

FOOTPRINTS

“Finally, we are one” December 2020

*Newsletter of the Border Bushwalking Club Inc
Affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria*

President	Ian Trevaskis 0425 782 983	president@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au
Membership, Data base	Marie	membership@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au
Treasurer	Eve	treasurer@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au
Secretary	Vanessa	secretary@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au
Newsletter Editor, VP	Ralph	newsletter@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au
Activities Coordinator	Bernadette	activities@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au

Ira: Meeting Suppers & Social Convener, **Ken:** Equipment Officer & Policy, and general committee members **Sandy & Simon**

From the President's Stump

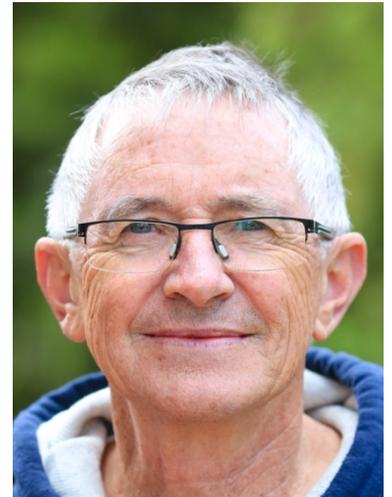
Isn't it beautiful that we have regained our freedom! The fact that we can now get out and about is certainly reflected in the wide range of activities being offered to members.

Whether you wish to enjoy a cruisy day walk locally or want to head into the hills for something a bit more challenging, our small band of hard-working and enthusiastic Leaders has something to offer all tastes - from exploring the High Plains huts, to multi-day trips in Kosciusko NP, to canoeing on the Murray River.

I recently led a 'Beginner's Overnighter' to Ryder's Yards in the Alpine NP (see Trip Reports) and was pleased that one of our new members made the commitment to join us. I'm sure Sharon learnt lots of valuable information over the two days – from food choices, to essential gear, to navigation. Perhaps the most important learning outcome was that BBC activities are a great way to develop and nurture friendships, to have a laugh and to have fun. Club activities are not designed to test someone's physical prowess, or to see how fast they can climb a mountain, or whether they have all the latest gear and gadgets.

Our Leaders aim to ensure those under their care have an enjoyable experience, have a bit of fun and come away with the desire to do it all again. Like Sharon, it's also an opportunity to develop and build their own knowledge and 'bush craft', based on the experience and expertise of Leaders and others in the party.

Of course, you can't enjoy the experience and have fun if you've not prepared yourself, so it is each and every participant's responsibility to read and understand fully the activity they are considering joining. If you're a non-swimmer, then you shouldn't book into a canoe trip; if you struggle to hike up a long, steep track with a full overnight pack, then opt for an easier day walk with little or no elevation gain. If you are feeling unwell immediately prior to the planned activity, then notify the Leader that you will not be participating.



For more information about Participant's Responsibilities, please refer to the Club's website under 'Club Policies', and if in doubt about any aspects of an activity you plan to join, just ask the Leader – they're a friendly lot!

And finally, congratulations to our Committee member, Simon Mullumby, on recently being elected to the Board of Bushwalking Victoria. Simon's voice will be a distinct advantage for all bushwalking clubs in the north-east.

I look forward to catching up with you on an activity and the Christmas Event in the near future.

Ian

New members; a warm welcome to the following;

- Fiona Hoath
- Monique Bennett
- Heather Thurnam
- Melissa Coombe and Kirk Macumber
- Helen Corrigan

End of Year BBC Christmas Event; Tuesday December 1

Hopefully you saw the recent email announcing the following:

The committee is inviting you to join them for a BYO EVERYTHING picnic at Hovell Tree Park, Albury on Tuesday, December 1 from 6 pm onwards. We are still operating under the "no sharing of food guideline" so unfortunately we will not be able to indulge in the usual amazing array of salads and desserts members have shared in the past.

We will set up near the new wood fired pizza oven precinct so that those who prefer a barbecue will be able to access the new barbecues near the ovens. There are fixed tables at the barbecue, but you may prefer to bring your own as it is a public area and there could be other people using it also. It would also assist with physical distancing.

