

Brindabella Bushwalking Club

October 2021 Newsletter



BBC



Mt Stromlo — near where Robyn planned to take us on Saturday 25 September

In this issue

- ◆ Coronavirus Update
- ◆ From the President
- ◆ Resumption of Walks
- ◆ Orroral Road
- ◆ KNP Track Upgrades and Closures
- ◆ Maintaining Balance
- ◆ Sicily and Malta Trip Report Reprise
- ◆ Light to Light Walk
- ◆ Photos

Coronavirus Update

- * The latest ACT updates can be found here: [Updates](#)
- * For a change, we are able to report that bushwalking can soon recommence
- * The Walks Officer has outlined the interim procedures we will be following—please read his article carefully

BBC Website

www.brindabellabushwalking.org.au [All newsletters are on the website]

From the President

Who would have thought that, like this time last year, we would still be fretting about the COVID-19 circumstances? Fortunately, there is light at the end of the lockdown tunnel with restrictions easing and nature reserves opening up. On the next page our walks officer, David Wardle, describes the protocols we will be following for October. Please be patient as this programme will need to be adaptable when we overlay the changing ACT & NSW Covid restrictions as they apply at a particular point in time. So, it will not be identical to that which we formally published in mid-year.

Towards the end of September, I participated on behalf of the club, in an online video workshop about the future shape and facilities of the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve (TNR). The main focus was on the Visitor Information Centre rather than the walking tracks in TNR. Nonetheless, it was encouraging that the Parks Service view the TNR as an important and valuable resource and one in which they are seeking funding to permit enhancements that would make the reserve a facility that a broad range of locals and visitors further frequent and gain pleasure from. It was acknowledged that much of the informational material, whether it be in the visitor centre or around some of the outdoor facilities, was in need of updating/enhancing or even replacing with more contemporary information and delivery methods. The process of identifying what options should be considered and how best to achieve this end as well as gaining necessary funding for any substantive changes is one which will, unfortunately, take time.

Fees. Annual subscriptions and car sharing costs remain the same for 2021-2022 as the previous year. Specific details of these charges are contained in the document "AGM 2021 Unconfirmed Minutes" on the club's website. Subscription fees are now due — please complete and submit this [membership form](#).

Finally, I have been reminded that Monty Fox (0423148069), on our social sub-committee, arranges the occasional gathering referred to as "Men of the Bush" luncheons and if you are interested in participating then please contact Monty.

With restrictions easing and spring here with associated warmer weather, I do hope to see you on a walk soon, albeit that I will be really huffing and puffing due to lack of longer walk fitness from being 'locked down'.

Until then, do take care.....Bill



Facebook

Our Facebook Manager regularly posts photos, walk reports and information about upcoming activities. Please pay a visit and see what our members are planning or have recently have been up to.

<https://www.facebook.com/BrindabellaBushwalkingClub/>

Please send your walk reports and photos to Heather at facebook@brindabellabushwalking.org.au

RESUMPTION OF WALKS

David Wardle (Walks Officer)

With the easing of the Coronavirus restrictions we can at last get back to BBC walks. While there will be restrictions within the ACT Government guidelines these are being relaxed from October 15 and again from October 29. Your BBC committee is developing COVID Plans for the ways that walks can be undertaken for the periods from October 15 to October 28 and again for the period from October 29 onwards.

Numbers attending the walks will be limited and pre-registration will be required. We won't be using the CBR QR check in code so the Pre-registration and the Walks Report on the day are vitally important should contact tracers require that information from us. While Tidbinbilla and Namadgi will be reopening, none of the walks in the early period will be too far afield as there will be no car sharing for the foreseeable future. For the October walks, masks will be required so we will choose less strenuous walks and probably for not too long a duration. Physical distancing will be required and the square metre rule will apply while we sit down for morning tea and lunches.

Until border restrictions are lifted walks will only be scheduled within the ACT. In discussions with the other bushwalking clubs we have decided not to resume joint walks for the time being so walks will be for BBC members only. People will be at many stages of their vaccination decisions so for the immediate future we will be advising that only members who have started the vaccination process should be coming on our walks. I am assuming that those people that are unvaccinated would prefer to isolate for a while longer until a higher level of vaccination is achieved within the community.

