

The Mitchell Walker

Upcoming walks on page 4.

A membership application form is on page 5.

Issue 100

January 2023

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



Well, we're finally here. (Balloons seemed appropriate, albeit they're only virtual balloons.) It's issue 100 and my 100th newsletter for Mitchell Bushwalkers. Many thanks to all the people who have supplied me with reports and photos over the years. It couldn't have happened without you all. This issue is a little late but contains 3 reports, two of which are for the same walk. You'll soon know why. (Ed.)

Sunday, 12th February. Mt Hickey and Magazine Track..

Paul led this walk with Pia, Bec, John and Judy Rapley, Jeanette and Fran. We started at Freeman's campsite to walk up to Mount Hickey in the Tallarook State Forest. Freeman's campsite has a toilet and picnic facilities, well used by campers and motor bikes. We were lucky most had gone when we arrived. To our astonishment Bec pointed out a guy doing Yoga while doing handstands. This continued for a good 10 minutes.

Time to leave the picnic area and after a quick safety talk on snakes and bike riders, we started along the Magazine track. It was a steep rocky track of about 250m climb to the fire tower at the summit of Mt Hickey.

There were magnificent views through the towering mountain ash, myrtle beech, and alpine ash trees. I tried to get a clear view of the countryside west of the fire tower, hoping to see my home but the trees were too thick. On the list maybe for a future walk.

We enjoyed a quick drink and then headed down a track that led us to a clearing. We then detoured onto a small winding goat track towards a flat rock section for more views of Mount Piper and the surrounding area. Here we ate our lunch looking over the horizon. The moss on the granite boulders had been worn away over the years by bikers but it reminded me of an ancient Roman roadway

because of the smooth polished rock surface. Lunch over, we then entered a cooler forest area and that joined the main road, called Gravel Pit Road.

We crossed the main road and decided to take an unknown track called Seed Track. The terrain varied from rocky ledges to pleasant almost flat terrain and took us through a magical hidden forest of tall scrubs at just the right height to walk through.

I couldn't say we "enjoyed total serenity" as four-wheel drivers and motor bikes were an occasional interruption, but not too much.

A truly enjoyable walk, not too hard but the descent was very steep at the end and we were grateful for poles. At last we come to the creek crossing at the end. We were about 400 metres from the starting point, and it was so peaceful listening to the water churn along its path. All good things must come to an end. The weather

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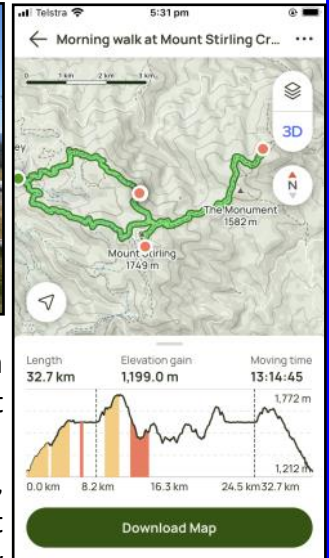
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was pretty near perfect and, as predicted, Paul led us back to our cars by 2:00pm. The distance was about 10 km.
(Report by Fran)

** I have included 2 reports for this next walk. Mary wrote a great report but I really enjoyed reading about the same walk from Pia's perspective, which I received later. Pia is a relatively new walker with our group and has only been in Australia 2 or 3 years. First, Mary's account-*

Friday 17th- Sunday 19th February 2023. Mt Sterling & Craig's Hut.

8 people set out for King's Spur Hut (Salt Lick Hut). We had some first timers with us, some had been to Mt Sterling but not to Craig's Hut, Brenda, Bec, Karen, Paul and Pia. Pia had her first time in the Australian bush for overnight camping. While she has camped out in other countries, this was the first time to carry everything. While her pack was army issue, it was without a waist belt and it took us a while to realize the problem. So Pia went commando all the way up to King's Spur hut. What a gutsy lady and the first time carrying a pack as well. Some shopping is on the horizon for her.



When we left Telegraph Box Junction, it was a hot, sticky and breathless day but with only 5 kms to go, it was still a challenging undertaking. Hydrolyte was very handy as some of us needed it, while others patiently waited, ready to move on. The march-flies welcomed us with open fangs; we were a good target- slow moving, sweaty and with fully loaded packs. We all enjoyed the short breaks along the way; the magnificent tall trees, slowly changing to the snow gums as we gained altitude. We were getting close to our destination for the day, 3 walkers had gone ahead and walked past 2 snakes along the side of the track, the one behind saw a little snake and within a very short time their attention was diverted to the parent black snake. They crossed the road in no particular hurry.



The weather forecast was for thunder storms later in the day, but not specifically for this area. We had all checked. We set up camp and as we could see the clouds gather over Mt Bulla we relaxed in the hut and had our evening meal, and then the storm came in. Lots of flashing lighting to start with and then the fork lighting and as we watched from the safety of the doorway, the big one happened, the flash and very loud bang almost simultaneously, well people jumped back quite smartly and all together. After that the lighting was close for a while but then passed on, and down came the rain. That was a relief!



We all checked our tents. They were still dry, which was good. Karen was especially pleased as she had some pretty wet experiences in the past with rain. We watched the lighting show in the far distance which was specular, and we were glad we weren't over there. Off to bed we go and just settling down for the night when a cry rang out, "Oh no! I've spilt my

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water". Can you believe it? It was Karen and she was flooded again, this time from within. That jolly water bottle. Lots of drying effort was required the next day.

