



Pyretes Creek, 24 March 2013
 Photo: Graeme Brown. Rat Tales, April 2013, the newsletter of the Ballarat Bushwalking and Outdoor Club

Contributions

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The statements and opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views or position of Bushwalking Victoria.

Editor: Joslin Guest

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WALKING AND TALKING WITH THE BUSHWALKING VICTORIA PRESIDENT

As I mentioned last month, my term as President is coming to a close and so I have been spending quite a bit of time reflecting on my experiences of the past three years.



When the previous President, David Reid, and Vice President, Barbara Guerin, approached me to nominate for the position of Vice President with the view to nominate subsequently for President, I was totally surprised by the idea, as it was something that I hadn't considered previously. I didn't think I had the skills, experience and knowledge to become president, but David, Barbara and my wife, Elaine, thought differently. So I agreed.

Back in 2010, I certainly didn't have any grand plans in mind, or any real plans for that matter. I was just an ordinary bloke who was passionate about bushwalking, who wanted to make a difference (until then I had thought being a Bushwalking Victoria Board member was enough); and pretty much thought I would just try to continue the fantastic work that David Reid had been doing.

From the start I decided that I was going to devote considerable time and effort to the role. I had retired from paid employment in March 2009 with the intention of getting involved in volunteer work of some kind, preferably related to bushwalking; so being president of Bushwalking Victoria fitted the bill pretty well.

In reality though I have probably been pretty much performing a CEO type role, which somewhat to my surprise I have quite enjoyed.

What's the difference? Typically the role of president is to provide leadership and direction, to ensure that the Board fulfils its responsibilities of governance and works to achieve the agreed goals. The president is also the spokesperson for the organisation and works to maintain key relationships within and outside of Bushwalking Victoria and its associated clubs. I certainly did all of those things. But given the very limited staff resources available to support me and the Board, and my ambition that Bushwalking Victoria become a more effective and successful organisation to benefit all people who bushwalk, I felt I needed to take on much more of the necessary administrative and management functions, such as managing the development and implementation of the club website and new Bushwalking Victoria website projects and the Green Walks in the Park project with the Heart Foundation.

Another difference is the workload. Obviously with more happening, there was more work to be done, and I was essentially filling multiple roles. As a result, over the past three years I have typically 'worked' 25 to 30 hours a week on Bushwalking Victoria tasks. There was also the constant avalanche of emails going both ways, amounting to close to 7,000 emails received and 4,000 sent over the past three years. There have also been plenty of meetings

to attend too, probably close to 175.

Fortunately in the electronic age all the emails are handled through my home computer and many of the meetings have been around the dining room table at home.

It's been busy, interesting and mostly enjoyable, and I wouldn't have changed any of it. However, just because I have been willing and able to do

all this, it doesn't, and shouldn't, mean that my successors should be expected to do the same. This is one reason why, following the retirement last November of Jenny Sykes, our Administration Officer, we decided to upgrade the position to Office Manager, with a commensurate increase in responsibilities, and knowledge and skill requirements. We have been very lucky in recruiting Patsy Borton to the position; and from the start the Secretary, Treasurer and I have noticed a significant reduction in our workloads and increase in the efficiency of Bushwalking Victoria operations. Hopefully a benefit of the upgraded position and reduced workload demands on our volunteers will be to make it easier to attract people to undertake these roles in the future.

Perhaps the most significant and potentially far reaching change that I have initiated is yet to come to fruition, and in some ways it came about by accident. I am referring to the Strategic Review that has been underway since January 2012, that will see a new Strategic Plan being approved in the next couple of months. No doubt the word *strategic* turns some people off, but, really, all we are doing is planning for our future (to 2017 anyway) and for the future of bushwalking, and working out how to achieve what we plan.

Being president of Bushwalking Victoria exposes you to a wide range of people and organisations. Like it or not, government pretty much lump us in with sport, and as someone who is almost anti-sport (yes I am nevertheless a born and bred Aussie!), this was at first a bit of a challenge for me as I also thought that there was nothing we could learn from sport. I was wrong. I am still anti-sport, but in fact we do have much to learn from sport. While there are many factors that contribute to success, one characteristic of successful sports organisations is that they have a plan. They decide where they want to be, what they want to do and how they are going to achieve what they want. Because they have a plan they are better able to attract members/supporters, money, recognition, sponsorship and ultimately achieve success. (Of course, as we have seen in recent months with cycling, AFL, NRL, swimming etc, even the best plans can sometimes go off the rails.) While Bushwalking Victoria has had a strategic plan for some years, our world keeps changing and so Bushwalking Victoria needs to do so too.

Another significant factor for me was realising that most people who bushwalk do not belong to a club, have never been in a club and never will be in a club. This means that

Walking and Talking with the Bushwalking Victoria President cont

there are a very large number of potential supporters out there who currently are not part of Bushwalking Victoria. In turn this means that Bushwalking Victoria and its members are carrying the burden of working to ensure the best bushwalking opportunities for Victoria that are shared and enjoyed by all people who bushwalk. In November 2011 I did a presentation on this at the annual Bushwalking Australia conference, and following this I was quite rightly asked 'what were we going to do about it?'. I hadn't really thought that far ahead, but pretty quickly the Bushwalking Victoria team kicked into gear, a working group was formed and the review has been underway since.

