

# FOOTPRINTS

## February 2024

*Newsletter of the Border Bushwalking Club Inc A5665  
Affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria*

**We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we travel and meet. We respect their elders past and present.**

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Ira: Meeting Suppers & Social Convener; Wendy; Equipment Officer; Alwyn: Policy; General member: Tim.

**Happy New Year to all members!**



The 2023 Christmas party was held at Brown's Lagoon, South Albury. The hot night did not deter members from attending and many turned up. Catering supremo Ira and chief cook Tim ensured there was plenty for all to eat, accompanied by a selection of excellent salads and delectable desserts brought by members. Conversations flowed thick and fast about trips taken, others planned, and fervent hopes that our activities in 2024 would not be disrupted by viruses, bushfires or landslides. Highlight of the night was presentation of the 2023 Club Person of the Year award.

## CLUB PERSON OF THE YEAR, 2023

### Ralph Simpfendorfer

The Border Bushwalking Club awards the title of Club Person of the Year to a member who has contributed significantly to the activities of the Club. The awardee is chosen by the previous year's recipient and the award is announced at the Christmas Party.

In her presentation speech, 2022 winner Pauline Scott described Ralph's contributions:

Ralph joined the Border Bushwalking Club in early 2016, becoming an active participant in walks. He joined the committee in 2017 and was Vice President from 2018 until 2023, and his commitment had him often filling in for the President at committee and Club meetings. In 2020 Ralph became Newsletter Editor, bringing us our monthly *Footprints* with the latest activities, eleven editions every year. He also took on the role of Web Facilitator, which involved maintaining our website, troubleshooting to keep the site functioning well, assisting members with technical issues on the website or our Instagram account. He did all these tasks with an obliging, cheerful manner until family circumstances led him to relinquish them in 2023.

During Covid Border lockdowns, Ralph led new and interesting walks, to keep the NSW members active, and always ensuring the best for the club. The BBC has benefited from Ralph's diverse and vast past life experiences, skills and knowledge, as evident at club committee meetings, where he would help, share and advise as needed.

Ralph has been a huge asset to the BBC, both on the track and on the committee, making him most deserving of 2023 Club Member of the Year.

On behalf of the BBC, thank you.



## From the President's Stump



Happy New Year to all our members and welcome to another fun-filled year of outdoor experiences and adventures! I hope everyone had a relaxing break over the Christmas period and got to enjoy some quality time with family and friends.

As you will read elsewhere in this edition of *Footprints*, your committee has been busy and at our most recent meeting we resolved to do the unheard of and LOWER the amount per kilometre when calculating fuel costs for travel to our activities!

We have also been considering introducing a BBC Facebook page following a generous offer from one of our members to act as the page's Moderator.

Unfortunately, the offer has since been withdrawn, but we are still keen to get this up and running as a means of enhancing our online presence and promoting our activities. So, if someone out there is willing to take this on and has the time and know-how, please contact me.

Committee has also been discussing the criteria for the awarding of Life Membership and we hope to be able to make some informed decisions at our next meeting in February. We'll keep you posted.

Bushwalking Victoria (BWV) has confirmed that FedWalks 2024, will take place at Wilsons Promontory, with a base at Tidal River, on 11–13 October 2024. Accommodation for 300+ attendees has already been secured for the event, in roofed lodges or huts, powered and unpowered campsites.

According to a recent survey, just one in three Australians know how to deal with getting lost, while two in three Australians entirely reconsider going on trail walks due to safety concerns. According to the survey, only 38% of respondents felt confident with basic first aid when hiking. Only 6% felt confident in dealing with a bite from a snake or spider and 43% of those surveyed did not feel confident in knowing what to do if they encountered a dangerous animal.

Which begs the question ... what can you do to walk more safely, and with more confidence?