There is no need to contact anyone to let them know you are coming; just show up with all you need for a great catch up. Hovel Tree Park is at the Murray River end of Hume Street, Albury with plenty of parking in Hume Street and the Albury Swimming Pool Car Park

Ira

Bushwalking Victoria Update

Our club is affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria. Part of your annual membership supports this group of volunteers working tirelessly to encourage bushwalking, influencing stakeholders, track maintenance, bush rescue, training etc.

This month, as Ian mentions in his report above Simon Mullumby has been elected to Board of Bushwalking Victoria. Well done Simon. We look forward to your regular updates from the board.

An excellent Bushwalking Manual has recently been released and can be downloaded at <https://bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/bushwalking-manual-704>

You can also subscribe to your own copy of Bushwalking Victoria monthly newsletter on the home page of their website. <https://bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/>

Trip Reports

The Fainters

What a glorious weekend we had, with cold, frosty nights leading to cool but sunny weather, perfect for walking, and a great group of walkers, including three who had not been to the Tawonga huts before.

The walk started at the Pretty Valley dam, but on the drive up we stopped at Falls Creek. It was here, lying on the pavement for all to see, a large, glittering, diamond shaped rock , but only spotted and picked up by leader. Still waiting to hear from the experts on whether I can afford to pay a lackey to carry my pack on future walks.....!



We arrived at the Tawonga huts Friday afternoon, to find no one else at the campsite, and the fireplace in the hut had a new wood heater insitu. While the older members oohed and aaahed over this new addition, the first timers to the hut made use of the stove top for cooking, made easy by the stacks of firewood lining the hut.

We woke Saturday morning to frost, and with a predicted maximum of 6 C, all were encouraged to rug up for the trek to the Fainters. The track was quite wet in places, with a couple of creek crossings, and a few lingering wildflowers around.

A suitable tree was found for morning tea, where the layers of clothing were removed, and much discussion was had on the current state of local and global affairs, before moving on and up.



The track up Fainter South remained elusive , but was easily navigated cross country, up then down , before heading up Fainter North. The views of both the Kiewa Valley and the Ovens Valley, Feathertop, Mount Buffalo and Bogong were enjoyed as we ate lunch , rested , soaked up the sun. Definitely a maximum temperature of more than 6 C !

It's amazing how the same track is just as interesting going back, as we admired large rock formations, and many little waterfalls off the track were seen.

We found our campsite had another tent, with a couple from Yackandandah, and as our group had three from the Yackandandah district, there was much discussion and interesting conversation, and possibly

a property sale! (I'm yet to find out if leaders get commission for this sort of high finance....).

The leisurely walk out on Sunday morning, with a rest and view at the Ben Cooper memorial, was completed with everyone enjoying lunch in the park in Mt Beauty.

Thank you to all the walkers, it was great fun.

Pauline



Ropers Hut overnighter

2020 will go down as the year that Plan B came to the rescue. Despite Covid restrictions allowing us to go to Wheelers Hut the still fire damaged and closed Khancoban – Cabrumurra Rd, meant Plan B an overnight walk into Ropers Hut became a reality.

The route we took started at Heathy Spur and followed the Falls to Hotham Crossing to the intersection with Big River Fire Trail/AAWT, where we turned left and headed to Edmondsons Hut for lunch. It was very windy and coolish, and the hut provided shelter as we ate lunch and used the fancy loo.

Heading back onto the track we had a headwind as we climbed up to Mt Nelse and Warby Corner. The best thing about walking on the fire trail (which itself is boring) are the views across to Mt McKay, The Fainters and beyond to Feathertop and Buffalo just visible on the horizon.

As we headed down from Warby Corner, we were a little more sheltered and now in front of us, were views of Bogong and West Peak and the ridge line that takes you to Cleve Cole Hut. We crossed paths with a guy on a bike who had camped on Bogong the previous night!

After approximately 16.8km we arrived at Ropers Hut campsite. As there was no one else there we spread ourselves out and enjoyed one of the prettiest campsites. First job was to collect water from the creek that was really flowing after all the rain. Tents up, fire lit, it was time for drinks and snacks in the last of the sunshine.



The hut was a cosy spot for dinner and the warmth meant that we all went to bed warm.

It was so good to pack up dry tents on Sunday morning and once packed we set off for the little bit of a climb out of the campsite and onto the main fire trail. The sky was blue, the wind had dropped and it was much warmer than the previous day.