Next month will be my final column as president and I will have something to say about the future of bushwalking as I see it, and the future role of Bushwalking Victoria.

Chris Towers

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

Geelong Bushwalkers



Happy Birthday to the Geelong Bushwalking Club. It is now 40 years since its first meeting on 11 April, 1973.

Then, 27 people gathered at St Mary's scout hall, Myers Street, Geelong for the inaugural meeting that followed an appeal in the press from John Holman.

In May 1973 the first newsletter was published.

BSAR SAFETY CLOTHING ISSUED TO ALL MEMBERS

Bush Search and Rescue members are being provided with safety shirts, fleece beanies and caps for use on searches. The safety shirts are highly visible and stay warm if they get wet.



Source: BSAR website

AROUND THE TRACKS

Bucketillible Track

After a major storm in the Mt Buangor area in 2011, Parks Victoria decided to close permanently the Bucketillible Track. Ballarat Bushwalking and Outdoor Club (BBOC) have fought hard for the past two years to get this decision reversed. Parks Victoria have now have given them the go ahead to clear one end of the track, from the Bailles campsite, on Sunday 21 April.

Parks Victoria are to be commended for reversing their original strong opposition to the reopening of the track.

All bushwalkers should be grateful to BBOC for their perseverance over the last 2 years in negotiations with Parks Victoria, and for the work they are prepared to put in to get the track, which has special values, reopened.

Grampians

Following the completion of the Venus Baths footbridge, Parks Victoria will complete works on walking tracks adjoining the bridge and in adjacent areas with an aim to opening the Venus Baths Loop in early May 2013.

Contractors are currently completing repairs to the walking track between Splitters Falls and Wonderland car park. This work should be completed in late May 2013, and will restore the link between Venus Baths, Wonderland car park and the Pinnacle.

Goldfields

Parks Victoria Southern Goldfields Region has advised that ground works on the Goldfield Track between Slaty Creek, Creswick, and Melbourne Road in the Creswick Regional Park began on Monday 8 April and will take approximately four weeks to complete.

A diversion for walkers follows the bike route along Slaty Creek Road. Direct any questions to Nick Muller, Parks Victoria, Ranger Team Leader, Southern Goldfields, ph 5321 4807.

Dave Rimmer, Manager BEC



Australia
Wide

Outdoor Equipment Hire

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Spot Messenger	Packs
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Commercial Development in Victorian National Parks

Press Release—Peter Ryan: Enhanced opportunities for eco-tourism in National Parks

Tuesday, April 02, 2013

Deputy Premier and Member for Gippsland South Peter Ryan said Victoria would be able to compete with other states to gain a market share in the lucrative eco-tourism sector, with guidelines allowing environmentally friendly and sustainable tourism in national parks released.

Mr Ryan said eco-tourism was an important driver of jobs and income for local communities, and the changes would allow Victoria to improve its offering to travellers to induce them to stay longer in regional areas. Mr Ryan said the guidelines followed the release of an independent report by the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission which recommended 'sensible and sensitive developments in national parks' as a measure to unlock Victorian tourism.

'The Victorian Coalition Government has embraced the recommendations to stimulate and drive a new era of eco-tourism in Victoria,' Mr Ryan said.

'Victoria's national parks are important public assets and, just as occurs in other states and territories, should be open to the public so they can be enjoyed in a responsible and sustainable way. The more that people have access to their natural environment the more they will come to appreciate, respect and care for it.'

Mr Ryan said the guidelines would provide strict environmental protections as part of a comprehensive approvals process.

'Proposals for major new tourism projects would require a detailed environmental management plan supported by an independent environmental risk assessment and auditing of the plan,' Mr Ryan said. 'There must also be proper community consultation and projects will be asked to generate a net public benefit for the community use of the park. The Coalition Government will encourage proposals that complement the values of national parks, broaden the appeal of our great natural assets and allow more people to experience these unique places.'

Mr Ryan said the Coalition Government had also agreed to exclude investment proposals in certain areas, such as wilderness parks, wilderness zones and remote and natural areas.

'The release of the guidelines is about making the most of these beautiful natural places and making Victoria's national parks more accessible to more people,' Mr Ryan said. 'We value our environment and we are working to ensure all Victorians can enjoy it.'

Mr Ryan said the guidelines were available online at: www.dse.vic.gov.au

From the DSE website: Tourism investment opportunities in National Parks

The Minister for Environment and Climate Change [Ryan Smith] has released guidelines for tourism investment opportunities in national parks to help grow the tourism sector and attract more international visitors to Victoria.

The release follows the Government's response in 2012 to the final report from the Victorian Competition and Efficiency Commission (VCEC) inquiry into the Victorian tourism industry.

In its response, the Government announced its aim to unlock the tourism potential of Victoria's public land, including national parks while maintaining important environmental safeguards.

Proposals for tourism investments in a national park require a comprehensive assessment of potential impacts to ensure they are compatible with park values. Tourism investment proposals will be subject to lease conditions to ensure the values of national parks are not compromised.

