



1978 – 2003
OUT AND ABOUT FOR 25
YEARS

**A SHORT HISTORY OF THE FIRST 25 YEARS OF THE
BORDER BUSHWALKING CLUB INC.**

BORDER BUSHWALKING CLUB INC.
PO BOX 857 WODONGA VIC 3689
ASSOCIATION NUMBER A5665B
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Welcome

A big warm welcome to all members of the club – both past and present.

Over the past 25 years many people have given of themselves so that we all can enjoy the outdoors. At the time of this celebration I would like to think that we all can reflect on the dedication and commitment that these people have shown. Be it the Club Secretary (who we all know is the person who actually runs the club) or the participants on club activities – you were all needed to make this club what it is today and what it will be for the next 25 years.

This publication is a taste of the history of our club. I hope that it will bring a smile to your face as it reminds you of some of the times you have spent with your friends toiling up the side of a mountain or canoeing down the Murray.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has helped putting this celebration together. In particular I would like to thank all those on the 25th Anniversary committee, Bruce Key, Warwick McLachlan, Edna Jacobs, Stan and Bernice Duffield and Eve Czarniecki.

I wish you all an enjoyable time throughout this celebration, hopefully you will have a chance to renew old acquaintances, remember those that can't be with us today and maybe make some new friends.

David Gordon
Club President 2003.

How did we get going?

The BBC was formed after Mrs Helen Black had a burst of inspiration and wrote a letter to the Border Morning Mail suggesting that Albury-Wodonga should have a bushwalking club. The letter obviously struck a chord with others, and a meeting of interested persons was convened on 7 June 1978 at Burrows House in Dean Street, Albury. The meeting, chaired by Mr Mike Copland, was packed. Buoyed by this demonstration of the latent interest, a walk to Tabletop Mountain was held two weeks later, on June 18 and 120 people walked there in the rain. (Thank goodness it was not a fine sunny day or we might have had a lot more).

A steering committee was formed of the following people: David Arkinstall, Alwyn Baxter, Denise Bergin, Lyndall Cropper, Bob Fisher, Bruce Fraser, Ray Henderson, Chris Kaberry (now Sobey), Rod Paton, John Paxinos, Lindsay Symons, and Max Verrier.

The steering committee prepared a constitution with the help of Mr Warwick McLachlan (now a life member and still very active), and the club was officially formed on 11 July 1978, at a meeting at Albury Public School, chaired by Mr Bob

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Weatherly. Mr Bob Fisher was elected the first president, followed by Rod Paton when Bob was transferred away from Albury Wodonga.

The purpose of the club as set out in the constitution

Although the reason for the club is to allow members to have a jolly good time, the Constitution is more formal and sets out the purposes of the club as:

1. To gather together people of similar interests in bushwalking and other outdoor activities.
2. To provide information, instruction and advice on all matters concerned with walking and other outdoor activities.
3. To arrange walks and journeys and promote social activity amongst walkers.
4. To preserve and protect Australian flora, fauna and natural beauty places.

Logo.

The logo was designed by Lindsay Symons, who won a competition for that purpose (similar to those for the Sydney Opera House and Parliament House in Canberra).

This is the official logo, but there are some variations of it to accommodate different shapes.



The club was incorporated in Victoria on 11 July 1985 (registered number A5665B) under the Associations Incorporation Act (Victoria) and is now known formally as the Border Bushwalking Club Inc.

The club at present.

In general the club has changed little from the original concept, but of course age changes us all and the club has matured like the rest of us.

The affairs of the club are still managed by the committee, Footprints is still the monthly newsletter, monthly meetings are still held and are well attended, and we still have trouble getting sufficient leaders to have a varied and interesting programme of activities.

Membership is currently about 250. We have a large amount of equipment for hire to members, varying from everything needed for extensive walks except deodorant and socks, to canoes, a trailer with canoe and bike racks, first aids kits, GPS navigation units, an EPIRB (emergency beacon), a food dehydrator, a projector and a public address system.

In addition we have a comprehensive library of books and maps available for loan to members.

New members receive a 'Members' Handbook' that sets out a large amount of information that is useful to new and old members alike.

The committee.

Most people will be aware that a camel is a horse designed by a committee. Despite this slightly disparaging remark about committees, the BBC committee over the years has worked away in the background making sure that the club fulfils its role. Most members would agree that the club is a no-fuss organisation that functions smoothly and seemingly effortlessly.

In fact there is considerable effort put in by every committee (albeit with a bit of fun along the way)(who can forget the inadvertent serving of a bottle of Penfolds Grange at a 1992 Committee meeting) and the reward for those who serve in this role from time to time is the satisfaction of seeing the club run smoothly. We can't record that hundreds of names of committee members over the years, but here is a list of the executive members over the life of the club.

