

The Mitchell Walker

Upcoming walks on page 4.

A membership application form is on page 6.

Issue 110

March 2024

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

Greetings everyone,

Just 2 walk reports in this edition, but we're gradually catching up. There is also a list of upcoming walks, and important messages about membership renewal and a new emergency form to be carried by everyone in their backpacks. The emergency form is in the body of the email (Ed.)

MT. BOGONG - 16th-18th February, 2024. On February 16, Mary, Rene, Fran, Yvonne, Paul, Wayne, Bec, Brenda and I, left our homes with the aim of conquering Mt Bogong, Victoria's tallest mountain. We headed up towards the high country, eventually turning off the Kiewa Highway, between Tawonga and Mt Beauty. The cars were left at the Mountain Creek Picnic Area and we walked up a vehicle track to the start of the Staircase Spur.



The Staircase Spur is categorised as a Grade 4 track and statements about its length seem to vary, however, a description I read online is probably the most meaningful. It said, "The track is only 6 km long but don't be fooled, it'll probably be the longest 6 km of your life". Tree roots and rocks give much of the track the appearance of an extremely steep staircase that seems to go on forever. In addition to the difficulty of the terrain, it was unusually warm and humid for that area and within half an hour, sweat was dripping off everyone. Luckily, we weren't aiming to get up to the summit in one go. As we had started walking in the afternoon, we only had to make it to Bivouac Hut. This hut is described on one online walking site as being, "allegedly halfway up the Staircase Spur", so it may have been written by someone who struggled in the same hot, humid conditions as us.



The land around Bivouac Hut is very uneven and rocky so it is not the easiest place to put up a tent. Initially the euphoria of getting my pack off and finally standing still stopped me from seeing this as too much of a problem. I thought I'd simply move some of the rocks. I picked up one only to uncover thousands of furious ants trying to protect thousands of eggs. So in the end I had to leave everything in place and accept that my inflatable mattress was going to be put to the test. Eventually everyone's tents were up. We were fed and in our sleeping bags ready for a good night's rest. There were a few minutes of peace and quiet, then suddenly the nocturnal animal peak hour began. We seemed to be camped in the middle of some sort of Flinders Street Station for small mammals.

We could hear the continual scampering of small, busy visitors, coming and going in all directions. Every time I started to drop off there was a new round of scratching and snuffling which seemed to be just centimetres away from my head. At one stage during the night, I heard the heavy tail of a wallaby and something large pushed against the wall of my tent, instantaneously changing my mind about attempting to find the pit toilet in the dark.

Despite the invasion of the campsite, we survived the night and continued the climb the next morning. However, once again, we were not alone on the mountain. The Jindera Football Club had decided to climb Mt Bogong

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as part of their pre-season training. Our eyes kept turning from the scenery to look enviously at the steady stream of footballer players who were carrying only tiny day packs. In fact, anyone watching could have concluded that there was some cruel arrangement where the weight of the packs was in direct proportion to the age of the walkers. However, they were very friendly and occasionally our confidence was boosted as we noted that some players did have a little trouble adjusting to the new form of exercise.



On the summit, the mood was triumphant. The football players cheered each member of the team as they arrived, while we nodded breathlessly at each other and hobbled around trying to straighten our stooped postures. I took a team photo for the football club Facebook page, and one of the players agreed to use Fran's phone to take a picture of us. Fran must have made quite an impression because as the player was handing her phone back, I heard his team mate say, "Hey Johnno, did you slip your phone number in?"



After conquering the summit, we descended in a southerly direction to our next campsite at Cleve Cole Hut. This beautiful stone hut was built in 1937 as a memorial to the pioneering skier Cleve Cole. The neighbouring camping ground was grassy and relatively flat in stark contrast to Bivouac Hut. The prospects of a more comfortable night seemed very good, despite a snake startling Wayne as he came out of his tent for lunch. As we had arrived in the middle of the day we had plenty of time for an extra walk down to Howman's Falls, and although we encountered yet another snake, we made it there safely.

Howman's Falls is a series of waterfalls flowing into large pools along Camp Creek. At the main waterfall you can stand on a rocky ledge, (or in my case, crouch nervously), and see the water plunging down into a steep sided valley. Although it is only a small creek, the water drops several hundred metres over a short distance, so it is very spectacular.

On Sunday we descended the mountain via the Eskdale Spur. Along the first section of the track, we stopped to search for the famous Rocking Stone. We all spread out and searched without success for about fifteen minutes. We were just on the point of giving up when we found it. Surprisingly it was right near a sign saying, "Rocking Stone", but at least we found it in the end and took some memorable photos.

After the Rocking Stone Saddle, the track became much steeper. The side of the spur dropped sharply down to a deep valley and provided us with some fantastic views. As we were carefully making our way along the rocky path, we were humbled by some five-year-old twins who were powering up the mountain merely on the promise that their mother would give them some fruit bread when they got to the summit. We continued, a little deflated, but eventually we managed to get down below the tree line. Soon after that, we were able to stop and have our morning tea at Michell Hut.



The vegetation continued to change as the altitude decreased. The trees became taller, and the undergrowth became more lush until we were able to hear the welcoming sounds of Mountain Creek. We then followed the creek along a track bordered by large tree ferns. By this stage, I was getting tired and walking a bit robotically. Fran had to yell out to stop me single-mindedly wading straight across the creek, pointing out that there was a perfectly good footbridge about two metres to my left.

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Finally we could see the parked cars and could congratulate ourselves on the completion of a challenging walk. Thanks to Mary for organising another exciting high-country adventure.

(Report by Karen.)

