

November2020

Brindabella Bushwalking Club



BBC

Newsletter and Program



Looking towards Tidbinbilla Range from Billy Billy Rocks

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Coronavirus Update

- * Some restrictions have eased , but they have no impact on bushwalking. The latest ACT updates can always be found here: [Updates](#)
- * Keeping your distance and maintaining hand (and respiratory) hygiene are essential.
- * If sharing a car, it may ease the concern of fellow passengers if you all wear masks.

BBC Website

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

If you need the password to access the members' Area, please send a request by email to

webmaster@brindabellabushwalking.org.au

From the President

COVID-19 restrictions. We are very fortunate in the ACT that we have so few restrictions and are able to go about our business as usual. Physical distancing and hand sanitising are now second nature and so easy to do. NSW, though, has a limit of 30 for any activity.

Our Program. For the remainder of 2020, walks will continue to be announced as 'short notice' activities in the week prior. Dates and names of walk leaders for November and December are at the last two pages of this newsletter. There is also information about our Christmas party.

2021. I'm pleased to confirm that the January to June Program will see a return to our normal routine — a full six months of activities.

Leaders: Please start preparing walk descriptions and selecting the dates in the period January to June that you would like to conduct these walks. Your respective walks sub-committee members will be asking for these early this month so they can develop the program. The Walks Officer will send you reminders. It is unlikely that the middle section of Namadgi will be open to the public before June, so you can't program walks for there just yet.

There are a couple of items in this newsletter specifically for the attention of leaders; please ensure you read them.

Let's hope the weather remains pleasant (not too hot) for our walks through November and into summer.

Peter Dalton



Bulbine Lillies are springing up stronger than ever in some of the burnt areas of Namadgi

Important Reminders for Leaders

(prepared by the Vice President)

As we prepare to produce BBC's six-month January to June 2021 "Walks and Social Program" here are a few reminders for leaders.

Guidelines for leaders are on the BBC website - check them out again if you have not read them for a while and have a copy with you on walks (print or digital).

Other useful documents on the website include: the **Walk Gradings** system; what to put in **Walks Descriptions**; and the current **Walk Report** form. Please try to complete the form promptly after your walk and send to the Walks Officer.

As Covid restrictions ease, we'll try to move back to the normal meeting points and car sharing - however, members are not required to car-share if they prefer not to.

We'll also go back to the shorter walk descriptions to put in the program and also to paste into the walk report. If your description of a walk is longer than 90 words, you might have to use a smaller font or abbreviate it before pasting it into the walk report. Below is the standard pattern:

Date - NAME OF WALK - x km Grade (grading score)

Leader: Name of Leader (phone number). Description of walk (up to about 90 words, including information about any unusual or difficult aspects of the walk). Climb: x m. Cars: x km (\$..). Maps: map names. **Meet at:** Meeting point (e.g. K for Kambah) (with any details if it is not the normal departure time of 9 am or one of the normal places).

Here's an example

Sat 13 Jun – MT TENNENT FROM THE VISITOR CENTRE – 14 km Medium (9)

Leader: Joe Blow (62345678). We walk from the Namadgi National Park Visitor Centre up the Australian Alps Walking Track to the fire tower at the top of Mt Tennent for lunch. Nice views from the summit. Return the same way. All on track. Climb: 750 m. Cars: 40 km (\$5). Map: Williamsdale.

