

The Mitchell Walker

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A membership application form is on page 5.

Issue 103

May 2023

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

Three reports this month. Thanks to Paul, Karen and John C. who contributed reports, and Fran and Marg for the photos. (Ed.)

Cobaw. Sunday 7th May. What a day! Five brave souls headed off from Kilmore on a journey up into the mountains beyond Lancefield and Benloch, to Ridges Road in the middle of the Cobaw State Forest. Mary was the leader with Pia, Karen, Fran and myself. Excited, we exited our warm vehicles into very cold and icy conditions. Twenty millimetres of snow had been dumped on parts of Victoria overnight and we were close to the same elevation as Mt Macedon.

After quickly putting on coats, beanies, and gloves, we embarked on the task of climbing the first hill to a small outcrop of boulders. It was a decent slug up the hill on an old motorbike track. There were short periods of scenery, but our eyes and noses were constantly watering and running to the point where it was very hard to see.

Reaching the top, we were greeted by an even colder, icier blast. The temperature was around 6 degrees. The descent down the next hill was a shortcut, and after bush-bashing along several wombat and wallaby tracks, we hit the main logging track called Soil Pit Road.

The weather then improved as the sun came out and our heavy coats were removed. This was the start of the logging area, and it was sad to see so many large trees lying in stacks ready for pickup, to later become chipboard. The trees were stripped of their bark, which now lay all over the track and forest floor. There were at least 20 x 6 metre sections in a stack and we counted over 50 of these spots.

The road in several places was completely covered by fallen trees from at least 5 years ago, and this started people asking "Where is the track?" This became the norm for the day, with 5 people trying to find the disappearing track at every turn. Luckily Pia was in front for most of the time, and we were guided by her blonde hair in the bush.

We came out at Devaney Road and stopped for morning tea. The next track was unnamed but had not been used for at least 10 years and the forest had reclaimed 95% of it. Again, the catch cry was "Where is the bloody track?" The bush-bashing got harder. Fortunately, Mary was using her maps and I had Alltrails open on my phone, so we knew the general direction. It was just a matter of getting there through the thick scrub. Eventually we came out at the Pole Track and we could see our target—the large boulders where we wanted to have lunch. It was only 300 metres away, but with a 200-metre climb through more thicker scrub.



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Instead, we took a longer 2 km road trip to the base of the boulders and climbed to the summit for lunch.

We had gone 8 km up until this point and only had another 2.5 km to go back to the cars, which were parked along the main road. It was a total of 10.5 km for the day, but this last section was the easy part.

We finished the hike at about 1:30 pm in time for the elusive coffee at Lancefield. Somehow, we had missed all the rain and as we drove down the hill, the

heavens finally opened up. Luckily, we had missed it!

On reaching Lancefield, we found that the café we normally go to was closed due to staff shortages but we found that the bakery was open. We even managed to get a photo to prove it. Thankyou Mary for leading this great walk and I am sure we will come back here and explore other tracks in the area. *(Report by Paul)*



Baringo Bushland to Mt Robertson, near Gisborne. Sunday 28th May.

Who would leave for a walk in pouring rain, heading for a destination with a forecast maximum temperature of 12°C? Answer - Paul, Karen, John, Marg, Ros, Pia, Arthur and Fran. We were recklessly ignoring the conditions and travelling to the Baringo Recreation Reserve, one of the less well known reserves in the Macedon Ranges. Initially shielded from the weather by Pia and John's cars, we drove through Romsey, Riddells Creek and a very nice



tree lined street in New Gisborne, until we arrived at the almost deserted reserve. By this time there was some improvement in the weather, but people were still cautiously putting on waterproof gear and getting out walking poles to cope with the slippery conditions. John was the exception, putting his faith in a large, furred umbrella with a curved wooden handle and a lethal metal tip. This meant that while the rest of us

bore a closer resemblance to a group of homeless people, John looked more like an urbane businessman off to the golf course with colleagues.

The Baringo Reserve was once part of a large grazing property. The 34 hectares that make up the reserve were given to the Macedon Ranges Shire Council in the 1980's. It features spurs, gullies and valley floors that form part of the Robertson Range within the Macedon Ranges. Since 1991, the Macedon Pony Club has occupied a small section of the reserve. We started walking at that location, passing through an open forest where various horse jumps had been carefully placed with minimal disturbance to the surroundings. We then passed into a steeper section reserved for walkers only, climbing through an area with a well developed understory of very healthy grass trees. The reserve is home to a diverse range of flowering



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plants. At this time of year forest floor was dominated by Victoria's floral emblem, the common heath, (*Epacris impressa*). We saw the white form and a large variety of pink shades. The flowers of these the plants stood out against a background of bright green grass.

