

December2020

Brindabella Bushwalking Club

Newsletter



BBC



A long steep climb in Rob Roy Nature Reserve

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Coronavirus Update

- * Thankfully, most restrictions have eased. The latest ACT updates can always be found here: [Updates](#)
- * Keeping your distance and maintaining hand (and respiratory) hygiene are essential.
- * We still need to be cautious while we await a vaccine.

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

Having so far been spared the horrors that coronavirus has wreaked around the world, we are able to return to a semblance of normality in the ACT.

Our Program. You will receive your copy of the January—June Walks Program soon. It is packed full of walks, for which we must thank the Walks Sub-Committee and our many walk leaders.

You'll see that social activities are largely absent from the program. While restrictions on socialising are still fluctuating, our Social Committee will continue to notify us of outings and functions by email, closer to the events.

With the hot weather now upon us, I urge you to ensure you take much more water with you on walks. Our individual needs vary, but the general recommendation is to have at least two litres with you for a full-day walk.

There are a couple of important reminders in this newsletter, and also a great introduction to the Coolah Tops National Park from Mary and Peter.

Some people say that older bushwalkers are lucky they have remained healthy enough to bushwalk, but it is much more likely that the bushwalking is what has kept them fit and healthy — not just luck.

On behalf of the committee, I'd like to wish you and your loved ones all the very best for the Christmas season, and we are looking forward to seeing you springing back into the bush in the new year.

Peter Dalton

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

COOLAH TOPS NATIONAL PARK

Mary Lindsay



We recently visited Coolah Tops National Park in Central NSW. It was our first visit and a lovely surprise.

The park is thickly forested and includes significant areas of old growth forest. The predominant tree in the park is stringy bark, and the park includes the tallest recorded examples on the continent, a result of its fertile basalt soil, altitude and high rainfall. The area was previously a major supplier of railway sleepers for Australia and India.

The park also includes the tallest snow gums in Australia.



The highlight for us was the giant grasstrees, some believed to be more than 400 years old.



Although the park is quite small (12,000 hectares) it includes many interesting features such as caves, waterfalls, lookouts and Gamilaraay cultural sites. It also contains many species of birds, especially owls, Australia's largest population of greater gliders - our biggest possum - and five species of endangered bats.

There are three pretty (primitive) campsites and a range of walks, generally pretty flat, which meander through the forests on well defined, grassy tracks with intermittent open grassy areas. In early November these were covered in wild flowers.

At an altitude of 1,000 m the park would be cool and wet in winter and the 30 km dirt access road risky for ordinary cars. But in early November it was delightful. There were few visitors and the little Corolla managed the access road, despite a few misgivings from its occupants.

Coolah Tops was gazetted as a national park in 1996 and is managed from the Warrumbungles NPHQ. Camping sites must be pre-booked as a COVID precaution and all provisions must be carried in, including water.

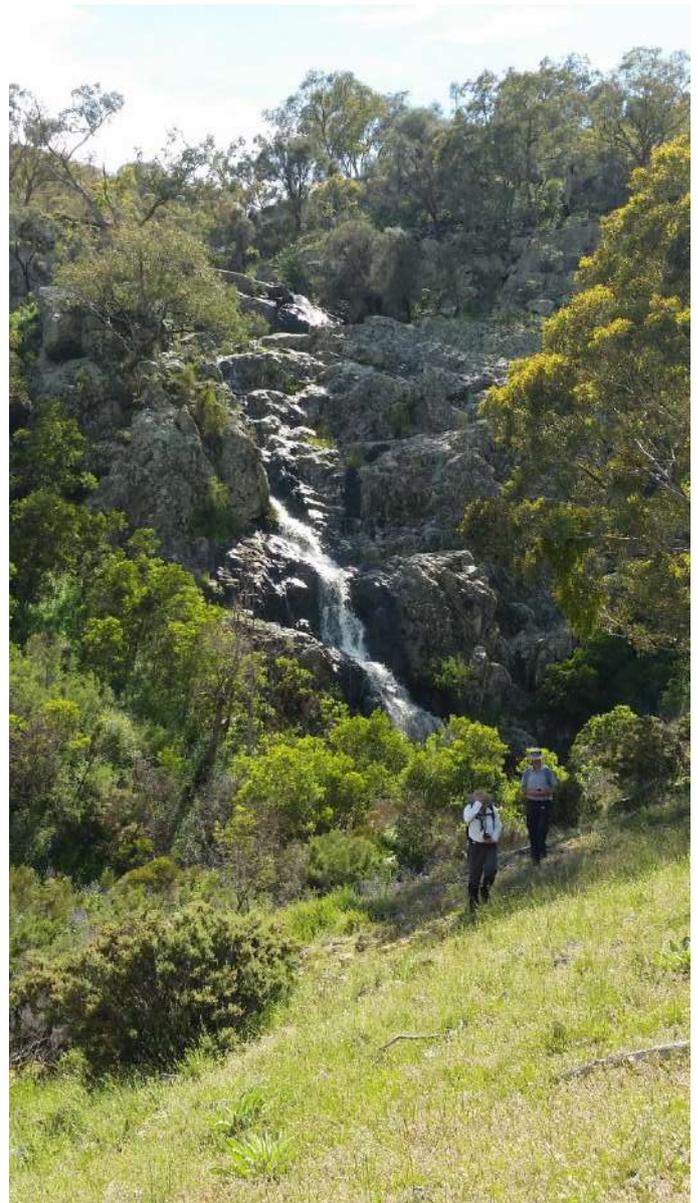
The park is not well known but it's a delightful spot to spend a few relaxing days communing with nature and we thoroughly recommend a visit.

