



Ben Cruachan Walking Club

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WWW: www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com

ISSUE 228 — Newsletter of the Ben Cruachan Walking Club — February 2023



Mt St Gwinear to Mt Erica

Ben Cruachan Walking Club



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Club Committee meets on the second Wednesday of even numbered months

The next Committee meeting is at 7pm on Wednesday 12 April 2023
at the Maffra Community Sports Club, 122-126 Johnson Street, MAFFRA.

Welcome to new members:

President's Footnotes

My Third Post

Christmas and the school holiday season have come and gone and what a mild summer it has been; I don't think there has been a day over 40°C here in Gippsland and plenty of days in the 20s. I'm sure these mild conditions contributed to a great turn out for our first club walk for the year in January led by Joe (Mt St Gwinear to Mt Erica and Mushroom Rocks) with twenty walkers taking part.

BUSHWALKING VICTORIA

Along with Nicki and Joe, I attended the Bushwalking Victoria (BWV) forum in Melbourne last week. I was pleasantly surprised to learn that BWV has sixty affiliated clubs with around 6,000 members. Of course there are many more bushwalkers and some clubs or walking groups aren't affiliated.

High on the agenda was leadership development and to this end BWV is in the latter stages of developing an online leader training course. Those present had a sneak preview and quick look at a couple of the modules (there are eight) then provided feedback to the steering committee. After some further refinement it will be available on the BWV website for either personal or group training with a trained trainer. In the meantime we are holding a leader training day in Sale on 13th May.

The date and location of 2023 Fedwalks has been decided – it will be in the Wombat State Forest which is north of Bacchus Marsh on the weekend of 21 & 22 October with accommodation to be self-organised. At this stage there is no host club but our own Jack Winterbottom will be organising the walks booklet.

COMMITTEE MEETING

At the February meeting the committee received several reports from members including Membership from Ken; we have 140 members – Facebook from Jodie; we have 442 FB members – Tracks and Conservation from Joe; BTAC had a very successful track clearing weekend on the Clive Lanigan Track along the Wellington River (see the FB page for a close-up photo of a platypus that was “playing” in the river) – BCWC website from John, with help from Geoff; still working on an upgrade to our website – Finance from Monica; the club is in good financial health – Walks from Geoff; there are still gaps on the walks calendar.... an appeal for leaders to put on some more walks. And finally ...

THE TWENTY BUSWALKING COMMANDMENTS – first instalment

1. Thou shall not cook on a neighbour's campfire without invitation.
2. Thou shall not leave thy companions without informing thy leader.
3. Thou shall not push in front without invitation or request when walking in file.
4. Thou shall not place wet boots near thy campfire.

Peter

Club News

Combined Walk Leader

March Club Night

Training 13 May 2023

08v March 2023

Bush Walking Victoria conducts training programs for aspiring Day Walk Leaders for the many walking clubs in our State. The Committee has managed to arrange for one of these courses to be held in our area on Saturday 13 May 2023.

The course runs over one day, will be held in Sale, and will cover the following areas:

Leadership, Navigation, Walk Planning, Risk Management and Conducting the Walk

For further details, contact John Cox (0419 356 710; johnandsuecox@gmail.com).

Registration is by email to the Club Secretary, Robyn Kercher, at sebcwc@gmail.com.

Heather Phillipson will be the guest speaker at our March club night at the Criterion in Sale. The Phillipson family have an environmental philanthropic trust (The Rendere Trust <https://rendere.org.au/>) that supports various causes including Trust for Nature, Landcare Victoria, Land Covenantors Victoria and Team Kowari. If you don't know what a Kowari is, come along and Heather will show you. This will be a great night. RSVP Monica by Monday 06 March on joe.monica@hotmail.com; 0431 777 460.

2023 Combined Gippsland Bushwalking Clubs Event Outline

The South Gippsland Walking and Adventure Club is hosting the 2023 Combined Gippsland Bushwalking Clubs' Weekend at Inverloch on March 24th - 26th 2023.

Where Inverloch. Participation: Members of Gippsland Clubs affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria including Bass Coast Strollers Walking Group, Ben Cruachan Walking Club, West Gippsland Bushwalking Club, Peregrine Club Inc, Strzelecki Bushwalking Club, Wonthaggi Beach & Bush.

