



FOOTPRINTS

February 2020

Newsletter of the Border Bushwalking Club Inc.
affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria



COMMITTEE

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General Committee: **Ralph:** Vice President, **Bernadette:** Activities Coordinator, **Liz:** Newsletter Editor, **Ira:** Meeting Suppers & Social Convener, **Chris:** Equipment Officer, **Marie:** Membership & Data Base Manager, **Ken:** Policy and **Sandy:** our go- to girl.

Visitors are always welcome at meetings and supper is served afterwards. **Club Nights** are regularly held on the **first Tuesday** of the month (except November, December and January) at 7:30pm. The room is opened half an hour before the start so that members may socialise. **Where :** Senior Citizens, Meeting Room, Civic Centre Complex, Hovell Street, Wodonga www.borderbushwalkingclub.com.au

CLUB NIGHT TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4TH 7:30pm.

IRAN - BUT IS IT SAFE?

Iran is a country of mountains as well as deserts. The Alborz Mountains in the north rise to 5670 meters and the Zagros Mountains of central Iran to 4,400 meters. With a population of 80 million, there are many ordinary Iranians who are avid mountaineers, climbers, skiers and walkers. Unless you happen to speak Farsi, most people who visit Iran to walk will want to use a local guide as good maps are not readily available. John Hillard visited in July 2019 and will describe a week long walk among the snow-capped mountains in a remote part of the Zagros Range. His experience, like that of virtually all visitors to Iran, was of friendly people, good food and superb mountain scenery. While the focus will be on the mountains, he'll also talk about some of the amazing things there are to see in cities like Isfahan and Shiraz.



WELCOME

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members:

Daniel Fowler

Gill O'Brien

We trust that you will enjoy all that the Club and its members have to offer.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO FOOTPRINTS.

Your contributions are keenly sought. If you have been on a club trip please send a short, or indeed long, report to the editor. **Photos** of outings are also greatly appreciated. **Please try to send photos as small files and acknowledge photographer.**

Send to: newsletter@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au

Deadline for next Footprints is 20/2/20

A huge thank you to all those who submit material.

CLUB MEMBER OF THE YEAR 2020

SANDY KAITLER



In presenting this award to Sandy, our outgoing recipient Ira, called Sandy, "Our quiet achiever" as indeed she is. Sandy was presented this award in recognition of the massive amount of invaluable support she gives the club behind the scenes.

Thank you Sandy.

Christmas BBQ 2019





FROM THE PRESIDENT'S STUMP

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE THERE'S FIRE

Welcome to the New Year!

I trust it will be one that will see you involving yourself in the many outdoor activities the Club has to offer you. You might even consider taking up the challenge to lead a walk for the first time, or to become part of the Club's management team by joining the Committee.

With the ongoing bushfires in our area, it is timely to remind all members, especially leaders, of the need to make sure you check current conditions, road closures and fire activity before venturing into the bush. Such information can be accessed via the websites of Vic Roads, Parks Victoria and Vic Emergency.

For this very reason, a number of planned activities have been cancelled, rescheduled or revised in light of the bushfire activity. It's a good idea to check in to the Club's website regularly to see the current status of activities and to keep up to date on any new activities that may be posted at short notice.

Ron Hammond's planned visit to "our" hut (Youngs Hut) to undertake the painting of the exterior weatherboards had to be cancelled and we can only hope that with the fires burning in the near vicinity that the hut remains safe and undamaged. Parks Victoria has wrapped iconic Wallace's Hut and Cope Hut in foil as a protective measure, but our little hut will have to look after herself!

Our excursions up to the High Plains, Mount Buffalo and Mount Hotham will undoubtedly be severely affected by the bush fires in the foreseeable future, however there are still plenty of other places unaffected by the fires that can still be visited and enjoyed, so keep an eye on the website – there's plenty on offer!