Year	President	Vice Pres	Secretary	Treasurer
July 78 -	Bob Fisher	Ray Henderson	Chris Kaberry (now Sobey)	Lyn Cropper
1979	Rod Paton	Mike Bysouth	Chris Kaberry	Lyn Cropper
1980	Mike Bysouth	Rick McLachlan	Dorothy Reidy	Jim Poyner
1981	Les Sobey	“ “ “	Dorothy Reidy	Jim Poyner
1982	Rick McLachlan	Ray Henderson	Dorothy Reidy	Jim Poyner

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1983	Rick McLachlan	Ray Henderson	Edna Jakobs	Jim Poyner
1984	Rick McLachlan	Ray Henderson	Edna Jakobs	Jim Poyner
1985	Jim Poyner	Rick McLachlan	Edna Jakobs	Ray Henderson?
1986	Jim Poyner	Rob Hill	Rick McLachlan	Ray Henderson
1987	Jim Poyner	Lloyd Beatty	Warwick McLachlan	Eileen Clark
1988	Marijke Korting	John Hengstmengel	Warwick McLachlan	Eileen Clark
1989	Lois Salvisberg	John Hengstmengel	Warwick McLachlan	Max Laubli
90,91	Peter Simpson	Lois Salvisberg	Terry Pearce	Jim Poyner
1992	Rick Armstrong	Lois Salvisberg	Terry Pearce	Peter Simpson
1993	Rick Armstrong	Beth Webb	Pauline McLaughlin	Peter Simpson
1994	Penny Craig	Beth Webb	“ “	Beth Simpson
95, 96	Eileen Clark	Bernice Duffield	Pauline McLaughlin	Ray Schild
97,98	Bruce Key	Pat Fairweather	Betty Carrasco	Ray Schild
1999	Michael Lowe	Pat Fairweather	Betty Carrasco	Ray Schild
2000	Michael Lowe	Bruce Key	Connie Constas	Pauline McLaughlin
2001	Jenny Stamp	David Gordon	Connie Constas	Pauline McLaughlin
2002	David Gordon	Helen Robinson	Connie Constas	Pauline McLaughlin
2003	David Gordon	Pauline McLaughlin	Carolyn Roberts	Warwick McLachlan

Footprints.

One of the tangible benefits of being a member of the BBC is that you receive 'Footprints' every month (except January) either by mail or email. Footprints is the club's newsletter and is always full of interesting items, walks reports, and most importantly, the forthcoming walks. The style varies from flamboyant to staid, depending on whom the editor is, but it is always welcomed by the members. It started as a single sheet, but for quite a few years has been 10 or 12 pages long. The club has copies of all the old Footprints and they provide a valuable record of the life of the club.

The production and delivery of Footprints is invariably reliable and it is one of the little mysteries that illustrates how the club relies on the good will of its members.

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Whilst the system obviously varies from time to time, it is currently something like this:

The editor prepares the general material using committee minutes and information submitted by members. The walks coordinator solicits walks and other activities from members, and collates them into the walks programme which he forwards to the editor.

In the meantime, the database manager produces the pre-addressed green covers and sends them to our photocopier organisation. Another member buys and takes the paper to the photocopier, (we have a deal to keep the cost down) and the editor provides the original for photocopying. A couple of days later the photocopied Footprints are collected by a member and a small group of 'fairies' collate and fold them. One of them posts them and also drops off copies to the outdoor shops. At about the same time, the database manager emails those that are delivered by this method.

Despite the fact that the flow chart for this procedure does not appear in 'The Manager's Guide to Effective Communications', there have been very few failures in the delivery of Footprints over the years.

Meeting venues

The club is lucky not to have been arrested for having 'no fixed place of abode'. Our monthly meetings were originally held at Burrows House, then at the following locations:

- Albury Base Hospital
- Age Concern Building in Townsend Street (no formal affiliation with Age Concern!)
- Senior Citizens Hall at Wodonga (ditto with Seniors)

Membership.

Throughout its life, the club has never had much trouble in getting members. Currently its number stands at 220+ but sadly, historical records do not record the rise and fall of membership of the years. We guess perhaps 60 at its inception and flows exceeding ebbs over the years to the present substantial level.

Life Members

There are five life members of the club, being:

Warwick McLachlan	1994	Jim Poyner	1994	Ray Henderson	1994
Chris Sobey	1997	Les Sobey	1997		

All have been appointed in recognition of outstanding service to the club over many years.

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Club Activities

Although nominally a bushwalking club, the BBC has also been actively involved in cross-country skiing, cycling and canoeing. Our skiing activities have recently been curtailed due to an inability to obtain insurance cover. Despite this it is fair to describe the club as an outdoor club rather than a bushwalking club.



Bushwalking in faraway places

By David Gordon

When I was offered a job working in Australia my first question was “Where is Albany?” Well, it didn’t take long to find it on the map and I could quickly see that it was surrounded by hills – that was quite appealing to an active trapper (as I used to be known).

