a creek which, in a reasonably wet season, would provide water for those wanting to camp in the area. Then a track uphill took us to an unremarkable break in the cliffs ahead which opened out to reveal the velvety, wind-ruffled gem of Goochs Crater,

Top: Goochs Crater surrounded by cliffs and pagodas.

Bottom: The camping cave, beyond the eastern rim of the Crater.

only discovered (apart from the local First Nations people) by the bushwalker Nick Gooch in 1978. He must have been thrilled to bits. It is approximately 105 metres long and 65 metres wide, and its vertical sandstone walls vary from 20 to 30 metres in height.

The track along the eastern side enabled us to keep our feet dry, and we lunched in the clearing at the northern end. Pete spent some time wandering around, cup of tea in hand, and came back commenting that it was the loveliest place he'd ever stopped at for lunch, or words to that effect.

The camping cave lies on the eastern side of the rim, and I was keen to find it via a route I'd done with CMW two years before, which ends in a bum-slide down the lowest several metres of a cliff. So we climbed up to the rim for the view over the Crater, ascended one of the prominent pagodas, then followed a track which took us down into a valley filled with wet sclerophyll scrub. The track disappeared, the scrub got worse, and after thrashing around for a while, checking out a cave which clearly wasn't fit for camping, and realising we were heading in the wrong direction, we retraced our steps and found the camping cave via the easier route – out the entry passage and easterly along a track to the cave. It was getting late and we returned to the cars the way we had come.

We finished the trip with a delicious dinner at the Thai Silk Restaurant in Blackheath, happy with the walks we'd done in the preceding days. Though they had been relatively short and easy, they had given us scope for adventure, and there are plenty more day walks like them. And I'd greatly enjoyed showing some of the beauty of the Blue Mountains to our enthusiastic group.

References:

Veechi Stuart, *Blue Mountains: Best Bushwalks*, Woodslane Press, 2022; available from bookshops in Blackheath and Leura.

Miles Dunphy, *Selected Writings*, pp 32-39, Ballagirin, Sydney, 1986.

Henry Gold and Peter Prineas, *Colo Wilderness*, p 15, Kalianna Press, 1978.

Maps: *Blue Mountains North and Blue Mountains South* 1: 50,000; available from the National Parks Centre at Govetts Leap, Blackheath.



Goochs Crater from its southern, downstream entrance

Overleaf: some Upper Blue Mountains flora and fauna in October, 2025



Five Days Exploring in Ettrema Gorge, 27/12/2024-1/1/2025

Scott Bartley

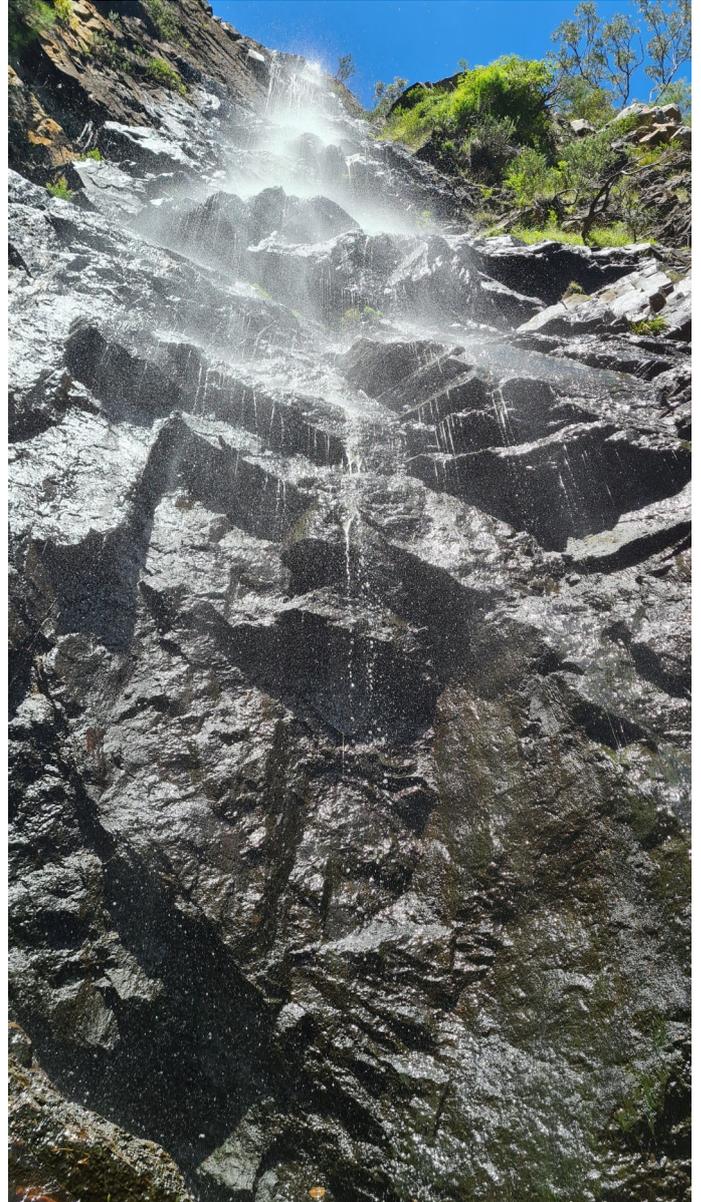
Over the Christmas-New Year break, Monika Binder led a party of seven into the Ettrema wilderness on a five-day exploration of the Tullyangela, Cinch, Ettrema, Jones and Myall Creeks. This was our second attempt, the same trip being aborted in 2023 due to heavy rains preceding the walk. This time the weather was fine and hot, perfect for getting in and out of the water as we traversed the creeks.

