

Brindabella Bushwalking Club



May 2023

The Bureau of Meteorology has indicated that the latest La Niña cycle is over, that we are currently in a 'neutral' state and will likely transition to an El Niño cycle.

Of course you all knew this. I'm mentioning it because recently I have been revisiting walks that I did some years ago. It feels as though I am doing wonderful new walks as the tracks/countryside are now very different from my recollection of the walks prior to the last 3 years of cooler and wetter weather.

Whilst it is uplifting that the land is looking so lush and healthy, I do miss being able to appreciate a grand outlook from a track or viewpoint due to the heavy re-growth. I'm not complaining as it is a part of the natural cycle that our landscapes go through and so it will inevitably change again. But when we do return to a drier weather cycle and the natural thinning of vegetation that will occur, I am looking forward to the return of those different vistas.

Either way it is rewarding to walk in and experience our country.

I do hope to see you on a walk soon, so until then do take care.....Bill



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CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

[Email here](#)

Autumn Family and Octogenarian/Nonagenarian Picnic, Saturday 15 April 2023

Speech notes prepared by Prue Deacon, Vice-President (see also report at p.6)

Apart from enjoying a beautiful Canberra autumn day, the reason for today's picnic is to recognise our older members and to thank them for what they have contributed to the club and especially for passing on their skills, enthusiasm and friendliness.

I am going to illustrate these contributions with recollections of my first years with the club. I joined late in 2001 after 20 years of having abandoned bushwalking so that I could raise my children. It was not long before I remembered how much I loved being in the bush. There also seemed to be far more options for bushwalking close to Canberra compared with the 1970s.

So, for me, all sorts of new experiences:

Off-track walking. Across the ridge from Gibraltar Rocks to Devils Gap and up the Pyramid, led by John Wells in April 2002. A slight error in the direction of the descent proved John Clune's maxim: There is one way up a mountain but 100 ways down. We were soon back on track but I was hooked on off-track walking.

A swimming walk. The Red Rocks Gorge on the Murrumbidgee, led by John Clune in January 2003.



Pushing through thick scrub. Along the Queanbeyan River, led by Peter Boyland in August 2003.

Seeing the desolation after the 2003 bushfires. The Nursery Creek – Rendezvous Creek Circuit, led by Ray Franzi in September 2003; the Bullen Range South walk, led by Trevor Willson in October 2003.



Rock hopping along creeks or rivers. The Gigerline Gorge walk, led by Peter Boyland in January 2004. It is so rare to have a nice pathway along a creek or river, but fun to work out other ways to follow the stream.



Seeing magnificent displays of wildflowers. The Ginini Flats circuit led by Peter Wellman in January 2004. In the high country, the flowers were spectacular a year after the bushfires.

A trip away, sharing cabins with other club members. The Blue Mountains Expedition organised by John Clune and Peter Wellman in March 2004. John and Peter have led so many wonderful trips in Australia and overseas.

Hard walks getting to amazing viewpoints. Tinderry Twin Peak led by Madeleine Huckstepp in May 2004.

Classic walks to favourite places. Billy Billy Rocks led by Trevor Bainbridge in July 2004; Mt Wee Jasper led by Paul Nichol in August 2004.

Exploratory walks. Two off-track routes up Mt Tennent, one led by Peter Wellman in July 2004, the other by John Ridley in November 2004.



Exploratory climb of Mt Tennent from the south, July 2004

Wonderful rock slabs. The Honeysuckle, Booroomba Rocks, Gorilla Rock circuit led by Allan Mikkelsen in August 2004. This crosses massive slabs to get up to the high point.



Booroomba Rock Slabs August 2004

A car camp. The trip to Endrick River and Quilty's Mountain led by Doug Finlayson in April 2005.



A pack walk. After training on what to pack from Colin, the trip to Cesjack's Hut and Ivit Jagungal, led by Colin and Val Boreham in January 2006.