And finally, don't forget that our March Club Night (Tuesday, March 3rd) is dedicated to encouraging new members to come and try some of our outdoor pursuits. If you have family and friends who might be interested in hearing what we have to offer and what we do, please encourage them to come along. The night is also an opportunity for members to offload all that hike gear they no longer have any use for and that is taking up valuable space in cupboards, under beds and in wardrobes as part of our 'Buy, Sell and Swap'.

Looking forward to seeing you on a track (preferably unburnt), a bike path or a river soon.

Ian



Near Cudgewa as fires were about to hit.

TRIP REPORTS

Bike ride Myrtleford to Bright and back.

Look at this photo. We've ridden 50kms and spot the two who look as fresh as daisies. Wow, these guys can ride! Barely raised a sweat.



Here they are again. But what is Ian pointing at?
Let's have a closer look.
Ian's mumbling something about batteries.



Ah, the secret exposed!

Now Ian and I don't feel so bad about having sweaty bodies and puffing.

Yep, the two smart ones are riding E bikes.

Don't be disillusioned though. They certainly had to pedal too, just that the headwind didn't bother them too much.

Great ride, thanks Ian for putting it on.

Ed.

The Fainters via Jaithmathang.

Mt Beauty was the meet up point before we headed up to Pretty Valley pondage. Rain was the forecast but it was a white out that greeted us. A quick rug up and we set off to Tawonga huts. By the time we got to the huts, the white out had cleared and walking conditions were good. We were greeted by a group of 15 year old girls, from Bogong Outdoor school who had camped at the huts and had six groups spread out across the different Huts in the area. Mt Fainter south was our lunch spot with spectacular views. Then we headed cross country to Jaithmathang. Another rug up with clothing was needed with the wind picking up speed while we were having snack. We headed back down the track to Tawonga Hut

and met the next group of 15 yr old girls from The Outdoor school, who had set up camp for the night. A quick break was had before heading back to Pretty Valley to the cars and home. Mick.



Pretty Valley Circuit

Three old hands and a new chum met in Mt Beauty and headed for Pretty Valley pondage. We had real Goldilocks weather, not too cold, not too hot, not too windy, but the millions of flies were a nuisance. I'd done this walk before in a clockwise direction but decided to go the other way around this time. We headed up the hill along the track towards Tawonga Huts and decided to visit the huts for morning tea. The flies invited all their relatives to join us. From there, we headed along the pole line to Pole 333 and then down to Cope Saddle Hut. By now it had clouded over and we were hungry, so we decided against the side trip to Ryders Yards and instead had lunch at the hut. Here we learned much about the keeping of bees and the development of allergies to bees, but thankfully we did not have to treat anyone because the flies kept the bees away. After lunch it was a gentle walk back to the car, pausing to admire the views across Pretty Valley. Eileen



In my years as editor I have never had two reports of the same event submitted. Here is the exception to the rule and they both go in because they are first time contributors, newbies to our club, the articles are excellent and it's interesting to look at the two perspectives. One of them has already worked Ian out!

First Time Overnight Trip To Ryder's Yards

by Glen M.

The morning started with an 8am pick up from Bunning's car park, Wodonga. There I was to meet a fellow hiker named Glenn Mac. After introductions we loaded up Glenn's pack into my vehicle and made our way to Mt. Beauty to meet up with our Leader, Ian and also Ron for a coffee and a briefing of the plan for the hike ahead. Ron was to meet us on the trail to Ryder's Yards as he was going to travel on his newly purchased electric bike.

We loaded up my four wheel drive and departed Mt. Beauty around 9:30am. heading for Cope Hut car park.

The drive through Falls Creek gave us chance to learn a little about each other and the stories of past experiences flew thick and fast. I was a little nervous to start off with, but quickly relaxed when I realised I was in good company. Ian was a wealth of knowledge, and as I was to learn, a very experienced bushwalker.

We arrived at Cope Hut and took the opportunity to have a look inside. It was fascinating. I had only seen these huts in books, and I imagined how it would feel to take refuge in one as the snow fell outside.