The Minister is required to approve all proposals for investments and leases in national parks. Other approvals, such as planning, may also be required.

The Department of Environment and Primary Industries is developing a pre-proposal package including checklists, maps and contacts in relevant government organisations to assist investors. The pre-proposal package will be available on the website when finalised. For detailed information on these proposals, go to <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/recreation-and-tourism/tourism-investment-opportunities-in-national-parks>

See also:

- [Report from the VCEC enquiry and Government response](#)
- Media release from the Minister for Tourism and Major Events and the Treasurer: [Coalition to open parks to nature-based tourism](#) - 23 August 2012

Examples of nature-based tourism in Australia and New Zealand

- [Cradle Mountain Huts, Tasmania](#)
- [Wilpena Pound, South Australia](#)
- [Wolgan Valley, Blue Mountains, New South Wales](#)
- [Bay of Fires Lodge, Tasmania](#)
- [Milford Lodge, New Zealand](#)

(Continued on page 5)

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EXCEPTS FROM THE GUIDELINES

1.3 Scope

The following guidelines are designed to provide clear and transparent advice and a streamlined process for assessing proposals for high quality tourism investment opportunities of regional and/or state significance in national parks. Tourism investment opportunities are defined as any facilities which are primarily intended to be used by visitors to the region in which the park is located.

Consistent with the government response, no investment proposals will be considered in areas classified as wilderness parks, wilderness zones and remote and natural areas under the [National Parks Act 1975](#) or reference areas under the [Reference Areas Act 1978](#).

The guidelines will be used in conjunction with the [Leasing Policy for Crown Land in Victoria 2010](#). The *Leasing Policy for Crown Land in Victoria 2010* provides a framework to guide tenure management decision-making. There are three principles:

1. **Provide benefits to the public through leasing.** Benefits to the community of granting exclusive occupation must be justified taking into account social, economic and environmental considerations.
2. **Ensure consistency and transparency in leasing.** Leasing processes must be fair, open and impartial whether the lease is allocated through a competitive process or through direct negotiations.
3. **Manage leased Crown land in an ecologically sustainable manner.** The economic, social and cultural benefits the community derives from Crown land depend on long term sustainable management.

These guidelines will support decision makers in determining whether

- investment proposals in national parks are appropriate in that they complement environmental, heritage and other values; and
- investment proposal in national parks will generate a net public benefit.

The guidelines will support decision makers in determining appropriate lease durations and conditions for tourism investment opportunities in national parks.

The guidelines will inform potential developers and investors on how key decision makers will assess a proposal and when decisions will be made.

The guidelines will inform the broader community on the process for assessing investment proposals and determining lease durations for such proposals.

2. Guiding principles

In considering proposals for tourism investment opportunities in national parks, the following high level principles will be applied:

- **Principle 1:** Tourism investment opportunities will be allowed which are sensible and sensitive to their setting and which support broader visitor enjoyment of national parks.
- **Principle 2:** Tourism investment opportunities must be determined as the highest and best use of the area of national park proposed for use. That is, proposals must provide the greatest public benefit. The greatest net public benefit will be determined by considering:
 - **Environmental outcomes** - the primary purpose of national parks is the preservation and protection of the natural environment (a legislative objective)
 - **Social outcomes** - parks are also for the use and enjoyment of the public (a legislative objective), requiring appropriately managed access and facilities in specific areas
 - **Economic outcomes** - proposals may include broader economic benefits for the region, which may have an impact on determining the greatest benefit.
- **Principle 3:** Investment opportunities must be consistent with the legislative objectives and purpose of national parks and have regard to applicable management plans.
- **Principle 4:** Investment opportunities must take account of associated risks and give regard to any risk management plans for the proposed settings, for example bushfire and climate variability.
- **Principle 5:** Tourism facilities must be established and managed in an ecologically sustainable manner, must minimise impact on Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage and must contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of national park values.
- **Principle 6:** Access to national parks by Aboriginal enterprises for tourism operations should be encouraged.
- **Principle 7:** Lease durations granted for private tourism investment proposals will be commensurate to the level of capital investment, rate of return on investment and level of environmental and social outcomes delivered.
- **Principle 8:** The approval process should not compromise the intellectual property of the proponent.

Demonstrating compliance with these principles is an integral part of the approval process for investment and in securing ministerial approval.

(Continued on page 6)

(Commercial Development in Victorian National Parks continued from page 5)

**From the VCEC website:
Inquiry into Victoria's Tourism Industry**

The Treasurer released the Commission's final report *Unlocking Victorian Tourism: An Inquiry into Victoria's Tourism Industry*, and the Government's response on 23 August 2012.

The inquiry commenced in September 2010, when the Victorian Treasurer announced that the Commission would undertake an inquiry into Victoria's tourism industry. On 21 June 2011, the Commission presented the Treasurer with its final report.

The inquiry received 112 submissions and held a number of roundtables and meetings with interested parties.