Warrumbungle NP Visitor Centre (02 68254364 email: warrumbungle.np@environment.nsw.gov.au)

A Couple of Our local Waterfalls



Punchbowl Creek—seen on John's recent walk to Blythburn Cottage

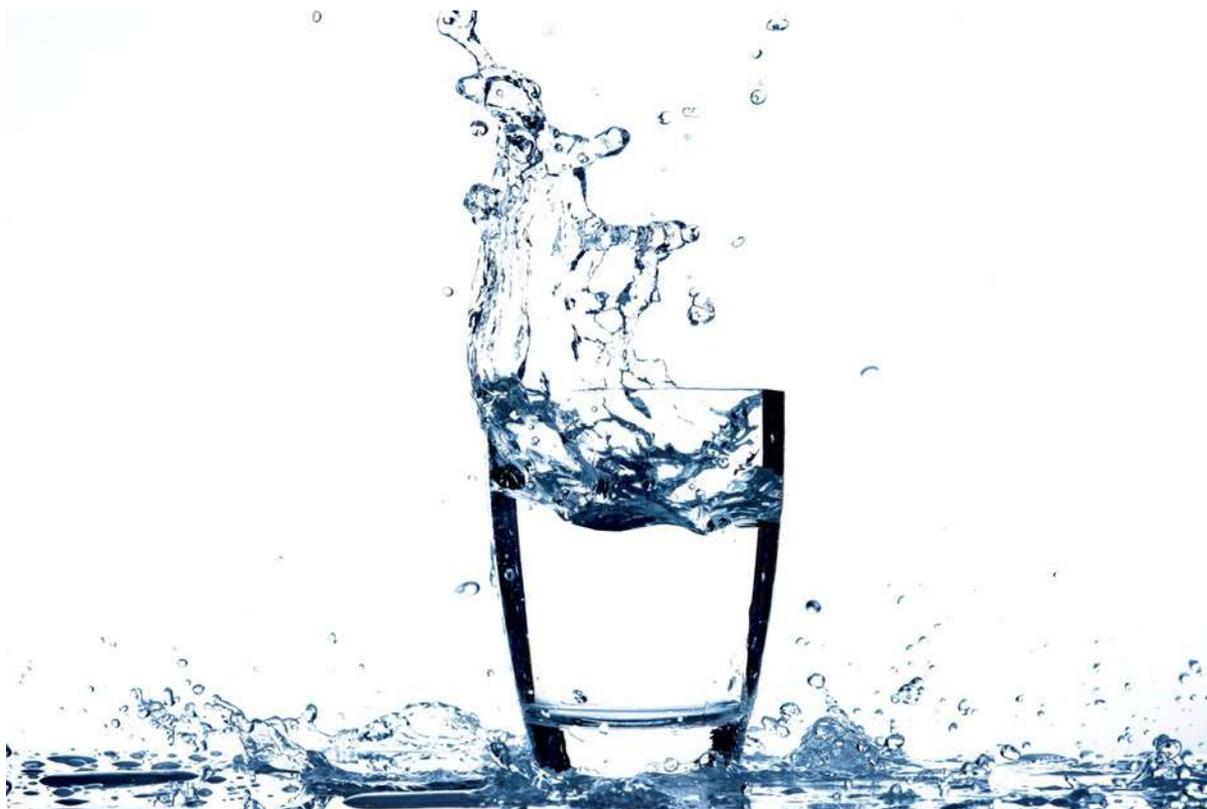


Unnamed creek found on Prue's walk in Rob Roy Nature Reserve



It's now a little further to Nil Desperandum

How much Water should we drink - are other liquids acceptable substitutes?



This is an interesting topic and many of us have differing views. There were some surprising conclusions in an informative article in the British Guardian newspaper last January. The article cites observations from several British university medical staff. You might disagree with them, but it is still recommended reading — the full article is here: [The Truth about Hydration](#)

Emergency Plus Phone App



emergencyplus

If you have a **Smart phone**, then you really should install the free **Emergency Plus** application that can save lives. This App is available for both Android and Apple phones. It has been developed by Australia's emergency services and their Government and industry partners.

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) and the choice of three buttons to press – one will dial 000, the second will call the Police, and the third the SES.

It recently had a major update to include your location using the 'What 3 Words' system (explained on the next page). The update also changed the icon to the one shown here. If yours still has a big red cross, then you should update it.

In order to make an emergency phone call it does, of course, rely on your phone being in an area of coverage at the time.