ROB ROY NATURE RESERVE — another important development for leaders to note

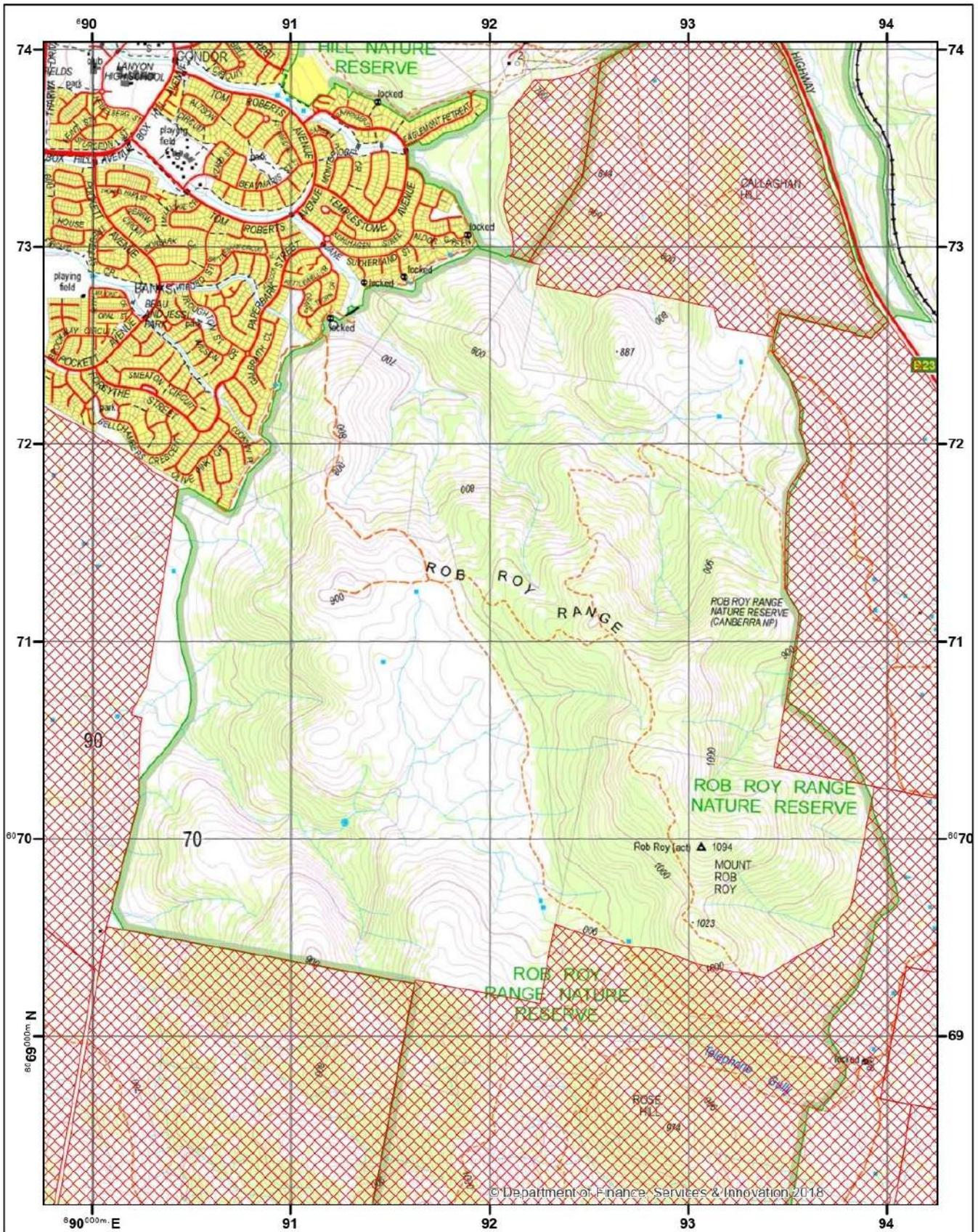
We've had many an enjoyable walk in the Rob Roy Nature Reserve. However, it turns out that two large chunks of it have been leased to graziers for quite a while now and we have apparently been trespassing. The northern lease has been ignored by the leaseholder in recent years and he has even let the fences fall down, but that lease has now been sold and new fencing is to be erected. There is no longer any access from that end and new 'private property' signs have been erected.

The other leaseholder (in the area encompassing Rose Hill) will permit club walks to take place provided he has been given at least two weeks' notice by ACT Parks and Conservation Service (PCS) staff; i.e. the leader needs to contact our Walks Officer, who will then ask the relevant PCS person to request permission from the leaseholder.

The red hatched areas marked on the map on the next page indicate 'private' land. This map will soon be available online. It will also be displayed at the foot of the steep road up into the reserve.

There will still be plenty of walkers and cyclists blissfully unaware of these leases and it will be interesting to see how PCS polices the area.

Rob Roy Nature Reserve - North Block



Legend

 Private Land

Georeferenced PDF
GDA94 MGA Zone 55
1000m grid

0 0.5 1
Kilometres
1:25,000 @ A4



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No pledge to rebuild historic huts

This article and photo by Mathew Higgins appeared in the Canberra Times on Saturday 17 October 2020



Bushwalkers at Demanding Hut, February 2013. Picture: Matthew Higgins

Many of our club bushwalks have included a visit to Demanding Hut in the southern part of Namadgi National Park, not far from the Mt Clear campground. Fewer, though, will have been to Max and Bert's hut. Sadly, as this article outlines, they are no more.

Matthew Higgins provides information on the history of the huts and his concern about whether they will be rebuilt.

The article (starting on the next page) is being reproduced here for those of you who missed this story in the newspaper.

Matthew Higgins

DURING the early 2020 bushfires that so devastated 80 per cent of Namadgi National Park, two historic huts were also consumed by the flames. The huts were Demandering and Max and Bert Oldfield's, both located in the rugged far south-east sector of the ACT.