The VCEC reports and additional information is available from the VCEC web site at <http://www.vcec.vic.gov.au/CA256EAF001C7B21/pages/vcec-inquiries-current-inquiry-into-victoria%27s-tourism-industry#.UXdiccpG-v0>

BUSHWALKING VICTORIA POSITION

BWV is not necessarily against commercial activities and development in parks. Our view is that as long as developments are done sensitively and do not compromise the environmental integrity and natural state of the park, there can be a place for them. There are good and bad examples of commercial activities and development in parks in Victoria, interstate and internationally. In fact many bushwalkers, including BWV members avail themselves of such commercial options both at home and when travelling.

Since the original government announcement that development in some national parks would be allowed, there have been highly emotional comments from some quarters that are unhelpful, not only making it sound like all areas of all parks will be available for development, but that such development will occur in all such areas. The government announcements state that development will be banned from sensitive areas such as wilderness zones, and the reality is that many of our parks are unsuitable anyway.

However, given the track record on environmental matters of conservative governments generally, including our own State Government since it took office in November 2010 (e.g. Alpine Grazing, logging), Victorians have every right to a degree of nervousness concerning what the government actually has in mind, and a degree of mistrust is inevitable.

With Bushwalking Australia, BWV has developed [10 Principles on Commercial Activities, Tourism and Infrastructure in National Parks](#) that set out our detailed position on this topic.

BWV will keep a close eye on further government announcements and will call it to account for any proposals approved which we assess as being inappropriate.

**Chris Towers
BWV President**

Planned Burns

During planned burns to reduce the risk of bushfire to people, property and communities may be affected by smoke from the burns.

- If you experience any symptoms that may be due to smoke exposure, the Department of Health advises that you should seek medical advice or call Nurse on Call on 1300 606 024.
- Road users:
 - Drive carefully as road travel may be hazardous due to low visibility associated with smoke.
 - (If driving through smoke it is probably also advisable to keep car windows and ventilation system closed. **(Ed)**)
 - Signs may be in place to slow traffic. Obey all traffic signs and instructions from fire agency crews near the burn.
 - For travel times and roadworks check <http://traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au>
- Access to tracks, parks etc:
 - Access to walking tracks, car parks, camping grounds and picnic sites in areas close to or in burn areas may be restricted.
- Accommodation
 - Close windows and doors to prevent smoke from entering.
- Stay informed
 - For information about planned burns in Victoria, visit www.dse.vic.gov.au/burns, www.cfa.vic.gov.au or call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL) on freecall 1800 240 667.
 - If you have a smartphone you can download the free CFA FireReady application to see planned burns on a map.
 - Information about fires is available at www.cfa.vic.gov.au or by calling the VBIL.

Source: Based on advice provided by Murray Goldfields Fire District release and forwarded by the Great Dividing Trail Association

4 HUTS LOST IN THE GIPPSLAND FIRES

In the most recent fires in Gippsland, four historic huts were lost: Junction Hut, Jorgenson's Hut, Goonan's Hut and Ben's Hut, all near Aberfeldy, where the huge Gippsland blaze started. They were lost in the fire that burnt about 75,000ha.

Store Point Hut, which was renovated last year, survived.

If these destroyed huts are rebuilt, they will probably be wrapped in fire resistant Hazmat and fire breaks put in around them, as happened when Weston's Hut, one of the three huts burnt down in the 2006-07 fires, was rebuilt. Dibbin's Hut, one of the other burnt huts in those fires, received the same treatment. Blair's Hut, the third hut, was sprayed with fire retardant foam to protect it.



Jorgensons' Hut-destroyed



Junction Hut-destroyed



Ben's Hut-destroyed 2013



Goonan's Hut-destroyed 2013



The renovated Store Point Hut, which survived the recent fires



Weston's Hut, showing the fire break surrounding it

Sources:

- Echo of the Mountains, Vol 11, No 1, March 2012, the quarterly newsletter of the Victorian High Country Huts Association
- <http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/article/2013/02/07/559054-national-news.html>
- <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/about-dse/media-releases/aberfeldy-donnelys-creek-fire-claims-four-recreational-huts>
- http://www.gippslandinpicture.com/special/huts/junction_hut/home.html
- http://www.gippslandinpicture.com/special/huts/jorgensons_hut/home.html
- http://www.alpineview.net/gallery/huts/huts_files/blair-hut06.jpg
- http://huts.victoria.org.au/cms/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=75&Itemid=76
- <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150640579091009>

'NEW' STATE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

On Wednesday 10 April, 2013, the State Government announced changes to the Victorian Public Service that included DSE and DPI forming one new department by 1 July 2013 - the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI). Although the announcement said the change would take effect from 1 July the new name and acronym are already in use by government.

This change has been under consideration for several years by both the current and former government. It won't just be BWV that will be keeping a close eye on this change to ensure that environmental considerations are not swamped.



TeamUp Victoria is a unique smartphone and Facebook app that acts as a physical activity marketplace, connecting people with hundreds of sporting and active recreation activities happening in local neighbourhoods.

TeamUp is a free way for clubs and organisations to promote every single one of their participation opportunities; from membership options to club based competitions. Users can join existing events or create their own, and can search activities by sport/activity, location, time and date. More than 100 different activity types are listed on the app, and it works whether you are looking to engage local people to become members or for a single 'come and try' event.