After meeting at Nerriga Pub on the 27th we made camp on Tolwong Road not far from Tullyangela Clearing. There I reacquainted with Monika, Noelia, Daniel and Richard and got to know Robyn and Chris. It was a bit of a meet and greet and Christmas/New Year celebration all rolled into one fun night.

The next morning we headed off-track to join Tullyangela Creek above Dungeon Canyon. It was difficult going in some parts of the walk to Tullyangela due to patches of thick scrub. Descending Tullyangela offered a mix of bouldering, refreshing pools to skirt or swim, and a long rock hop toward its junction with Ettrema Creek. Along the way we came upon a stranded wedge-tailed eagle in the creek bed, looking unwell. We mused that it was a young bird and theorised about what might be its affliction. While the bird looked quite passive, we dared not get too close due to its menacing beak and claws. It was an interesting interlude to what was a long day. Our campsite at the creek junction was a welcome site at the end of our day.



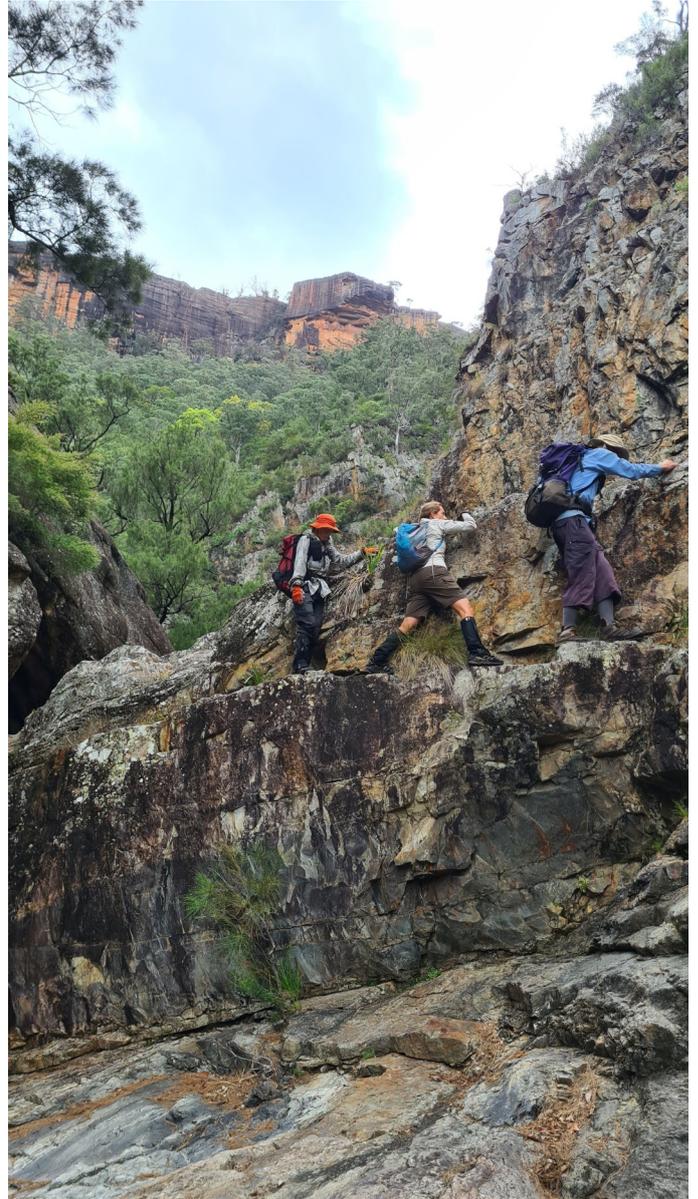
Pack swim in Tullyangela Creek *photo by Chris Day*



