



Federation of Victorian
Walking Clubs Inc
A2548 ABN 88 344 633 037

VicWalk News

June 2006

No. 161

\$1.20

Calendar

VICWALK AGM & COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 6 June 2006
(AGM starts at 6pm)

Community Room, Powlett
Reserve, East Melbourne
Melway Map 2G F2 (44 C7)

VICWALK EXECUTIVE & CONVENORS MEETING

Tuesday 4 July 2006
(address as above)

BUSHWALKERS SEARCH & RESCUE MEETING

Monday 24 July at 6pm
Carlton Community Room,
216 Rathdowne Street,
Carlton (next to the baths).

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

4th Wednesday each month
except December at 7.30pm
St Martins Anglican Church
27 Cromwell Rd (cnr Wilson
St) South Yarra
Melway Map 58 F4

FEDERATION WEEKEND

17-19 November 2006
Bright & Beyond

WALKING & TALKING WITH YOUR PRESIDENT

AGM

The AGM is on Tuesday 6 June. See the calendar for details. Your club will have received the formal notice of the meeting including resolutions to be voted on. If your club is unable to attend please fill out the proxy form nominating someone to vote on behalf of your club.

The meeting will include an election for office bearers. Most of the existing office bearers will be nominating for a further term, however our current treasurer, Greg Weston, will not be seeking re-election. A position description for the role is on page 3. If you have the skills needed, please consider nominating.

The Annual Report for 2005/2006 has been distributed. It shows what has been achieved in the last 12 months. When you add these achievements to community value contributed by our club network we can be justifiably proud of what we as a bushwalking community are doing.

BRIGHT AND BEYOND: FEDERATION WEEKEND 2006

Planning is well advanced for what will be a great weekend of walking together. If you haven't responded to David Gordon's request for a club contact yet, please do so ASAP. November will come around very fast.

FEDERATION DAY WALK 2007

This event will also come around quickly. The choice of day is up to the organising club and I invite clubs to volunteer to host this event. If you haven't done it before there is plenty of advice and assistance available including a detailed manual on how to run the event. If you are a small club you might consider joining with another club to organise the event.

STRATEGIC PLAN

I am pleased to announce that Alan Clarke has kindly volunteered to lead the development of the VicWalk Financial Management Plan. Alan has also offered to assist with the preparation of a detailed proposal for individual membership. Both are important action plans from our strategic review, and are in addition to Alan's coordinating role for Federation Walks. Alan has had a long association with the bushwalking community and we are fortunate to have someone with his experience and professional skills. My thanks to Alan.

I invite all club presidents to contact me and discuss how your club could contribute to one of the working groups. This age of electronic communication provides the opportunity to be involved no matter where you are located.

DAVID REID

Contributions

Email or post news, views, club profiles, articles, photographs, sketches and letters on any subject of interest to bushwalkers (subject to editorial approval) to ekerlin@optusnet.com.au or 2 Glenwerri Court, Vermont South 3133.

Deadline for July:
Thursday, 15 June

Editor: Eileen Kerlin
Design & Layout: Helen Rowley

inside this issue ...

Conservation	2	VicWalk Layout Designer	5
Bunyip State Park	3	More VicWalk Clubs Volunteering... 5	
Track Clearing	3	Oxfam Walk	5
Celestials	3	BSAR Speaker Correction	5
Friends of Baw Baw	3	Get Up & Go Searches for Australia's Most Adventurous Senior	5
First Aid Course	3	Action for Clubs	6
VicWalk Treasurer	3	Around the Tracks	6-8
Bushwalking Volunteers	4	Club Contact Details	7
Planning a trip to Queensland?	4		

Who's Who at VicWalk

Administration Office

Jenny Sykes
Phone 9455 1876
Fax 9457 5438
vicwalk@vicnet.net.au
www.vicnet.net.au/~vicwalk
Monday 12 noon–3pm
Tues, Thur & Fri 10am–3pm
Not open Wednesdays

Office Bearers

President: David Reid
5984 0039
valdavid@alphalink.com.au
Vice-President: Nick Brown
9509 1112
camnix@optusnet.com.au
Secretary: Wayne Rice
9842 2817
longgrain2@bigpond.com
Treasurer: Greg Weston
9399 9592
greg@ttcc.com.au
Assistant Secretary: Barbara Guerin
bjg123@bigpond.com

