

# The Mitchell Walker

Upcoming walks on page 5.

A membership application form is on page 6.

Issue 99

January 2023

Mitchell Walking Group is a program of Broadford Living & Learning Centre inc. 158-160 High St, Broadford 3658

*A new year begins. Issue 99 has the summer evening walks and a report from the group who spent 5 days walking and camping in Victoria's High Country. (Ed.)*

**First of the Wednesday evening walks. Wandong. Wednesday 4th January.** Paul led this popular walk, which we started at the Wandong railway station car park opposite the Magpie and Stump Hotel. Known as the "Say G'day: walk, it's an easy circuit walk, and ideal for one of our summer evening walks.

There were 9 starters after a few people dropped out, apparently frightened off by threatened storms. Marg and I had checked the radar on the BOM

weather site and were so confident that the storm would pass over to our north, that we

didn't even bother to take raincoats with us. Well, that was a mistake! Light rain started almost immediately after we arrived. There was a brief conversation about perhaps cancelling the walk and heading over to the pub instead, but the rain stopped, and we headed off.

Paul made what I thought was a very sound decision. He crossed the railway line at the station, at ground level, thereby avoiding the monstrous blue bridge which would have sapped all our energy before we really started.

Crossing over Rail Street, we headed east, passing a wholesale plant nursery. We then walked on a well formed track around the back of the town, past the sports grounds and beside a creek. Mostly, the track was undulating but towards the most southern point, there was a bit of a hill which required a bit more huff and puff. Soon after that we were on the home stretch, heading back in a northerly direction, beside the railway line and towards the cars.

Someone then suggested that we cross the dreaded blue pedestrian bridge. It was probably Mary, when I think about it. She is always looking for a way to make a walk that little bit more of a challenge.

Anyway, the bridge is a lot easier to climb from the eastern side; not many steps up but a lot going down. Then back past the little shopping centre to the carpark.

It had been a very pleasant stroll, with lots of chatting along the way. We briefly said our goodbyes and drove home in several directions. As luck would have it, it rained almost immediately after we started driving and continued for some time afterwards. You have to be lucky sometimes!

Thanks to Paul for leading, and to all the gang who came along.

*(Report by John)*

**Second of the summer evening walks. Broadford town walk. Wednesday 11th January.** Unfortunately this walk had to be cancelled. The weather had been quite hot, and with a few of the regulars off hiking

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in the High Country, there were only 3 starters and we were happy to cancel. Thanks to Arthur who had volunteered to lead the walk.

### ***Feathertop. Five Days in the High Country. Sunday 8th January to Friday 13th January.***

A group of seven walkers left Kilmore and Broadford about 1:30 pm on Sunday, later arriving at the Harrietville Hotel for dinner and an overnight stay in the motel accommodation. After looking at the options for seating, we made the perfect choice by sitting inside the bistro in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere.



Meals were well presented, and everyone tucked into their food with glee, knowing that the next 5 days would be packaged meals prepared on camp stoves. Our rooms were large with sleeping available for up to 5 people. Mary, Yvonne, Bec and Rene stay in one room, while Wayne, Tony and I stayed in another. The rooms were clean and the only issue was that when we opened the door to let in a bit of fresh air, within 10 seconds there were about 200 tiny sandflies that entered too. Sorry guys.

Morning came quickly and we then had to look for Fred in the carpark, as he had driven up separately at around 5 am. Fred joined the group just before 8.00 am and we quickly grabbed a coffee/tea and snack at a quaint coffee van across the road from the hotel. Bec's friend Brenda from Mt Beauty then joined the group, which now comprised 9 walkers, all eager for the adventures ahead as we headed off for Mt Hotham

We travelled up the steep slopes by car to reach the start of the Razorback trail. This resembled a winding goat track that dipped up and down as it followed the ridge of the mountain range. Fresh air and beautiful views ahead!

This was the start of my very first overnight camping adventure and I had been very pleased to receive some advice from Mary and Rene the previous night on how to lighten my pack from 22 kilos down to 18 kilos. This is still considered heavy by experienced hikers. Within 10 minutes we were spread out and chatting about what lay ahead. I soon realised that my pack-legs were starting to feel the strain. After 4 hours we arrived at the turnoff to the Diamantina Spur track and travelled 500 metres to a clearing which Rene had chosen the week before. Here we set up camp at about 2:30pm. We had heard there was no water at Federation Hut, and we needed to travel another 2 km to a spring to collect it near the base of Mt Feathertop. What a delight! Fresh cool water bubbling out of the ground. Close to the best water I have ever tasted! The weather was hot at 26 degrees and there was no cloud cover. That is how it was for the entire 5 days of hiking ahead.