These are not the first historic Namadgi structures to be lost to fire. The Mt Franklin Chalet was burnt during the 2003 bushfires and has since been replaced by a public shelter with interpretive text about the chalet's history. Other huts, like Rowleys Orroral and Rowleys Rendezvous Creek, were burnt as a result of human negligence at other times.

Huts were also lost in Kosciuszko during the recent fires and in 2003. But following 2003, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service decided to overturn its steadfast opposition to reconstruction after a consultant's report concluded that these places still retained social value for the community, and that rebuilding, in a style and in materials similar to the original structures, was justified.

Since that decision, several huts have been rebuilt in Kosciuszko, and those lost in the recent fires are also set to be rebuilt.

But in the ACT, there has been no commitment to rebuild. Despite overtures by the volunteer Kosciuszko Huts Association (KHA) for Demandering and Max and Bert's to be rebuilt, neither the ACT government nor the opposition have given a clear statement that rebuilds will be approved.

So, what were the huts that were lost in the conflagration early this year? Both were stockmen's huts, simple structures that told of the earlier land use by pastoralists prior to the gazetting of Namadgi.

Demandering is down in the Mt Clear area in the upper valley of Naas River. It was built by Bill Cotter on behalf of his brother Jack in the early 1940s. Bill and Jack were grandsons of ex-convict Garrett Cotter who had first entered the Cotter Valley (eventual-

The huts' stories can continue to be told.

ly named after him) in the late 1820s. Garrett had the leasehold Demandering run for many years later in the 19th century and it passed down to various Cotter family members who selected portions. Jack purchased some of the holding in the early 1940s from his father Garry.

The Cotter brothers were based on a property at Michelago, so Jack needed the Demandering hut for shelter when running stock there. He and Bill also annually took stock through to their snow lease at Kellys Plain, now under the waters of Tantangara Dam in Kosciuszko. So the hut saw use then too as it was an important stopover point during the summer trip to Kellys Plain.

A distinctive thing about the hut was that

Bill used his bullock team to haul logs to the site for part of the hut frame. Given that it was the 1940s, bullock teams were getting rare, so this is a notable feature of the place's history.

In the late 1950s Jack sold the holding to Colin and Norman Curtis and they too used the hut during stockwork until the land was resumed in the 1970s for Namadgi's predecessor, Gudgenby Nature Reserve. Since that time the hut has been visited by countless bushwalkers and saw various work parties by KHA members. In fact, major works were under way at the time of this year's bushfires.

So, the hut had a direct connection with the significant Cotter family, with the predominant grazing theme in the area's economy and way of life, and was of note for the way it was built.

Max and Bert's Hut was constructed later, in 1967. It was a simple corrugated iron hut with a skillion roof, built of second-hand materials obtained from Tharwa, which itself had been built from parts of an early Canberra house. It was little known until I conducted the Namadgi Oral History Project for KHA in 1990. Interviews revealed the existence of the hut, and when I walked to it late that year in the rugged Booth Range area, I found a time capsule. The hut still contained personal items like a shaving brush, a kerosene lantern, and a wonderful collection of paperback novels, all westerns, giving an entertaining insight into the reading interests of the Oldfields.

The Oldfield clan stemmed from convict

Joseph Oldfield and his wife Mary Keegan in the 1840s. The clan became one of the most numerous in the area and played a major part in the grazing story of the area that became Namadgi. Max and Bert were cousins, and their fathers had held the Booth Range lease for several years, using a hut at The Bog near the top of the range. Max and Bert built their own hut and, like Demanderling, it was a periodic shelter when doing stockwork, fencing, rabbiting and other tasks.

Since the end of grazing, the hut had been visited by small numbers of walkers, and had seen a few KHA work parties too.

Both huts had similar themes in their being: connections to significant early families of the region, connections with the grazing way of life and economy, interesting aspects of their construction and materials, and continuing importance for today's users of the area.

The question for the ACT government now is whether these places have a social value supporting a decision to rebuild. Sure, the original structure can never be brought back, but social value can be retained and maintained when lost huts are resurrected. The huts' stories can continue to be told. The ACT would be well advised to look to the Kosciuszko example.

|| Matthew Higgins is an historian who has worked at several national cultural institutions and written several books about the mountains, including *Bold Horizon* and *Seeing Through Snow*.

|| To contribute to this column, email history@canberratimes.com.au.

Aftermath of the Fire



The view towards Nursery Swamp from the top of Nursery Hill

This photo was taken on 14 October 2020 and it shows there has been very little recovery here yet.