But it seems that the local walks have never been enough for some bushwalkers. Tip toeing through old editions of Footprints I can see that there have been quite a few members who have enjoyed bushwalking both near and far. Right from the early days of the club there has been walks to the Grampians, Wilson’s Prom and several all around Tasmania.

Possibly the first overseas trip was an expedition for 14 days to walk/ski the Copeland Pass in New Zealand in March 84. Warwick McLachlan, Ray Henderson, Marg Hough, and Ken Pascal went on this trip.

Not long after, at Christmas 1986, Ray Henderson led a walk to Nepal, trekking into Everest Base Camp.

This was not to be the last of the trips to the pinnacle of bushwalking. At least one other club trip has gone to Nepal. Ron and Liz Hammond took Mike Agnew along for a walk in March 1998.

In June of 1989 Rae Close called for interest in a 16 day bus trip around Alice Springs including a 3 day walk through Kings Canyon. 80 people from the BBC and the Benalla Bushwalking club made this trip, showing some real interest in these far off places.

The travel bug must have been catching and a couple of club members caught it bad. Marg Hough and Geoff Payne jumped aboard their 43 foot sloop “Skookum” and were sailing away. Footprints was getting regular reports from places such as Easter Island, Cape Horn and even from Antarctica.

Of course there is always some tramping to be done in little old New Zealand. In February 1992 we had 4 members discover the thrills of the Kiwi’s best known walk, the Milford Track. This trip was enjoyed by Sue Green, Marijka Korting, Pam Duncan and Judy Harvie. This was repeated in February 1996 when Liz Hammond led 9 walkers on the Milford. Both trips noticed the 50 trillion sandflies the Milford has to offer. Quick local tip – eat marmite (not vegemite) for about a month before you go.

Liz obviously got the travel bug leading another walk back to NZ in late 2001 taking on the Kepler Track (very close to the Milford) and the Rakioura Track in Stewart

Island (Stewart Island is like NZ's version of Tasmania – just a touch smaller). 4 members went on this trip with one mutton bird. I am sad to report that the mutton bird did not make it back but then Duncan did have to do something when he got stranded on Stewart Island for an extra 24 hours.

In September 1992 Bob Mc Kercher arranged for 20 people from the BBC, Benalla and Shepparton clubs to go on a trip to Canada where they joined in on a walk in conjunction with the Ottawa Outing Club of which Bob used to be a member. This trip was repeated in September 1994 when Jan Andrews took 11 walkers over to walk with Ottawa Outing Club.

An interesting read was Duncan Thurlow's account of his trip to Lord Howe Island (led by Pauline McLaughlin). Seems like Pauline had 15 members join her for her trip back in October 1994, 14 women and Duncan. Apparently the ladies did party on the final night.

Of course with a country this size you don't have to leave the borders to feel like you are in an entirely different country. There have been several trips into other states. Two of note are Marijka's trip in May 1994 from Central Australia up to Kakadu and Jillian Bolger leading 32 people (not all members) on a 31 day camping safari from Central Australia up to the Kimberleys and on to Perth in August 1996.

Speaking of other countries there have been many trips over the years to Tasmania.

The February 1995 edition of Footprints contained a report by Bruce Key on walks that he and Joy had done in Bulgaria. Apparently there was something about this trip that appealed to Bruce's frugal side. There was some interest after this about a club trip to Bulgaria but it never got off the ground.

In 1998, Jan Andrews (the indefatigable) led a trip to England, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and the Czech Republic. Jan took Pam Duncan, Marge Minchin, Pat Zentner, Joy Key and Bruce Key as the token man.

More recently, October 2001, Jan Andrews has led a trip to Italy with 14 people going on that trip. Maybe the start of some more European walks.

The red centre also still holds appeal with Pauline McLaughlin leading an eight day walk on the Larapinta Track in July this year followed by a 4 day walk through King's Canyon and around Uluru. We had six members of the club on this trip as well as being joined by 2 members of the Waikato (NZ) Tramping Club. Maybe the next trip away will be a joint trip with our Waikato friends to their lodge in the North Island central plateau area. I don't believe there has been a club trip to the North Island yet – Pauline and Liz – keep the pressure on.

When I look through the list above it makes me feel sorry for the people that sit home watching television. It's much better to be out there doing it and there is no

better (or cheaper) way than with like-minded members of the much-travelled Border Bushwalking Club.

Honour Roll of injuries!

Fortunately the club has never had a serious accident. No-one has been eaten by a polar bear, nibbled by piranhas, or fallen down a crevasse. However, our safety record is not quite perfect and some of the little mishaps that have marred it include:

Lindsay Symons, who in the early days of the club did the splits in the snow when one leg went north and the other south. The result was that they both went west with some badly sprained knees (or the bits that hold them together), but to Lindsay's credit, he managed to ski back to base (which is just as well because the alternative would have been a bit drastic). He resumed skiing 2 years later after knees and psyche were well mended

Tonia Timmermans had a less than satisfactory first walk with the club, not because she left her camera home but because she broke her ankle. This probably cut short a wonderful career in bushwalking, but years later she made it to Nepal and back without having to be carried by the Sherpas.