Convenors

Bushwalkers Search & Rescue:
Monica Chapman
9859 8464
convenor@bsar.org
Conservation, Tracks & Huts:
Steven Robertson
9762 5367
srob7859@bigpond.net.au
Track Clearing: Jim Harker, 9547 1152
jnharker@netspace.net.au
For other project officers please contact Conservation Convenor, Steven Robertson, as above
Insurance: David Gordon
02 6051 2602W or 02 6040 9599H
david.gordon@fmg.co.nz
Publicity/Promotions: vacant
Publications: Claire Garrett
9598 4854
Risk Management: Wayne Rice
see details above
Skills: vacant

Representatives on Other Organisations

Bushwalking Australia: Marianne Watt
9328 4228
BMTAB: Peter Conroy
9596 2639
ORC: Kyle Matheson
9890 6094
mathesonkyle@hotmail.com

CONSERVATION

Don't put all your walking equipment into the cupboard and sit in front of the fireplace and hibernate at home – there are still superb walking opportunities to be had during these colder months and it's also a great time for track clearing work on the tracks we love.

The track clearing program is not totally finalised for the rest of the year but a couple of day activities to promote in your clubs are:

- Sunday 2 July – Freemans Mill – contact Graeme Kidd on phone 5629 8515
- Sunday 17 September – Condons Track – contact Steve Robertson on phone 9762 5367

Activities for other months will be advised soon.

Also keep in mind that the Otway Ranges Walking Track Association will be listing track clearing in October to open up the tracks further for our summer walking pleasure.

MOSSBED REHABILITATION

The Conservation Committee worked hard last month in preparing a submission for funding through Envirofund for assisting works in progress together with PV. If successful, these funds will be a great additional benefit to the high country.

SNIPPETS

Recent submissions made by VicWalk Conservation Committee:

- Greater Bendigo National Park Draft Management Plan
- DSE – Review of Code of Forest Practices – Timber Harvesting
- Mt Buller/Mt Stirling Strategic Management Plan
- EPA – Audit feedback
- VEAC – report to draft chapters – River Red Gum
- Envirofund – application for funding re Mossbed Rehabilitation

The guest speaker at our April meeting, Luke Chamberlain, talked about protecting our old growth forests as well as the rally for World Environment Day which will be held on 4 June.

The future direction of our committee was openly discussed with varying views. Due to a shortage of time at our April meeting this discussion will be continued at our next meeting in May.

VicWalk News

Advertising Rates

1/6 page advertisement.....	\$25.00
1/4 page advertisement.....	\$40.00
1/3 page advertisement.....	\$50.00
1/2 page advertisement.....	\$75.00
Full page advertisement.....	\$150.00
Address list of affiliate clubs....	\$50.00
Insert for Newsletter*	\$50.00

Note: Advertisements must be artwork ready.

*Advertiser to supply 300 printed inserts each edition

It was gratifying that our committee was acknowledged by MBW Club in following up a concern of theirs. Last November the club reported trailbikes on the Alpine Walking Track near Walhalla. They contacted local authorities and received somewhat of a runaround. The VicWalk office was then notified of the problem. This area is a difficult one as many authorities have control of different sections. However, we promptly reported it to DSE head office. After many emails it was ascertained that the area in question was actually PV responsibility, and they responded in a positive manner.

At the conclusion of the matter the club's representative was pleased to respond:

“Thank you for following this through with persistence and diligence. It has left me with the impression that it is worth the effort for us, as club members, feeding issues such as this through VicWalk ... Thanks once again for keeping me updated. I will pass on the relevant details to the other walk leader involved on the day of our walk back in November, so that he will know VicWalk has pursued this as far as possible, and that our voice has been heard in the interest of making walking in that area a little safer and more pleasant next time!”

Our committee knows the right people to approach, and is happy to pursue any of your concerns with the relevant authorities. Please continue to contact me at any time, on matters that you think may be of importance.