Saturday: Day walk to Craig's Hut

After a quick breakfast, we left our main packs and tents, grabbing our day packs for our assault on Mt Sterling, and then onward to Craig's hut for lunch. From Mt Sterling we enjoyed magnificent 360 degree views, looking across Mt Cobbler, the Crosscut, Mt Magdalea and the 300 year old snow gum that resides above the snow line nearby.

Then down the track which is mainly suitable for 4x4, horses, and a few hikers. On arrival the hut was full of day-visitors; over 50 horses and their riders and of course us. An *Extreme 100 kms Run* was on, adding to the congestion. After enjoying the Craig's Hut experience, taking photos and having a lovely lunch, we were then back to the track, and it's all up here



from now folks!. We decided to walk on the horse trails as it was much more interesting vegetation and easier gradient than the 4x4 track. Quite a few of the horse riders caught up with us, and we quickly gave way. We sighted a large black snake; it smiled at us and slid away. There were times when one could only see hats walking along as the vegetation was tall and thick. We were passed by at least 6 groups of horses and riders



After more stunning views we returned to camp, to manage those blisters, rest the body and have a lovely meal.

Sunset was another delight, magnificent views over the horizon for miles.

Sunday: Pack up and away. It was beautiful in the morning, with the lovely smells of the damp vegetation, some more stunning views, then over to Bluff Hut. There we all sat in the round table chairs, that someone has loving made. Then it was all downhill from there. Some of us caught a fleeting glance of a lyrebird as it scurried across the track. Pia was thrilled with the walk, and we had seen more wildlife on this walk than many other walks.



Things we saw: Horses, snakes, cows and calves (I have never seen any cattle up here over the years that I have been coming up), a Flame Robin, Runners, Bushwalkers. We heard the Mo-Poke, and saw First aid tents for the runners with doctor present, a lightning show, magnificent sun rises and sunsets, and we got out of the way of the 4x4 drivers, most of whom were very friendly.

Tony and Wayne went home on Saturday night, and Tony led a bike ride for *MBugs* the next day.

This walk report was from a discussion on Saturday night about what we should include. Thanks to the drivers, Pia and Wayne and thanks to all for their wonderful company. (Report by Mary.)

My First "Over-Nighter" with the Bushwalkers. (Report by Pia)

I had no excuse for not going, as my daughter had everything I needed, apart from a small tent. The decision was made at the last minute. I started to get organised and excited about going. I have walked up many hills in Spain but never with 15kg on my back, so this was going to be interesting. Eight of us met in Mansfield for a quick coffee and a chance to buy some lunch. Then we made our way to Telephone Box Junction where we parked the cars and ate our lunches. Then, on went the backpacks and off we went down path. We walked about 200m and there was the first hill. OK, I thought. I can do that



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one, but it was uphill all the way for 5 km! No little inclines or flat stretches, apart from the last 300m or so. It was tough I have to say, but we did stop quite a few times. I don't normally swear much but I cursed that mountain! It was wonderful when, after 3 hours, we got to our camp. It was all so amazingly lush and green. The cabin was cosy with a wood burner and plenty of wood, and the toilet had the most wonderful view. The weather forecast said 30% chance of rain that wouldn't hit the ground. (Not sure how that works.) Well, they were wrong. Very wrong. One lightning strike was so close it made us all jump and I could feel the pressure of it in my chest. Scary! Luckily it soon passed over us and left us with the most amazing lightning show that went on for a long time. Next morning, we were ready to leave at 8:30 am for a walk up to Mount Sterling Summit. Still uphill but it was lovely not to have to carry our backpacks; just a daypack today. The views were amazing and the



view over Mt Buller was interesting to see without snow. From there we took the trail over to Craigs Hut. Hallelujah! It was now downhill at long last! Craigs Hut was interesting for me as I saw the Snowy River film only six months earlier. It was full of people out for the day and there must have been about 35 horses coming through there in smaller groups. Cows and calves walking about, all enjoying the lovely weather. After lunch it was time for us to return to our camp. Guess what? It was up hill again..... until Mary decided we should take the horses' trail back. What a great idea that was. It's made for a much longer walk but it was so much easier and more interesting, not forgetting 'less scary'. We only saw one snake. (I must get gaiters) The walk that day was just over 19 km. We also lost 2 of our group as they had other things to do on the Sunday.

We left our camp for the hike back at 8:50 am. We were taking a different trail back from the one we arrived on, and just as well as it would have been quite a steep descent. However, to get to the other trail, yes, we had to go up a long steep hill that seemed to go on forever. My goodness it was worth it though. This was the most beautiful



trail I have been on in Australia. It was a nice easy descent and the birds were singing. It felt so peaceful and I was also very happy knowing I didn't have to walk up another hill.

What really made this weekend for me was the wonderful people I spent the time with. Three of them I hadn't met before, and the others I got to know much better, with lots of laughter and good crack. That put the cherry on the cake for me. I think I might do it again.

Thanks everybody for putting up with me.



UPCOMING WALKS.

Friday/Saturday/Sunday 24/25/26th March. Rubicon base camp. (Too late to join this one now)

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

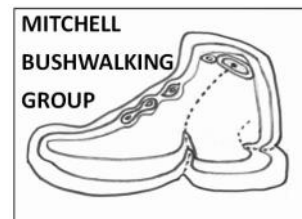
Sunday 2nd April. Toolangi/Myrtle Creek walk. Leader Mary. More details later.

(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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OFFICE USE ONLY	Receipt No:	Database updated Date:
Membership No:	Receipt issued Date:	Email notification sent Date:

The club membership year is 1st 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

* 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 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.