David Doyle went to the Federation of Victorian Walkers weekend at Mount Buffalo and broke his ankle in an attempt to draw attention to the fact that there were BBC members there, not just walkers from Melbourne clubs. Just another illustration of loyalty to the club!

Ali Redenback had an ulterior motive for going to a Howman's Gap skiing weekend. Ali has four kids and felt that she needed a rest, so she sprained her ankle near Mt McKay. This gave her a rest at home and she got a ride in a ski-do as a bonus.

Kathleen Kerr heard about this, and thought that it was a novel way to have a rest from work on the farm, so a year or so later she broke her ankle whilst skiing doing a triple back somersault with tuck and pike. Kathleen also had a free ski-do ride.

Denise Smith believes in 'being prepared', so on a walk to Flaggy Creek Gorge she put on a training event for the members present by breaking her arm so that we could all get some real life practice. Denise is a very dedicated member who believes in realism.

Six weeks into her new job Lu Peterson was ready for anything. But her first time on skis and some ice on the home Trail from the Nordic Bowl at Falls Creek brought her undone. Cleverly thinking to slow down by steering into the bank she instead crossed her skis, ripped all relevant ligaments in the right knee and wore a hip to ankle plaster for two months. Thank God for sick leave and crutches!

Albert Lightfoot is well known for many things, and he was in the process of adding 'chivalry' to the list by going to the aid of Rae Close who had stumbled in the Blue Mountains and gashed her leg on a rock. However in the process Albert broke his arm. (Hand according to Pauline) Albert had to walk for the next day and a half and climb out of the Kanangra valley with a full pack, but in typical 'she'll be right' style he managed it and even declined a ride in the helicopter that the NSW Police had kindly sent.

All these stories (and there would be others that we have forgotten) suggest that bushwalking is dangerous, but it isn't so. You have to balance these events against tens of thousands of member days of activities, often in rough isolated areas.

Despite the above casualties, the club has never had a claim on its insurance, and we have always come back with the same number of people that we had at the start of an activity.

Social Activities.

Unlike contact sports, bushwalking is by nature a social activity. There are all sorts of people in the club and every outing provides an opportunity to socialise. On many walks there is a visit to a bakery or coffee shop as the final part of the day.

There is little need to have additional social activities but they occur from time to time. The most obvious example is the monthly meeting.

The main purely social event in the life of the club has been the annual Christmas party. It is usually very well attended and enjoyable. At most of these there is an award ceremony where members who have distinguished (or embarrassed) themselves are presented with award certificates in a spirit of fun.

In the eighties, we had several weekends at the Albury Ski Lodge (after the ski season) as mainly social events, but of course taking the opportunity to walk in the high plains. Similarly, for many years, we have had a snow weekend at Howman's Gap and it would still be taking place if we could get insurance cover for activities above the snow line. Whilst this was a snow activity it had a wonderful social atmosphere as we sat around the circular fire and swapped yarns and nibbles.

Another social activity of the past was 'Sliding Bottle Nights'. The name was a play on slides (as in photographs) and bottles of wine. They were held in private homes and were a great chance to socialise and relive the events portrayed in the slides. In recent years they have faded away, probably because slides have also become a thing of the past.

In the early nineties when bush dancing was in vogue, we had a number of bush dances once at Holy Spirit Hall, Lavington and then at Osborne's Flat hall with Lazy Harry. Very fitting for a bushwalking club where boots and gingham dresses are easy to find (and that's just the blokes; the women looked good too!)

The biggest social event in 2003 will undoubtedly be the Anniversary Dinner to held at the Commercial Club on Saturday 27 September, and followed next day by a barbecue lunch on Huon Hill.

There are 200 odd people in the BBC (plus 3 normal ones) and it is great to be able to share band-aids, aches and pains, and wonderful experiences.

Legends and Lies (Trip Reports)

Leaders of trips are expected to lodge trip reports with the secretary as they provide a valuable resource for future leaders. Currently we have many hundreds on file and they provide a resource of ideas for future walks.

One of the interesting aspects of reports is the variation in style and comprehensiveness. At one end of the scale some reports include times, grid references, weather, flora, geology, members' morale, and detailed notes on exactly what took place (within the limits imposed by the censorship laws). At the other end of the scale is one report from an anonymous member who flies an ultra-light aeroplane. He wrote a report of a day walk on which they had a few problems and did not arrive home until 10pm. The report said simply: "A pretty average day walk"

Memorable Trips – a selection

"The most memorable things in life weren't necessarily pleasant at the time"

Kowmung River in the Blue Mountains. Leader Albert Lightfoot. Six days (as told by Bruce Key)

On day 1, Ron Hammond hurt his back lifting a pack. He was going to pull out until he discovered that a diet of Panedeine Forte instead of scroggin could allay the pain enough for him to walk.