A number of our leaders will be unable to lead their proposed walks – who would have thought that people could still break and injure bits of themselves while on their short walks in their local nature reserves over the past few months! So, we will be on the look out to fill gaps in the Walks Program – after all you won't be leaving for Italy any time soon.

As well as Saturday and Sunday walks we will also aim to restart our Wednesday Walks, although without the other clubs. Robyn Kelly is planning for her Easy Wednesday Walks and the other Wednesday Walks coordinators are working out their program. In the first instance until we have sorted out our leaders we will aim for just one full day walk on a Wednesday at a level to suit most or even split the walk to cater for different walking abilities.

As all of the above develops we will keep in touch with Club members via email and through the Newsletter. There is the reminder though that the ACT Government restrictions will only be lifted if there is no great deterioration with COVID outbreaks.

An email will be sent to all members on Wednesday 13 October outlining a draft Walks Program. Please contact me at walks@brindabellabushwalking.org.au if you have any questions.



Remember when we could last do this?

The letter from Minister Steel (below) is in response to a query from CBC committee member, Jenny Stewart, about the timetable for reopening Orroral Road.



Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Transport and City Services
Minister for Skills
Special Minister of State
Member for Murrumbidgee

Dear Dr Stewart

Thank you for your email about the closure of Orroral Valley Road.

I acknowledge that the construction of public works can create a level of disruption and inconvenience for the local community.

In February 2020, the storm event after the drought and bushfires had an unusually high debris load at this location and caused the first signs of permanent damage. A subsequent storm in August 2020 exacerbated the damage to the crossing and temporary works to fix the access were implemented, while planning for a permanent remediation was commenced.

A further storm in March 2021, had some extreme peak flows that compromised the crossing and caused the closure of the road. This storm rendered the crossing unsafe for any crossing and unfortunately made the previous temporary works redundant due to the severity of the storm impacts.

The restoration of the crossing is currently in the design stage which will consider increasing the resilience of the crossing for the frequency and extremity of weather events. This stage also includes technical investigations, analysis and assessment of options, and is estimated to be completed by November 2021.

Orroral Road Crossing and the access to Orroral Road from Boboyan Road is estimated to be reopened by June 2022. The timeframes for restoring the crossing are indicative only and are subject to wet weather, procurement/tendering process and dependant on COVID-19 restrictions easing.

Thank you for raising this matter. I trust this information is of assistance.

ACT Legislative Assembly London Circuit, GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601



+61 2 6205 1470



steel@act.gov.au



Kosciuszko National Park Track Upgrades

NSW NPWS advice on temporary closures - October 2021 to May 2022

Always check for closures at <https://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alerts>

Note that there will be limited or no works over the Christmas to New Year period or at Easter.

Muzzlewood track. Tree risk assessment and remediation is scheduled over coming weeks with possible closures.

Bullocks track. Tree risk assessment and remediation is scheduled over coming weeks with possible short closures.

Thredbo River track has maintenance works scheduled over summer. Track closures are not expected to occur; however, walkers should expect some diversions where works are occurring.

Dead Horse Gap walking track. Upgrade works will commence late November and continue until May 2022. The track will be closed whilst materials are flown in and where a temporary diversion is not available. These closures should not exceed two days for each occurrence.

Kosciuszko walk (Thredbo to Rawson Pass). Upgrade works to the existing steel mesh track are scheduled to begin following snow melt. Track work will continue over summer with planned completion in April 2022. There will be no closures related to this work, but short diversions will be in place in areas where works are occurring.

Mount Kosciuszko Summit walk (Rawson Pass to summit). There will be works this summer immediately surrounding the summit of Mount Kosciuszko and access to the summit may be delayed or altered.

Mount Kosciuszko Summit walk (Charlotte Pass to Rawson Pass). Sections of the Summit walk will be re-surfaced once the snow melts. There will be large machinery and regular truck movements. This will involve some short periods of delay, diversions and potential trail closures for extended periods from December 2021 to April 2022.