How to Register

Go to the [SGWAAC Website](#)

Select 'Find Out More' under the 'Join Us' section on the right hand side of the Home Page

Select 'Click Here for a Membership Form'

Select 'Apply for/renew Membership' – don't worry its a special category of membership and free

Complete the Form and when you get to 'Category of Membership' select the category of 'Gippsland Combined Clubs Temporary Membership' from the drop down menu and submit. You will receive confirmation of your membership and will then be invited to complete your Member Profile and submit a password. You will now have access to the 2023 Combined Gippsland Bushwalking Clubs Event and associated activities. Register for the event and then select and Register for any of the Activities you would like to participate in. Registration will close on 24 March 2023.

Venue and Hut The base for the event is to be the Ingenia Holidays Inverloch Foreshore Camp Ground at the park entrance - see here for further information. **Accommodation** Participants are required to arrange their own accommodation. There is a range of camping and roofed accommodation options in Inverloch including Holiday Parks, Apartments, Hostels, Cabins, Bed and Breakfasts and Private Holiday Rental. In particular, the Ingenia Holidays Inverloch Foreshore Camp Ground, the adjoining Big 4 Ingenia Holiday Park or the RACV Inverloch Resort may appeal. 'Pre Booking' accommodation is essential. Further information at <https://inverlochaccommodation.com.au/>

Program A variety of walks ranging from Easy to Medium will be offered on Saturday and repeated again on Sunday. Cyclists will be provided with an opportunity to explore the local rail trails on each of Saturday and Sunday. A short walking and cycling activity will also be conducted on Friday afternoon. You can choose to walk/ride on one or all three days. Please see the detailed [program here](#). We will be meet each day for registration and carpooling at 8.30 am at the Ingenia Holidays Inverloch Foreshore Camp Ground hub.

Social Program Dinner will be at the Inlet Hotel, [3-5 The Esplanade, Inverloch](#) (at own cost) in a private area, with an entertaining after dinner speaker. Pre dinner drinks will be at 5.30 pm and dinner at 6.30 pm. Please register your intent to attend by using the activity booking facility. For further information, please contact: admin@sgwaac.com.au.

Walk Reports

BTAC clears Valley of Destruction

Date: 06 November 2022

Leader: Peter J

Report: Joe van Beek

On the sunny morning of 06 November, Peter J led BTAC volunteers in clearing the Valley of Destruction.

Fourteen BTAC volunteers worked with Parks Vic to improve walking access to Tali Karng from the Tamboritha Road. They made improvements to the many river crossings on the Wellington River to make navigation easier, they cleared overhanging vegetation and did some work on the Riggall Spur Track, but the main emphasis was clearing the overgrown 6.5km Clive Lanigan Memorial Track through the Valley of Destruction terminating at Tali Karng. It wasn't all hard work, there was great camaraderie at the camp and volunteers were entertained by the antics of a small black platypus in the Wellington River adjacent to the camp site.



This was a logistically challenging activity with weather and access tracks needing to be dry for the activity to go ahead. It was clear a few days out that the conditions were favourable and that the contingency work would have to wait for another day. The volunteers gathered at Muttonwood Camp on the Wellington River north of Licola on Australia Day ready for an early start next morning to get to and establish camp at the base of Riggall Spur Track, 13km upstream from Tamboritha Road. On the Friday morning participants parked their vehicles at the



Platypus Camp and walked with day packs up the Wellington River, attending to river crossing improvements with hand tools, to the camp site. All camping gear, supplies for the weekend, tools, equipment and PPE were transported to the camp site by two Parks Victoria vehicles which negotiated a network of 4WD tracks, including Management Vehicles Only tracks, to get to the camping spot. A few volunteers scored a ride on the vehicles. Brush cutters were used to clear sufficient area for all the tents and amenities.

Saturday's forecast was for temperatures into the 30s so it was an early 7am start and an early finish for the two work teams. All workers were back in camp by 2:30pm to make full use of the river and shade to keep cool. It was during the afternoon that Meredith sighted the little platypus as it made its way upstream time and time again, sometimes leaving the water, just to be swept downstream by the current again to a pool created by a log across the river. Parks Victoria rangers provided the volunteers with a sumptuous BBQ for the evening meal.