On day 2, Pat Fairweather fell fully clothed into the river while washing.

On day 3, Pauline McLaughlin wandered away from the campsite in thick scrub to get some water and couldn't find her way back for an hour or so.

On day 4 Rae Close fell and gashed her leg badly. In going to her assistance Albert broke his arm. Later that day as it was getting dark, the party couldn't find a spot to camp and when they did it started to rain.

Next day, Errol White went on ahead to inform the families of the participants that they could be a day or so late home. After doing so he rang the police to alert them that they could be needed if the party did not appear by the end of the next day. It must have been a slack day for the police rescue squad because they took off immediately to find the walkers.

Meantime the party had reached their cars about half an hour after dark, and they were somewhat embarrassed when a chopper with blazing search lights, an ambulance and the SES all arrived to help. Fortunately all was well and the

'rescuers' went home to a quiet night. Needless to say the leader of this trip was awarded the 'Burnt Boot'

Canoe Trip Mitchell River National Park . Leader (& Author) Rick Armstrong

Four club members including me planned to paddle from Waterford to Iguana Creek over two days. We arranged for a local to leave our car at the exit point. As we had agreed to travel light I was amazed to find that our "minimal" equipment comprised five drums and four stuff bags in our two canoes.

Just 200m downstream we encountered an innocuous looking rapid but with the baggage in my low slung canoe the waves swamped us and we had our first swim in the freezing cold water. This was to set the pattern for the day, as soon as we got into any sort of waves we filled up and sunk. At lunch time we discovered that some of the drums were leaking and that quite a bit of our gear was wet so we made an early camp to dry off our gear and tents.

On day 2 we came to some long difficult rapids which we portaged around through thick scrub. After several spills and portages it was obvious that our day would be long so we decided to forego lunch. In one spill we lost a bag containing many hundred dollars worth of gear, we were too busy trying to save ourselves, the canoe and paddles. Fortunately we recovered it further downstream. Progress was slow but we did have the occasional opportunity to admire the spectacular sandstone cliffs that soared above us. The country around was completely wild dense scrub without tracks therefore the only way out was to continue downstream.

By late afternoon we were still hopeful of making it to the finish point, but another spill, swim and lengthy portage made that impossible. On a steep bank we flattened out a small area with our paddles and made camp for the night. Our resources included plenty of food, one dry sleeping bag and a set of dry cloths each with the help of a fire. We used the single sleeping bag as a doona and two of us slept till 2am while the others huddled around the fire, then we swapped over. Greg's main concern was a smoke and he spent an hour or two trying to dry his tobacco and cigarette papers over the fire.

We were concerned about our partners back home as we had promised to be home on Sunday night so we set off bright and early the next morning. After a few spills and more portaging my canoe got smashed against a rock making it unpaddleable. This left 2 options, either leave the canoe behind and thrash out over steep scrub covered ridges, or swim it out; we chose the latter. The water was freezing cold and we had to leave the water every 10 minutes or so to warm up to avoid the risk of hypothermia. This meant progress was very slow.

About midday we reached the exit point and started a very steep climb up a foot track to a car park. Near the top we met some walkers who informed us the police had set up a search and rescue mission to look for us. Sheepishly I wandered up to the command caravan, knocked on the door and told the police "I think you blokes are looking for us".

The Black Allen Line, Cobberas- Author & Leader - Rick Armstrong

The Black Allan Line is a boundary marked by surveyors in 1870. It runs from the source of the Murray south easterly until it meets the coast at Cape Howe. I decided to lead a three day walk, and with a party of four walkers and 2 support vehicles arrived at Omeo on Friday night ready for adventure the next day. The adventure started 15km into the trip, when a tyre blew out on one of the cars. This meant no spare. Alright I can live with that, I thought. The vehicle still has 4 good wheels going round and round.

On day 1, the walkers enjoyed good weather, locating the first stone cairn at Forest Hill without much trouble. Trouble was brewing quietly somewhere else. We found the other two stone cairns easily that first day and were collected by our support crew and taken back to base camp for a meal and a good rest. On day 2 the walkers had a steep climb up the Berrima track and rambled on to a four metre high stone cairn, complete with original 1870 centre pole and four timber posts making up the pyramid shape. The Black Allan Line angles across several flat ridges covered with chest high scrub here and despite earnest attempts, we were unable to locate several of the marks this day. We were however compensated with plenty of wildlife spotting including brumbies, kangaroos, wallabies, goannas, emus and lyrebirds. After our pleasant day, the last thing we expected was to arrive at our pickup point, find no support crew to pick us up and when we finally did return to base camp find the Nissan Patrol up on jacks with two wheels lying on the ground. Yep, another tyre had blown and our vehicle was immobile.