Already we had travelled 11 km to get to this point. Mary, Bec, Brenda and I headed off for a summit run, while the other 5 who had done this section before, returned to camp having covered 13 km on their first day, and there they enjoyed an early dinner. The four of us reached the end of the track and continued a further 300 metres up to the summit.

What a sight, standing there on top of the second highest mountain in Victoria, at 1,922 metres! Visibility was excellent and the 360-degree views were worth the pain and sweat of getting there. We retraced our step down the hill and met a boy, with his mother walking 300 metres behind him. They had no water and were badly in need to assistance, which the





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four of us were able to provide. We gave them water and told them to rest at Federation Hut. Someone had told them it was an easy walk, and they were grossly unprepared. We got back to our camp at 7.00 pm, having completed 16.5 kms for the day. The first meal of spaghetti and meatballs on the gas camp stove tasted great, and after watching the sun set, we were off to bed.



**Day 2.** We woke up early on Tuesday and had cereal for breakfast. I was surprised that I had slept so well and that I was not as sore or tired as I thought I would be. The laughing kookaburras had woken me up at 5.00 am, and at 7.30 am we set off down the spur, which was estimated to be 4.5 km but seemed to take forever. Brenda left the group to return home, as she could only get 2 days off work. Now we had 10 short hills to climb and descend in succession. The last one was very steep and for a first timer, carrying a pack, it was very nerve racking. Rene helped me to adjust my pack as it was too low and was causing me to be off-balance. The last bit was very slow with several bum-slides in the descent. We reached the bottom and found a small creek to refresh ourselves in. Here we spotted our first snake, gliding across the road.

Morning tea followed, and then we were off to Blairs Hut for lunch. What a pretty place! A decision was made that Mary, Tony, Wayne, Yvonne, and Rene would go on to Weston's Hut, which was a further 2.4 km uphill over a steep rocky path. Bec, Fred and I would stay at Blairs Hut overnight. Our distance for the day had been only 8 kms. We would all meet up again the next day around lunch time. Not having done the added distance had saved us 10 km. and the three of us enjoyed standing in the stream for over an hour refreshing our sore and tired feet. We watched several trout jumping very close to us. This water tasted so good! We set up camp and had an afternoon tea party. Before we knew it, it was time for dinner. Then off to bed where I read 4 chapters of a book I had brought along.



**Day 3.** Wednesday. A late checkout just before 10.00 am, and we joked that we would not have to pay for an extra night's rent. We had all slept well and recovered from the pain of the day before. Our goal was to reach



Dibben's Hut, only 5kms away. This track took us past the Red Robin mine's stamping plant and we stopped off briefly for a look. This track was uphill all the way but due to its gentler gradient and sandy base it was a very pleasing stroll. For the three of us, this was a highlight. We reached the gap, and then 30 minutes later we were at Dibben's Hut for our overnight stay. The main group arrived 30 minutes behind us having travelled an extra 8 km across the plains near Mount Jim. Again, we found another stream for bathing our feet but this water tasted very muddy. The March flies found most of us tasty and Fred and Tony had a competition to see who could kill more of them. There were not many flat spots to camp that night and most of us had to pitch our tents on a slight slope. I felt the difference in my body the next day.

**Day 4.** Thursday. Off to Derricks Hut just 5 km away, but a steep climb all the way. I managed this section better than expected and saw 2 small snakes as I ground my way up the slope. We arrived at the hut in time for lunch and looked around for a spot to set up camp for our final night. Again, there were not many flat spots as we were perched on the side of a hill. The Snow Gums were magnificent with their twisted and colourful trunks, and with branches going in all directions. The flora on the trip was excellent with white, yellow, and blue daisies. Also, wildflowers of purple and other colours, spread along the track. We decided to add 5

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km to our journey by heading out to Spargo's Hut, an old miner's hut which turned out to be well worth the effort. We had fresh water available from a spring near the camp and several of us bathed our feet once again.

**Day 5.** Friday. The pack was now much lighter as all our food had been eaten and less water was required. We did still have a 5 km climb to get back to our cars, however, at Hotham. People seemed to find an extra gear and we got back in less than 2 hours.

It was interesting to examine the circuit we had travelled. It turned out that the main group had walked over 55 km, while the second group had covered 46 km. Not a lot of difference. We travelled back to Harrietville for coffee and croissants. A few of us also had an ice-cream as a reward for our efforts. We stopped at a bakery for lunch and said our goodbyes. A pleasant time was had by all, and special thanks go to Mary for organising and leading the walk.

