

FOOTPRINTS

July 2021

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

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Sandy & David

Second Attempt at the New Member NightTuesday July 6

Victorian Lockdown number 4 was not on our radar when we planned an evening for our record numbers of new members that have joined in the last twelve months. So let's give it another attempt.

To refresh your memory, we plan to cover the following.

- Learn about booking activities, what questions leaders will ask and what do the levels really mean
- Understand how to hire gear from the club to try before you buy; tents, jackets plus much more
- Meet the leaders, put a face to the names
- Explore our website and links to other worthwhile sites
- Enjoy a Pizza before moving into small groups
- Visit our activity "stations" to understand what each has to offer and what equipment is necessary
 - Day Walks
 - Overnight Walks
 - Multi Day Walks
 - Canoeing
 - Cycling
 - X-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing

The Meeting location is Senior Citizens Meeting Room, at the rear of Cube Complex, Hovell Street, Wodonga (Havelock Street end of the car park).

New members; a warm welcome to the following.

- Mark & Linda Adler
- Kevin Ward
- Bethany Nyhan
- Leonie Wyld
- Merryn Joy
- Agnieska Lisowska

From the President's stump

Now that winter has well and truly arrived, (it's been raining steadily here for the past 24 hours and snowfalls are forecast for the mountains), our forays into the mountains are a little less attractive unless you are a keen skier or snow-shoer.

Multi-day and overnight trips are usually put on hold until the warmer weather returns, but this means some of our leaders now offer walks at lower altitudes and usually of shorter duration.

A quick check of our Events program indicates there are Easy and Medium walks happening at Baranduda, Beechworth, Thurgoona, Nail Can Hill, Lockhart' Gap, North's Lookout and Mt Beauty. All of these walks are a bit closer to home and well below the snow line.

For those who are keen for some snow play, once the snow cover improves in the mountains, Ron Hammond is planning on running some ever-popular snow-shoeing days and the "borderskiers" group will be heading up into the hills for some cross-country skiing.

So there's no need to go into hibernation since there's plenty happening over winter, even though the weather is a bit chilly and you might be tempted to stay indoors. Chuck on some thermals, gloves and a beanie and enjoy some forays into the great outdoors.

The New Member's Night that we had to cancel in June is now going ahead in July and even though it's aimed at new members, I hope as many members as possible will join us at the Senior Citizen's Hall and help make all our new members feel welcome to a club that prides itself on offering a diverse range of safe and friendly opportunities get out and about.

Ian

Fees for the June 2021 to May 2022 are now due

The committee have decided not to raise the fees for the third year in a row and this fee structure was approved at the recent AGM referred to in Ian's Report.

For new members who joined after January 2021, no further payment is required for this period.

You can pay by direct debit to Border Bushwalking Club Inc. at Hume Bank; BSB 640 000, Account No 111104448 including your name in the description field for our identification.

- **Single Member \$45, Concession \$35**
- **Family \$80, Concession \$65**
- **Extra Family Member \$10**



Trip Reports

Lonesome Pine

Lonesome Pine State Forest is about 75km north-west of Albury – directly north of Corowa and just to the east of Coreen.

I first ‘heard of it’ as it shows up as a big green rectangle of uncleared land/forest on google satellite, and I was hoping it might be a nice ‘new’ walk for the winter months.

The following informative website advises that the forest is a unique time-capsule of White Cypress-pine on land that was likely cleared in the late 1800s, but then untouched since. This has meant that the trees (and surrounding vegetation) have regrown in a natural way– hence they’re quite short/low and quite narrow trunks

despite their age as they’re all competing for the same nutrients in close spacing (unlike other pine forests where the trees are thinned/spaced to promote growth for harvesting)



<https://ianluntecology.com/2013/05/22/dense-old-trees-bitter-and-twisted-charismatic-megaflora/>



The walk consisted of a 14km loop/meander on 4wd tracks through the forest.

But rather than drive up right to the forest to start, I thought it might be good to park beside the road a kilometre back and walk, as there would be farm views either side and there is an impressive ‘avenue’ section of agave plants with huge dried flower spikes. This nearly ended badly when Kevin’s car wheel sunk into the grass. Fortunately he was able to slowly drive out and park on firmer ground.



The walk progressed as planned and we made good time so had an early lunch.

Not far from the end I had an argument with my GPS and so we retreated to 'known ground' rather than potentially add some unexpected kilometres.

Following the walk several participants had a drink at the Balldale pub on the way home.

All in all it was a great day out and was a really pleasant walk in the forest. Lonesome pine forest isn't very big, but it is a good option for an easy-medium walk close to home in the winter months.

David



Mt Samaria

It was cold, but it was sunny and after a grey, foggy week we were all looking forward to walking, what I think is the best winter walk in our region if not “our bubble.”

