

FOOTPRINTS

January 2021

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

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From the President's Stump

Happy New Year! Let's hope 2021 is a massive improvement on what has just preceded it.

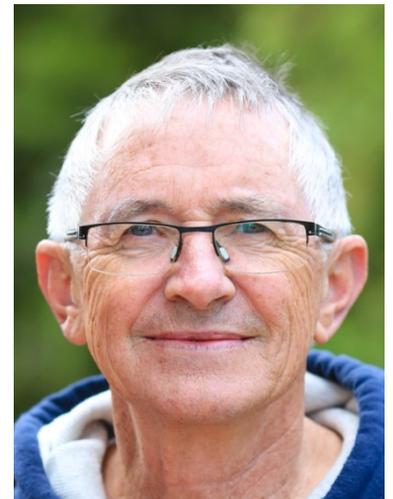
Whilst COVID-19 has certainly affected all our lives in one way or another, it's been pleasing to note that the BBC has continued to provide members with a range of outdoor activities despite the restrictions imposed on us by various government departments, and at the same time making sure we try to keep all members safe and healthy.

If you check out the current activities on our website you will see that there's plenty on offer, although there is perhaps a need for a few more local day walks. So, if you'd like to lead a walk for a couple of hours in and around Albury or Wodonga, finishing with cake and coffee at a café, by all means put it on the program!

The Committee had hoped to be able to resume our monthly Club Nights but as you will note elsewhere in this Footprints, the best laid plans of mice and men ... So, in an effort to have some face-to-face contact with our members and to enjoy a bit of socialising, our very first Club Night will be a picnic/bbq down by the river side in Albury. We are hoping as many members as possible will make the effort to attend and to also take a few minutes to share with the rest of us a memorable walk they have done, or perhaps, an amusing anecdote from a walk.

At our February committee meeting we will be discussing the Club's role in hosting the 2022 Federation Walks event and appointing a special sub-committee to organise the event. For those who are unaware, each year a club, or clubs, affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria hosts a series of activities in its region.

This is an excerpt from BWV's website: *"Bushwalking Victoria was originally established as the Federation of Victorian Bushwalking Clubs at a meeting on 15 May 1934. At that meeting, the first of the six aims of the new organisation was to 'Unite all Victorian walking clubs for the protection and advancement of mutual interests to*



promote the pastime of tour walking [as bushwalking was known at the time] and encourage good fellowship among affiliated bodies'.

To foster good fellowship among the eight inaugural member clubs, the first Federation Walk was organised by the Melbourne Amateur Walking and Touring Club and held on 6 October 1935.

The tradition of a member club organising a walk event was thereby created. Unfortunately, we don't know the location of the first walk."

The 2021 Federation Walks will be held in the Gippsland Foothills and Southern Alps and based at the Licola Wilderness Village and will be held from 12th November to 15th November. For more information go to <https://www.fedwalks.org.au/>

BBC members will be kept updated on the progress and planning of this major event that will attract hundreds of bushwalkers to our region. We will be putting out a call sometime in the future for members to both offer assistance in the organisation of the event, and also to volunteer to lead an activity or two.

I look forward to catching up with you on an activity sometime soon.

Ian

New members; a warm welcome to the following;

- Chris & Yve McLaughlin
- Andrea Ryder
- Shivaun White
- Libby Alexander
- Alison McCaig
- Jean Teek

Our First Club Night For 2021; Tuesday March 2

The committee trusts the new year has started well for all members and that it brings you enjoyable adventures in our great outdoors. We had hoped to be able to hold a club night in February in the Senior Citizen's Hall but unfortunately the hall committee has notified us that it will not be available until further notice.

After some debate it was decided to belatedly start the year with a social gathering near the wood fired ovens in Hovell Tree Park Albury on Tuesday MARCH 2 starting at 6.30 with a BYO everything picnic/BBQ followed by an outdoor meeting.

The topic for the evening is "My Favourite Walk" and members are invited to share theirs with us.

Put **MARCH 2** in your diary and watch the BBC website for any reminders/updates.

Ira

Navigation Training March 13 2021 Chiltern Forrest

BBC have committed to training in leadership and Navigation.

Unfortunately our next leadership course will need to be delayed due to COVID considerations, but on March 13th anyone interested in navigating through the bush will be given to opportunity to learn more about this skill.

Our club member, John Hillard, who assists in training courses for BWV has agreed to take a group out to Chiltern Forrest to go over theory and then try out their skills. This follows a very successful day in 2019.