**Get Informed:** Check out some of the great resources BWV have published for getting started bushwalking, and staying safe in the bush. Just go to their website: <https://bushwalkingvictoria.org.au>

**First Aid:** Always carry a first aid kit. Even if you are not "going far" it's something that should always be in your pack. Obviously, being first aid trained is the best way to know how to manage first aid, and BWV and our Club offer a subsidy for those undertaking such training. (At this time of the year we encourage all members to carry at least one Snake Bandage in their pack).

And finally, a reminder to regularly check the Border Bushwalking Club's website so that you are up-to-date with what activities are coming up.

Hope to catch up with you soon somewhere in the great outdoors.

Ian

### A Safety Issue: Numbers on walks

The Committee wishes to remind leaders and members that there must be a minimum of **FOUR** people on a Club walk or other activity, as stated in the Risk Management policy. If there are fewer than four and those people wish to proceed after assessing the possible risks, then the activity **will not be recognised** as an official Club activity for insurance and other purposes.

## WHAT'S COMING UP IN THE NEXT SIX WEEKS?

For more details of the activity please click on **events** in our club website. You will also find the leader's phone number here. Please ring them to discuss the walk and to book in.

<http://borderbushwalkingclub.com.au/>

***Don't forget events are added to the website frequently so check often or you may miss out. In fact, why not add an event yourself. An experienced leader will support you.***

Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	<b>Falls Creek:</b> Beginners' Discovery Walk	Grade 2 Easy/Medium
Weekend 10–11 Feb	<b>Falls Creek:</b> Ryders Yard Beginners camp	Gr 2 Easy Medium
Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> March	<b>Falls Creek:</b> Frying Pan Spur the not-so-hard way	Grade 3 Medium
W/E 22–24 March	<b>Falls Creek:</b> Spion Kopje/Edmonson Hut	Grade 3 Medium
Weekend 6–7 April	<b>Falls Creek:</b> Tawonga Huts Gourmet Weekend	Grade 3 Medium

## Car pooling policy: Amended cost factor

The Club encourages members to car pool for travel to the start of walks to reduce costs, encourage sociability and minimise our carbon footprint. Participants are expected to contribute to drivers' costs, with all participants paying the same amount and each driver receiving an equal amount. The leader is responsible for calculating, collecting and distributing 'petrol money' using a formula that takes into account distance travelled, number of participants, number of cars, and a cost factor. As Ian noted in his President's letter, the committee conducted a periodic review of petrol costs at its last meeting and decided to **REDUCE the cost factor to \$0.30**. An example of how the calculation is done can be found at the end of this issue of *Footprints*.

## Christmas party leftovers



No, we're not recycling food, but several items were left behind after the Christmas party. If any of these implements looks familiar to you, please claim it from the Editor at

[newsletter@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au](mailto:newsletter@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au)



## Trip reports

Club members have been active over the summer and here is a taste of what has been happening.

### Rosa's Ride: Ludlow's Reserve to Tallangatta and return



Five of us completed an enjoyable and cruisy ride beside the shores of Lake Hume, across the Sandy Creek Bridge and on to Tallangatta recently. Thankfully, Rosa came along for the ride which had been named in her honour after requesting at the New Members' Night that a ride be put on the activities program!

Despite a forecast of rain and possible thunderstorms we decided to pay no heed to the BoM forecast and mounted our bikes at Ludlow's Reserve around 10:30am and set off with a pleasant breeze on our backs and a dark, threatening sky overhead. While Rosemary disappeared into the distance on her e-bike the rest of us cycled and chatted, chatted and cycled, cycled and chatted until we took a break at the Sandy Creek Bridge, admired the expansive views across the water and had a quick snack. The sky remained dark and foreboding.

Determined to keep pace with Rosemary, our Leader pedalled furiously beside her up the long gradual climb from the bridge only to admit defeat after a couple of kms and stopped to wait for the others to catch up with Rosemary's parting words ringing in his ears - "I'll see you at the Op Shop." The rest of the ride into Tallangatta was without mishap and the main bunch located Rosemary at the Op Shop paying for a bargain she had found. We then adjourned to the newly opened 'Yellow Picket Fence' for coffee and lunch before taking a side trip around the Lake Hume foreshore where the local council has undertaken extensive landscaping and beautification works.