As we walked downhill towards the turn off to Johnstons Hut we ran into recently released prisoners from Covidville, who were even happier than us to be enjoying a great day on the high plains. The track goes down to Johnstons, but it is definitely a hut worth detouring to. Set in a wide-open field of alpine grasses and flowers, it was picture perfect.



But we still had a few kilometres to the car at Watchbed Creek, so we retraced our steps back uphill and onto the waiting car. We got to the car just on midday and after walking 14.5km from Ropers Hut everyone was looking forward to lunch at Mt Beauty. Deb



Yes, No , Maybe...

It was my third attempt to run the Spion Kopje walk in 12 months and it was by no means certain.

Would the bad weather predicted stop our walk?

Would the injured participants be recovered enough to join us?

Will Linda be able to get off work on time?

Would our president's other commitment clash?

Would Roper's Hut be in the bubble?

Would the gate over Rocky Valley dam be open on time?

After much research, many, many phone calls and emails we got some answers. And so our 10 became 6 and we battled the, not as bad as predicted, elements to set up at Edmonson's Hut on Friday evening.



This presented us with a whole new set of questions:

Are you warm enough?

Will Rex ever get his choofer working?

Is Bernadette's dinner, left over from the season that wasn't, still ok to eat?

Are the storms, that David is seeing on the ap, really going to eventuate and, therefore, is Spion Kopje the best destination?

Is the 17.50 on Eve's watch, the time, the altitude or...?



After many yes, no, maybes we opted to walk to Roper's Hut avoiding the exposure of SK. The weather was a constant source of surprise but we managed to summit Nelse and visit Johnston's Hut before returning, slightly soggy to camp.

Soon after our return we were surprised to see Marie, who had pulled out the walk, appear to join us. That evening presented yet more questions.

Is that a raven, a crow or Marie's ap making that noise?

Is the barking we hear during the night a rare Alpine Dingo?

Is Leanne's foot massage the best gift ever for the leader?

Will Rex ever get his choofer to light?

The group agreed that it was lovely to be back in our lovely Alpine area experiencing the many greens of the landscape, the fresh air and even a very lazy but alert tiger snake on our return.

A few of us headed up to Roper's lookout to take in the magnificent vistas before heading back down to unpacking, cleaning and mostly planning our next getaways.

My fourth attempt at Spion Kopje will be in March 2021.

Watch this space.

Bernadette



Federation Hill, Huon Hill and Kiewa River, Mahers Hill and Mt. McFarlane

Due to the Covid restrictions which included no carpooling in Victoria and once the restrictions were eased for Regional Victoria some walks close to home seemed an ideal choice. Parklands Albury Wodonga manages a number of bushland reserves in and around Wodonga, so it was decided to attempt four of the walking tracks they managed. Parklands Albury Wodonga also manages a section of the High Country Rail Trail from Baranduda to Tallangatta, The Baranduda Parklands and Gateway Island plus some other parks and walkways

Federation Hill was the first of our walks on the 26th of September, originally the walk to Mt. McFarlane was advertised but due to heavy rain and low cloud we took on Federation Hill instead, as it was deemed to be a safer walk in the conditions. The rain stayed away long enough for us to complete this walk, however, a cold wind left over from winter greeted us on top of Federation Hill. Six walkers completed the 18km walk including new members Rex, Wendy and Cazz. The walk along Federation Hill track offered great views of Wodonga Albury and beyond to Table Top. It also included a section through some urban parkland and walking trails. It was a very enjoyable day and everyone was pleased to just get out of their houses.

Huon Hill and along the Kiewa River. Again, heavy rain in the days leading up to this walk on the 10th of October threatened its cancellation. However, in the end eight walkers from the club including new members Rex, Wendy and Cazz took on the walk. The first section involved climbing the Stringybark track to the summit of Huon Hill, the track was in remarkably good condition considering the amount of rain during the week leading up. An extended morning tea was taken so we could fully assess the 360 degree views overlooking Albury, Wodonga, Lake Hume, Mt. Bogong, Mt. Feathertop, the Kiewa Valley, Bonegilla, Baranduda Range, Table Top Mountain and the Murray Valley towards Corowa. After the break we descended towards the Kiewa River along the Bundy track. When we reached the Kiewa River it was in minor flood level, which provided a spectacular look at the fast flowing river. After a short walk we reached the Murray Kiewa river junction passing a canoe tree along the way. It is not signed for fear of vandalism, but it is quite obvious when you see it. Along the track we disturbed a good size Red Belly Black snake, who appeared just as confused as we were. A little further on we spotted a very young Eastern Long Neck Turtle with its distinctive orange markings. This one was the size of a 20 cent piece. The walk back to our cars involved a detour around rising flood waters. All up this walk was about 14km.