Exploring Cinch Creek: *Left: Wading a pool; Right: Below Perryman Falls*

The next morning we set forth to explore Cinch Creek up to Perryman Falls, a more relaxed day. So much fun following the creek line, clambering over boulders, climbing around pools, wading and swimming others, until we reached the falls. There it was time for a well-earned swim to sit under the waterfall. After some lunch a few of us, led by Monika, made our way to the top of the falls and a short distance further upstream. The allure of what might be around the corner kept us moving upstream until we decided it was time to turn around. The return journey was just as much fun as our ascent. We were back at camp mid-afternoon. After another dip in a nearby pool on Ettrema Creek most of us settled in while Monika headed off to explore Dynamity Creek.

Day Three we packed up camp and headed to the junction of Ettrema and Jones Creeks, where we would camp for the next two nights. It was a relatively easy walk/rock-hop along the wide bed of Ettrema Creek. While the creek bed was mostly dry, several wades were required and there were a few deeper pools we chose to skirt. After setting up camp most of us chose to settle in for the remainder of the afternoon. For me, it was a short walk further upstream on Ettrema Creek to find a swimming hole and then, closer to



Exploring Jones Creek: *Left:* Clambering around a pool; *Right:* Traversing a ledge

sunset, a relaxed walk part way up Jones Creek. What a lovely creek it is, and in the evening light the scenery and reflections were stunning. Upon my return I learned that others had had a bit of excitement of their own. Lying on the gravel, Noelia turned to see a sizeable red bellied black snake at her feet. Fortunately, she had the nerve to remain calm and it continued on its way, unperturbed by the group around it. With a couple of lazy days under our belts we were all charged for our hike up Jones Creek the next morning. We set forth at a determined pace, making me grateful I'd decided to amble up the evening before. For me, this was to be the jewel in our multi-creek traverse. Along the way there were lots of stunning waterholes, some that required a careful traverse or tricky rock climb and some that required, or simply elicited, a swim. As we approached Jones Falls, the views of the Ettrema Cliffs in the background made for some great photos. Before reaching the falls we had a little side adventure to two mine entrances, one affording a short interior exploration and the other a vertical shaft with no apparent bottom.

At Jones Falls it was an occasion for another swim, whilst having lunch. From there Monika, Chris and I decided to climb to the top of the falls, skirting the cliffs on the true right of the creek. It didn't take us long to reach the upper falls, where we were treated to a series of pools cascading down to the edge of the falls and some terrific views down the Jones Creek valley. Near the edge of the falls we found an 'infinity pool' of sorts that Instagrammers would likely covet if they knew of its existence (so keep it a secret). With the Ettrema cliffs in the background, the upper pools offered the opportunity for some impressive photos. Our return journey to the others was along a much more efficient, though slightly more exposed route.

Descending Jones Creek was just as much fun as the ascent, the scenery and experiences along the way being totally immersive. A highlight for a few of us was jumping into and swimming across a pool above one of the lower waterfalls. It was so good we had to do it several times.