It will suit beginners and those wishing to brush up on skills.

Even if you never intend to go cross country it is a good skill to have, just in case.

Some members have done this course but you are welcome to come again as a refresher. This is advertised in 'Events' and you are advised to book in as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Some thoughts on Car Pooling

Due to COVID 19 our usual car pooling arrangements have been suspended.

Leaders have been asked to refer to current government guidelines in planning transport to/from walks and for car shuffles.

It is important that participants are comfortable with their travel arrangements **so please let your leader know if you would rather make your own arrangements.**

Trip Reports

Youngs Hut Overnight, finally we are allowed to visit “our” hut

Executive Summary;
provided by Eve

“...the most fun painting the hut, the worst weather, the most sleepless night, the coldest swim, the best surprise of another 11 walkers, 4 riders, and 9 beautiful horses, the most crowded hut, the most social weekend ...”



The photo shows half of our smiling crew slapping linseed oil onto the outside boards ... and that was the weekend. Ian, our trip leader and self-designated work's foreman, had his Cat O'-9-tails at the ready for anyone who even thought to stop. Needless to say, Young's is now well oiled once again!

An intrepid band of TEN, seven women and three men, assembled at Pretty Valley carpark. Our walk in to Young's was very pleasant; wind coldish but no rain. From the carpark WSW towards Tawonga Huts along the Fainters Fire trail turning off to head due south past the three snow gums (or is it one

with three trunks?) to meet up with the Pole 333.

From there south past Mt. Jim continuing along Young's Spur past the turnoff to Cobungra Huts, at which point we ran into quite a large mob of brumbies and onto Young's Hut. We quickly set up tents, slapped some oil on the hut in no time flat (Ian's 'cat' has a nasty bite) and then set off to explore.

Not far below the hut are the falls and so off we went to explore. By the time we had all returned from our swim (foot dangle for some) at the falls it, the rain had arrived as had the first of our two “guest” parties for the evening.



Party #1: A large group of Out-Door Ed. Students from Victoria college Footscray and their tutors/handlers appeared out from the ether somewhat dishevelled and bedraggled. They assembled their tents and then *en masse* invaded the hut to share (commandeer?) the fire our number had previously lit. However, this was partially our fault as we chose the table and that only left the fire end for them. As our first guest party#1 were settling in the second bunch arrived; and in style!

Party #2: Four people on horseback plus packhorses, dismounted stripped off their drizabones, found flat land, pitched shelter, hobbled horses and also joined our little company to sample the pleasures of Young's Hut.

Soon all twenty five of us persons were eating, chatting, swapping stories and yarns and having a bloody great time aided, not in the least, by quantities of Marie's Negroni. For a very modest sum Marie is willing to share her secret formula. Please be warned all bottle-shops in Albury - Wodonga are running very low on the necessary (alcoholic) ingredients.



Apparently wind gusts of up to 110km per hour were experienced in the vicinity of Young's that night accompanied by lashings of rain; I for one did not feel, or at least remember them. Is everyone else on my page?

Well, no, as Iona has beautifully written ... *"the deafening and scary thunderous roar of the wind swirling through the high country in the dead of night is something that I will not forget too soon"*

Rex



Mt Beauty Candlelight Supper

What better way to see out the old year than a short stroll followed by an alfresco candlelight supper as the full moon rose over Mt Bogong? Rose and Violet accepted Hyacinth's invitation to sleep over and pitched their tents on her expansive but rather sloping lawns. They admired the bouquet of *Floribunda plastica* she had placed strategically in the hole to stop them falling into it in the dark. Then they headed to the riverside park in Mt Beauty, where they were joined by Daisy.

We first walked round an attractive artificial lake known locally as *Le Pon d'age*, admiring the reflection of Mt Bogong and noting the families happily frolicking on the beach or playing in the warm water. As befitted the occasion, Hyacinth was resplendent in a hostess gown in psychedelic hues of scarlet and purple, while Rose's pink shirt showed off to perfection her reindeer antlers studded with diamonds and pearls.

The next walk was along the river, *La Promenade de la Kiewa*, a 1 km track with a short turning loop at the end that afforded great views of the fast-flowing river and the camping ground on the opposite bank. However, after walking and talking for some time, Hyacinth realised something was amiss because the path came to a dead end, *un morte finale sanguine*, as she so eloquently put it. Daisy and Rose hastily consulted the great cartographer Monsieur Google and we decided to retrace our steps and eventually found the right path, guided by the smell of bacon from the campers.