*(Report by Paul)*

### **Third of the summer evening walks. Wednesday 18th January.**

**Monument Hill. Kilmore.** Bec was the leader of this evening walk, which was a slightly modified version of the Monument Hill Long Loop walk. The evening was cool and there was a threat of showers. Despite this, we had a larger than normal group of walkers willing to partake. We started from the first carpark in Monument Rd. and walked in an anticlockwise direction around the edge of the reserve, reaching the Hume & Hovell



monument after a bit of a climb. On reaching the monument, no one wanted to climb to the top of it, perhaps because they have done it so many times before? It is a local icon, after all. Every-

one was very happy to spend some time looking east over the hills towards Kilmore East, however. The views from here are pretty impressive even to those who've seen them before.

Then off in a northerly direction along Monument Rd. towards the racecourse, but turning off to the left through the golf course, and back to the cars. It was a pleasant way to get some exercise with friends, and fortunately the showers held off. Thanks to everyone who joined in and to leader, Bec.

*(Report by John)*

**Last of the summer evening walks. Wednesday 25th. Seymour.** This walk had to be cancelled because so many of the group were away on holidays.

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### UPCOMING WALKS.

**Sunday 12th February. Mt Hickey and the Magazine track.** Approx. 10 km. Mary to lead this walk, with Paul available as an emergency leader if she is not available.

**Friday/Saturday/Sunday 17/18/19<sup>th</sup> February. Mt Stirling base camp.** Probably too late to join this one, but give Mary a ring on 0428 479 469 if you want to check.

**Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> March. Mt Charlie.** Leader Paul. This is to replace the walk cancelled on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Long weekend 11/12/13<sup>th</sup> March NO WALK.

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March. Sunday Creek and Anderson's Gardens walk.** Leader to be decided.

**Friday/Saturday/Sunday 24/25/26<sup>th</sup> March.** Rubicon base camp. More information to follow.

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April. *CycleDindi* (A cycling event in Murrindindi which some of our members will be attending)

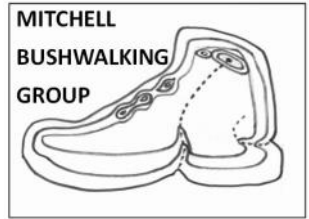
**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Toolangi/Myrtle Creek walk.** Leader Mary. More details later.

*(John Brissett. Editor)*

**\*\*\* See Membership application form on the next page.**

# Mitchell Bushwalking Group

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



<i>Contact details may be made available to leaders for the purpose of organising trips.</i>			
Name:	Year born:		
Email:			
Postal Address:			
Phone:	Home:	Mobile:	Work:
Emergency Contact:	Name:	Mobile:	
Do you hold a Level 2 First Aid Certificate? Y / N		Date of qualification:	
Brief description of bushwalking/outdoor experience:			

**Acknowledgement of Risk – Please read and sign (all members over 18 years must sign)**

I am aware that my voluntary participation in any activity of this club may expose me to risks that could lead to injury, illness or death, or to loss of, or damage to, my property. These risks include, but are not limited to, slippery and/or uneven rocks, dislodged rocks, cliffs, exposure to weather and whiteout conditions, falling and hypothermia.

To minimize these risks I will endeavour to:

- Ensure that any activity I participate in is within my capabilities;
- Carry appropriate food, water and equipment for the activity;
- Advise the leader if I am taking any medication, or have any physical or other limitation which might affect my participation; and
- Make every effort to remain with the group during the activity and accept the instructions of the leader.

*I have read and understood these requirements and have considered the risks before choosing to sign this Acknowledgement of Risk. I accept that in signing this form I will take responsibility for my own actions.*

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	Receipt No:	Database updated Date:
<b>Membership No:</b>	Receipt issued Date:	Email notification sent Date:

The club membership year is 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 to 31st July 2023. New members May–August pay half the annual subscription. Annual membership, which covers insurance through Bushwalking Victoria, is **currently \$35.00** . For further information please email: [mitchellwalksgroup@gmail.com](mailto:mitchellwalksgroup@gmail.com)

\* This form could be posted with a cheque to **Secretary, Mitchell Bushwalking Group, 3 Hibiscus Court, Kilmore, 3764** OR Scanned and sent electronically to [mitchellwalksgroup@gmail.com](mailto:mitchellwalksgroup@gmail.com) The membership fee could be paid via bank transfer to **Mitchell Bushwalking Group** at Bendigo Bank. The BSB number is **633-000** Account number: **160294047** Please write your surname in the "Details" section.