It was now time to strap on the pack and hit the trail. Being the beginner that I was, naturally I packed too much and had to deal with 18kg of weight on my back. Luckily my pack worked well and after some help from Ian with the straps I was right to go. The weather was fantastic for us, we really jagged a good weekend for this trip. Daytime temperature was around 27 degrees and about 6 degrees overnight. The walk in was interesting - rolling hills, a small stream crossing. Then as we walked further along the trail we could see a pair of knees sticking out of the grass. It was Ron taking a nap in the sunshine as he waited for us to arrive. We tried to scare him by throwing rocks into the bush beside him but he was onto us. We proceeded to the aqueduct and a small former SEC hut for a little rest and a snack. It was while we were inside that hut that I looked out of the window to see two hikers approaching in the distance. Ian looked out the dirty window

and announced, “Looks like old people”, to which Ron replied, “That’s your reflection,” and with that I nearly choked on my nut bar.

We arrived at Ryder’s Yards around lunchtime and were met by a couple from Adelaide who were staying there overnight also. We claimed our lot and pitched out tents and fired up the jet boils for a brew. After we had established our camp it was decided to take a walk to a little known hidden waterfall a short distance along a maintenance track. So about mid-afternoon we set off to find this waterfall, taking the opportunity to collect some water from the aqueduct. Ron also had a bottle of wine that needed chilling in the icy water of that same aqueduct.

So off we went on our way, and after some navigation issues we arrived at the nicest little waterfall you could hope to find. One member of the party decided that a swim was in order and in he went. I took off my boots and put my feet in the water. Well, if you have ever put your hand into the water in the bottom of your esky, that’s how cold this water was! We arrived back at camp to find a school group had joined us and the place was bristling with tents. They were good kids and very well behaved. We had time to cook up our dinner and light a fire inside the hut before the temperature dropped with the sun. It was a beautiful night with lots of stars and no wind. After the day’s events sleep came quickly and before I knew it, I was listening to the sounds of the magpies in the early morning light.

After breakfast we packed up camp, wished Ron a speedy trip home on his trusty bike and was on the trail again by 9am. We arrived back at the car by 11am and made our way back down to Mt. Beauty where we had some lunch and a debrief before saying our goodbyes until the next trip.

So in conclusion, I can say that it was a fantastic experience and I can highly recommend doing this activity if you’re at all interested in meeting great people and experiencing our wonderful outdoors.

Ryder's Yards Report by Glenn Mac.

We were promised an “easy overnighter for first timers” and a chance to “brush up on our navigation skills” and this trip delivered in spades! Unfortunately our starting group of 6 was reduced to 4 with two late withdrawals – perhaps they had prior knowledge of Ian’s “navigation skills”!

The fab 3 (Ian, Glen and Glenn Mac) ventured off from the Cope Hut car park weighed down by our overnight packs, but still made good time to Little Cope Hut and then on to our pre-arranged meeting point with the final member of the fab 4, Ron Hammond, who had biked in from Pretty Valley.

Upon arrival at Ryder's Yards we noticed that Ron had already set up camp, well away from anyone else! We set up camp and were shortly joined by a very large school group at which point our fearless leader, Ian, decided that we should take a hike to the “Secret Waterfall”.

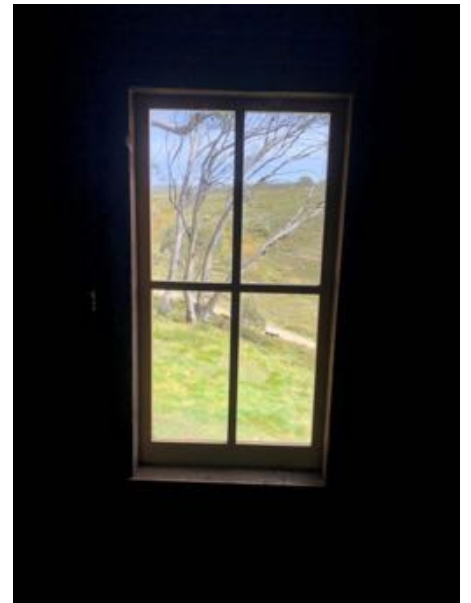
We all blindly followed Ian along the track to the secret waterfall and it soon became obvious that Ian had forgotten the way! At about pole 970 Ian decided that since he could “hear the water down there” that we had all better follow him down the ridge. Through thigh high scrub, rocks, and broken trees we trudged for ages, without complaint, until we finally found the creek! We then had the opportunity to practise our navigation skills and determined that if we walked up stream and headed towards the narrowing gorge we should find our destination! After much rock scrambling we managed to find the waterfall with all of us still in one piece...although a couple of us had very wet feet and a few scratches!