Supper was taken in the new picnic area beside the river, a charming and well-equipped location. Hyacinth lit the candle while the meal was prepared.

Because of Covid regulations we were unable to share food (rice paper rolls, chicken schnitzel, quiche and an appalling *compote* of brown rice and kale) but sharing drinks seemed to be in order, and in a flash three bottles of wine and a hip flask appeared on the table. Ever the good hostess, Hyacinth had anticipated this and produced four brand new wine glasses with hand-painted logos of a local ski race (*L'hoppet Kangarou*).

As daylight faded, we ate our supper, finished some of the wine and waited for the moon to rise, and waited for the moon to rise, and waited.... Eventually we decided it was time to go home and as we walked back to the cars, we noticed the full moon, just emerging above trees before moving over Bogong. Hyacinth, Rose, Violet and Daisy agreed it had been a great evening and worth doing again some time.



Eileen

Fitzgerald and Kelly Huts

This was planned as a short walk to ease people back into activity after the excesses of Christmas. We welcomed a new member, Fiona, on her first Club walk. Four of us met at Howmans Gap and drove in convoy to the start of the Watchbed Creek track. The skies were cloudy and there was a threat of rain. We made good time up the hill and decided to keep going to Fitzgerald Hut rather than stopping for morning tea.

After inspecting the hut, we moved on to Kelly Hut, noting new signs that had been erected pointing the way. We also noted, sadly, that the magnificent old snowgum beside the track had died. We had lunch and were just packing up when rain started. We hastily donned our raincoats as the rain set in, then just as we were

leaving there was a loud thunderclap. We hadn't seen any lightning, so we decided to keep going. Once we'd stomped up the hill from the hut we made good time despite the rain and the odd rumble of thunder.

We were almost back at the cars when we noticed an old tree covered in moss. We must have walked past it many times before, but the way it was reflecting the light against the backdrop of dark clouds made it stand out. Back at the cars we struggled out of wet raincoats and boots and headed home after a pleasant, relaxing walk.



Eileen



Dibbins Hut overnight

After an initial meetup at Bright and with a new member, we were soon heading up towards the Hotham high country. As we passed the long lines of parked vehicles near the start of Razorback Trailhead it appeared that many people were keen to be out in the glorious weather on offer for the weekend.

We headed out from Mt Loch carpark on the Machinery Spur Track / Australian Alps Walking Track for a mostly downhill trek. A mosaic landscape of pink, white and yellow flowers surrounded us as we neared Derrick Hut where we rested for morning tea shaded by snowgums.



After descending a much steeper treed section we arrived at Dibbins Hut, set down our packs and discussed our camp site options. A few tents had already been setup by other walkers. A brief recce was promptly organised to the camping area further downstream which thankfully had a toilet! We quickly shouldered our packs for the short distance to the camping area and were able to find a spacious clearing right beside the Cobungra River. We soon discovered a pool of water deep enough for a dip. The jumping fish did not have to co-exist with us for too long as the temperature was the equivalent of an ice bath!

Marie soon joined us after a morning excursion. With the sunshine and butterflies it all became too relaxing for some. One turned to the water buckets for some excitement. This soon evolved into a friendly waterfight. Another slept for 3 hours and nearly missed dinner. Others caught up with visiting walkers from separate groups. Large mozzies soon sent those remaining after sunset scuttling into our tents.

The next morning was as perfect as the previous day and the 8 of us set off towards Dungey Track. This was a pretty section amongst tall trees. We passed an old miners cabin and battery and it was then all uphill along W Kiewa Logging Road. At the entrance to an old mine, we met a group of other walkers. Morning tea was then welcomed in the shade on the side of the track. The views were spectacular.



The many photo opportunities increased as we gained altitude along Machinery Spur Track until we reached a large clearing offering 360 degree views before the last stretch. We watched as a coppery coloured young snake crossed our path. A newish binoculars lens cover was then found and returned to a very grateful lady walker on a field trip.

We all said our goodbyes at Harrietville before heading our separate ways.

What a great weekend we all had with thanks to our leader, Bernadette. Looking forward to the next walk!



Eve



Quartz Ridge and Mt Bogong overnight

After cars were left at Mountain Creek Campground, we went into Mt Beauty, to meet the taxis for our ride to Heathy Spur, the start of our 2 day walk to Mt Bogong. It may have been an early start but the car park at Heathy Spur was already full.