Back on the Rail Trail, we retraced our route and before long had arrived back at Ludlow's Reserve after a most enjoyable day's outing. Bikes were stowed, farewells were made and as we drove away the forecast rain began pelting down. As usual, our Leader's timing was impeccable! Ian.

### Mt Hotham: The huts walk

This walk could not take place in April as scheduled due to bad weather and, once again, we were watching the forecast closely as it looked like it might be cold and wet. As the date got closer things cheered up with predictions of a sunny day with a maximum of 21. Perfect! Twelve people put their names down to walk in our magnificent high country and look at three huts, each with a very different history: cinema production, mining and a ski refuge. However, by the time we headed off we were down to five walkers.

The walk was a very pleasant one with great company, but the weather didn't quite match the forecast. The mercury reached 24<sup>o</sup> before we even started to walk, and it climbed from there. It may not sound too hot, but it always feels hotter up there and Golden Point Spur was definitely the longest it's ever been. The small





group were fantastic company, and the combined knowledge was astounding. We learnt about plants and wildlife, health and celebrities, and television shows were also discussed.

Thanks to the two walkers who volunteered to retrieve the cars while the rest of us sat in the shade at the end of the day.

Another day in paradise!

Bernadette.



(From: *Big Panda & Tiny Dragon* by James Norbury)

## Mt Hotham: Young's Hut via Paling Spur

On a warm weekend, five club members did the walk to Youngs Hut via Brandy Creek Fire Trail and Palings Spur that had been postponed from earlier in the year. Leaving cars at Brandy Creek picnic area near Mt Hotham, the group descended the 3.5 km fire trail to the Cobungra River. There is a faint footpad along the river and after about 700m we crossed the river, picking up a few leeches as we walked through the grass to the camp site at the junction of the Cobungra River and Swindlers Creek. Palings Spur had recently been cleared, so was easy to find and climb back up onto the High Plains. From there we followed horse/deer/foot tracks on a roughly northerly bearing until we got to Youngs Hut. It had been a long, warm day, and everyone was keen to have a relaxing afternoon around the hut. The fog rolled up the gully early and everyone went to bed. On Sunday morning after having breakfast and packing up, we took a slightly different route back to a big snow gum in a clearing where the easily visible track that we needed to follow back to the top of Palings Spur veers off. It was a big weekend of river crossings, leeches, snakes, on track/off track, lost track/found track, muddy tracks/dusty tracks. We finished with a cold drink at the General at Mt Hotham.

Mick/Deb





Relaxing outside Young's Hut after a long day.

### Mt Buffalo: Lake Catani camp



This was billed as a few days of relaxing mixed activity, and it was certainly that. We kicked off by gathering for a delicious Vietnamese lunch in Myrtleford and, for some, a quick look at an old wares shop. Lake Catani campground was at capacity for both nights as families and others, young and old, came to enjoy this beautiful place.

It was delightful to have cooler temperatures after the previous few hot days down here on the lower lands. We enjoyed a fire with vegetables cooked in the coals and, next day, breakfast toast cooked over the open fire. The walks were shortish and very enjoyable with lots of wildflowers to be seen and then time was spent around the fire. Bush craft survival skills were discussed, and there was even a little "Bear Grylls" type competition as to who could collect the most combustibly effective tinder material to start a fire, using Ferro rods and flints.

This was a car camp and some older and heavier camping equipment had been dusted off and brought along, including an old twig-fired bush kettle and Chris's battered black billy which had brewed many mugs of tea over the years. However, Ron brought us into 2023 by using his EV to make very nice cappuccinos! Chris entertained us with stories of many bushwalking and skiing trips she had taken on Buffalo with Border Bushwalking Club or her family over a number of decades. On Saturday evening we did a circuit of the lake, enjoying the late light playing across calm water just before the sunset.