Back at camp we prepared for dinner and to share our New Year's resolutions. Chris took the prize with the share food, offering up Christmas pudding and cream that he had been carrying since the start of the trip. New Years was called at 8.30pm and then it was off to bed to get a good night's sleep ahead of our exit the next day. As we settled in our tents, we could hear a creature swimming in the nearby waterhole. It was Daniel doing his best replication of an ice bath.



An easier stretch along Ettrema Creek

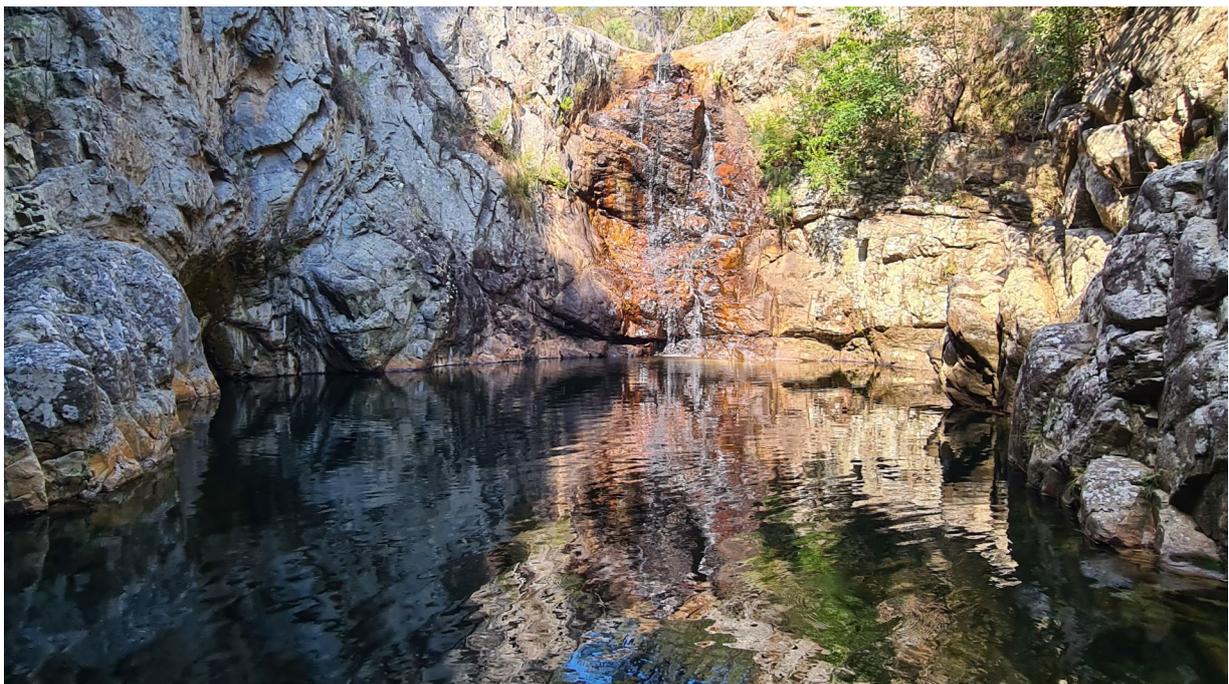
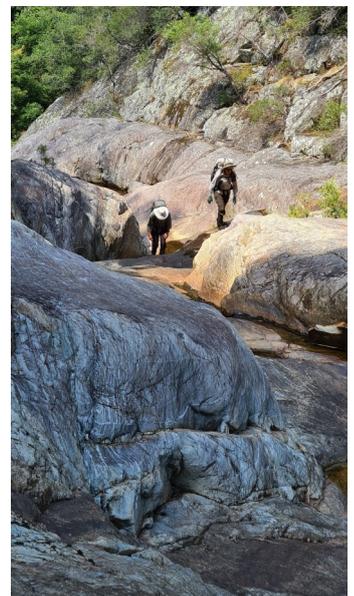
The next morning we walked upstream along Ettrema Creek toward the junction with Myall Creek. We dropped our packs to walk a bit further upstream to the 'olympic swimming pool' at the lower end of Sentry Box Canyon. With a lot of the pools along Ettrema Creek being a bit scungy, this pool was a real treat. After a swim we headed back to the creek junction to commence our journey to the cars.