Mt Samaria State Park is right on our doorstep but often overlooked. Walking in the park is full of variety, bird life and has amazing views. Our group of 7 started walking around 9am, and the summit of Mt Samaria 924m was our first stop. The views from the top are spectacular and stretch from Lake Nilhacootie to the Alps and the farmland in between.

Following a slippery, steep track we headed downhill towards Mt Samaria Road.



The track to Wild Dog Falls is not that well defined but we found it and were soon having our morning break at the falls, which had more water in them than I had seen on previous visits.

We then followed a few different tracks that undulated through the tall mountain ash forest before we again came out on the road. A short section on the road had us at Spring Creek Sawmill for lunch.

And like all good walks after lunch, it was straight uphill, through a forest of green ferns under towering ash, to the highest point of our walk 965m.

From here the track weaves through rocky outcrops as it descends once again to the road. All up we walked just on 16km, ascended almost 700m and descended about the same. It was a great day in a very beautiful location.

Deb



Moncrieff Gap, Mt Beauty

This is usually an end-to-end walk that winds through the forest around the base of Mt Bogong from Mountain Creek camping ground, climbing up to Moncrieff Gap and then descending towards Mt Beauty township, finishing with a crossing of the East Kiewa River. However, a pre-walk recce showed that the river was in flood, flowing fast and deep and probably very cold, so the route was changed. We walked up to Moncrieff Gap and then returned to the start.



It was a cool clear morning at the start, but as we climbed steadily, we warmed up and layers came off. Most of the group were fairly new members and the broad fire trail meant that we had room to talk as we walked. That was after we had negotiated the steep part of the climb near the beginning, when only the fittest had breath to speak.

We paused for morning tea on the track and stopped to admire the 'seldom seen' waterfall, cascading down from way above us.

Lunch was taken quite early as we had reached the highest point of the walk and there was a large fallen tree that provided plenty of perches for us to sit.

Then we turned around and headed back to the start. Although this wasn't quite what was planned, nevertheless it was a very pleasant walk on a sunny winter's day.

Eileen



Decontaminating your boots

Alison Wellard has provided the following timely reminder from the Bushwalking NSW site on why its important to clean your gear particularly boots

As people who love wild places, bushwalkers are generally pretty aware of what it takes to keep campsites clean and to practice good minimal impact bushwalking. Things like human waste, rubbish and campfires are visible and therefore front of mind when it comes to taking care of the bush. However, there's a whole other raft of things that we can't see, but that are just as important.

Tiny little things can have a big impact. Apart from diseases that attack our native plants and animals, there are weeds and other pests that can do big damage. In many ways, they can be a bit like, 'out of sight – out of mind', but thanks to the work of the [Invasive Species Council](#), they're shining a light on these dark little creatures and providing a whole host of great tips about what we can do to stop them.

Many bushwalkers tread lightly along managed tracks and great walks around Australia and are familiar with shoe cleaning stations provided by National Parks and Land Managers at trailheads and entrances to sensitive areas. Looking something like a piece of children's play equipment, these spray n' scrub stations provide an easy way for walkers to ensure they don't walk any of the offenders into precious natural places. The great news is that you don't need to wait for facilities like this to be installed wherever you walk. You can easily create a simple DIY solution by using a spray bottle with methylated spirits (70-100%), bleach (dilute to 25%) or F10 disinfectant solution.

Another key way to avoid bringing in or moving weeds around, is to wear sock protectors or gaiters and avoid wearing clothes that have a seemingly magnetic attraction to seeds, as well as keeping to tracked areas. Spend some time in camp at night to methodically pull off seeds like cobbler's pegs (*Bidens pilosa*), aka Farmer's Friends, etc. and then carry them out in a clip-lock bag.

Ensure you have washed or sprayed your tent pegs, walking poles, bottom of gaiters, and bottoms of packs using 30% water and 70% methylated spirits. Ensure your vehicle is clean, including floor mats and there is no old mud sticking to the vehicle.

Given the amount of money that bushwalkers spend on outdoor gear (tents, shoes, etc) it makes good sense, financially and environmentally, to keep them clean. It not only extends their life, but also the lives of native plants and animals. Before you head out on your next adventure, wash or brush off the mud and any other hitchhikers from your gear, then let your gear completely dry.

There are some real gremlins out there; from Chytrid, that can kill off our native frogs, to the well known Phytophthora, that rots roots and destroys native plants. Fortunately the devastating 'rock snot,' aka Didymo, hasn't made it to Australia yet, but has caused untold problems in rivers and waterways of New Zealand.

Do your bit by thoroughly checking and cleaning all your gear whenever you enter or leave a new location and visit invasives.org.au/act-now for more information.



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 again. 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 July, 24 2021.