As we passed Mt Nelse and Warby Corner, the flowers were in full bloom and we continued onto Timms lookout, which was a great spot for lunch and soaking up views. Management tracks are not that much fun but we continued down to the Big River crossing, which was a nice place to freshen up before a short steep climb to our camp, Bogong Spring Saddle. Ants and more ants greeted us and made getting a good spot to set up hard.

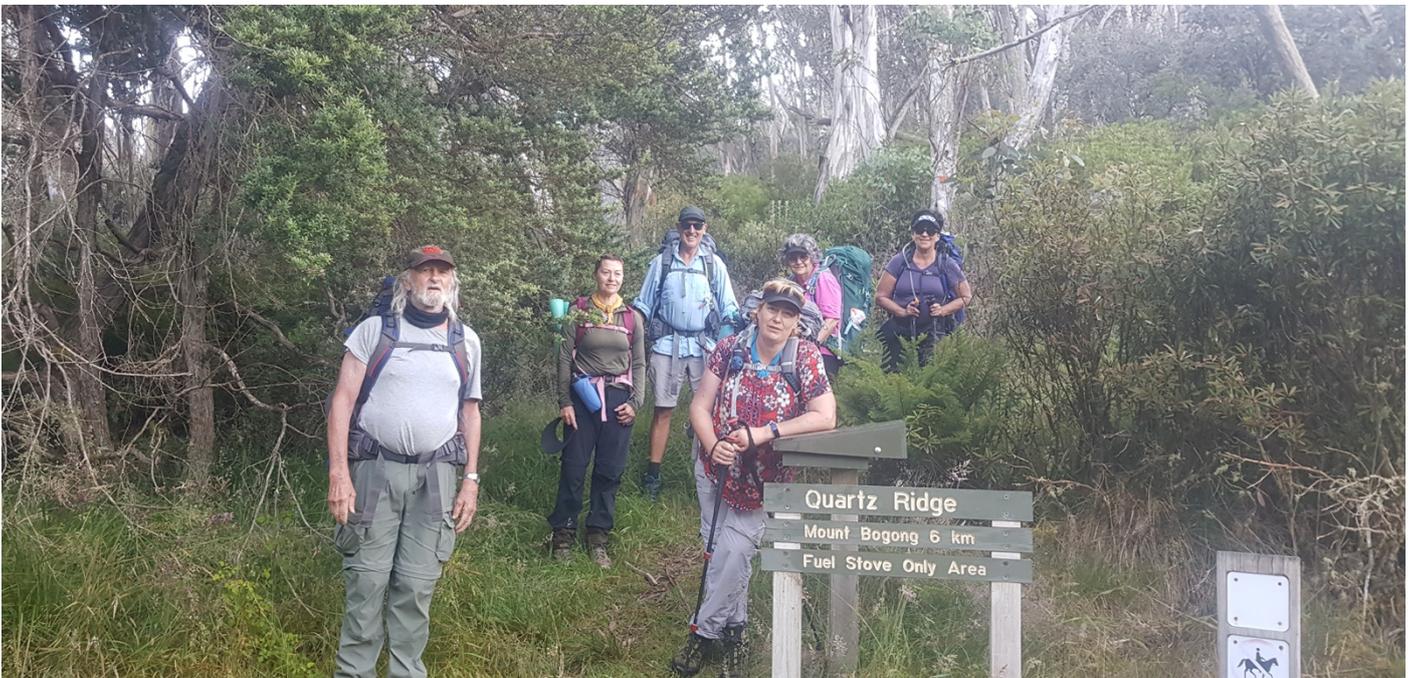




We were up early and moving by 7 am hoping to make the most of a cooler morning to climb Quartz Ridge. Once we were out of the trees the views made up for the hard climb, we had almost finished. Continuing up the ridge we finally reached the flatter plateau where some of the group opted for lunch at West Peak, while others went to Mt Bogong cairn for lunch.

Standing at the top of the Staircase and looking at the 6km track that goes down towards Mt Creek is impressive. It was a relief to be going down and after a short time we were out of the sun.

The sound of the fast flowing Mountain Creek, meant we were almost done for the day, and this had a few of us breathing easier after what was a big walk.



Mick

The little things matter or A needle in a haystack; almost.

Usually over the summer a few of our members volunteer to assist Parks Victoria with various environmental projects in the high country such as willow and hawkweed eradication. This summer the hawkweed program has been reduced so when another project, the Striated Sun Moth survey, came to our attention Ron Hammond and myself decided we would volunteer for this two day activity at Shelley in the upper Murray.