The app is available on Facebook and for Android and Apple smartphones. To download, visit www.teamup.com.au. Then a profile can be created and activities added. When users come on board (there are already over 1700!), they can contact the organiser to see if they fit the vacancy posted.

A substantial online advertising campaign will commence from 29 April.

You can find out more information and keep in touch with TeamUp happenings at www.facebook.com/teamupvictoria.

If you need any help, would like to talk further about promoting TeamUp and making it work for your club,



Bushwalking Victoria is on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/bushwalkingvictoria>

IDENTIFYING & NOTIFYING STATE PROHIBITED WEEDS

Almost wherever we walk, we see invasive weeds that cause or have the potential to cause environmental harm.

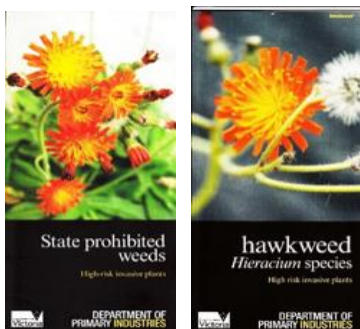
The Department of Primary Industry (DPI) asks bushwalkers to become weed spotters and look out for and report State prohibited weeds.

State prohibited weeds are invasive plants that do not occur in Victoria but pose a significant threat if they invade; or are present in relatively small numbers and can reasonably be expected to be eradicated if we take action now. They do not include common and wide-spread weeds like Paterson's Curse, Blackberry, Ragwort, Serrated Tussock, Gorse or St John's Worth, even if these weeds are new to a particular part of Victoria.

Bushwalkers are asked to keep an eye out for, and to report sightings of plants that might be State prohibited weeds to the DPI. These plants might be spotted out in the bush, in local parks, in waterways and ponds, in private gardens or even in nurseries.

Do not try remove the weed yourself. Take a picture and a GPS reading if you can (or address if the weed is spotted in the suburbs).

Some of you might already have participated in weed spotting by taking part in the annual survey for hawkweed, a State prohibited weed. Other State prohibited weeds include plants you probably know, such as the ornamental looking Water Hyacinth and Horsetails.



The DPI has two coloured pamphlets, which they ask bushwalkers to carry in their backpacks, to help identify the plants when we are out and about.

If you think you have seen or have purchased a State prohibited weed, contact the Department of Primary Industries by telephoning 136 186.

If you are interested in becoming a registered weed spotter, contact the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186 and provide your name, postal address, daytime phone number and email address. Training is available. Take a look at upcoming [Weed Spotter Training and Events](#). There is also a quarterly [weed spotter newsletter](#).

If you would like a representative of DPI to talk to your club about State prohibited weeds, or to obtain the pamphlets, contact Sarah Partington at sarah.partington@dpi.vic.gov.au

It is a very interesting presentation and you will be shown specimens of some of the plants.

Editor

Book Review BUSHWALKING EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hobart Walking Club has produced an excellent little booklet—*Bushwalking - Emergency Management*—compiled by its Search, Rescue and Training Subcommittee. Although it does not cover all risks and eventualities, it covers the main ones and is an excellent reference to keep in your backpack.

It includes a good précis of current approved first aid. (But remember, approved first aid techniques change from time to time, and bushwalkers should visit the [Australian Resuscitation Council's](#) website to confirm the latest approved guidelines.)

There are brief and focused guidelines for what to do if caught in a bushfire; when lost, with both individual and group actions; how to find shelter; what to do if you run out of water and there are no obvious signs of potable water; and how to manage scarce food—with a warning that in Tasmania it is almost impossible to live off the land.

Another section covers emergency direction-finding if you do not have a compass or GPS. A separate section covers the basics of using a compass, PLB, satellite phone and GPS for navigation.

The sections of dealing with difficult terrain include some very basic techniques for crossing rivers. It advises that you never have to cross a river and, if the crossing involves more than just a wade, that you should always consider an alternative route or waiting until the water level drops. (If you have never done a river crossing, or have only done easy crossings that involve little more than wet feet, visit some of the many websites that provide excellent advice and show videos of different crossing techniques. Also river crossing practices might be an excellent training activity for your club to do. There's nothing like actually doing it, to understand it.)

There are brief guidelines for walking extreme weather conditions.

There is a section of how to act during a helicopter rescue.

The appendices list essential items to be carried on day walks, in first aid kits and for completing emergency repairs.

To repeat: an excellent aide-de-memoire and a very useful (and small and lightweight) item for carrying on all walks. But it is not a substitute for deeper or more comprehensive knowledge of how to act in an emergency.

You can order the booklet from Hobart Bushwalking Club; cost \$12.

Email their Publications Officer at sales@hobartwalkingclub.org.au; or send a cheque to the Hobart Walking Club, GPO Box 753 Hobart, TAS 7001, together with your return address.