Sunday and Monday were long days as each day the walk to the start of work and return from knock off position was longer. Fortunately these days were cooler, but still a bit humid. It was heavy work to clear the track of vegetation and fallen logs among all the rocks. The lake, Tali Karng, was reached around 2:30pm on Monday, mission achieved. That night the volunteers slept well with the satisfaction of a job well done.

On Tuesday, the camp was packed up and everything stowed on the Parks Victoria vehicles for the journey back to the cars at Platypus Camp. The majority of the volunteers walked the full distance back to the cars with some still having enough energy to do some track clearing with hand tools along the way. The team contributed some 650 volunteer hours to achieve the objective.

Many thanks to the Parks Victoria Rangers, Tehan, Bek and Sam for their hospitality, facilitation and support. Thanks to Patrick for leading the second team and thanks to all the participants for their dedication to the task and their camaraderie throughout the six days.



Mt St Gwinear to Mt Erica

Date: Saturday 07 January 2023

Leader: Joe van Beek

Report: Sue Wielgosz

Twenty walkers were keen to start their trek from the Mt St Gwinear car park to the Mt Erica car park today, (about 16kms) and, after meeting at the Mt Erica car park, were allocated seats in four cars and headed off to the start of the walk.



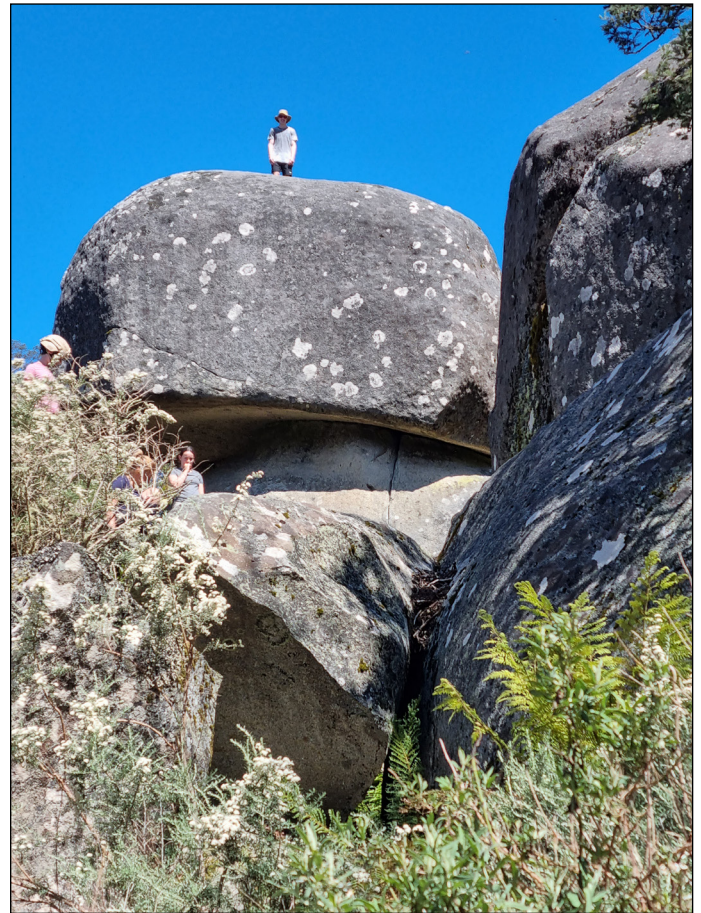
Starting with beautiful blue skies and the sound of many birds, we made our way uphill via a strangely named construction called the 'look out' - steps up to a raised platform, room for many people, steps down again, but surrounded by dense bush - not your everyday look out.

Leaving the 'scenic shortcut' we were onto the trail, and within a short time arrived at the cairn marking the top of Mt St Gwinear. Time to replace the fluids lost, and morning tea was taken (joined by March flies and lizards) in front of a view over the distant mountains.

The track went up and down through fern gullies, moss-covered rocks and snow gums. At the intersection between Mt Baw Baw (right turn) and Mt Erica (left) is a collection of large boulders - Cave Rock - where we found a solo walker on his second day of walking the AAWT. This seemed to be peak time on the tracks as many walkers converged from each direction.