Mahers Hill on the 17th of October was affected by heavy rain the night before. It was touch and go if we would proceed as five walkers pulled out on the morning. A heavy downpour at the carpark was nearly the final straw. Of the five who did brave the weather the first km was the wettest and low cloud didn't generate a lot of enthusiasm. After the km the rain stopped, the clouds lifted sufficiently to reveal an exhilarating walk with sweeping views of Lake Hume to the north. At times the track was difficult to find through the long wet grass which also contributed to some very wet boots and pants.

A short break was taken at the top of Mahers Hill, where we were joined by the 2020 season of bush flies. From the top we saw Lake Hume at its once in ten year best, low cloud and mist drifting across the lake and surrounding emerald green hills. That weekend the Lake was at 70 percent capacity and we were well rewarded for walking in the rain. This walk was only 8km which meant we were back at our cars and heading home for a warm shower before 12.00pm.

McFarlane Hill Nature Trail the fourth and final local Wodonga walk on Saturday the 24th of October. Of the four Parklands Albury Wodonga walks, McFarlane's Hill promised the greatest views. However, as with all walks since late September rain put everything in jeopardy. Saturday morning on the day of the walk started early, text messages coming in like machine gun fire, constant weather radar checking until we decided to move the departure time to 10.00am. Eventually, six walkers took on the 9km circuit.

Initially the walk follows the contours of Mt.McFarlane and Hunchback Hill, then shortly after crossing Coyles Road we began the steep climb along Schinders Track and onto Vearings track up to the Klings Hill shelter. Fifty metres from the shelter the views disappeared behind low clouds and mist. So unfortunately we missed the views of the Murray Valley, Mt. Bogong and Mt. Buffalo. Hopefully next time! The rain began again so we decided to head back to base camp walking along the ridgeline and across the Hunchback saddle, where we were eventually rewarded with a view of Albury Wodonga. As with the other walks we were all done within a few hours and back home to dry out, again.

Thank-you to everybody who participated in the four walks over the past rainy Saturdays. It was pleasing to see so many new members getting involved.

Simon

Mt. Buffalo Scenic Points

It was my first walk outside Wodonga since late March when we undertook a navigation training course around Falls Creek. It seemed a lifetime ago. The weather was perfect, even a little warm in the gullies. Five walkers joined me for what turned out to be a 14.5km walk around the famous Mt. Buffalo Chalet scenic points. Eve, Rex and new member Heather were joined by Aline and Rachel both visitors for the day.

We began by walking around Lake Catani and meeting up with the Monolith Track. After getting our bearings we headed towards the Chalet, it was very busy, many Melbourne visitors making the most of their new freedoms. The Chalet was in full splendour with the gardens putting on a grand display.



After a short lunch and a wonder around the lookouts and Chalet we descended towards the Underground River. The climb to View Point was quite taxing in the heat. However, View Point provided us with a welcome breeze and some wonderful views over Lake Catani, Mt. Dunn in the distance and the Chalwell Galleries our next destination.

We abandoned our packs as we passed our cars and began the climb towards the Chalwell Galleries. The walkers were warned that this section included some rock scrambling. However, when confronted with the descent through a cavity in the rocks the initial shock was replaced with large grins. It was a great way to finish off a very enjoyable day.

Simon

High Country Rail Trail.

The cycle trail begins in Central Wodonga and extends all the way to Cudgewa not far from Corryong. The track is maintained by friends of the trail groups who have benefited from its boost to local tourism, including community groups from Tallangatta, Parklands Albury Wodonga and other community groups along the way.

After two previous attempts to get this bike ride from Bandiana to Tallangatta and return underway, October the 18th, provided us with the break we needed from the recent rain. This ride was undertaken by five riders, Ian and Trish, Eve, Simon and new club member Linda from Mt. Beauty. The return ride just clocked over 60km. It is an Ideal ride for all levels of cyclists as there are a number of parks or reserves along the way which provide easy access to the trail.