Sunday Creek . 2 Loop walks. 3rd March 2024. On the morning of Sunday the 3.3.2024, a group of 15 hikers headed off at Andersons Gardens in Clonbinane. Starting at the campsite, we were told to keep an eye out for snakes by leader Paul and together we hiked 3.5 to 4 km along the Sunday River creek walk. This was the first loop, we stopped for some morning tea back at the campground and found a long drop.

Next, we headed off from the carpark and did a new loop from Raynors Rd to the Bump track, continuing along the river flat until we hit the steep section. The terrane

was uneven from the bikes and four-wheel drives that had been before. The weather was perfect. We stopped here for some lunch, and we turned around and headed back to the turnoff to Drag Hill Rd, saw a large wombat hole, passed some 4x4's and dirt bikes and went along the muddy road which then took us back to Andersons Gardens. The total distance was 10 km with both circuits completed.



After the beautiful walk, those who were keen joined in for coffee at the Duck Inn Café in Broadford where the cakes were plenty. A fantastic walk thanks Paul.

(Report by Carla)



Leaders wanted: The group would like to encourage members to nominate to lead alternate easy grade day walks when either overnight or more difficult walks are scheduled. We understand not everyone is able to attend 'bigger' walks, so we would like to provide suitable alternatives, but we can only do that if there are others who are willing to lead easier day walks. Please get in touch mitchellwalksgroup@gmail.com if you are interested and able to assist the group with this request. Other leaders are able to provide advice and guidance on organising and leading walks.

AGM Announced: It was agreed at the last meeting on 04 March 2024, that all positions will be vacated and refreshed at an AGM on 06 May 2024. Please consider if you are interested in contributing to the group's activities and provide an expression of interest via mitchellwalksgroup@gmail.com. Meetings are on the first Monday of the month.

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.

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Walk Name/details	Lead/Notes	Date
Private property- Pyalong/ Lancefield Paddock Rock Boulders walk- Beginners.	Rene	Sun- 17 March
NO WALK	EASTER WEEKEND Public holiday	29 th March – 1 st April
NO meeting	No meeting	Monday 1 April- this is Easter Mon- day
OVERNIGHT - Tawonga Huts. Explore Mt Jaithmathang, the Fainters, and Salt Lick Creek.	Benalla Bushwalking Group (Bec to assist for MBG)	Fri-Sun 5-7 April
DAY WALK- City walk	Arthur (School holidays)	Sun- 7 April
Trentham Domino Rail Trail	Fred	Sun- 14 April
Dabyminga (behind Talla- rook) TBC	Fran (With Paul) (Thursday- 25 ANZAC DAY Public holiday)	Sun- 28 April
OVERNIGHT – Otways base walks- accommodat- ed.	Bec and John L.	Fri- Sun- 3-5 May
MGB Monthly meeting ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	Broadford living and learning Centre @ 7:30pm	Monday 6 May
NO WALK	Mother's Day	Sun- 12 May
Walk- TBC	TBC	Sun- 19 May
Walk- TBC	TBC	Sun- 2 June
NO WALK	Monday- 10 June KING'S BIRTHDAY Pub- lic holiday	8-9 June
OVERNIGHT/Base Camps- Flinders Ranges, South Australia TBC	Mary/Rene	Sun- 18 August Sun- 25 August
OVERNIGHT- Grampians Peaks Trail- 13 days TBC	TBC	Sun- 15 Septem- ber Sun- 22 Septem- ber
OVERNIGHT- Federation Walks Wilson's Promontory	Bushwalking Victoria Registrations TBC.	Fri- Sun 11-13 Oc- tober (Possibly ex- tra day each side for travel)

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Other news.

There are several items I need to remind members of:

1. Our new sign-in sheet on walks will include a column where ambulance cover is indicated by walkers. (*Ambulance cover is strongly recommended by the group.*)
2. A medical form needs to be completed by all our walkers and carried in an outer pocket of their back-pack, in a plastic zip-bag, on all walks. *A copy of this form is included in the email to which this newsletter is attached. Please let us know if you are unable to print this yourself.*
3. *At a recent planning meeting, it was decided that **no dogs** are to be taken on our walks.*
4. **MBG membership** as our 12-month membership commences on August 1st. Unfortunately we do not have much flexibility here. If you are not sure if your membership is current, send us an email to **mitchellwalksgroup@gmail.com** and we'll get back to you.

You can see membership information explained on the back page of this and every newsletter. The cost of renewal remains \$35.00, which practically all goes on the insurance we all must pay to Bushwalking Victoria. Details of how you can renew your membership are also on the back page of all our newsletters.

The easiest way to pay is by bank transfer to Mitchell Bushwalking Group's account at Bendigo Bank. BSB number 633-000. Account number 160 294 047, and be sure to write your Surname in the Details section. Other alternative ways of payment are on the membership application form on page 4.

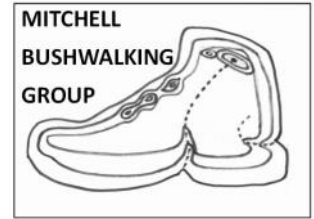
Please note that the \$5.00 per walk for non-members **is not an alternative to joining up**. It is an opportunity for prospective members to "see how they go" before paying for their membership and can only be done **twice** before a decision needs to be made. The \$5.00 does cover them for insurance on those 2 walks and if they subsequently join, the payments can be deducted from the \$35.00, meaning that they only have \$25.00 balance to pay.

(John Brissett and Bec Grant (Joint editors))

***** 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 2023 to 31st July 2024. 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: **160 294 047** Please write your surname in the "Details" section.