What is what3words?

The developers of this system divided the world into 3 metre squares and gave each square a unique combination of three words. It's considered the easiest way to find and share exact locations and the system is now being used all over the world.

To make what3words precise enough to refer to an entrance or parking spot, it needed to be accurate to a 3m square. This meant they needed 57 trillion addresses to cover the world, and three words allowed them to create 64 trillion addresses – covering the entire world with quite a few spare!

Simple GPS receivers in smartphones are not precise instruments and two phones side by side might provide a different set of three words, but the position will still be accurate enough for emergency services to find you.



You Need Ambulance Cover!

Ambulance costs are very high in the ACT – possibly the highest in the nation. An ambulance for an emergency costs \$982 + \$13 per km for every km outside ACT.

Non-NSW residents needing an ambulance for an emergency in NSW are charged \$786 (road or air) + \$7.09 per km.

Westpac helicopter rescue has never charged a patient, and Care Flight claims to be fully subsidised.

People excluded from paying in all States (it's actually free in QLD and TAS for all) are those who have one of the following:

- Healthcare card issued by Centrelink;
- DVA Gold Card;
- Private health insurance; or
- Ambulance cover (only) from a private health insurance company; e.g. BUPA, AHM, Medibank, HBF, etc.

Here are examples of 'ambulance only' costs from four private providers:

- AHM Extras: \$2.90 week; this covers much more than just an ambulance.
- HBF: urgent road ambulance cover costs \$93 pa.
- BUPA: costs around \$40 pa, but varies a little depending on age and gender
- Medibank: around \$30

This is one of a group of stone walls in a fairly remote section of Namadgi NP—why were they built?



Blythburn Cottage



Misplaced Walkers

When a walker gets separated from the rest of the group, it causes anxiety for all concerned and usually results in the walk being aborted or returning much later than expected because of the time spent searching.

Here are some examples of how this situation happens:

- A walker slips away to find a tree to relieve themselves behind while the party is moving and doesn't tell anybody. By the time they've finished what was to be a quick stop, the rest of the group has disappeared.
- Sometimes they might forget which way they came from in search of the perfect tree and afterwards head off in the wrong direction.
- Photographers taking time to perfectly frame a shot (or several) can also quickly lose sight of the group.
- A walker can be getting tired and can fall behind to the point that they lose sight of the rest.
- A walker who has dropped back a bit can go the wrong way at an intersection on a track or foot pad.
- Someone might stop to take something from their pack or to put something in and easily become separated.

Avoidance. If we all follow simple procedures this potentially very serious situation should never occur.

- The very best principle is to always keep **the person behind you** in sight. That's right, the one behind! If they are falling back, call for the leader to pause until they catch up.
- If you are the one who urgently needs to answer the call of nature, don't be shy — tell the leader and they will wait for you.
- If you really need to photograph something, ask the leader if you can stop for a moment.
- Walkers should wait at all intersections until the leader can be sure everybody will go in the right direction.
- If someone is tiring or finding the going very hard, they should walk up near the front of the group, not at the rear where they might get trailed off.

What if you do get separated? Wait where you are and stay calm. Your leader will start looking for you and will back-track in an effort to find you. It is not helpful if you keep moving, because you could be getting right away from the planned route. Call out at regular intervals and blow your whistle — you do carry a whistle, don't you?

Summary. Pausing for a few minutes as needed takes much less time than mounting a search does.



Recent Social Events

There have been 3 popular outings since covid restrictions have eased.

The first was a family picnic at Uriarra Crossing on the October long weekend (24 adults and 8 children). Most walked the 1 hour loop. A great time had by all!!!

Next, 23 happy walkers visited Bundanoon by train on 23 October; they were not deterred by the early start. It was a picture perfect day with the cicadas singing non-stop.

The first stop was morning coffee followed by a choice of 2 walks – one including the beautiful gardens and boardwalk and the other Erith Coal Mine in Moreton National Park . There was plenty of time to have lunch and relax before heading home in the early afternoon.



Bundanoon Station

On Friday 20 November, 22 members visited Hall and enjoyed a relaxing morning coffee at Daughters at Hall, a heritage tour of the village and a relaxing lunch at historic Allwood (2 slab cottages, built in the late 1800's by David and Agnes Rule - now restored by the Roberts and recently heritage listed). Many thanks to Judy Roberts from Allwood, the hostess with the mostest, for her interesting stories and local knowledge .



Next event: Friday 11 December Christmas party in Weston Park from 5 pm. More info closer to the date.

Elaine and the Social Committee

Walks Program and Social Activities

Upcoming Day Walks — hopefully this will be the last time they'll be in this format

Details of all activities for 2021 will be in the program you receive and also at our website

Date	Grade	Leader
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
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



Wednesday 9 December — Wednesday Walkers Christmas Gathering and Lunch

The Wednesday Walkers' Christmas get-together will be at Tharwa 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 rest, swim, enjoy the river and generally celebrate having made it through the year. All categories of Wednesday walkers are invited, 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