Endangered, Striated sun moths are a medium sized moth, a little smaller than a 20 cent piece, with whitish striations and markings on the dark brown upper sides of their wings; females being marked more prominently. Their wingspan is about 3.9 cm for males and 4.1 cm for females. Adult moths emerge from the ground over a small window of about 2 weeks from late December to mid January and are most active on warm, sunny, still days from 10am to 3pm. Their behaviour is so linked to sunshine that if passing clouds block out the sun they will immediately settle and not take flight again unless disturbed or until sunlight returns. T

They usually fly rapidly within a metre of the ground but when resting for short periods they often raise and lower their wings showing bright red orange coloured hind wings. When resting for longer periods this colour is concealed and the moth is camouflaged in the dry grass making them very hard to see when they are stationary. The adults sole purpose of their short 4 to 10 day lifespan is to find a mate.

Striated sun months are dependent on open grassy areas with good cover of native grasses, in particular Wallaby grass. The females lay their eggs at the roots of the grass and larvae feed on those roots for about two years before emerging as adults.

Given all the constraints of this little moth our group of around 17 volunteers only found two on the first day which was cut short by clouds building to an evening storm. The second day was more successful with another five found, including a mating pair.

The Parks Ranger who lead us was pleased with this result given that the survey, usually done annually, could not proceed last year. This was valuable data as it was unknown what impact the lack of sun for weeks, due to the smoke from the fires, would have on this rare moth.



I enjoyed the challenge of searching remnant patches of dry grassland for these special moths and urge anyone interested in “giving back” to our bush to watch Parks Victoria’s Park Connect volunteer web page for activities.

Ira; photo by Ron

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

The December newsletter included the following. Thanks to Eileen Clark for being our representative on this important project. See her role below.

Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing

\$15m for Falls to Hotham project

Ashleigh Piles

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Wednesday, November 25, 2020

Categories: Community, Government, Major Works, News

Tags:



A MAJOR tourism drawcard for Mount Hotham and Falls Creek has been backed by the State Government in its latest bid to support regional recovery.

Premier Daniel Andrews visited Whitfield last Wednesday, his first trip out of Melbourne since the bushfires, to announce a \$465 million Victorian Tourism Recovery Package that he described as the biggest regional tourism announcement in the history of the state.

The Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing will receive \$15 million to go towards works on the master plan, which was announced in 2018.

A project to develop the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing (FHAC) received substantial funding in the 2020/21 Victorian state budget. The FHAC is to be third of Victoria's four so-called Icon Walks, following the Great Ocean Walk (GOW) that opened in 2006 and the Grampians Peak Trail (GPT) that is scheduled to open in the next couple of months.

Development of the FHAC was first proposed in around 2006 and has been supported by both Labor and conservative governments. Interest in it has waxed and waned over the years since, with 2015 being the last year that saw much activity on the project and this led many people to

falsely assume that the project had been abandoned.

In May this year Parks Victoria (PV) established a Strategic Partnerships Committee (SPC) to provide advice on the key directions for the delivery of the project, and BWV was invited to participate on the committee. BWV nominated Chris Towers, a BTAC member and former president of BWV and Bushwalking Australia, and Eileen Clark, BTAC Field Officer for North East Victoria and Border Bushwalking Club member. The VNPA is also represented, with the remainder of the committee members representing state and local government departments and local and state tourism bodies.

Commercial development and commercial activities on public land such as national parks generate strong negative opinions amongst bushwalkers, and the proposed FHAC is no different. BWV's long-standing [policy position on commercial development and activities in national parks](#) is that we do not have a blanket objection to the creation of infrastructure to support walking in national parks, but certain clear provisos must be met. In particular, BWV does not support the construction of visually obtrusive infrastructure or any other inappropriate infrastructure along the route proposed for the Alpine Crossing and have particular concerns about proposed facilities in the High Knob (top of Diamantina Spur) and Federation Hut area.

BWV opposes commercial activities in the area that could cause detriment to free walkers' enjoyment of a truly iconic area. We strongly support the view that national parks are primarily intended for conservation and public enjoyment, and that commercial activities and supporting infrastructure must respect this intent.

However many bushwalkers, including members of BWV affiliate clubs utilise these types of services in other states and overseas, for example, in Tasmania, New Zealand and Europe. Like it or not, demand for commercial alternatives to the 'traditional' model of bushwalking has been growing for many years and there seems to be little sign of this changing.

BWV's involvement in the SPC will help ensure that bushwalkers' interests and views on the FHAC development are at least shared with key decision-makers, and we hope, will result in a better outcome.

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 February 22, 2021.