The first section of the ride crosses the Kiewa River which has been at minor flood level now for almost two months. This section is without any doubt one of the most scenic sections of the High Country Rail Trail.

After crossing the Kiewa we cycled along raised tracks across billabongs and past majestic ancient Red River Gums, this section of the trail is green all year. Leaving the Billabongs we began the steady climb towards the historic Bonegilla rail platform and onto the Ebden reserve where Eve joined the group. After a couple of breaks we arrived at Tallangatta where we enjoyed lunch and fresh coffee from the Tallangatta Bakery.



The return trip back to Bandiana was equally as enjoyable as the ride to Tallangatta because there appeared to be more down sections than uphill sections and of course we managed to get another look at the Billabongs and Red River Gums around the Kiewa River. It was also pleasing to find out the magpies had given up.

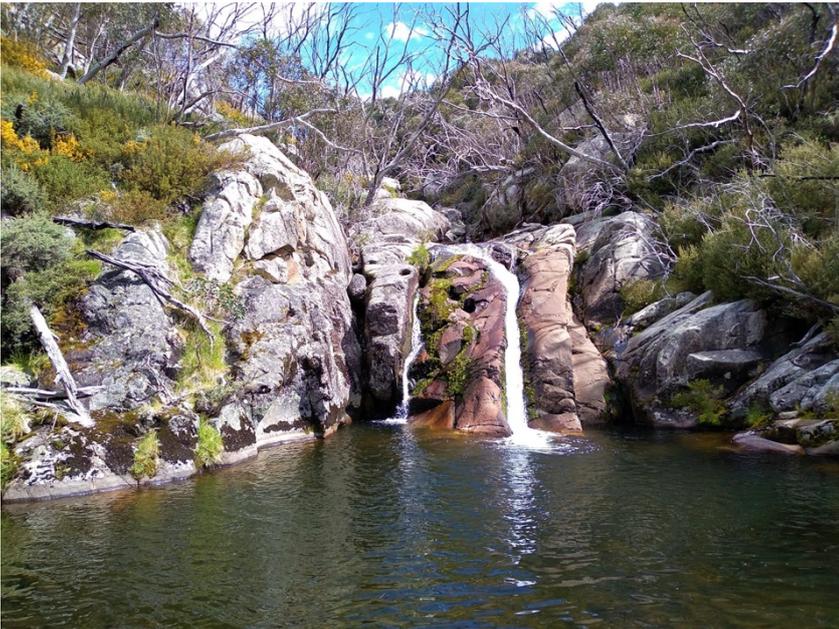
Simon

Ryders Yard Overnighter

Four of us, including a first-timer, enjoyed perfect hiking weather to walk from the Cope Hut car park to Ryders Yards recently. We were joined by Ron who chose the easier option and rode his electric bike from the horse yards near Pretty Valley. We were met by Marie just before reaching the huts - she had decided she needed to do something a bit more strenuous and had hiked up from Howman's Gap.



After setting up our tents and having a relaxing lunch while gazing out across the valley, four of us set off on our quest to seek out the 'Secret Waterfall'. Unlike the trip last year, we erred on the side of caution and chose not to attempt any short cuts this time until we reached the faint footpad at Pole ***. (I can't name the pole in case the secret is leaked!)



We followed the pad into the valley, before bush bashing further down towards the sound of rushing water and the confluence of two streams. From there it was a matter of some careful rock hopping and a bit more bush bashing upstream until we reached our goal.

While Rosemary and Sharon cooled off in some rock pools, Tania and I took the plunge in the icy water and believe me, despite the shock, it was pure magic! I'm sure there are some who would pay big bucks to be guided to this special place, but we selfishly hope that "our" falls remain a closely guarded secret.

Saturday evening's meal was enjoyed on the grass in front of the main hut while we were entertained by a robin flitting about and a bunch of bunnies foraging beneath the snowgums. We retired to our tents when the sun went down and despite light rain and some gusty winds overnight the weather was fine when we set off in the morning.

Hopefully we can make a return visit again in the near future and perhaps some more members will join us, so they too can experience this unique spot hidden in the bush.

Ian

Member Profiles

Simon Mullumby

Where do you live? I currently live beside the 14th fairway of the Wodonga Golf course

Where else have you lived? The first seventeen years of my life was spent in Melbourne, where I went to school, joined the Scouts, and local sailing club.