Day 3 saw two of us walking 16km to get help at Suggan Buggan, population four! The roadside assistance operator nearly fell off the phone when we told him where we were and expected assistance! We waited all day for the agent to get to us with 1 wheel for car and 1 wheel as spare. At 7.30pm we decided that one of us would try making calls in Suggan Buggan and the other would go back to base camp to inform the crew what was happening, or rather not happening!

When the agent finally did reach Suggan Buggan, one of us guiding him to base camp, things went from unfortunate to comical, when his vehicle developed engine problems. He refused to go any further and one of the two spares he was carrying for us had bounced out of the back and into the bush.

That only meant day three was quickly becoming day four to complete this misadventure!

At dawn we walked once again to Suggan Buggan, finding the missing wheel on the way and then coercing a local to return to our camp with the wheel on board. This brought some relief to the anxious crew and when they finally emerged from the bush that afternoon it also brought relief to the policeman from Buchan and all the other police stations within 150km radius that had been alerted by family members and concerned Suggan Bugganites.

Needless to say, I was totally 'tyred out' from leading this trip!

Opera house Hut and Olsen's Lookout – 3/4/5 December 1983 – Warwick McLachlan

In precipitous country on the west side of the Snowy Mountains Bella Vista, Verandah Camp and Opera House Hut are places well-known to construction workers of the 1950's. These places, with Watsons Crag and Lady Northcott's Canyon formed the backdrop of a truly legendary BBC bushwalk devised and led by Warwick McLachlan, with Ray Henderson in charge of the split party. The journey started Sat. morning with an unexpected lift from a SMA truck which spared the 8 participants most of the 9k road bash to Siren Song Creek. The diversion tunnel from there under Watsons Crag runs 2 ½ k, is big enough to drive a car through (when not running with water) and cuts off a long hoof around the side of the Crag. With Henderson's fluorescent light leading the way we waded through knee high water for a moderately scary long time to finally clamber over the timber barricade at the southern end (didn't know about that) and dry cold tootsies in the warm air. (Subsequently everybody in Authority went berserk at the risks taken -- if there had been a rain storm we would have been washed out of the tunnel like big rats with packs -- there are now signs prohibiting access).

We tracked down the Opera House (so called as its cost of construction per square foot exceeded the same) to bed down that night and the next day we began our journey into legend. After a brisk morning trip to the top of Watsons Crag, a measly 800 metres vertical climb in a little over 1k and return!, we decided after lunch to split the party, one to go around the Crag, collect the cars from Bella Vista and take them to Olsen's Lookout; the other party (party B) would rock hop down Lady Northcott's Canyon, cross the Geehi River and climb steeply to the Lookout directly above. Oh yeah!

The Crag track these days is heavily overgrown but at that time it was the most beautiful of journeys, following the 1300 metres contour with incredible late afternoon views down into the Canyon and the Geehi River Valley. Slow going nevertheless and we and the evening mosquitoes arrived together at Olsen's Lookout some time after 7pm. Surprise -- no party B! Hollering into the valley brought only echoes of our own voices (and seemed to stir up the mosquitos). By 11p.m. we concluded party B. had found the going too hard, retraced its steps and had followed us to Bella Vista. With dwindling petrol supplies and great puzzlement we returned to Bella Vista to find only an empty clearing. We bedded down to wait and dozed off in the back of the station wagons. A banging on the car windows sometime after 4 AM Monday morning revealed 2 really weary walkers who had just tramped the 13k from Olsen's to wake us up. They were somewhat pissed that we had not waited as they and the rest of their party in fact turned up a little after midnight expecting to find cars and a pleasant journey home and got instead an empty lookout. It seems the short legged members of their party found the rock hopping a real stretch and travel time stretched similarly. Their 5k in journey down the Canyon and up the other side ran for 11+ hours – an average of 1k every 2 hours. Go figure! At 6am Monday we again became one band of stuffed brothers and sisters. Ringing the NRMA at Carryong for some petrol at 7am was about all we could cope with and, with eyes

hanging off sockets drove to Albury ready for Monday's work (ha, ha!). Neither Ray nor I surfaced for work. This finished a weekend I don't ever wish to repeat.