Ascending the various waterfalls along Myall Creek was up there with Jones Creek for adventure. But after several hours that fun came to an end, and it was back into the scrub for our traverse to the car drop point on Tolwong Road. Our ascent to the plateau was short but it was steep and through messy scrub that was quite unpleasant. But once done, and with some lunch under our belts, the remainder of our traverse to the cars was easy going.

After retrieving the cars from Tullyangela Clearing and reassembling, Noelia pulled some ice-cold beers from her Yeti icebox. So good! And amazing that an esky could keep things cold after five days in the car in hot weather. Happy New Year's Day!

For me, the trip capped off a terrific year of walking, canyoning and concerts – a great introduction for more of the same in 2025. Thanks, Monika, for your leadership and to the others for your great company.

Photos by Scott Bartley unless otherwise indicated



Clockwise from Main: The first waterfall on Myall Creek; Group Selfie photo by Monika Binder; Another wade in Ettrema Creek photo by Monika Binder; the last climb before exiting Myall Creek.



Lunch under the Black Sallees *photo by Andrew Cupit*

Another fabulous week with old and new friends on Janet Duncan's week in the Snowy Mountains! Based at the cozy and comfortable Canberra Alpine Club Lodge in Perisher, 20+ people enjoyed a diverse range of activities. Despite single digit temperatures some days and what felt like triple digit wind speeds most days, group members walked every day while some cycled, one fly fished and others indulged their artistic streaks to paint and knit.

With a wealth of members happy to lead trips, and no shortage of tracks, we were spoilt for choice! Each morning, small groups headed out into the great outdoors. There were trips of varying degrees of difficulty to the Main Range, Blue Lake, Stilwell, the new Snowy Alpine tracks (Charlotte Pass to Guthega and Charlotte Pass to Perisher), Sawpit Creek, The Sentinel, Dicky Coopers Bogong, Mt Townsend, Thredbo River, and Porcupine Rocks to name just a few! We marvelled at the fabulous views across the ranges, the gnarled and tortured gums, stands of black sallees and the wildflowers that were still in bloom.

Thank you all for a wonderful week, in particular walk leaders and a special thank you to Janet Duncan for all the hard work and planning that ensured it all happened in such a delightful way.



Top: Some of the many flowers in bloom photos and formatting by Sonja Weinstein

Bottom: At the Sentinel photo by Andrew Cupit





Clockwise from top left: Battling the wind at Mount Townsend summit Andrew Cupit; Birthday Celebrations Sonja Weinberg; On the Alpine Track Sonja Weinberg; Crossing Illawong Bridge Andrew Cupit; Group at Horse Camp Hut Tim Wright; View towards Porcupine Rocks Sonja Weinberg.

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.

Social Media Team

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.

FOREST ART AUCTION

The Canberra Forest Alliance and Conservation Council ACT invite you to a forest art auction, to be held from 4.30 pm on the 15th of March, 2025, at Capital Brewery in Fyshwick.

The auction will support our campaigns to protect our beautiful native forests—those surrounding the ACT, those in South Coast NSW forests and also the endangered ecosystems in the ACT. All proceeds will go to the Conservation Council.

Come along, enjoy some drinks, and bid on some beautiful art - all for a good cause. Register here:

<https://events.humanitix.com/forest-art-auction>

There will also be a special event for the under 12s. Children can draw their own favourite forest or forest creature at the event. These artworks will be displayed and judged between 6 and 6.30pm by one of our special young volunteers.

The Capital Brewery has kindly offered the room in which the auction will be held pro bono. We can support the brewery's generosity by having a drink and a meal during breaks between auctioning.

Before the event most of the paintings for sale are on display on the Conservation Council Website (<https://conservationcouncil.org.au/artwork-auction/>) with information about the painting and artist.

Further information and registration can be found here:

<https://events.humanitix.com/forest-art-auction>). Information about how the auction will be held is available on the registration site.

With thanks
Angela and Judith
on behalf of the Conservation Council ACT and Regions

South East Forests NP, NSW *photo by Meg McKone*
(this photo is not part of the exhibition/auction!)

