

# BRINDABELLA BUSHWALKING CLUB NEWSLETTER



## This 'n' That

### *President's Pontifications*

#### Contents

This 'n' That

AGM

Upcoming Trips

Tales of the Tatras

Try Off-Track Bushwalking

Emergency Plus Phone App

Contributing Articles

Facebook Page

May and June were very busy months for the club with several trips away, and many of our members took the opportunity to tack extra expeditions onto one end or the other of these to keep them away longer (getting more value out of the air fare). As you read this, some still haven't returned!

The big trip, of course, involved 22 of our members participating in another great adventure organised by John Clune; this time to the Tatra Mountains, which straddle the border of Poland and Slovakia. There is a comprehensive report in this newsletter, with photos supplied by a number of the attendees.

Prue Deacon has provided an arti2cle describing the many features of enjoying a little time walking off tracks and I hope those of you who haven't tried these walks will feel sufficiently enthused to give them a go. Prue is happy to tailor a walk for you.

**AGM - Tuesday 30 July.** There is a reminder about the AGM on the next page. Please do come along and meet, or catch up, with some of our members who go on different walks than you. Help us elect the new committee and be able to put a face to the names that are listed on the first page of every program.

Peter Dalton



## Annual General Meeting - Tuesday 30 July

The AGM will be held at St Margaret's Uniting Church Hall at the corner of Phillip Avenue and Antill Street, HACKETT on Tuesday 30 July.

Arrive from 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start. Proceedings will be over by 9.30 pm.

If you don't want to do it via the website, this is also a good opportunity to pay your annual subscriptions and/or to hand your completed membership form to the Membership Secretary. You can print a form from the website.

**Annual reports** for the past year will be provided at the meeting, followed by the election of office holders for the coming year.

**Nominations for Committee.** If you'd like to be part of the committee or perhaps understudy one of the other committee positions in preparation for taking over in that role at next year's AGM, please let the Secretary (Julie Pettit) know.

There is still plenty of time to nominate someone for any of the committee positions at all, so don't be shy. At the conclusion of the AGM, we'll socialise over supper. Contributions of supper fare are most welcome.

Please come and join us.

Book the Trips Below Now

**September – actual date to be advised – HUME AND HOVELL WALKING TRACK**

If you are interested in the walk, contact Mac Kirby (0422585519 or [mac.kirby@hotmail.com](mailto:mac.kirby@hotmail.com))

**Mon 16 Sep- Fri 20 Sep –WALKING IN THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK, SYDNEY - Easy and Medium.**

Leader: John Clune (62627504) or [j.clune@bigpond.com](mailto:j.clune@bigpond.com).



# Tales of the Tatras

*by Peter Ford with input from various members of the party*

From 15 to 29 June, 22 intrepid travellers enjoyed some magnificent walks in the Polish and Slovakian Tatras. In the first week, we were based in Zakopane, Poland, and in the second, Novy Smokovec, Slovakia. The trip was organized and led by John Clune.

Most of us had built detailed travel plans around these dates. Arrivals were from all points of the compass and departures were similarly omni-directional. Having a week on each side of the mountains proved to be a wise decision as the differences made for a welcome variation in track conditions, scenery, weather and in incidental experiences such as dining out.



The Tatras are part of the Carpathian Mountain Range and the 'High Tatras' (up to 2,655 metres), with which we were concerned, are 78 kilometres in length and of an average width of about 10 kilometres.

## The Walks

John Clune, Bill Gibson and Terrylea Reynolds together devised a program of walks to suit the abilities and inclinations of the whole party. We agreed to start from the same point and sort ourselves into either the harder/faster group or the easier/slower one with the flexibility to move between the two. The first group usually walked further.

The plan worked well.