In 1974 I started my working life as an apprentice carpenter, after a year of working in Melbourne I moved with my family to the Southern Riverina town of Finley. I was very fortunate to be able to transfer my apprenticeship. My family took on farming, growing sheep, wheat and rice.

Early in married life I moved to Wangaratta with my wife Penny. Where I joined a cycling group. We then moved to Albury Wodonga in 1994.

When and how did you first become involved in bushwalking/skiing etc.? When I was very young my family spent time over Christmas at Wilsons Prom. It is a great place to be introduced to bushwalking. I still try to do a walk at the Prom at least once a year. Joining the scouts also introduced me to the Dandenong Ranges.

Tell us about your first activity with BBC. Not quite sure if my first walk was to Mt. Welcome just outside Mitta Mitta, or around Mt. Stanley, either way both were very enjoyable, both of which I haven't done before.

What roles have you had within the club? I joined the club 18 months ago and took on a role as a committee member at the beginning of this year. It has been disappointing we haven't been able to visit the high country as often this year. However, I have really enjoyed the local walks around the Wodonga hills and along the Kiewa River. Many new members have also found these walks a good way to be distracted from Covid and the lockdowns.

What do you love most about walking or other club activities? Last year I really enjoyed the canoeing on a Wednesday night, it was something I had never done before but always wanted to do.

What club activity that stands out in your memory? Why? Before Christmas last year, I took part in the Hotham to Falls Creek walk. I had done sections of the walk in the past but never done it as a combined day walk. Dibbins hut was at its best and there was enough water in the creek for a quick cool off.

Which activity do you most wish you could do now? I am looking forward to taking on the McMillans Track which runs from Omeo to Woods Point. It is an old track cut by Angus McMillan in 1864 which has recently been bought back to life by volunteers from the Ben Cruachan Walking Club. John Chapman launched a new travel guide last week, where describes the 210km walk as a good taster for the Alpine Walking Track.

What are you doing to make the most of our current situation? I have used my time well during the lockdown, renovating two bathrooms and finishing off a few jobs around the house. I also have ridden the High Country Rail trail a couple of times a week, and walked the hills around Wodonga to keep my fitness up, unfortunately my golf has gone backwards.

What's something new that you've done or learned since we've been required to stay at home more? I suspect like most others I have had to become more proficient with Zoom and Skype, chat rooms, face time, etc... there must be others I have forgotten? I have found it an efficient way of communicating.



Tell us one thing about you that most people wouldn't know. I have recently joined the Boards of two local community organisations. The first being NELLEN which is an organisation that supports Students at Risk, by helping them to get involved in Structured Workplace Learning programs. The second organisation is Parklands Albury Wodonga they manage local bush parks and reserves, preserving native flora and fauna, river frontages and the wetlands along the Murray and Kiewa rivers. Among other things, they are also involved with the development and promotion of the High-Country Rail Trail. I was recently invited to join the board of Bushwalking Victoria and I am also a member of Bush Search and Rescue (BSAR).

A new guide for our region

Eileen has passed on the following.

A new guide to tracks in the Wangaratta area including Chiltern, Warbies and Mt Cobbler is now available. A lot of the walks are short but could be linked together. It's a great resource for leaders looking for inspiration, especially for easier walks or members looking for a local explore.

<https://www.visitwangeratta.com.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/Wangaratta-Tracks-and-Trails-Guide-2020.pdf>

Members Forum on the website

To celebrate "finally we are one again", this month we encourage you to tell us where were when you had one of your most enjoyable Christmas celebrations.

Include a photo if possible so we can all share your memory

Services included in your BBC membership include;

A range of gear is available from the club to hire at a very minimal rate

- Sleeping bags
- Back-packs
- Hiking poles
- Waterproof jackets
- We even have a dehydrator if you want to prepare your own meals

Safety equipment is available free of charge for leaders of club activities

- First aid kits
- GPS
- PBLs

All of the above is stored and managed by **Adventure Gear, 479 Dean Street, Albury.**

Adventure Gear is open for business with slightly shorter hours. Call in and have a chat to Gino and Kell for all your equipment needs whether it be hiring or buying at the special BBC club discounted rate.

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

Cut off date for input to the next issue of Footprints January 25, 2021.