STEVEN ROBERTSON
Convener

VicWalk Conservation Committee

BUNYIP STATE PARK

After several years of submissions and meetings, the long-awaited response on the Recreational Framework for Bunyip State Park and surrounding areas has just been released. See the PV website.

Mostly it's great news – but there are still a few concerns that will be followed through.

More details next month.

TRACK CLEARING

Over the weekend of 13–14 May, 33 VicWalk members attended a track clearing weekend in the Grampians. It was a fantastic effort with five from Melbourne Bushwalkers, eight from Sunraysia Bushwalkers, eight from Melbourne Womens Walking Club, two from Bendigo Bushwalkers, one from VNPA-BWAG, seven from Warrnambool Walkers and two from Bayside Bushwalkers.

PV was extremely impressed with attendance and the work carried out.

Full Moons

Monday 12 June; Tuesday 11 July;
Wednesday 9 August; Friday 8 September;
Saturday 7 October; Sunday 5 November

Sunrise & Sunset

Friday, 9 June7.31am5.07pm
Friday, 23 June7.36am5.08pm
Friday, 14 July7.33am5.18pm
Friday, 28 July7.23am5.29pm
Friday, 11 Aug7.09am5.40pm
Friday, 25 Aug6.51am5.52pm
Friday, 8 Sept6.31am6.04pm
Friday, 22 Sept6.09am6.16pm
Friday, 6 Oct5.48am6.28pm
Friday, 20 Oct5.28am6.42pm
Daylight saving starts Sun 29 Oct at 2am
Friday, 3 Nov6.11am7.56pm
Friday, 17 Nov5.58am8.12pm

Sources
www.museum.vic.gov.au/planetarium
www.timeanddate.com/worldclock

FRIENDS OF BAW BAW

Friends of Baw Baw still wants to locate photographs of people using the Upper Yarra Walking Track during the early 1900s. Please spread the word.

The Friends group will celebrate the centenary of the opening of the Baw Baw Tourist Track (Yarra Track) in March 2007. The celebrations will take place over the Labour Day long weekend in the historic township of Walhalla.

The aims of the celebration are to:

- Support the work of the Baw Baw Plateau photographic project through stimulating conversations with parents and grandparents who walked the track in the 1920s and 1930s and who may still have memorabilia of those trips;
- Promote the significance of Baw Baw NP and its surrounding forests;
- Highlight contributions made by volunteers in society;
- Raise the profile of bushwalking and low-impact outdoor recreation activities in Victoria; and
- Recognise the important role bushwalking played in the early development of tourism in Victoria.

The celebrations will include a historic memorabilia display in the Walhalla Mechanics Institute, open daily over the three day period; and possibly guided walks in the local area led by FOBB members and local bushwalking clubs over the three days.

FIRST AID COURSE

Saturday 15 July 2006

Level One Emergency First Aid Certificate Course, including Emergency Life Support "Outdoors Special".

Minimum 10 participants.

Cost for 15 to 20 attendees is \$75 per person: cost for six to 14 attendees is \$85 per person.

This course is being organised by Maroondah Bushwalking Club and is open to members of all VicWalk clubs.

For further information please phone Paul Chamings, Maroondah Training Officer on 9705 7601.

VICWALK TREASURER

VicWalk needs a new treasurer. Our present treasurer is not seeking re-election at the AGM on 6 June. Please consider whether you can help take on this important role.

Position Description

The treasurer is an elected member of the VicWalk executive and the position is required by the Associations Incorporation Act under which VicWalk is constituted. Term of office is from AGM to AGM up to a maximum of three terms.

Duties

- Collect, receive and bank all moneys due to VicWalk
- Make all authorised payments
- Maintain the financial accounts with full details of all receipts, expenditure, assets and liabilities
- Report monthly to the Executive and Council on the financial position of the organisation
- Prepare notes to the Annual Financial Report and the statement lodged with the Registrar of Incorporated Associations
- Administer the taxation affairs of VicWalk
- Maintain the human resource records of staff including all leave, PAYG tax, superannuation and Workcover.
- Provide input to the budget process and the development and review of the VicWalk Financial Management Plan
- As part of the executive team contribute to the decision making process