We stopped for morning tea when we got to the top of the climb and then walked along a spur with good views of the surrounding countryside. This was followed by a careful descent down towards our lunch spot. We only had one person fall over during this section, however, with a combination of grace and athletic co-ordination, Fran managed to land in a dignified sitting position and escaped injury. Lunch was eaten in an open grassy area of the pony club. By this time sun had come out and the gloomy conditions of the morning were forgotten.

We continued down a more gentle slope that lead back to the cars. What followed next was an episode of great personal shame. I had left my walking pole back at the lunch spot. I knew that there was probably no greater sin in the eyes of the Mitchell walkers, than getting between their completion of a walk and afternoon tea at a nearby cafe. I started spluttering apologies and turned to go back but I realised I didn't know the way so I had to make Paul come too, just when he thought all the exertion was over. My progress up hills is normally characterised by noisy mouth breathing and frequent rests. However, the disgrace propelled me up and down this hill in record time. I arrived back hot and sweaty only to find that the others had decided there wasn't a risk to their afternoon tea. They had sauntered off to the toilet block and still weren't back.

Ultimately we made it to a cafe in Riddells Creek in plenty of time. It is amazing how carefree walkers become once they get to afternoon tea. While in the queue for orders, John told me that he wasn't going to buy any cakes because they were too expensive and it was too soon after lunch. I looked away for thirty seconds and then suddenly I saw there had been a complete change, and he was in possession of a large vanilla slice.

So after the unpromising start, the day ended quite well. Except perhaps for Ros who was rushing home to watch her beloved North Melbourne take on league leaders Collingwood. However, she did say that she felt the energy expended on the walk entitled her to some wine during the match, so hopefully that dulled the pain.

(Report by Karen)

Tallarook State Forest at the bottom of Mt Hickey. June 4th 2023.

The walkers were Paul Bramich (Leader), Fran Grindlay, Christine Sonnleitner, Yvonne Williams, Rene Reynolds, Kerryn Nelson, Meridie Bawson, Rebecca Grant, Karen Chapman, Pia Shackcloth, John Cotter. The walk started about 8km east of Broadford at the base of Mt Hickey on the southern side, approached via Davis Rd. We ignored the narrow mountain bike track there that loops to the south and back, and instead took Davis Rd, now an unpolished track, eastwards to the ford over Dabyminga Creek. Weather was cool and sunny and the creek low so no one suffered wet feet. A turning northward provided an excursion of about 1 km along the creek



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through grass-floored woodland of eucalypts and wattles with occasional breaks in the trees allowing views of the mountain to our right, all of it highlighted to best effect by bright sunshine. Water quality buffs noticed that the creek itself held water of striking clarity - the benefits of filtration by a forested catchment. Truly an idyllic scene fit for poets.

The creek continued north through a steep sided, heavily wooded canyon that would almost certainly have involved bush bashing, paddling and a bit of rock climbing so we were pleased to accept Paul's advice to return to Davis Rd and continue along Jenkin Track further eastward along

the contour lines at the foot of the mountain. The woodland was now mainly young-growth eucalypts, still lit up beautifully in the sun. The walking was pretty easy. We observed 'Track No 1 V Steep' heading northwards up the mountain side. Those wishing to take this short cut to the summit face a 30 to 40 degree slope of irregular rocks all the way. After studying the map earnestly and remarking on the aptness of the track's name, we were content to loop back, westward, on another track, parallel with our eastward route but slightly lower down the mountain side, again through mostly young-growth woodland.

The total walk was measured at 9.5km but the outing was not finished. Fran and husband Rob kindly invited

us to call in to their property on the route back to Broadford and be treated to fresh scones, cream, teas and coffees. We enjoyed all that seated on their veranda admiring the beautiful views of the mountain and many other hills around. Also, the several peacocks they have there. It was a great day. Many thanks to Paul for revealing a beautiful walk close to Broadford that some of us locals had no notion of, and to Fran and Rob for hosting us afterwards.

(Report by John C.)



Upcoming Walks. Note. These are planned walks and may change. Please look for final details which are emailed out a few day before each walk.

Sunday 18th June. Taradale Conservation Reserve. Leader Fred. More information closer to the date.

Sunday 25th June. Snow visit. More later. Mary to lead?

Sunday 2nd July. To be decided. Mary to lead the walk. More later

Sunday 16th July. Merri Creek. Leader will be Arthur. More later.

Saturday 22nd July. Heathcote. This walk may be with Echuca/Moama walking group. Bec will investigate how this will work.

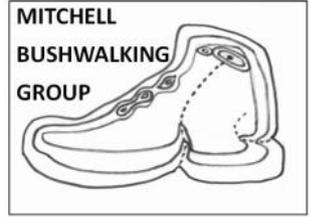
NOTE: The Federation Walks this year will be on the 20th-21st October weekend around Trentham/ Blackwood/Lyonville. There will be 20 walks and they are looking for leaders. If you are interested, contact **Paul** on **0476 932 117**.

(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.