Continuing on our way, a brief downhill section allowed us to catch our breath, but not for long! The stunning snow gums helped distract from the long uphill section, and the mud traps gave us some laughs. One intrepid walker caused great merriment by somehow ending up on her rear end in the biggest section of mud we came across.

The chimney is all that remains of Talbot Hut, and it is a popular camping spot with large boulders arranged almost in a circle, and fresh running water. The top of Mt Erica is nearby, and then the track takes a decidedly downhill turn to Mushroom Rocks. This is another popular camping spot and, being only a kilometre or so from the car park, is well used by families with young children.



Arriving back at the Mt Erica car park, Joe organised all walkers into the correct cars, all slightly wearier than when we started. Thanks to Joe for organising not only an enjoyable walk, but also for the well organised car shuffle!



Howitt, Magdala, Hell's Window, King Billy

Date: 04 - 06 February 2023

Leaders: Oliver Raymond

Report: Lynette Newman

The high country around Mt Howitt is spectacular and the views can be extensive, dramatic and terrifying; or when the mist envelopes you, the focus reduces to the wildflowers in the snow....



Wait, snow?! In early February? Yes, indeed. We had seen the forecast for snow down to 1500m and felt the icy blast in the air in Bairnsdale.

We gathered at Glenmaggie Hall and settled in to Oliver's trusty 4WD. There was much reminiscing of club trips more than 17 years earlier as Jill had been a member then and had been on several epic outings with Oliver and Andrew. I'm sure this trip will rate amongst the epics.

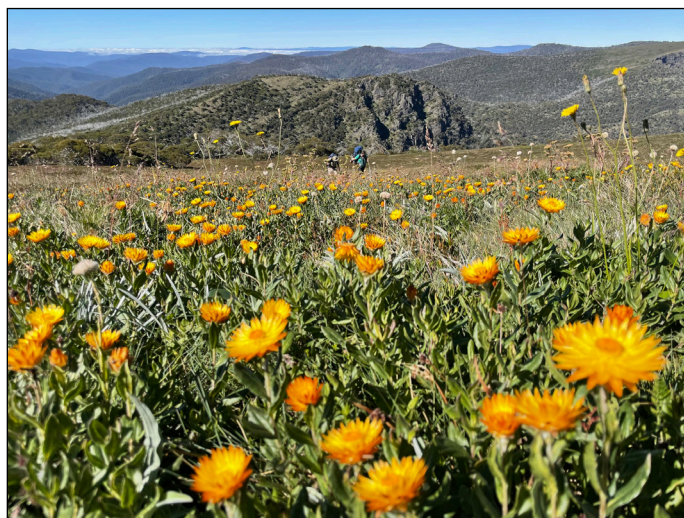
When the Tamboritha Road became a teeth jarring, bone shaking nightmare of corrugations, conversation was reduced to occasional shouted questions – somehow, Andrew and Jill actually managed to nap on the return journey. Light drizzle came and went and the outside temperature dropped. The Howitt Road had been recently graded with extra material added in some areas but there were several very slippery sections and Oliver's white car was now two-tone, brown and white. A light dusting of snow decorated the roadside.

Warm, waterproof gear was the go as it was 3°C at Howitt Car Park when we set off just after 11am. Vallejo-Gantner Hut brought a welcome shelter from the icy blast for our lunch. The drizzle had stopped but the trees still dropped moisture on us and the close vegetation on the trackside down from Macalister Springs meant that legs became thoroughly soaked. As Tail End Charlie, I hoped the 4 in front would have taken all the moisture. Just to mention that the walk preview stated "It should be noted that the walk leader is 81 yo, so a cracking pace will be avoided!!" I must say that the pace was constant and never seemed slow and it did allow Helmut and myself to take many photos.