We soon found out why Ian was keen to get to his “secret waterfall”....so he could get his gear off and go for a swim! We have photos of Ian showing off his “extra hiking gear” but fortunately Footprints is a family friendly magazine so the photos have not seen the light of day...yet! After some rest and recreation we returned to camp, this time following the well defined track...which was (Ian take note please) left of pole 1000. On the way back to camp we retrieved Ron’s bottle of red which had been cooling in the waters of the aqueduct.

We settled into the night with the newbies very impressed by Ron, “the master chef’s”, cooking skills! It also explained why he biked in as he could not have carried all of his culinary gear in! We managed to check out each other's gear, kept cosy by the hut fire, talked a whole lot about nothing, all aided by some fine red wine and Brown Bros. port before we retired to our tents after 10pm.

We arose early the next morning and found the queue to dig a hole a long one! Ian noted one of the newbies kept him awake all night by tossing and turning on his new air mat, and threatened to march Glenn Mac to the summit of Mt Cope but luckily Glenn had not yet put his hearing aids in for the day so he feigned deafness....something he is good at! We watched in envy as Ron tucked into his bacon and eggs and then packed up ready for the walk back. Ian was trying to rally the troops for one last visit to the “secret water fall” and was surprised when he found no takers! The trip back to our car and Mt Beauty was uneventful. Whilst finally tucking into something that resembled decent food, Ian mentioned that his monthly bush walking article was in yesterday's Border Mail. The subject of Ian's article was being aware of snakes. One of Ian's main points made in his article was to not go trudging through thigh high bush where you could not see where you were planting your feet or what you were planting your feet on! Nice work Ian! A great weekend was had by all with my two take-aways from my first overnighter being:

- Though shall not follow the leader blindly...especially off track!
- The secret water fall is not so secret if you hike to pole 1000 and take the track that is to the left!



Heathy Spur and Kelly Hut

Five keen bushwalkers set out, on the feast of Stephen
(Well, 29 December actually, but close enough)
When the snow lay round about, deep and crisp and even
(There **was** a big snow patch on Mt Nelse)
Brightly shone the sun that day, 'though the flies were cruel
The wildflowers were a brilliant sight that really cheered our Yu-u-ule

Up Heathy Spur they followed me, happy voices chatting
The track was clear, the path was soft, thanks to rubber matting
Twelve grumpy Boy Scouts came our way, they couldn't raise a smile
A horde from Melbourne slowed our pace, one hour for every mi-i-le

Morning tea atop the Spur, lunch for all at Kelly's
Walkers know what food is best to fill their hungry bellies
The President was in The Chair, his acolytes around him
A nap for one, then up the hill, to test each weary li-i-mb

Back we went, the way we'd come, but now the sun was hotter
Lots of short stops on the way so we could drink more water
Soon the dam came into sight and our walk was ended
We changed our boots and stowed our packs and back to home we we-e-nded.
Eileen

An Abundance of Huts.