Main Range walk. Work will be carried out on several sections commencing in late November until May 2022. There will be large machinery and regular truck movements. The track will be closed whilst materials are flown in and where a temporary diversion is not available. These closures should not exceed two days for each occurrence.

Blue Lake lookout will be undergoing replacement during spring and early summer 2021 and the track to the lookout will be closed whilst works are occurring. Upon completion of works, access beyond the lookout (to lake, lake outlet or Hedley Tarn) will no longer be permitted via the current foot pads to reduce environmental impacts.

Pallaibo walking track lower section will be fully closed from October to early April for the construction of the Thredbo Valley Track from Gaden to Thredbo River picnic area. This section will open in early 2022. The walk will be open from Sawpit Creek picnic area to Gaden Trout Hatchery, with a signposted temporary diversion. There will be no access to the Pallaibo walking track from the Thredbo River picnic area.

Porcupine walk. Upgrade works will commence late November and continue until May 2022. The track will be closed whilst materials are flown in and where a temporary diversion is not available.

Illawong walk. Upgrade works will commence late November and continue until May 2022. The track will be closed whilst materials are flown in and when works are being undertaken in areas where a temporary diversion is not appropriate. These closures should not exceed two days for each occurrence.

Snowies Iconic Walk - Illawong to Charlotte Pass is planned to open to the public in late spring.

No works or closures are planned for:

- Waterfall walking track
- Sawpit walking track
- Rennix walking track
- Rainbow Lake walking track
- Mount Stilwell walk

Harvard Health's 3-Step 'Beep' Program Helps You Maintain Balance As You Age

As you get older, your ability to keep your balance declines — and pretty quickly, too. And when your balance is poor, it can increase your risk of getting hurt. That's why you need to introduce **BEEP** into your life, which focuses on the best exercises for maintaining your balance as you age.

According to Harvard Health, **BEEP**—balance-enhancing exercise program — is a study-backed method to improve your balance. In a 2016 study published in *Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine*, people who stuck to it not only had better balance, but also had a **quicker walking speed and more confidence**. While the program is primarily meant for those between 60 and 80 years old, experts say it's best to focus on your balance earlier rather than later.

Working balance exercises into your routine now can keep your sense of balance strong as you age.

There are just three simple exercises the **BEEP** program focuses on — all of which "increase both the physical and cognition skills needed for better balance." Follow the instructions below to ensure you're doing the best exercises for balance correctly and you'll be on your way to a more balanced life in no time.

Heel and calf raises

1. Lift your heels off the floor 2 to 3 inches. If you need support, lightly hold the top of a chair.
2. After holding for 10 seconds or longer, lower your heels back to the floor.
3. Do 3 sets of 10 reps, 3 times per week. For a greater challenge, try this movement with one leg.



One-legged standing - *this doesn't need a picture!*

1. Lift your right leg 6 to 12 inches off the floor.
2. Hold for 30 seconds and switch to the other side.
3. Do 3 sets of 30 seconds on each leg, every day. For a greater challenge, try it with your eyes closed.



Squats

1. Start with your feet hip-width apart and sit back like you're sitting in a chair at a 90-degree angle.
2. Focus on pushing through your heels and engaging your core as you lower down, stopping when your thighs are parallel to the floor. If your knees are coming in or out, keep them pointed straight ahead.
3. Exhale as you come back up to your starting position.
4. Do 3 sets of 15 reps, 3 times a week.

As we don't have any recent big trips (or even small ones) to report on at the moment, I have reprised the one below that Julie Pettit prepared for the December 2015 newsletter—how time flies!

Sicily and Malta – 13 Oct to 7 Nov 2015

12 of us met up in Trapani on the west coast of Sicily for our adventure, which was expertly planned and organised by John Clune. Our stay there lasted for 5 nights/4 days and was full of interesting places to see and things to do.

The old city was charming with many ornate facades to the buildings; however, the outskirts of the city sported many run down and rather ugly apartment blocks reputedly financed by “funny” money.



Parthenon



We explored the old walled city of Erice, perched high on the range overlooking Trapani, with its many narrow, cobbled alleyways and small shops displaying wonderful arrays of painted wall plates. It is renowned for its famous pastry shop, where of course we indulged ourselves. In our wanderings we unexpectedly found ourselves in the midst of a film production for a “B” grade Italian war movie complete with old World War II tanks and armoured vehicles. There were locals dressed as 1930's peasants, priests and townspeople, and extras dressed as Italian and American troops.