Preferred Knowledge, Skills and Attributes

- Practical knowledge of double entry bookkeeping practices
- Working knowledge of computer programs including Excel & MYOB
- Effective oral and written communication skills
- Access to and ability to use email
- The ability to work as part of a team

For further details please contact the president David Reid on phone 5984 0039 or email valdavid@alphalink.com.au

BUSHWALKING VOLUNTEERS

It is likely that most bushwalking clubs in Victoria have one or more members who are also members of an environmental group such as Friends or Landcare. Friends groups work on designated public land, for example in a national park or on a creek reserve. Landcare groups generally work on private land in support of sustainable agriculture in balance with remnant ecosystems. Some Landcare groups, such as the Dunmoochin Landcare Group that I am associated with, have a heavy bias towards retention and protection of remnant vegetation and the planting of local species in aid of habitat and biodiversity.

There is an easy connection between bushwalking and conservation group activities. Bushwalkers might like to occasionally enrich their walks program by helping

with a planting, weeding or erosion control program organised by a conservation group. I will explain how this can be done shortly.

Any of the field activities by Landcare and Friends groups provide exercise often in a very attractive environment. There is a deal of organisation involved and bushwalkers have a group discipline that is very suited to planting procedures which involve optimising plant selection and location, planting, guarding and watering.

The CAEX Bushwalking Club has been supporting the Dunmoochin Landcare Group for some seven years. Dunmoochin is a low-density residential area just north of Hurstbridge set on wooded hills. The objective of the Landcare group is to protect 65 hectares of high value bushland by

planting a buffer zone on cleared properties surrounding this conservation zone. (The Landcare group also carries out pest plant and animal control.) Over this time, the bushwalking club has gained Landcare skills which are highly valued by the Landcare group, particularly as planting in the rather thin and rocky soils in our area requires extra technique. Social aspects of the day's activities are not neglected and there is a great deal of satisfaction gained in transforming a local landscape.

Your club may have a connection through locality or membership or favourite walking location with a particular conservation group and that would provide opportunity for work in an area of particular interest. It may be just a matter of a talk with a Friends or Landcare group member in your club. You could contact PV or your local shire for an appropriate Friends group contact. Alternatively you could speak to the Landcare representative in the Catchment Management Authority (CMA) operating in your locality or area of interest. In the case of Melbourne-based clubs this would be the Port Phillip and Westernport CMA where Doug on phone 9296 4662 would put you in touch with your local representative who in turn should be able to introduce you to a Landcare group.

Incidentally, CAEX has other volunteer interests. Through a member who has a special interest in helping disadvantaged children and students in Nepal, CAEX has played a part in raising funds, all of which are passed directly to help those in need. Financial assistance has also been provided to the Mittagundi Youth Education Centre near Falls Creek to provide camping equipment (tents, stoves) for young hikers in that area. In both cases our walking activities have introduced us to the people and organisations needing assistance.

DAVID NICHOLLS
CAEX Bushwalking Club



CAEX members looking at a small new forest that they planted three years ago at Dunmoochin (near Hurstbridge). On this day, together with Dunmoochin Landcare members, they planted another small forest and removed four trailer loads of weeds. Photograph by Chris Towers

PLANNING A TRIP TO QUEENSLAND?

Try out Tourism Queensland's new website: www.queenslandwalks.com.au

It is a fairly comprehensive site, categorised by region, with practical tips and hints for each walk as well as useful links to guidebooks/authors, government sites, etc.

"All of the bush walks are self-paced and adaptable to suit any age or fitness level. For the keen walker there is a range of multi-day treks with excellent camping facilities available. For a quick snapshot of the surrounding native area, there are also many short one to two hour walks available."

The media release also talks about "Queensland's Great!Walks, which are a series of six world-class walking tracks throughout the State. Five of the Great!Walks are now open to the public including Fraser Island, Whitsundays, Wet Tropics and Mackay Highlands and the Sunshine Coast Hinterland Great! Walk (which just opened in April). The Gold Coast Hinterland Great!Walk is due to open in 2007."