Editor

TRACK MAINTENANCE & CONSERVATION – REPORTS

Kurth Kiln—Building steps on the Thornton Track—Tuesday 19 March



*Dear Charlie and members
of Bushwalking Victoria*



A & U Klink Autland Drive NANGANA



*Dear Charlie and members of
Bushwalking Victoria*

Many thanks for coming to Kurth Kiln on Tuesday 19 March and installing the steps on the Thornton Track. Now the track is safer for elderly and groups like the Heart Foundation walkers, some of whom are not seasoned walkers. On Sunday Alfred and I have installed the last two panels and whilst installing them there was a constant stream of bushwalking groups and school groups (practising for the World Challenge) using the steps and commenting how much they liked them.

Many thanks to all of you.



Alfred Bellamy

Alfred and Ursula on behalf of the Friends of Kurth Kiln

More about the Kurth Kiln maintenance day

This was a Bushwalking Victoria activity and about a dozen bushwalkers from different clubs participated. We met at the home of Ursula and Alfred Klink at 8.30am. A little later a Parks Victoria truck driven by the ranger, Dean, arrived with the tools, generator etc.

We constructed a number of steps on the Thornton Track leading down to a bridge over Tomahawk Creek. The steps and track were levelled and boxed, then crushed rock was wheel-barrowed in to form the bed of the steps and track. A very satisfying job was completed shortly before 5pm.

Thanks to Ursula for the yummy morning tea and invitation to our club to visit the area for more walks.

Michael Haynes

Strzelecki Bushwalking Club Newsletter, Vol 22, No 9, April 2013

Mt. Worth State Park Track Maintenance Activity

Sunday 17th March

Participants: from SBWC: Michael H, Cathy A, Rob B, Megan M, Fran M, & Ron C assisting Merrin, Paul; and 5 members of the Friends of Mt. Worth.

Although a decision had been taken not to go ahead with clearing an overgrown track to the Waterfall Bower, the SBWC committee were keen to honour the commitment to help the Friends of Mt Worth. Six Strzelecki members attended the Friends' monthly working bee.

The goal for the day had been switched to bridge repair. Three bridges along the Moonlight Creek Track needed repair or replacement.

Getting to the meeting place at the Moonlight Creek picnic area was the first challenge. The aim was to be on the job by 10.00am, but a large Blackwood wattle had other ideas, blocking the road a kilometre or so before the park. Paul from the Friends was already chain-sawing by the time others began to arrive. Rob's chain saw was soon in action too.

After gathering at the car park and a briefing by Merrin and Paul, a variety of tools and a couple of wheel barrows were loaded into the back of a ute. It and Rob's work vehicle were driven part of the way to the bridge locations, while the majority walked in. From there it was 'many hands make light work', with tools and timber having to be carried in along the narrow and sometimes slippery track. We divided ourselves into three groups, two on bridge building and one for replacing hand rails.



After a dry summer there wasn't a lot of water flowing in the Moonlight Creek, despite the decent rain event the day before. But gumboots would have been smart nevertheless. The track might not have been muddy, but the creek bed at the bridge sites certainly made up for it!

With lots of initiative, plenty of energy and some good bush carpentry skills, all three bridges were repaired/replaced by early afternoon, as were damaged handrails. As a bonus, Megan had managed to fit in some minor track clearing.

With the goals for the day achieved, we returned to the picnic area for a late lunch and much good conversation. One of the Friends who had served the group for the past 25 years was honoured with a presentation from the group and from Parks Victoria.

It was a very satisfying day for all involved. Many thanks to those from Strzelecki Bushwalking Club who 'answered the call' – a job well done. Those who do the walk will get to see our handiwork, and have drier feet than might otherwise have been the case.

Ron Cann

Strzelecki Bushwalking Club Newsletter, Vol 22, No 9, April 2013

Playing Where There's a Willow on the High Plains

Sat 13 – Sun 14 April

Forget Where's Wally. Hunting willow on the High Plains is much more exciting.

Twenty-four eager volunteers from various bushwalking clubs assembled in the Falls Creek car park on Saturday morning to accept the search and destroy mission. Iris from Parks Victoria briefed us; and the looming grey clouds, cold wind and the eerie call of the currawong did not discourage us. Dressed in fluorescent vests and armed with secateurs, saws and weed poison, we marched out onto the Bogong High Plains to do battle with the slyly hidden exotic willow that had taken root in the snow grass and sphagnum bogs and are threatening the alpine ecosystem of this precious wild area.



The eradication team. Photo by Charlie Ablitt



Cutting and poisoning. Photo by Deb Shand

With cheerful determination we snipped, hacked and dabbed large and small willows as our Parks Victoria leaders Iris, Stewie and Keith shared information about the plants and animals of this area with us. There was time to sit and absorb the wonderful landscape as we munched our lunches, and at the end of the day we left hundreds of executed willows behind us when we returned to the comfortable Viking Ski Lodge. After hot showers, we enjoyed an ample barbeque dinner and chatted with old and new friends, shared glasses of wine and tales of previous battles with weeds and the area's walking tracks.

On Sunday morning we sallied forth for another skirmish with the willows, before farewelling our fellow eradication warriors and driving home. We were weary but enriched by a job well done in convivial company. Many thanks to Parks Victoria staff and Charlie Ablitt, the Conservation Convener of Bushwalking Victoria, for organising the weekend, and to Charlie and Sigrid and Parks Victoria for the delicious Saturday night meal.