On day 2 we hired a bus to take us to Agrigento, about 2 ½ hours travel SE of Trapani and famous as a World Heritage archaeological site displaying ruins from the many civilizations to have occupied Sicily. Agrigento was a main centre for temple worship in both Greek and Roman times and we were able to see many examples of magnificent and very well preserved ruins – especially the Greek temple of Concordia, one of the best preserved Doric temples in the world. It was constructed in the early 5th century and is used as the UNESCO logo. The trip there and back passed through some very scenic countryside, marked by dry stone wall-enclosed fields growing mainly olive trees and grapes, with very angular square stone farmhouses dotted here and there.



The next day took us to Levanzo, one of the Egardi Islands which is a short distance by hydrofoil from Trapani, where we spent a delightful day walking around the island and indulging in a refreshing swim in the clear blue sea.

On our last day we hired a guide to take us to Zingaro National Park, to the north, where we enjoyed some great coastal views and walks, as well as swimming.

The houses in Sicily are uniformly square stone structures with flat roofs and a distinctly Arabic look about them, as no doubt the climate dictates a style that keeps the occupants cool inside in the very hot summers and offers a roof space to relax in the cooler evenings.

Our next stop at Taormina on the East coast of Sicily was quite different; this is a bustling up-market tourist town perched high on a hill with wonderful coastal views and Mt Etna in the distance. There was still a surprising number of tourists promenading down the main street, which is lined with very expensive shops.

We did some coastal walks in the region, explored the town and spent a day walking the lower slopes of Mt Etna, which is an enormous volcano with vast lava fields being evidence of its many eruptions – the last one occurring as recently as 2007. Walking here was quite hazardous as pathways were littered with jagged lava rocks entailing a close watch on where one stepped. Only experienced walkers, accompanied by a guide, are allowed to go to the top on a full day trek, so that was not possible for us.

A mini-bus took us and our luggage to the port of Milazzo on the NW coast for our next stop on the Aeolian Island of Lipari where we spent 5 nights. Our stay here was one of the highlights – a very comfortable hotel and many interesting sights.

We enjoyed some great walks around Lipari and then went by ferry for a day on Stromboli, where we explored the lower reaches of the still active volcano. In the evening, after dining on the island, we boarded our ferry and anchored offshore to witness Stromboli's pyrotechnical display. It was quite an experience to see the volcanic explosions at night – fortunately only little ones. We also had an opportunity to explore the closer volcanic island of Volcano on the next day where we were able to climb right to the top and peer into the crater which only has smoking sulphuric vents around the rim.



A day trip to Syracuse, founded by Greeks in 734 BC and which, at its height was a most important commercial centre and the largest city in the ancient world, proved most interesting. There is plenty of evidence of the many cultures to have invaded and settled there – Greek, Carthaginian, Roman and Saracen.

Our mini-bus delivered us to Catania airport in the evening for our short flight to Valetta (capital of Malta), arriving quite late at our hotel which, to our horror, was down a narrow stepped alleyway – great fun with all our heavy luggage!! We all loved Malta and found the Maltese people so friendly, obliging and helpful. Also, English is widely spoken and there is an excellent public transport system which makes getting around very easy.

Valetta is a fascinating city with so much history, as a result of having been invaded by just about everyone. The fortifications are amazing with great stone forts overlooking all the strategic entry points to the Grand Harbour. There is so much to see in the city and we all enjoyed exploring the many historic sites, the museums detailing the long and bloody history of the Knights of St John, and the magnificent St Johns Co-Cathedral. This central church for the Knights is where most of the Grand Masters are interred. It has the most jaw-dropping interior, decorated extensively with gold and frescoes, statues and marble floor slabs of all different colours and patterns. Each Grand Master tried to outdo his predecessor by embellishing the cathedral a bit more and leaving his mark.