VICWALK NEWS LAYOUT DESIGNER

Sadly, after four years on the job, our VicWalk News layout designer, Helen Rowley, is retiring after the September issue. If you have:

- A flair for layout;
- Intermediate to advanced Microsoft Word skills or desktop publishing experience; and
- About 14 hours of time per month

then I'd like to hear from you. VicWalk News is currently published monthly, February through to December and all material is compiled by the editor and sent to the layout designer by email.

If you, or someone you know, has a flair for layout and a willingness to 'give it a go' please contact me on 9803 5426 (after hours) or by email at ekerlin@optusnet.com.au, or feel free to contact Helen direct to discuss the job role in more detail, at hthrowley@melbpc.org.au.

Eileen Kerlin
VicWalk News Editor

MORE VICWALK CLUBS VOLUNTEERING

The following is an excerpt of a letter from Terry Manning of the Melton Bushwalkers to VicWalk:

"Thank you all for your assistance and congratulations on all the good work you are doing. We are only a small club so our input is limited. However, in the past, as members of Melton Bushwalkers and Friends of the Lerderderg, we have built three gazebos in the Lerderderg State Park, and three in the Wombat State Forest. The materials for the three Lerderderg gazebos were paid for by PV and we supplied the labour at no cost.

We also clear one track each year, and this year it was the East River Track in the Lerderderg."

Thank you Terry for acknowledging the help you get from VicWalk, and congratulations on your club's contribution to the community through your volunteering. Well done.

OXFAM WALK

In April this year Max and I participated in our second Oxfam. The Oxfam requires each team of four to walk 100km in 48 hours. It's like a walking Fun Run to raise money.

About 2000 people participated, looked after by 700 volunteers which made for a happy interaction for all. Some volunteers provided lollies to walkers. Some groups attempted to walk straight through without stopping except at check-in points. Other groups had breaks half way and/or check points.

The walk had to be cut short by the last leg, Millwarra to Donna Buang by 11.5km. This was because heavy rain on Friday night made the tracks very greasy on some sections through the Dandenongs and the uphill section to Donna Buang. The Dandenongs section was made even more dangerous for many, having to be walked at night.

Experienced walkers are used to walking in much worse conditions than these, sometimes with heavy packs. However most Oxfam walkers were in running shoes and some problems did occur in the difficult sections of the Dandenongs. Therefore the decision to cancel the last section was the correct one as this would have also been overnight for many.

On another note the first Oxfam walk we participated in – Ferny Creek to Marysville, and the last Oxfam walk, Jells Park to Donna Buang, would both make very good overnight walks for a number of days, staying at accommodation each night. Access is available by public transport at the beginning and end as well as at other points along the route.

IAN BELL
Project Officer
Long Distance Walking Trails

BSAR SPEAKERS CORRECTION

All clubs recently received a letter offering a speaker from BSAR for club meetings. Unfortunately the snailmail address was incorrect. Requests to the BSAR Convenor should be sent to:

PO Box 5042 (not 4250)

Laburnum 3130 (not 3031)

With apologies from Monica Chapman for the dyslexia!

The best of mature travel and leisure

GetUp&Go

GET UP & GO SEARCHES FOR AUSTRALIA'S MOST ADVENTUROUS SENIOR

"The Get Up & Go Magazine Award celebrates inspiring individuals who refuse to let age be a barrier," Get Up & Go Editor-In-Chief, Bobbi Mahlab said. "We are calling for entries from seniors who are making the most of their mature years by challenging themselves with new travel experiences." Any Australian senior can be in the running to win the award, as long as they are aged over 60 and an Australian citizen or permanent resident. They can nominate themselves or be nominated by a friend or family member.

In 2005, runners-up included: a 90-year-old aerobatic pilot, a Masters Games gold medal winner who lived with native Indians in the Amazon, a sky-diver who travelled to Antarctica, a 67-year-old scuba diver, and a man who races Goggomobils and motorcycled across South America.

For the chance to win the title and a trip for two to China, courtesy of China Holidays and Malaysia Airlines, entrants simply need to describe a travel adventure they have had since they turned 60 and what led them to travel.

Entry details are available in Get Up & Go magazine, or by visiting www.getupandgo.com.au. The competition closes on 30 July, and the winner will be announced in the September 2006 (spring) issue of *Get Up & Go*.