We look forward to doing it all again next year – willows beware!

Deb Shand
Melbourne Bushwalkers

Ranger Iris said that our eradication work is having a good result in reducing willow numbers, as could be seen from return surveys conducted by Parks Victoria. This year's activity targeted bogs in more isolated areas and involved substantial walks in. **Dave Rimmer, Manager BEC**

Sallow willow is a State prohibited weed. See also the article on page 7. For some more information about sallow willow visit the following and other websites:

- [Grey Sallow Willow Threatens High Country Wetlands \(Radio National Breakfast audio\)](http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/willows/docs/Willows_fore_pages.pdf)
- http://www.weeds.org.au/WoNS/willows/docs/Willows_fore_pages.pdf
- <http://iphone.sciencealert.com.au/news/20132901-24005.html>

Editor

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Bushwalking Victoria AGM and Leaders Forum

Saturday 15 June

The leadership team (ie. the President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) of your club is invited to attend. Details of the forum will be provided directly to clubs.

23rd Ballarat Autumn Daytour (BAD RIDE)

Sunday 5 May

The annual BAD RIDE is organised by the Ballarat Bushwalking & Outdoor Club (BBOC).

Three distances:

- **50kms and 100kms.** Each starts at Pleasant Street Primary School, Ballarat at 9.00am. These two rides are on sealed roads, so you'll need a road bike.
- **25kms.** Starts at Smythesdale Recreation Reserve at 10am. Perfect for beginners and families. This ride is on the Ballarat-Skipton Rail Trail, so no need to be concerned about being on roads. However, hybrid or mountain bikes are best because the rail trail is unsealed.

Enter before **Wednesday 1 May** to go into the draw to win one of two bikes.

This year's ride will support PINARC Disability Services and the Ballarat SOUPBUS. Remember to organise sponsorships from friends and family - or just make a donation.

Entries and donations on www.badride.com.au

Regent Honeyeater Project—Nest Box Weekends 2013

Sat 18 – Sun 19 May

For details in see the March edition of *Bushwalking News Victoria* or contact the convener Ray Thomas on (03) 57 611 515 or at ray@regenthoneyeater.org.au

Regent Honeyeater Project—Threatened Species Planting Weekends 2013

Aug 10/11 Aug 24/25 Sept 7/8 Sept 21/22 Oct 5/6

More details in future editions of *Bushwalking News Victoria* or contact the convener Ray Thomas on (03) 57 611 515 or at ray@regenthoneyeater.org.au

Federation Day Walk 2013

Sunday 13 October in the Western Gorges area near Bacchus Marsh.

This years event is being organised by Boroondara Bushwalkers. There will be 20-25 walks ranging from Easy to Medium Hard. Details soon.

EASTER 1930 TRIP TO THE GRAMPIANS

Have you just been away walking over Easter? Had a splendid time? I suspect that what constitutes a splendid time might be viewed somewhat differently now compared to 1930. The story below is an extract from the diary of Colin Nicholls, father of David Nicholls who is a member of CAEX Bushwalking Club.

Chris Towers

President, Bushwalking Victoria and CAEX member.

18.4.30 - Fri: We this year decided on the Grampians for our Easter camp. The party was Alan, Frank, Lloyd, Bob S, Harold, and Howard and self [Colin].

Frank had secured a truck for a fiver, a Chev 1 ton of an old model. But we soon found that we had bought a pup. We left at 6.15am, fine weather, and comfortably seated on the back. About every three miles a halt was called to fill the radiator which leaked like a sieve. Later Frank broke three eggs into it in a desperate effort to stop the holes.

We passed through Ararat at about 9.30am and Pomonal at 11am. About here the engine commenced to misbehave, foreboding trouble. We arrived at our campsite, seven miles up the Gap at about 3pm. Early to bed but little sleep and up at daybreak for an early run, bath, then breakfast. We left at 10am to climb Red Man's Bluff, 3200ft, and a round trip of about 15 miles. The track led past the Barbican Ranges and the grand Barney's Castle, then turned south and ascended by the Seven Dials Range.

About 1½ miles from our destination we lost the track and commenced to struggle and scramble through rasping bush and over rocks. Half the party, including myself, wore only shorts, singlet and shirt and the latter was soon removed and carried. We reached the summit and its wonderful view about 1pm, but were too thirsty to eat much.

We commenced about 2pm to return along Bovine Creek. After two hours of scrambling we reached water and also the spot where our track left the gorge. But the climb out seemed so uninviting that we decided to follow the creek which, about three miles further down, passed by the camp. We scrambled and slid and pushed our way down and soon, getting tired of stepping over the rocks, commenced to wade. We travelled at a fair pace till the sun commenced to set, when we doubled our pace. Alan was bilious and feverish and I kept near him.

Darkness fell and our two torches came into use. It was a nightmare in the pitch dark crawling along logs, doing tail slides down the rocks and into the black water, wading and slipping and cursing, calling back then forward and hurrying the laggards, sometimes on hands and knees, till at nine o'clock our torches failed. Soon after dark, Howard, who had wrapped about £7.10.0 in notes including £2.1.0 of Alan's and £2.9.0 of mine in his handkerchief, had discovered their loss and this had lowered our spirits still further.