One-offs that I have not done again but would really like to. The circuit to the South Yankee Hat, led by Max Smith in September 2006. The different wattles flowering at the top were a field of yellow.

This is just a selection of my early learning experiences with the club. As well as the leaders I have mentioned, there are many other older club members whose company I have enjoyed over the years. And I would like to make an extra mention of Peter Wellman who gave me so much practical navigation training as I started to lead myself (and told me where I went wrong).

So, on behalf of we "younger" members, I would like to thank all you "oldies" and look forward to continuing to enjoy your company. Finally, a big thank you to Elaine Atkinson and her team for organising the picnic.

Canberra's Centenary Trail

It is ten years since the launch of the Canberra Centenary Trail in 2013, a walking/cycling route of 145km that circuits urban and rural Canberra.

I plan to walk the full route this coming September/October, taking eight days to do so, with roughly 18 - 22 Km each day (two days are shorter). Car shuffles will be necessary. The aim is to take four weeks, walking each Tuesday and Friday.

Please let me know if you are interested in joining me, and if so, confirming that the proposed Tuesday and Fridays suit (there may be some flexibility in the scheduling). Other walkers may join for individual days, but pre-registration will be necessary so transport can be organised. The detailed plan will be published in the next program. Further information may be found at [Canberra Centenary Trail - Parks ACT](#).

[Leigh Hermann](#)

Classy insults

George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill.

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play;

Bring a friend, if you have one."

Winston Churchill, in response.

"Cannot possibly attend first night, I will attend the second...if there is one."

Walking in the Royal National Park – 3-6th April



It was a small band of six that turned up for three days walking in the Royal National Park, led by the inimitable Bob Chittenden.

Some that had booked might have been put off by the weather forecast, but we all know how wrong 'the Bureau' can get it! In fact the weather was just perfect for walking, apart from a couple of short showers on the last day, lasting only long enough to have us don our raincoats only to take them off immediately after, we had glorious sun and high fluffy clouds, tempered by a light sea breeze.

The Bonnie Vale camping grounds where we stayed were equally terrific. Large grassy sites, excellent facilities, and multi-million-dollar water views! The only fly in the ointment was that on the day of our arrival signs went up to advise of an aerial deer cull to occur the next day which would close all the coastal walks for the rest of the week! So within minutes of arriving Bob had us out on a 3 hour walk to take in the northern section of the coast before it was rendered off-limits. On the way there we walked through parts of Bundeena, ogling some of the phenomenal houses, and denouncing a state government that had allowed private beach ownership so that walkers have to divert from the sand to the streets in sections.

Not long after getting back on the sands of the bay we took a track over the ridge towards the coast, passing Nude Beach (empty, so no thrills there, unlike previous trips I believe) and on to the Aboriginal rock engravings at Jibbon rock. Quite expansive, but a tad hard to see under the blown-in sand and erosion, despite having been "renovated" by local Indigenous people in recent years. Then a fast-paced walk out to Jibbon Head and

back through the headland and along the bay to arrive at the campground just on dark.

On **day two** Bob found a challenging inland walk from Mount Bass to Audley. A mixture of track type including some management trail, leaf-littered woodland, some muddy sections along the creek, and a long rocky section culminating in a steep descent into Audley. 16km and 500m elevation as an out and back. We passed two sets of falls – Anice Falls and Winifred Falls, the latter with a great cave to clamber down to. The vegetation was lush with some fabulous fungi on the track, and at Audley we were able to indulge in a decadent coffee and cake to reward our efforts.

On our last day we took the small ferry across to Cronulla with a few eccentric locals, and then walked south on the esplanade to Bass and Flinders Point where there is a memorial lookout which celebrates their voyage in *Tom Thumb II*, a small rowing boat in which they explored the south coast from Port Hacking to south of Wollongong.