For further information contact Mione Peacock on phone (02) 9818 8896 or email mione@mahlabmedia.com.au

AROUND THE TRACKS

NEWS AND ARTICLES FROM CLUBS

Help in the High Country

Located at the very top of the catchments and headwaters of north-eastern Victoria's major rivers, alpine mossbeds retain and slowly release water, thus reducing erosion, whilst also improving downstream water quality through natural filtration. This is particularly important in spring when snow melt increases the amount of water flowing in the upper catchment.

These mossbeds have been degraded since non-indigenous occupation, through various land use practices including cattle and sheep grazing. The fires that burnt large sections of the Victorian alps in 2003 resulted in further degradation. Those degraded mossbeds are now suffering increased erosion, exposed peat soils, drying out and dying sphagnum moss, weed invasion and vegetation loss.

The rehabilitation work involves building small weirs to retain and slow the flow of water in shallow drainage channels. The weirs will raise the water table at a local level, saturate the peat soils, and slow the speed of water flow, thus preventing erosion and trapping silt and nutrients to encourage natural revegetation. This work is funded through the Victorian Government's High Country Initiative.

During the long weekend of 10-13 March 27 people from local bushwalking clubs who are members of VicWalk joined together to put something extra back into the high country. Some 19 bushies were accommodated at Viking Lodge located within Falls Creek Alpine Village, with another eight camping out on the high plains. Clubs represented included Waverley Bushwalking Club, VMTC, Melbourne Bushwalkers, Walking Club of Victoria, Boroondara and Maroondah Bushwalking Club (12 people).

The pointy end of the weekend started on Saturday morning, as PV rangers made us feel most welcome, and presented a field study in local moss vegetation, invading weeds, and the reasoning behind the location and construction methods for the weirs.

We then split and relocated to the three work sites, where we developed new skills and constructed weirs by filling two metre long tubes of biodegradable material (the socks) with wood chips, and nailed them across the small, shallow water channels using steel pegs. Weirs across the more significant channels were constructed using bales of core material hacked to size, wrapped in biodegradable material, and held in place using wooden stakes. By the end of Sunday we had constructed upward of 100 weirs, extending the work already started by previous volunteer groups.

Action for Clubs

- Consider running the Federation daywalk in 2007 (p1)
- Advertise upcoming track-clearing events (p2)
- Ask members for photos of the Upper Yarra Walking Track in the 1920s & 1930s (p3)
- Request nominations for the VicWalk Treasurer and VicWalk News Layout Designer jobs (p3 & p5)

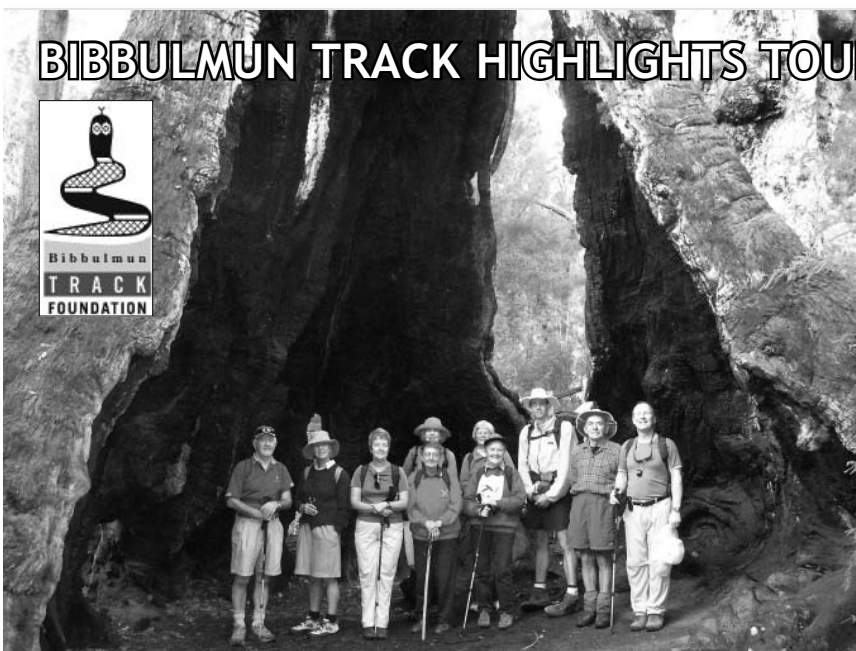
The weather on the last of the three days cancelled any further work, and many bushies took the opportunity to examine a range of sites. There was great satisfaction to see how the weirs were really working as the rain fell and the channels filled with water as designed.