When our lights failed we started a fire on a small uncomfortable ledge and dried our boots and socks. We divided the tiny bit of food left from dinner and tried to sleep. Personally I got about half an hour for the night. At day break we started off and were home in about an hour and a half, tired, hungry and sleepy.

Sunday morning we shoved the truck around in futile effort to start it. In the afternoon four of us did a trying scramble back up the creek, but were unsuccessful in finding the money, and lost a pair of my socks as well. Sunday night we slept in the logs and were up early on Monday, broke camp and drove to the Gap. We did the Wonderland and Pinnacle trip and left at 4pm for home.

The bus ran poorly from the commencement. About nightfall, when we should have been near Ararat, we ran into Willaura, 20 miles off our road. We reached Ararat at 10pm, then Beaufort at 3.30am. The truck stopped every 450 yards and needed gigantic efforts to start it. At 4am we settled down at the roadside, lit a fire and dozed off until daybreak. At Burrumbeet (9.30am) we phoned for a mechanic from Ballarat and reached home at 1am.

Despite bad luck we had a truly splendid time. A bonza lot of chaps. R.S. a bit brutish. Cost £2.2.0.

From the diary of **Colin Nichols**



And what sort of equipment would the chaps have carried?

On the left is a bushwalking pack from about that time. The pack belonged to Jack Thwaites who, together with ET Emmett, founded the Hobart Walking Club in 1929.

Editor

Source: <http://ourhikingblog.com.au/2010/02/jack-thwaites-pioneer-tasmanian-bushwalker.html>

BEEN WALKING?

Tell us about your bushwalks by completing our short survey.

Win Great prizes

www.wherewewalk.org.au (WWeW) is an initiative of Bushwalking Victoria (BWV) to collect some basic data on bushwalking.

LATEST PRIZE WINNERS

The latest prize winners for entering walks on WhereWeWalk are:

- Greg Smith, Shepparton Adventure Club, Lowe clothing from Paddy Pallin
- Leon Ouretski, Melbourne Bushwalkers, \$25 gift voucher from EMC and a sports water bottle from Snowgum
- Mike Adler, B'Nai B'Rith Bushwalkers, \$25 gift voucher from EMC and a sports water bottle from Snowgum

- Peter Wilson, Catholic Walking Club of Victoria, a \$50 gift voucher from EMC
- Derek Grantham, Dandenong Valley Bushwalking Club, a Power Monkey battery charger from Snowgum

WWeW is for anyone who bushwalks, so we also need as many bushwalkers as possible complete the survey too, so please promote WWeW as widely as possible to friends, family, colleagues etc.

Prizes

There are still great prizes to be won for entering walk details on WWeW, including a \$400 Snowgum Caddis tent, Backpacks and water bottles (supplied by [Snowgum](#)). Valued at \$70, Lowe clothing and gift vouchers (supplied by [Ajays Snow Country Sports](#) and [Eastern Mountain Centre](#)).

Chris Towers, BWV President

BWV gratefully acknowledges the generous support from our commercial and government sponsors for WWeW.

BWV thanks the following member clubs that have shown their support of Bushwalking Victoria's efforts to promote bushwalking by entering details of walks on WWeW. **31 member clubs are yet to provide any details.**

Bayside Bushwalking Club Inc	Echuca Moama Bushwalking Club	Ramblers Walking Club Inc
Ben Cruachan Walking Club Inc	Essendon Bushwalking Club Inc	Shepparton AdventureClub Inc
Benalla Bushwalking Club Inc	Friends of the Great South-West Walk	Strzelecki Bushwalking Club Inc.
Bendigo Bushwalking & Outdoor Club Inc	Geelong Bushwalking Club Inc	Sunraysia Bushwalkers Inc
Berwick & District Bushwalking Club Inc.	Heathcote Walkers	Victorian Mountain Tramping Club Inc
Boroondara Bushwalkers Inc	Keilor Bushwalking Club Inc	Walking Club of Victoria Inc
B'nai Brith Ramblers	Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc	Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc
Bushrangers Womens Walking Club	Melbourne Womens Walking Club Inc	Waverley Bushwalking Club Inc
CAEX Bushwalking Club Inc	Melton Bushwalkers Inc	Wimmera Bushwalking Club Inc
Catholic Walking Club of Victoria	The NOMADS Outdoors Group Inc	YHA
Dandenong Valley Bushwalking Club	Peninsula Bushwalking Club Inc	

Summary of WWeW Entries to 10 April

- 544 Walks entered
- 3,518 walkers
- Total of 67,140kms walked
- 182 day walks
- 50 Backpacking Trips
- 98 short walks (less than 4 hours duration)
- 63 solo walks
- 27 Family groups
- 38 walks with friends
- 324 club walks



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Bushwalking Australia:
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 Victorian Deputy Delegate: David Reid
 Please contact via the office

Organisations where BWV Members Provide a Bushwalking Perspective

Grampians Peak Trail Task Force: Phil Brotchie
 Living Links Steering Committee: Tony Walker



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