After retracing our steps we walked north along the boardwalk past North Cronulla and Elouera beach, then through the Wanda Sand Dunes to Wanda Beach before coming back along the sand to Cronulla and the ferry. An easy, but quite impressive 12km coastal walk, and particularly interesting for a girl who had spent her childhood and teenage years in southern Sydney and for whom Cronulla beach was the go-to place for summer weekends and holidays, and later for teen drinking and party nights, but who hadn't been back there since the early 1970s! Thanks Bob. Good fun had by all!

Deborah Gibson

The Great South West Walk

The Great South West Walk starts from Portland in South Western Victoria and continues for 250 kilometres in a circular route.

While designed to be a multi-day walk, easy access enables it to be enjoyed in bite size chunks. Check out the [website](#) for more details



The walk traverses cliff tops and beaches, river valleys and forests. Starting in Portland with the giant aluminium smelter and wind farms to one side you soon leave the built environment behind for wild windswept cliffs and bays.

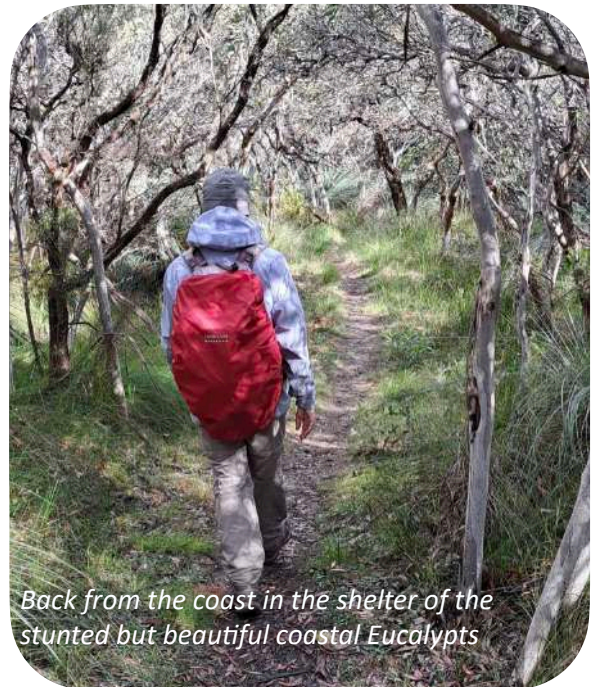
The first highlight was where the walk passes Point Danger, the most easterly point of the walk. Point Danger is home to the only colony of Australasian Gannets on the Australian mainland. Although protected, you can get very close.



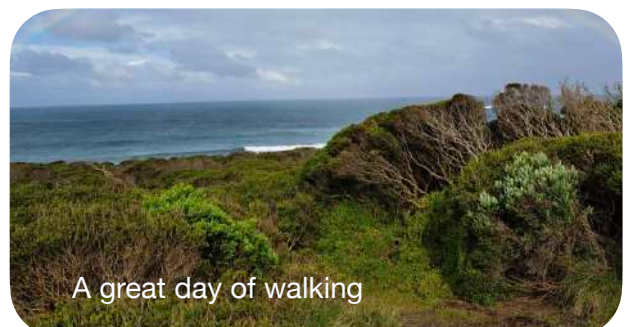
The westerly end of the walk around Nelson follows the valley carved through the landscape by the Glenelg River. There are nice camping sites set for walking a day apart (14 in total) or access is possible to transport to take you back to local accommodation.

While Prue and I only had the time to walk for two days in the area, it is certainly on our list to come back for more. While you are in the area the Jelly Slices at the Heywood bakery come highly recommended.

David Wardle



Back from the coast in the shelter of the stunted but beautiful coastal Eucalypts



A great day of walking

SOCIAL NEWS

Saturday 15 April, Weston Park: Autumn/Octogenarian /Nonagenarian Picnic

What a beautiful autumn morning in Weston Park. 45 attendees Included 2 visitors, a nonagenarian (potential member) and a 3 year old grandson. Of the 45 attendees, there were 13 octogenarians and 6 nonagenarians. Pat is our only female nonagenarian.