16 June, the first day - a walk up the Chochowlowska Valley from Siwa to Grzes in Poland



## Tales of the Tatras [continued]

On the Polish side, by using taxis in the mornings and public buses in the afternoons, we were able to cover a fair bit of territory. In the west, for example, we walked up the Chochowlowska Valley, favoured by Pope John Paul II. In the centre, we took the gondola to the high point of Kasprowy Wierch from which, on a fine day, there are panoramic views of the mountains. Unfortunately, the weather had turned spectacularly against us. (It was necessary to book ahead and, sadly, our leader's skills as a weather forecaster did not match his skills as a bushwalker). And in the east, we walked to the famously beautiful Moskie Oko, the largest lake in the Tatras, after utilizing the horse drawn carriages on the ascent. Some of us wisely also used the carriages on the descent when they travelled at quite a clip, passing the rest of us who were slogging through increasing rain.



28 June, most of the party on our last walking day outside our Slovakian guest house



16 June, photos by Jennie Nicholson, forest and farm buildings in the Chochowlowska Valley



## Tales of the Tatras [continued]



17 June, looking out from the terminus of the gondola lift at Kasprový Wierch - should we set out?  
The weather turns to custard.

About 70 percent of the Tatras are on the Slovakian side of the border and a train runs regularly on an east/west line, providing access to a large part of the area.

Walks in the west started from Strbské Pleso, the western extremity of the line; in the east, we took the gondola from Tatranská Lomnica to Skalnatá Pleso to give ourselves a good start to a western traverse; and by using a public bus service, we were also able to extend our area of operations in the east so as to undertake a beautiful walk from Biela Voda.

We were fortunate to have generally better weather in Slovakia than we had experienced in Poland.

Following is a list of the walks compiled by Bill Gibson with BBC gradings. Opinions will differ about the highlights as there were so many and not all of us did the same walks, but I would include among the those that are listed in bold below.

A list of the walks with BBC gradings by Bill is as follows.

16/6 Siwa to Grzes 20.7km +777m = 11 Med

17/6 Zakopane to Białego 13.3km +515m = 9 Med

**18/6 Moskie Oko to Blue Lake 14.4km +288m = 7 Easy**

19/6 Bundowski to Zakopane via Sabnia Skata 10km + highlights 506m = 10 Med

21/6 **Kiry to Schroniska Ornek via Lake and Caves 15.8km +663m = 10 Med**

23/6 Strbské Pleso to Vodopád Skok & Pleso nad Skokom 12km +460m +Chains = 9 Med

24/6 **Strbské Pleso to Nový Smokovec via Ostrva Peak 22km +932m = 14 Hard (the easier walk on the same day returned from Chata pri Popradsom Pleso to Popradske Pleso Station - 12 km 400m. 7 Easy)**

25/6 Tatranská Lomnica to Starý Smokovec using cable car 14km -800m = 7 Easy

**26/6 Biela Voda to Zelene Pleso out and back 16.5km +744m = 11 Med**

28/6 Tatranská Lomnica to Tatranská Lesná via Zamskovského Chata - 14km -400m = 7 Easy

Further details and photos will be published on the club's Facebook site.

## Tales of the Tatras [continued]

The weather on the Slovakian side, although hot at times, was kinder to us than on the Polish side where we had to contend with some fierce electrical storms and occasional rain.

Dinners were a casual affair in which we sorted ourselves into table sized groups and favoured various establishments with our patronage ( in Zakopane it was usually our nearby pub). The offerings were very good but one group of six got quite a shock to discover that the restaurant they had entered served no alcohol. They took flight like a flock of startled pigeons.



24 June: negotiating a snow drift on the hard walk in Slovakia.

Both of our bases were very pleasant places to stay and Palko, our host at Novy Smokovec, was exceptional in his hospitality. Each place had its attractions - Zakopane had urban 'zing' and Novy Smokovec, rural tranquility.

Occasionally, that tranquility was reportedly disturbed by a mother bear and her cubs foraging among the tightly secured rubbish bins at 2 am but they were gone well before dawn.