The popular Huts Walk includes 3 Huts that form a circuit at Mt Hotham. However the huts seen on this day did not quite line up with the plan:

8/12 Julie books in

9/12 Glenn books in

22/12 Bernadette flags that the walk may be cancelled due to insufficient numbers and weather warnings

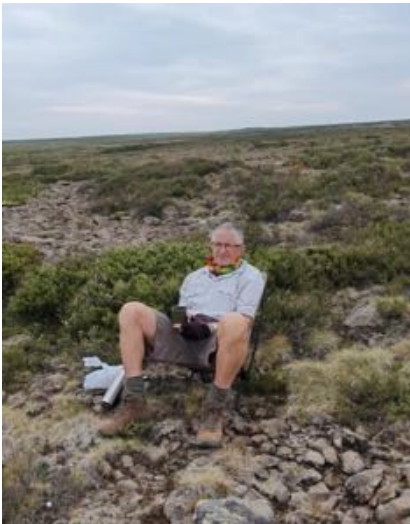
24/12 Bernadette cancels the walk

24/12 (9.30 pm) Ian rings to book in with Trish. After much discussion it is decided that an easier walk with more escape routes is in order. Bernadette gets nervous that Santa won't come if she doesn't get to bed soon.

24/12 (9.44 pm) Bernadette informs all previous participants that she will be repeating Eileen's lovely Pretty Valley circuit and goes to bed just as she hears a reindeer hoof on the roof.

27/12 Bernadette rings Eileen to finalise the details for her Sunday walk and, when Eileen hears about the Saturday plans she says 'Can I come too?'

28/12 Six walkers have a delightful day on the Pretty Valley circuit. For details read Eileen's report from 2 weeks before. Instead of three huts we had 5. What a bonus! Bernadette.



Hannels Spur

Friday saw us head off to Thredbo, for the start of our car shuffle, before heading back down to Geehi Flats for the night. After crossing the river at Dr Forbes Hut, we started our long climb up Hannels Spur early on Saturday morning, gaining elevation quickly. When we reached the openness of the alpine heath, it revealed views from where we started in the morning, 1500m below us. The track then followed lots of cairns that guided us around the rocks to our overnight stay at Wilkinson Creek Valley. We began the climb out of the valley to the summit of Mt Kosciuszko, early on Sunday morning. There was still lots of snow that we had to navigate around, before we arrived at the highest point in Australia and probably the windiest too. A few selfies later, it was off to Thredbo and for some down the dreaded chairlift. After snacks at the bottom, we all had fingers crossed that David's ute was still there. We found it easily and set off back to Geehi to pick my ute up, before we were homeward bound. Thanks everyone for a good trip. Mick.



East Ovens River Walk

What better way to escape the heat and smoke than to walk up a clear, flowing river. The East Ovens river walk starts from Tronoh Dredge hole in Harrietville and follows a management track as it winds its way towards the base of Champion Spur. Nobody minded that as we followed the track, it crossed the river many times. The water was just perfect, so we swam. Deb.



NOTICES.



Efforts to save the huts.

Yesterday the NPWS confirmed that the following huts and buildings were lost in the recent bushfires in the Kosciuszko National Park:

- Delaneys Hut
- Sawyers Hill Rest House
- Happys Hut
- Brooks Hut
- Wolgal Lodge
- Kiandra Court House
- Pattersons Hut
- Matthews Cottage
- Round Mountain Hut
- Bradley and O'Briens Hut
- Four Mile Hut

Broken Dam Hut survived and the NPWS continues its efforts to protect the remaining huts.

BORDER BUSHWALKING CLUB ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

Please click on the following events website for the latest events on offer from BBC

<https://borderbushwalkingclub.com.au/events/>

WANT TO GO ON A WALK BUT NEED SOME GEAR?

We hire:

- Tents
- Sleeping bags
- Back-packs
- Hiking poles
- Waterproof jackets
- We even have a dehydrator if you want to prepare your own meals (or dry your excess Summer produce)
- And lots more...



WANT TO LEAD A WALK BUT WORRIED ABOUT SAFETY?

We have the following equipment available for free for any club walk:

- First aid kits
- GPS
- PBLs

Where do I get the gear?

ADVENTURE GEAR, DEAN ST ALBURY

Photo credits this issue:

Mick
Bernadette
Glenn
Liz
Glen
John



EVER WONDER WHERE TO GO WALKING?