Those who had not seen the new viewing platform at the chalet took a quick look. It was



disappointing to see that the clear floor section is already very scratched and therefore opaque. It was almost impossible to look down through it.

We are so fortunate to have beautiful Mt Buffalo in our back yard.

Thanks Bernadette for your organisation. Ira.

## Mt Hotham: Razorback track to Mt Feathertop



Even with our early start on Saturday 13th January, our walk along The Razorback, Mt Hotham, was a hot, humid day. Our plan for the day was to summit Feathertop, but we were all aware of the forecast for "possible severe thunderstorms" later in the day and knew our plan may change.

There were heaps of people out that day. Some, like us, were doing a day walk, but lots of others were heading for a night at Federation Hut. It would have been busy. The wildflowers were out, with large swathes of billy buttons, alpine daisies, trigger plants, everlasting daisies, *Wahlenbergia* and *Brachyscome* painting the track in pretty colours.

We stopped regularly in the shade, but we couldn't escape the humidity and the march flies that seem to thrive in those conditions. Simon (Jeff's son) was our weather radar man and a check of the radar, just before where Diamantina Spur joins the

Razorback, showed that the storm was headed our way and had picked up a bit of speed. We probably had 2.5 hrs before it got to us (it had taken us a little over 3 hrs to get to that spot) so we decided to return to the cars, Feathertop would have to wait for another day. We knew we wouldn't beat the storm, but we could reduce our time out in it.

Our pace picked up on the walk back and it was just before where the track splits that the storm hit. Lucky for us there was no lightning. As it wasn't cold and we were already dripping sweat from the humidity, rain jackets stayed in packs. We got back to the cars, wet but very happy with our decision to forego Feathertop. Thanks to everyone for making this a memorable walk on The Razorback, and for those who haven't been to the summit before, we'll be back.

Deb





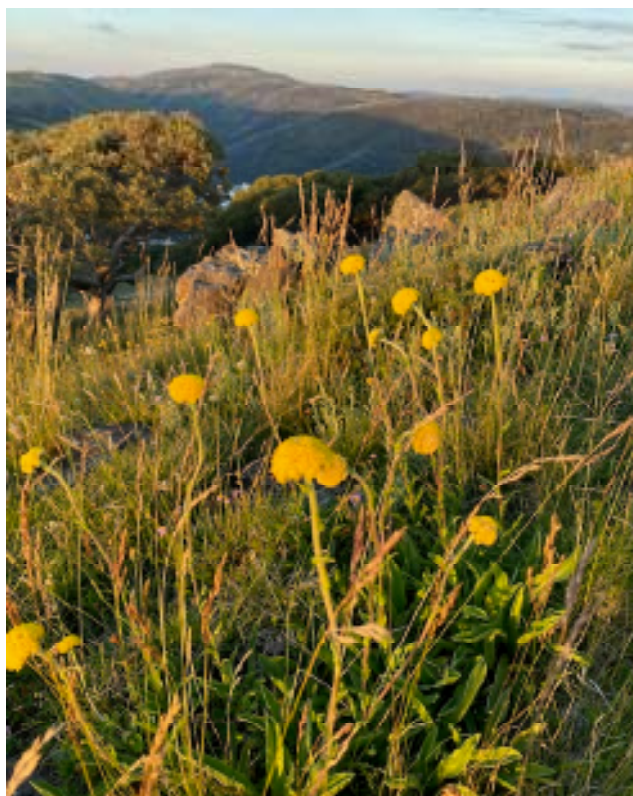
## Dinner Plain: JB plain car camp

JB plain was another great BBC event. We didn't walk far largely due to weather, but on several occasions participants were heard to say how good the social aspects were and the importance of this within the club whether whilst carpooling, walking, camping, or partaking in coffee afterwards. Ira.

We'll let the pictures tell the story.



Relaxing by the campfire



Beautiful billy buttons



Fab Four see sinking sun



According to our leader, this is the new COVID virus





Two walkers; two mountains  
(Who can name all four?)