Western Arthurs -- February 1983 - Day 2- Warwick McLachlan

One of the legends of the club in the story of the floating tent. Here is that story. Six of us proposed to traverse the Western Arthurs in southwest Tasmania over 12 days. On day 2 we had climbed Moraine A and plonked our three tents onto the beach at Lake Cygnus high in the mountain range in quite strong north westerly winds. The beach was far more tempting than the official overused and muddy camp sites back in the scrub. Ah, sweet ignorance. Jim Poyner and I snuggled in my 3 man Bergans Ignell tent and sometime after 11 p.m. sensed the beginnings of a wild rain and wind storm. The tent seemed secure and I looked outside to see how the others were faring, Marg Hough and Geoff Payne in one tent, Ray Henderson and brother John in another. Oh, oh - in the torch light were naked men running hither and thither clutching demolished tents and a soon-to-be very wet sleeping bag. I then realised that my capacious three-person tent would soon become a very squeezey six person tent. And so it proved to be as wet bodies piled through the entrance and found a steamy corner and some legs, torso or dampish other body parts to lie on. With driving wind and rain and the realisation this tent needed to remain standing it was impossible to sleep, and we waited for dawn. Unfortunately the water level of the lake had begun to rise and we watched it first enter the vestibule and then little wavelets disappear underneath the tent floor, the material rising and falling with the wave action. Not that there was much loose material with 6 bodies cramped into 2 sq. metres of area. It was with great gratitude I recall having proofed the floor before the trip. Time passes really slowly when the basic need of shelter is threatened with wind from above and flooding from below. And 2 days from a public road. As dawn broke and the wind, now southerly and still fierce, Geoff and I got out and for the first time saw the distorted fibreglass wands of the tent pushed out of shape almost to breaking point and silently thanked Norwegian tent makers. Although the fabric had stretched enormously under the strain it survived and later was to give many years of faithful service even in snow blizzards of similar intensity. When we exited 10 days later we discovered our night of drama was the start of the Ash Wednesday fires of 1983.

Skating – a short Club history

The world divides neatly into those that ski and those that don't. For some it is a wet and extremity freezing place suitable for penguins, leopard seals and bearded men wearing lederhosen. For others it is a White Paradise of sliding planks, carving turns, gentle gliding and sublime scenery. For a subset of the latter it is a communion of like-minded souls in snow tents camped far from trackhead, immersed in the rise and fall of night and day and sliding movement over snow-covered plains, valleys, hills and mountains.

The club has a sort of glorious history of cross-country skiing starting pretty much at its inception and continuing until June 2002 when the insurance ran out. A rump group called BorderSkiers continues the tradition. Skiing mainly was day trips to Falls Creek, Buffalo (slushy, wet snow became known as Mt Buffalo Powder) and

Hotham. Weekend trips went to all points of the Bogong High Plains, Snowy Mountains and occasionally to Mt. Striling and The Bluff. The week long trips went to Mecca – either the Jagungal Wilderness or the Main Range of the Snowies.

Typically of the Club's early days, the ski trips were not expertly organised or run and it was "every person for themselves" method of skiing and navigation. Incredibly, injuries were few and temporary loss of companions infrequent. The club always had an active day ski program to the extent that the late Bruce McKissack once complained of the absence of day walks during winter. My, how times have changed! The monumental seasons of 1981, 1990 and 1991 when Falls Creek exceeded 3 metres snow depth are fondly remembered. Several trips were organised with participation from the Wagga Wilderness Walkers whose members generally could ski better than us. Typically of the club, absolutely no formal ski tuition was ever made available and members shuffled, panted, stumbled around Falls Creek, Hotham and Mount Buffalo in varying styles and degrees of stress. BBC skiers historically are excellent straight-line skiers but the word "turn" may as well be written in Sanskrit. A picture long held in my memory is of a weekend skier sidestepping for 3/4 hour down the slope to Tawonga Huts rather than chance a turn. Self-preservation at its apogee!

For those privileged to go on weeklong ski camps in the Snowy Mountains the club has had one of these most years starting in 1979 with Peter Meyer as putative leader and continuing this year under the illicit BorderSkiers banner with Warwick McLachlan to Jagungal & Grey Mare Range. The pleasure, the incredible beauty of snowcapped ranges, the hard work lugging a 20+k pack, the absence of baths for eight days and the close proximity of sweaty male and female personnel are memories and smells to cherish through to old-age. Hopefully the insurance issues will subside and the club can continue its history of officially offering this wonderful pastime.

From about 1990 various leaders have organised ski weekends at Howmans Gap Alpine Centre during August and strange things apart from skiing have occurred over the years – demonstrating carpet skiing to an interested but confused the group of Taiwan émigrés; removing a simply confused member of the club from an incorrectly allocated room at 2 a.m. spring to mind. There is a regrettable decline in interest in skiing exacerbated by the need to organise it in dark alleyways without Club sanction or approval. What snow there will be at the Club's 50th anniversary is a matter of conjecture.

The Ubiquitous Jan Andrews – Anon.

No BBC walks program is complete without a walk or 4 therein lead by JAN ANDREWS. Who is this constant contributor? What makes her go round and round Northeast Victoria and other parts of Australia, and the world? She deserves her own special place in the BBC annals so here is the low-down....

After working as a geologist based in Melbourne and London, Jan moved to Benalla to work as a regional education consultant on geology, forestry/flora and outdoor education.