The planning and organization of this weekend of mossbed rehabilitation was spearheaded by Steven Robertson, VicWalk Conservation Committee convenor.

This initiative is a part of a long term partnership between VicWalk and PV in protecting and helping with our parks, and in promoting healthy parks for healthy people.

PHIL KRONE
Maroondah Bushwalking Club

BIBBULMUN TRACK HIGHLIGHTS TOUR



8 DAYS / 7 NIGHTS

Experience the Track at its best in the spectacular wildflower season.

- Selected full and ½ day walks
- Spectacular coastal, forest & wilderness areas
- Motel & chalet accommodation
- All meals & transfers
- Side trips to eco-tourism attractions

18th-25th September 2006

For more info call (08) 9481 0551 or email events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au
www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au

AROUND THE TRACKS

Cobberas by Billycart: Easter 2006

Last month I reported that members of the Bendigo Outdoor Club were going to 'walk' the Cobberas with billy carts ... and so they did. Here are some excerpts from Bill Clark's report on the trip:

"Well my friends, this turned out to be a nightmare on the way in. I must start by saying even with wheels it is still hard going up those steep hills on the way into Cowombat Flat. Friday - Omeo Bakery etc, then drive to the car park on Cowombat Track. Billycarts were assembled, tyres checked, loads installed and off we went. As the first part was downhill and the weather was OK at this stage, it was fun prancing along in harness. Then the hills started, even with a full cart with three people's loads, I was accused of walking too fast for the others! (I can't win.)

The weather was getting ominous as predicted and it started to spit rain. Up and down we went, with very gusty winds pushing us around, more rain and dirty hands. The ladies wandered down the last slope to Cowombat and unloaded while young James helped me get my cart down to Cowombat Flat. Freezing temperatures, heavy rain, a quick glance at the aeroplane crash then picked a possie to camp.

Shelters hastily erected, tents up, trying to keep out the wind and rain. Water collection runs down to the Murray, freezing hands, filling bladders, more warm layers put on one's body, cook a blustery tea and eat same. So cold I couldn't keep my hands from shaking vigorously whilst holding onto a hot brew, which in turn was chilling down as fast as you can read this. Bed at 6pm would you believe! Leaving the rain, the cold and the gales outside the Salewa, I felt like a small kid in a comfortable bed. Warming up, dry and safe. Thirteen hours later it was 7am Saturday.

Saturday - Everything was cold and clammy from Friday, but the sun was peeking out from below low clouds. A little bit of sunshine cheers things up. Once we had acclimatized to the alps again, we plodded off with a daypack only, heading NE on a 4WD track ... 1.6km later we set a compass on a SE bearing and speared off the track, down the slopes looking for the official steel pole. The official start of the border and or the Murray.

Being the alps of course we had more rain, gloom, and then a snow shower, just as we found that legendary steel pole. But this didn't worry us hardened adventurers, smiles, cameras and lots of posed shots. One of my photos has a snowflake dead centre of the pix.

The next thing of interest was the first stone cairn marking the border,

CLUB CONTACT DETAILS

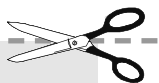
If you've changed your website details recently, or if your club contact details have changed, can you please:

1. Check your details on the VicWalk website and get in touch with the webmaster if anything needs updating; and
2. Advise Jenny at the VicWalk office of any change of club office bearers and/or club contact details.

up on a saddle near Forest Hill. I set off on a compass bearing. Barry and James set off just following the occasional brumby pads up to the saddle. The weather was starting to ease up a little, but we still had cold winds and a little spitting.

As we were also trying to see some brumbies, we decided to follow the little Murray back around to Cowombat Flat, passing through both bushland and grassy patches. Fresh signs everywhere, but the wild nags were dodging us. Back at Cowombat camp the clouds were going, a bit more sun and a bit more scenery.