Looking across Rendezvous Creek towards Yankee Hat—also 14 October 2020.

The plain is lush and hundreds of kangaroos have survived to enjoy it.

Walks Program and Social Activities

Upcoming Day Walks

[If you don't receive emails about Wednesday walks, but would like to, just follow the instructions on the Club's [website](#)

Leaders will not accept bookings until after the detailed description has been emailed to you

Date	Grade	Leader
Wed 28 Oct	Easy/Medium	CBC
Wed 28 Oct	Medium/Hard	NPA
Sat 31 Oct	Easy	Jillian Bellamy
Sun 1 Nov	Medium	Bill Gibson
Wed 4 Nov	Short	Robyn Kelly & Colleen Fox
Wed 4 Nov	Easy/Medium	John Ellis
Wed 4 Nov	Medium/Hard	Prue Deacon
Sat 7 Nov	Easy	Elaine Atkinson
Sun 8 Nov	Medium	John Clune
Wed 11 Nov	Easy/Medium	Tim Wright (CBC)
Wed 11 Nov	Medium/Hard	Phillip Gatenby (CBC)
Sat 14 Nov	Medium	Peter Wellman
Sun 15 Nov	Easy	Lyn Willson
Wed 18 Nov	Short	Robyn Kelly & Colleen Fox
Wed 18 Nov	Easy/Medium	Kathy Handel
Wed 18 Nov	Medium/Hard	Leigh Hermann
Sat 21 Nov	Medium	Peter Dalton
Sun 22 Nov	Easy	Bob Chittenden
Wed 25 Nov	Easy/Medium	CBC
Wed 25 Nov	Medium/Hard	Barrie Ridgway (NPA)
Sat 28 Nov	Easy	Jillian Bellamy
Sun 29 Nov	Medium	Bob Chittenden
Wed 2 Dec	Short	Robyn Kelly & Colleen Fox
Wed 2 Dec	Easy/Medium	Kathy Handel
Wed 2 Dec	Medium/Hard	Prue Deacon
Sat 5 Dec	Medium	Peter Dalton
Sun 6 Dec	Easy	Leigh Hermann

Walks Program and Social Activities

Leaders will not accept bookings until after the detailed description has been emailed to you

Date	Grade	Leader
Wed 9 Dec	Easy—combined all grades—see below	Janet Duncan
Fri 11 Dec	BBC Christmas Party—see below	Elaine Atkinson
Sat 12 Dec	Easy	May Lok
Sun 13 Dec	Medium	Peter Wellman
Wed 16 Dec	Easy/Medium	Terrylea Reynolds
Wed 16 Dec	Medium/Hard	Peter Wellman
Sat 19 Dec	Medium	Phillip Hope
Sun 20 Dec	Easy	John Clune



Social Activities

Wednesday Walkers 9th December Christmas Gathering and Lunch

The Wednesday Walkers' Christmas get-together will be at a completely different venue this year. From Tharwa Bridge we visit the De Salis Cemetery and walk along a foot pad onto the Sandwash area of the Murrumbidgee River. Here we can have a restful time, swimming and enjoying the river and maybe energetically planning walks post Covid. Also invited are the Med-Hard Wed walkers and the Wed Morning walkers as we haven't had a mixed and large gathering for a long time. Please bring your own lunch and some Goodies to share. More details through the lists closer to the time. **Leader: Janet Duncan**

Friday 11 December – BBC CHRISTMAS PARTY

We are breaking with tradition this year due to the Covid environment and will hold the picnic/barbecue in Weston Park from 5.00 pm. There is plenty of parking near the miniature railway and the picnic area is just a short walk across the road – undercover facilities. Look for the BBC banner.

BYO food, drinks and portable chairs, though something to share for nibbles and desserts is welcome. Also bring a jumper/jacket. There are bbqs available.

Please note: in the event of wet weather the event will be rescheduled to the following Friday 18 Dec.

Enquiries to Elaine Atkinson: 6288 3557 or 0410 154 133

Advance Notices — **subject to coronavirus restrictions**

2021

May 2021 – Walking in Austria, Stubai and Zillertal Alps - Easy a
Leader: John Clune. One week at Mayrhofen in the Zillertal Alps, and Garni Hubertus. These towns are south of Innsbruck. It is likely that we fly into Munich and take accommodation. Both towns are in valleys near Innsbruck and are at the end of train lines. Contact john.clune@bigpond.com if you are interested in going.

**Perhaps in 2022,
John?**

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



Enjoying a break on the Eastern end of Billy Billy Rocks during a recent walk