During the 80's Jan ran backpacking club trips most weekends and would take ski trips, mongrel blizzards or not, into remote areas like the Bluff, south of Mt Buller and the Snowies. But after backpacking since Melbourne Uni, Jan needed a new community challenge. Meals on Wheels were not an option as Jan would have eaten the meals before they got to the frail elderly recipient. The boredom threshold had set in with squash & aerobics too so the fitness was down a bit too. This more or less cut out huge climbs and backpacking as well!

Jan started eye-balling the local hills in NE Victoria. which showed great potential for exploratory off-track walks to find new places rarely if ever bushwalked by non-indigenous people. With a map & compass there were unlimited new exciting places to bushwalk right on everyone's doorstep which additionally could be open to everyone as they could be done as day walks. Visitors are rare in Jan's house (apart from possums and a long suffering 14 year old cat who self caters during her frequent absences) as the floors and tables are covered in maps in the constant search for new walks.

Jan likes to use the seasons for outdoor activities. In summer it is obviously better to wallow in rivers on canoe trips or do river-walks down mountain streams (on Jan's trips these are always crystal clear) than lurk in front of an air conditioner for 4 months. Or walk in what's left of the Alps. In spring the local hills are covered in masses of headhigh wildflowers and wattles which no-one who didn't bushwalk would ever know were there. In winter Jan takes all phone calls until 11am from under 3 doonas in bed.

With the marginal snow conditions these days with often crusty / icy snow, Jan now takes winter club trips to warmer places- Europe, Kimberleys, Hammersleys, NT and SE Qld. Wherever there is a bakery Jan will lead a walk, or if too far away to walk, then a cycle trip. Remarkable woman, remarkable appetite. A treasure to the Club.

The Burnt Boot Award – BBC History in the making - Warwick McLachlan

It's been some years since this was awarded for the gnarliest, most dysfunctional, heroically stupid trip of the year. Some leaders accepted the award as a badge of honour but some would absent themselves from the handover ceremony and needed to have it thrust upon them later on. It is fitting to record its germination. In the first three years of the club's life, misadventure and idiocy went unrewarded until.....

On 20/21 Feb. 1981 about 8 of us started from Howitt Hut with full packs for a weekend trip up Queen's Spur to Macalister Springs and Mount Howitt intending to camp at Hells Window. The day was rainy, visibility lousy, the navigation appalling and East became West and late Saturday afternoon quite by accident we arrived back

at the cars at Howitt Hut. Having carried full packs up to 1700 metres elevation and back down again in a day, liquid compensation was sought and drunkenness shortly ensued. We were young.

Dorothy Reidy left her boots on the mantelpiece in the Hut to dry but an errant elbow, a passing rat, an earth tremor or simply God’s punishment for inebriation displaced one of the boots into the fireplace hearth where the magic of heat and the inattentiveness of a drink affected owner turned it into the work of molten art that is now attached to the mulga wood that Bill Krautz crafted into the Burnt Boot Award.

Over the years there have been many BBC walks and ski trips that make bushwalkers from other clubs turn their heads away in shame. Better education, greying hair, the thought of loved ones, mobile phones and emergency beacons have conspired to make walks more predictable, disasters more manageable and the outdoor activity arguably more boring. So the Award gathers dust waiting for the next time the “stupid” gene is let out of a leader’s water bottle to dance on the landscape prettily and reward its Aladdin at year’s end with the gift of the Burnt Boot.

And the Winners so far are:

1981	Ray Henderson	Mt Howitt bushwalk
1982	Ray Hancock/ Steve Warild	Mt Kosciuszko Ski camp
1983	Ray Henderson	Olsens Lookout walk
1993	Rick Armstrong	Mitchell River Canoe trip
1996	Warwick McLachlan	Mt Kosciuszko Ski camp
1999	Albert Lightfoot	Kowmung River bushwalk

The Tao of Walking – Warwick McLachlan

Walking is as primal as sex, but only requires 2 legs and not necessarily anyone else. Its appeal is elemental and modern trappings of waterproof tents, raingear, lightweight food, stoves that work and electronic navigation aids should not get in the way of the basic enjoyment of the experience. Walking is essentially a pleasuring of the body (after the swelling from overuse or injury goes down) in as pure a bush context as the purse, level of fitness, sense of adventure or stupidity allows. Walking has a cadence (broken occasionally by limping or tiredness) which ideally matches the body’s internal rhythms of heartbeat, breath and bowel movements. All squish away in unison and at its best, walking integrates the inner soul with the outer world beauty to bring about that temporary harmony that comes from simple basic pursuits.

Alcohol confuses, interpersonal relationships gnash teeth and cause dissension, money corrupts and work is often a grinding coalface but a walk in the bush will enliven, settle, activate, tranquilise body and sprit like no other hunter gatherer activity I know of. It emulates so well what life is – a journey with a beginning, an end, with frolics, frustration and fraughtness in between. To live is to walk and walking is living at the best of its times.