VicWalk News Subscription



When your subscription is due, a red dot will appear on the address label of this newsletter. If your subscription has already been paid, please ignore the red dot.

To renew, use this subscription form, or copy it if you prefer to keep the newsletter intact. Make cheques payable to the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs, and send to 332 Banyule Road, Viewbank 3084.

Enquiries should be directed to the Secretary.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Email _____

Club _____

Enclosed is \$ _____ being for

_____ years subscription to *VicWalk News* at \$15 per year posted (11 issues).

_____ copy/copies of _____

at \$1.70 each posted (individual issues).

AROUND THE TRACKS

Taking into mind energy levels, time available etc, we rearranged the day. The ladies potted around camp, including chinwagging with a couple that had just walked in from Thredbo. Barry, James and I took off to the west. We crossed Pilot Creek which was surprisingly large and flowing quite well, then ascended a small hill there. The bushfire damage was everywhere but also was evidence of the regenerative powers of the OZ bush. Dropping down from that crest, we crossed over Pilot Creek in a gorge and found the burnt out gauging station. Returning east, back to camp about 1km for a non-rushed tea.

Barry and James had erected what could only be described as a Taj Mahal. A giant system of three tarps and one tent that gave them shelter from the winds and rain, and thus out of harm's way, could enjoy the storms and the products of their cooking. Saturday was a late night, about 8pm to bed. Still, nice to be warm and snug inside the tent.

Sunday - Easter bunny put on his cold damp clothes and spread frozen chocolate eggs around. (A BOG tradition at Easter). Chocolate so cold it was turning white, but nevertheless smiling faces still devoured it. We had a frosty night, tents, tarps had a layer of ice on them. We decided to make the journey back to the car

easier by knocking off part of the trip this day. We had a little walk over to the gauging station to show it to the girls, packed up the carts then moved up to the crashed wing. Sunshine, blue skies, and the obligatory photos to prove it. Then assault the track. Unfortunately, from Cowombat Flat up to the pre-selected saddle was nearly all uphill, so it was a grunt.

We had chosen a small grassy paddock about 3.5km back from Cowombat. A beautiful afternoon, a pleasant tea sitting there in the warm alpine grass. Would you believe, a bold fox just trotted past camp, showing no fear. Barry demonstrated his fox whistling abilities, then young James took off like a rocket and chased the fox around the back of the paddock. (You can do that when you're young!)

Monday - Up around 6am, for a long day. I had spent most of the night inventing a breaking system for my cart. So with a well-rehearsed plan, some boy scout training from yonks ago, some sweat and spilt blood, I constructed a brilliant log braking system, complete with self cantering pads and with spring loaded return. This made it easier all round. While I was busy doing this the others were complaining about the frosty cold morning. We had water left in the billy overnight and it had turned into a layer of ice 10mm thick. For the

last 10km I only needed help from the ladies about twice, so at least they could enjoy the walk back to the car.

Back to the car by about 11am and unpack. Barry and son were heading north so we parted at this point. Muriel, Rosemary and I had a quick drive around in Benambra, stopped for a few minutes on McMillans Lookout taking in the cold wind, the eagles, and wonderful scenery, then into Omeo for nice fish and chips. The body needed some junk food.

In summary, next time take less junk, use lighter carts and equipped with brakes, and take some more males. I can't wait to do it all again ASAP. To base camp in at Cowombat then circulate around the peaks is an unquenched dream ... so watch this space.

PS - this method doesn't give you blisters or worn out feet."

As if billycarts aren't enough for Bendigo Outdoor Club ... their next outlandish adventure is going to be by camel! Terry Potter is organizing a dromedary safari around the Lake Eyre South region of South Australia - described as seven days cameleering (hopefully not camel leering), in mid-July. You definitely have to let us know how that one turns out Terry!



VicWalk News

Print Post Approved
PP381667/00312

SURFACE
MAIL

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

If undeliverable
please return to the
Federation of Victorian
Walking Clubs (VicWalk)
Inc.

332 Banyule Road,
Viewbank 3084