We reached the summit of Mt Howitt with visibility down to about 10m, the wind howled and at times we battled to stay on the track. We skirted around Big Hill and made it to the Hell's Window camp about 4pm. Visibility was improving and we were below the snow. Oliver worked his magic

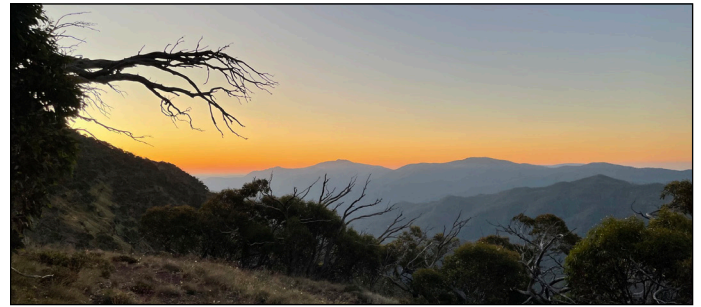
to have a cracking fire going to dry out our gear, and bring life back to frozen fingers. Helmut and Andrew went to the spring for water. 10km done, tents up, we enjoyed dinner and brief views of clear sky before retiring for the night.

Sunday: after a low of 1.90C noted in my tent, it was a relaxed start at 8.30. Today was the highlight and the weather was perfect. Hell's Window opened up as we hiked to Mt Magdala. We spent a bit of time viewing the rock formations from different angles with Helmut going to the most ad-



venturous spots. The wildflowers were fabulous and I was pleased to see the orange everlastings starting to open. (On a club wildflower walk to Mt Howitt in mid Jan 2019 these flowers were just past their prime.)

Some of the flora spotted; Grass Triggerplant, Prickly Starwort, Victorian Buttercups, Pale Everlastings, Billy Buttons, Gunn's Groundsel, Fireweed Groundsel, tall Rice-flower, Native Raspberry, Pale Vanilla-lily, Showy Violet, Royal Bluebell, Alpine Rusty Pods, Tasman Flax-lily, Bidgee-Widgee, Muller's Snow Gentian, Silver Daisy, Mountain Celery, Clustered Everlasting, Hoary Sunray, Yam Daisy, Leafy Daisy and Spoon-leaved Daisies.



were truly stunning.

Back to camp tired, but exhilarated, after a total of 11.5km.

Monday: after a warmer night with a full moon, we headed off to reverse our first day's hike soon after 8am. We reveled in the views that were obscured on our hike in and looked to the Crosscut Saw where the club will venture in March. Thanks to all for a fabulous few days and particularly to our inspiring leader Oliver.

Mount Magdala and King Billy No 1 provided more 360 degree views with Mount Buller and Mount Stirling being easily identified. Lunch was at a spring before King Billy turn off and our return took a lower route north of Mt Magdala to view Hell's Window from below. The rock formations



Walk Previews

Distance	Hills	Tracks
S -- Short <10km	1-3 -- Easy, suitable for beginners	1-3 -- Graded open terrain. Well formed tracks and paths
M -- Medium 10-15km	4-7 -- Medium, reasonable fitness required	4-7 -- Bush, minor scrub. Some rock hopping, scrambling
L -- Long 15-20km	8-10 -- Hard, strenuous. Fit walkers only	8-10 -- Bush, thick scrub. Rock hopping, scrambling, creek crossings, use of hands
X -- Extra long 20+km		

Please register with the Walk Leader before the day of the walk.

Walk Name	Date	Grade	Distance	Leader	Contact
Tambo Bluff and Nyerimilang Park	25/02/2023	S-3-2	10km	Trevor Clues	valmai51@bigpond.com 0428 564 559
The Crosscut Saw	4-5/03/2023	X-7-5	21km	Peter Jennings	pnjjennings@gmail.com; 0428 230 444
Social Evening Criterion Hotel, Sale	08/03/2023	Easy-peasy	RSVP 06/03	Monica Scicluna	joe.monica@hotmail.com; 0431 777 460
Avon Channel	18/03/2023				see website for further details
Combined Clubs at Inverloch	24-26/03/2023	vari-ous	variable		See page 4 this newsletter see website for further details
Mt Moornapa	15/04/2023	L-6-3	19km	Janine Muir	0421 474 688
Balook - Macs Creek	16/04/2023	L-7-5	17km	Peter Jennings	pnjjennings@gmail.com; 0428 230 444
Ramshead Range	20-25/04/2023	M-6-4	32km	John Martin Helmet Tracksdorf	john-martin@bigpond.com; 0428 349 071 helmut.tracksdorf@bigpond.com; 0402 089 404
Mt Taylor	22/04/2023				see website for further details