All in all, it was a wonderful trip and the group worked well. Our particular thanks go to John Clune, Bill Gibson and Terrylea Reynolds for their preparation and leadership of the walks. While John led almost all of the easier walks, Bill and Terrylea led the harder walks and encouraged the rest of us to stretch ourselves to reach some of the objectives that we had thought were beyond us.

19 June, photo by Graham Chalker:  
On our way to a peak overlooking Zakopane,  
there were plenty of seats for a rest:  
Mike Smith, Peter Ford, Bev Chalker, John Whittle, John Ellis





## Try Off-Track Bushwalking



Off-track bushwalking means really getting into the bush: negotiating scrub, clambering over fallen logs, climbing up and around boulders. It is good fun, exercises your whole body and helps develop good balance. The biggest reward is getting to some beautiful areas of the country that are not accessible on tracks or firetrails - valleys, river beds, grassy flats, rocky outcrops, climbs to peaks with fabulous views. We are so lucky in the ACT to have so many good walking areas within an hour or two's drive.



Some people refer to off-track walking as bush-bashing. I don't like to think of it in this way - I prefer to think that we try to tread lightly on the land. Sometimes we have to push through scrub but usually we seek a way to go around barriers.

One advantage of scrub and saplings is that they give you handholds for steep ascents and descents.

Off-track walking has to be done at a slower pace than on-track walking, so the distances covered are generally much shorter. Group size is also smaller, leading to quieter groups which, in turn, allows you to get much closer to wildlife like lyre birds. Opportunities to photograph rarely-seen features (or you in front of them) regularly present themselves.



## Try off-track Bushwalking [continued]



In recent years, BBC has had fewer members joining off-track walks on Saturdays or Sundays. We would love to have more of our members experiencing the joy of exploring the rocky outcrops and peaks of the ACT region. Note that, in the Walks Program, walk descriptions and grades indicate how much is off-track and what the vegetation or terrain is like in those areas. This can help new off-track walkers pick less-demanding walks initially. Certainly, if you are new to off-track or not quite confident, contact the Walk Leader beforehand to discuss the walk.



If you would like to see some introductory, shorter or slower off-track walks in the 2020 Walks Program, then please get in touch with the Walks Officer ([walks@brindabellabushwalking.org.au](mailto:walks@brindabellabushwalking.org.au)) so that they can be included. For any other queries, comments or suggestions on off-track walking with BBC, you can also contact the President ([president@brindabellabushwalking.org.au](mailto:president@brindabellabushwalking.org.au)) or talk with me on a walk soon.

*Prue Deacon*





## Emergency+ Phone App

If you have a Smart phone, then you really should install the **free** Emergency+ application that can save lives. This App is available for both Android and Apple phones.

If you need help in an emergency, then you select the App and it will give you your coordinates (or a street address if you are not in the bush), which you can relay to the phone operator, and the choice of three buttons to press – one will dial 000, the second will call the Police, and the third the SES.

It does, of course, rely on your phone being in an area of coverage at the time.

## Contributing Articles

Suitable articles are always welcomed and photos make them better. It may not be possible to use all the photos. We will include the photographer's name in the newsletter, unless they ask us not to bother. If it is not your photo, you must have the photographer's permission to use it. Send your articles to [walks@brindabellabushwalking.org.au](mailto:walks@brindabellabushwalking.org.au)

An article may be edited to correct spelling errors and to suit the newsletter's style by restructuring, cutting to fit, and even re-writing sections if the editor believes that will better appeal to readers.

The newsletters will also be placed on the Club's website.

## BBC Facebook Page

Visit the facebook page to see photos, walk reports and information about upcoming activities. It is at: <https://www.facebook.com/BrindabellaBushwalkingClub/> You can set your facebook page to receive notifications every time there is a new post.

## Website

[www.brindabellabushwalking.org.au](http://www.brindabellabushwalking.org.au)