Whoever is that man with the pony tail? Who invited him?



Play misty for me





Goodnight all! Sunset from Mt Higginbotham



## Recycle your old boots!

The Athlete's Foot store in Dean Street, Albury, has a collection point for worn out boots and sports shoes. These are deconstructed and the materials reused for other purposes.



## Message from Parks Victoria: Campsite booking system

Parks Victoria manages campsites in 47 parks across the state, with 131 campgrounds available to book, including Lake Catani on Mt Buffalo. The booking system is the way people select, book and pay for their campsites or accommodation with Parks Victoria. Every year, nearly 400,000 people book a stay through this system. We are committed to having a booking system that is easy to use, fair and efficient. You have the chance to **provide feedback to help improve the booking system** so it is as user-friendly as possible. We'd like to hear your ideas on how to book with us. Your feedback will be used to refine the booking system, and guide priority improvements.

Learn more and have your say **before 21 February 2024**:

- Visit [www.engage.vic.gov.au/parks-booking-system](http://www.engage.vic.gov.au/parks-booking-system)
- Email [engage@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:engage@parks.vic.gov.au) with your feedback
- Call 13 1963 with your feedback

### AMENDED Car pooling policy

The Club encourages members to car pool for travel to the start of walks to reduce costs, encourage sociability and minimise our carbon footprint. Participants are expected to contribute to drivers' costs, with all participants paying the same amount and each driver receiving an equal amount. The leader is responsible for calculating, collecting and distributing 'petrol money' using a formula that takes into account distance travelled, number of participants, number of cars, and a cost factor. **Leaders please note:** the cost factor is currently **\$0.30**.

In response to requests, here is an example of how the policy works. **Participants** are all people undertaking the activity who wish to car pool, including leader, drivers and passengers. Those who do not wish to car pool should tell the leader when booking in. **Designated drivers** are the drivers of vehicle used in the car pool.

**Leader** uses Google Maps or prior knowledge to get accurate estimate of the distance to be travelled from agreed meeting place (e.g. Bunnings, Wodonga) to the start of the walk and doubles this for the round trip. This distance is **multiplied** by number of cars needed and current cost factor rate:

Distance x number of cars used x cost factor

The calculated number is then **divided** by the number of participants to give an amount in dollars and cents. Round to nearest dollar and collect this amount from each **participant**. Divide this amount equally between **drivers**.

Example:

Seven people book in for a walk at Falls Creek starting and finishing at Cope Hut car park. They meet at Bunnings in Wodonga. The distance to start of walk is 122 km, making it 244 km for round trip. Two cars are needed.

Distance x number of cars x cost factor:  $244 \times 2 \times 0.30 = \$146.40$

Divide by number of participants (7) = \$20.91. Round up to \$21.00

Leader collects \$21.00 from each participant including drivers (\$147.00)

Two cars were used, leader gives \$73.50 to each driver.

We run a cash economy. To help leaders, participants should bring notes/coins in small denominations.

\$

## Message from the Editor

Thank you to everyone who has sent trip reports and photos. Photo credits this issue include Bernadette, Deb, Eileen, Ira, Mick, Nola, Pauline, Ron, and Roma, with apologies to any I've overlooked. Sometimes it is difficult for me to match up reports, photos and trips when I get photos from many people, and it would really help me if people sent these to the leader of the trip (or the person who wrote the trip report) who would then send best of them on to me. Don't forget that the Club also has an Instagram page where you can post photos of club trips.

Many thanks, Eileen

***Cut off date for input to the next issue of Footprints: 19 February 2024***

Contributions to *Footprints* can be sent to [newsletter@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au](mailto:newsletter@borderbushwalkingclub.com.au)

### Services included in your BBC membership include:

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

1. Back-packs
2. Hiking poles
3. Waterproof jackets
4. We even have a dehydrator if you want to prepare your own meals

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

- First aid kits
- GPS
- PLBs

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

Call in and have a chat to Gino and Wendy 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*