Bushwalking Victoria has this fabulous walk directory with detailed information on about 200 walks in Victoria.

Check it out by clicking on the link below.

<http://www.bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/walks-directory>



PHOTOS IN FOOTPRINTS.

Often on walks there will be photos taken of participants. If you **DO NOT** wish your photograph to be taken, it is **YOUR** responsibility to inform fellow walkers.

ACTIVITIES PROGRAM

LEADERS reserve the right to change the activity route on the day depending on prevailing conditions and altered circumstances. A walk leader can refuse permission for any person to take part in his/her activity. A list of trip participants must be prepared and the non-member fee (currently \$5) should be collected before the start of the trip. This is a requirement of our insurance policy. Without this list participants may not be covered by insurance.

EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSONS (ECPS): Leaders must leave trip details, including a list of participants and their contact numbers with a family member, or if none available, with an ECP. In the event of a delay, the ECP will contact families and decide on the next course of action.

PARTICIPANTS (members and visitors) must check with the leader that their fitness and experience suit the walk.

Follow the leader's instructions at all times. Pay own ambulance costs – insurance is recommended (but accidents are rare).

BOOKINGS: If you intend participating in any of the activities listed below you are required to personally speak to the Leader **no later** than the **Wednesday** prior to a **day** activity or **7 days** prior to an **overnight** activity or unless otherwise indicated. SMS bookings are not appropriate. **Please be aware that leaders have the right to decide the size of the group they will accept for their activities. Activities may become fully subscribed before the general cut-off date. By contacting the leader early you may avoid missing out.**

FIRST AID KITS: are to be taken by leaders on each walk.

BIVY BAGS: The club has bivy bags available for activities where extreme cold may be an issue.

GRADING

Grade 1

(**Easy**) Opportunity for large number of participants, including those with reduced ability to walk/cycle on well-marked and even formed tracks. **Formed tracks** may have a few steps. Should not be steep. Suitable for beginners. Distance should not exceed about 10km.

Grade 2

(**Easy-Medium**) Easy activity, mostly on tracks of low gradient. Opportunity to walk/cycle easily in natural environments on well-marked tracks. Tracks should not be steep. Distance should not exceed about 15km.

Grade 3

(**Medium**) Medium activity with some hilly sections and/or rougher terrain. Opportunity to walk/cycle on defined and distinct tracks with some steep sections requiring a moderate level of fitness. Suitable for fit beginners. Distance should not exceed about 20km.

Grade 4

(**Medium-Hard**) Steeper, rougher terrain and may have off-track sections (no more than one quarter of the walk) or a longer distance track walk. Opportunity to explore and discover relatively undisturbed natural environments mostly along defined and distinct tracks. Tracks can be steep. There may be short sections of rock scrambling involved. Leaders should have map reading abilities and/or ability to use a compass. Distance depending on circumstances. Not suitable for most beginners.

Grade 5

(**Hard**) Off-track or difficult terrain. Opportunity for walkers with advanced outdoor knowledge and skills to find their own way along often indistinct tracks or off track in remote locations. May include steep sections of unmodified surfaces. There may be rock scrambling, creek walking and crossing involved. Distance should not exceed 30km, but may be short and difficult. Not suitable for beginners.

Grade 6

(**Very Hard**) Strenuous off-track walk or very long distance. Opportunity for highly experienced walkers to exploratory remote and challenging natural areas without reliance on managed tracks. Terrain may be steep, uneven and no track. There may be rock scrambling, creek walking and crossing involved. Distance covered is unlimited, but may be short and difficult. Only for experienced walkers and not suitable for beginners.

Exploratory Is unknown to leader and while every effort has been made to grade the activity appropriately, there may be some unexpected aspects which may increase the difficulty of the walk.

Disclaimer All statements and opinions expressed in articles published in 'Footprints' are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor, the Committee or members of the Border Bushwalking Club.