We had a lovely walk from Qrendi, on the South coast, through dry stone walled fields to a Neolithic temple site of Hagar Qim. This dates from around 3000 BC and is built from huge blocks of stone - we also saw the famous Blue Grotto. The landscape in Malta is uniformly stone with the towns built on the ridges and extensive cultivation of the sparse available arable land in the valleys. Water is a major issue with a lot of the supply sourced through desalination plants.

We also visited Mdina, an old walled city, which was once the capital, with its narrow winding alleyways and beautiful honey coloured stone buildings. Our last city, Mellieha, at the Northern end of Malta, was a lovely spot to finish up in with a very comfortable hotel. There were some great walks here, including on Gozo Island, around the spectacular coastline (where we found several good swimming beaches), as well as walks to visit more Neolithic archaeological sites which were so fascinating.



Thanks to John Clune for organising this wonderful trip.

Julie Pettit

Blue Grotto

Light to Light

There has been considerable concern that this iconic walk was going to be privatised and handed over to commercial operators to the exclusion of the general public. The email below, from NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services, explains that the Minister has listened to the public and made sensible changes to the plan.

From: NPWS Park Planning Mailbox [<mailto:npws.parkplanning@environment.nsw.gov.au>]

Sent: Tuesday, 31 August 2021 1:36 PM

Subject: Adoption of the Ben Boyd National Park and Bell Bird Creek Nature Reserve Amendment to the Plan of Management – Light to Light Walk

I am pleased to advise that the Minister for Environment, the Hon Matt Kean MP, has adopted the Ben Boyd National Park and Bell Bird Creek Nature Reserve Amendment to the Plan of Management under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*.

The amendment enables improvements to the visitor experience in Ben Boyd National Park, particularly for walkers on the Light to Light Walk. These improvements will be part of the largest ever investment in national park infrastructure - \$257 million over the next 3 years. Works proposed include realigning sections of this walk between Boyd's Tower and Green Cape Lighthouse and building new accommodation to provide a hut-to-hut style experience for walkers.

The draft amendment and the draft Light to Light Walk Strategy were placed on public exhibition from 12 July to 26 August 2019. The proposals in the draft amendment and draft strategy generated 205 submissions and a significant level of interest. Key themes raised in the submissions included the potential loss of opportunity for remote walk-in camping along the Light to Light walk, impacts from the construction of new accommodation, concerns about the private management of accommodation, opposition to the proposed route of the walk and concerns about a reduction in opportunities for people to stay at Green Cape.

Before adopting the amendment, the Minister considered the proposed amendment, the submissions and the advice of the South Coast Regional Advisory Committee and the National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council. Key changes that were made to the amendment in response to submissions included:

- NPWS will formalise low-key walk-in public camping facilities at Mowarry Point. Development of new accommodation and low key walk-in public camping facilities can occur at Mowarry Point with little or no additional clearing of vegetation. This change recognises community concerns about potential loss of remote walk-in camping.
- NPWS has removed references to commercial operators managing or leasing accommodation and clarified that NPWS will manage all accommodation. This change recognises concerns expressed around commercial managers operating on-park accommodation.
- Each year, NPWS will make Green Cape available for a period of casual short stay accommodation. This change recognises concerns raised about continuing access to Green Cape accommodation for existing users.

The amendment, strategy and a report summarising the feedback received from the public and outlining the Department's response to submissions are available at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications/publications-search.

Thank you for your ongoing interest in the project. All future communication about the Light to Light Walk will be through our project newsletter, and if you have not already done so, I invite you to register your interest to receive updates at www.environment.nsw.gov.au/light-to-light-walk.

JANET CAVANAUGH

Acting Manager, Planning Evaluation and Assessment

National Parks and Wildlife Service

**The following 6 Photos show where
we should have been walking in recent weeks**



Palmerville, Percival Hill and Gungahlin Hill



Bullen Range South



Apollo Rd, Bushfold Flat and Mt Tennent



Black Mountain Reserve and Aranda Bushland



Sherwood Forest Daffodils



Shepherd Lookout to Uriarra Loop

From the Sublime to the Ridiculous



Female Gang Gang sighted near Mugga Reserve by David and Prue



Irina Blok

Got any items for the Newsletter?

Your contributions are always welcome — please send them to editor@brindabellabushwalking.org.au