Most of us enjoyed a 1 hour stroll through the beautiful autumn trees. Vice-president Prue gave her speech thanking the over 80s and 90s for their contribution to the club and passing on their skills (see report p.2). Prue also recalled many memories of past walks and leaders. This was followed by a toast to our 'honoured' members with a glass of bubbly, birthday cake and song.

This select group of members has laid the foundation for a fabulous walking club. Even though some of them are no longer participating in club walks, these social outings are an opportunity for them to be connected to the club and catching up with old friends. I have received many thanks and positive feedback. This is one comment "Good Morning Elaine - Thank you for putting on that birthday party for us oldies. I really did enjoy the day and as usual was the last one to leave" (wonder who that was?)

Thanks Wendy for baking the yummy chocolate birthday cake. Thanks also Ian for helping me set up etc.

You can check out the history of the club on the website, through [this link](#).

Friday 28 April, Potluck dinner

31 happy members enjoyed our annual potluck dinner. Maybe it should be called a 'food fest' as there were plenty of yummy dishes to choose from. Thank you for generous contributions. The numbers were down due to illness and other commitments. Although the weather and traffic were frustrating, the atmosphere after joining friends and sharing food lifted spirits.

[Jenny Horsfield](#) was our guest speaker. Jenny is a writer and historian with a special interest in the landscape and human stories of the Canberra region. Jenny spoke about her previous books as well as her work in progress – *'Our grassy landscapes and the people who care for them: the story of Canberra people and their attachment to this special place'*. Thank you Jenny.

Thanks to the Social sub-committee for your contribution to the success of the evening. Other members helped



clean up at the end of the night, so thank you all. Many hands make light work.

Thanks too Caryl, for your fabulous photos - too many for this newsletter, so check out [our Facebook page](#).

*Elaine Atkinson
Social Convenor*



There are too many photos for the newsletter, but there are quite a few on [our Facebook page](#).



ACT PARKS CULL



From 15 May to 2 June, large areas of Namadgi National Park will be closed to allow culling of invasive species. The opening of Rocky Crossing will be again delayed.

The closures may also be extended in particular areas so, if you are planning a walk anywhere in the park, it is important to keep abreast of developments. As the cull progresses, further advice will be provided in BBC member emails by David Wardle, our Walks Officer.

The plans were first reported in *The Canberra Times* on 8 April and were followed up by ACT Parks after Easter with notifications [here](#). In that notice, the closures were expected to continue until 9 June. [More recent advice](#) is that the expected completion date is 2 June and this appears to be the website to watch.

Facebook

Our Facebook Manager regularly posts photos, walk reports and information about upcoming activities.

Please visit [here](#) and see what our members are planning or have recently been up to.

Just for this month, while Heather is away, send your photos etc. [here](#)

You don't need to be on Facebook to look at these posts.

New Members

We are very pleased to welcome these new members.

Frederick Bennett

Paul Drake

Adrian Fordham

Alana Foster

Teresa Holland

Christine LaCouvee

Karen Moore

Charity Mundava

Abhijeet Nadpurohit

Scott Nichol

Terry O'Leary

Faye Pearse

Kevin Tingey

Our membership now stands at 427.

Mont Blanc Walk

Glenda Snape writes 'there are three of us, all women, from Canberra/Yass doing the Tour Mont Blanc walk in July with one person, a male, having dropped out recently. (Making it four originally)

We have all the accommodation booked to complete the walk, starting in Italy walking through Switzerland and France before returning to Italy over 14 days.

We are looking for someone who is fit enough and enthusiastic to pick up on this opportunity to join us, otherwise we will start cancelling the one spare bed available in the refugios.

The accommodation is now fully booked for 2023.'

If you are interested, you can contact Glenda at glenda.snape@gmail.com

Billy Billy Rocks Circuit 19 April
Medium-Hard walk