

Brindabella Bushwalking Club Newsletter

July 2017

Contents

Reminders	1
Contributing Articles	1
Annual general Meeting	2
Walk Reports	2
Family Walks	2
BBC Facebook Page	2
Keeping Together	3
Mulligans Flat Spotlighting	3
Glenburn Precinct Trail	4
Insurance & Affiliation Fees	5
Walking the ACT Border	6
Madeira	6/7
This 'n That	8



BBC walkers at San Lourenco, Madeira
(All Madeira photos supplied by John Clune)

Reminders

1. Membership fees are due.
2. Remember the AGM on Tuesday 29 August.

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.

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.

Annual General Meeting - Tuesday 29 August

The AGM will be held at St Margaret's Uniting Church Hall at the corner of Phillip Avenue and Antill Street, HACKETT on Tuesday 29 August.

Arrive from 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start. Proceedings will be over by 10.00 pm.

This is also a good opportunity to pay your annual subscriptions and/or to hand your completed membership form to the Membership Secretary. In case you've misplaced yours, a copy of the form is attached to the email with this newsletter.

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. While most committee members have accepted nominations for re-election, there are still two general positions without nominees. If you'd like to be part of the committee and 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.

Walk Report Forms

The Walk Report forms have been rearranged slightly, although the content has not been altered; you can continue to use the existing form until your stocks are exhausted. The revised format will be at the Club's website soon and, additionally, copies will be emailed to leaders.

Family Walks

Family walks are scheduled for the last Sunday of each month during school terms. Our walks are suitable for families with young children. The children in our group are mostly of primary school age, however on some walks strollers will be possible. The pace is slow, with a long stop for morning tea, and attractions for children are often included. Most walks are in Canberra bushland and about two hours long. Details of the walks are routinely emailed to members who have indicated their interest in going on the walks.

If you are interested in these walks or have children, grandchildren or friends who might be, please contact the Membership Secretary (Davinia Wells 62544491) for details.

BBC Facebook Page

The facebook page is attracting plenty of interest and Terrylea is keeping it up to date with photos, walk reports and much more. Visit it at: <https://www.facebook.com/BrindabellaBushwalkingClub/>. You can set your facebook page to receive notifications every time there is a new post.

Keeping Together

On a couple of recent walks, the group has become separated, resulting in a lot of calling out and searching until the party was safely reunited. I have been asked to remind members of their responsibilities to prevent this happening.

The leader is generally in front and has to rely on those behind to keep in visual contact with each other. In a small group, the 'tail-end-Charlie' can do a lot to help, but with a large group this is not possible; i.e. only the three or four immediately ahead can be seen and there will be no indication that a gap has developed somewhere in the middle.

Leaders should always stop at track intersections to ensure that everybody is aware of the path to be taken.

If gaps open up in the party, then immediately those at each side of the gap should shout out and halt the party until the gap is closed. This should be made clear to visitors and new members at the beginning of the walk.

Often a gap will occur because someone is off chasing plants or photographs. I'm told that recently a person stopped to take a photo, lost the party, but eventually managed to get back to the cars on his own. In the meantime, he left behind a worried leader and party.

I understand that on another occasion, at the conclusion of morning tea, just as the party was about to move off, someone wandered off to take a photo. Only a head count ensured that he was not left behind. No one knew where he was. Both these incidents could have ended disastrously.

No one should leave the party, not even for a visit to the bush toilet, unless they let the leader know.

If part of the group becomes separated, they should **not attempt** to get to the next point of interest. In fact, our Rules for Walkers clearly state that: "If you do become separated, stop and call out. **Do not keep walking. Wait in a visible place even if you have to wait some time.** The leader will return for you. Call out at intervals."

Finally, again as per our Rules for Walkers, "Keep the walker in front and behind in sight", and the problem will never arise.



Photo: nedmartin.org/v3/amused

Mulligans Flat Spring Spotlighting Walk

A joint outing has been booked exclusively for members of Canberra's three major bushwalking clubs, Brindabella Bushwalking Club, the National Parks Association of the ACT and Canberra Bushwalking Club.

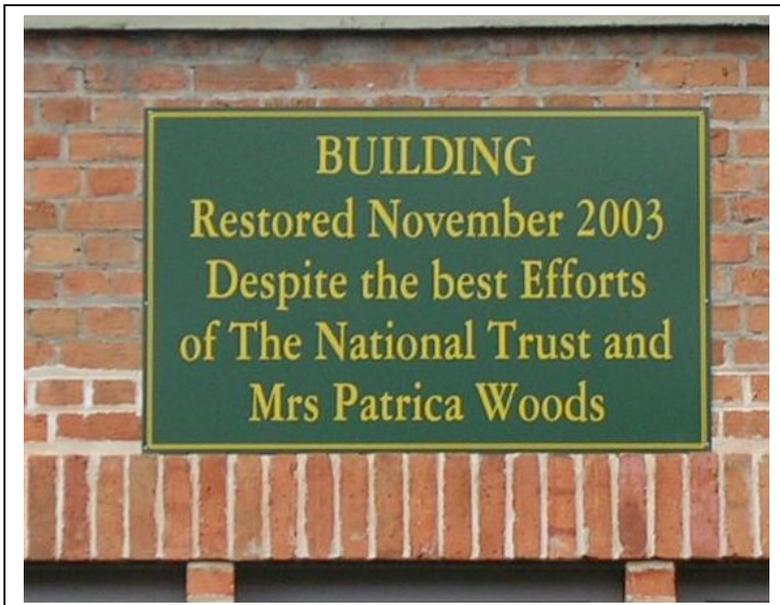
This 'twilight tour' of the Mulligans Flat Woodland Sanctuary is on the evening of **Friday 20 October 2017**. It will be led by an ACT Parks and Conservation Service ecologist with a good knowledge of the threatened animal species which have been re-introduced to this woodland conservation gem on the northern boundary of the ACT. These species include Eastern Bettong, Eastern Quoll, Bush Stone-curlew, and New Holland Mouse.

There is an informative video, 'A Short History of Mulligans' on the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust website at mulligansflat.org.au for those seeking to learn more about the reserve and its species.

The cost is \$30/person, payable in advance. This covers the cost of employing the ranger and gives us access to the woodland sanctuary which is not otherwise accessible at night.

Please email Isobel Crawford on orru@iine.net.au or 'phone 62571860 for further information and/or to make a firm booking.

We need 20 participants for this to go ahead. To my mind, it's worth it just to hear the beautifully eerie call of the Bush Stone-curlews, at present being regularly reported on the *Canberra Birds* chatline.



A sign in lovely Chudleigh, Tasmania

Glenburn Precinct Heritage Trails

The Friends of Glenburn have done a great job in preserving the heritage and history in the Glenburn precinct. They have now produced brochures with a sketch map and details of three walks of 10-12 km that visit the homesteads, sheds, kilns and so on. These brochures are available at the box near the new locked gate at the intersection of Charcoal Kiln Road and the Kings Highway, and also at the Parks Service Stromlo depot, 500 Cotter Road, Weston.

A copy of the brochure is also on the web at:

<http://www.npaact.org.au/res/File/2017/Glenburn-Brochure%20for%20web.pdf>

Leaders might consider these relatively easy walks for the next program, but why not go and have a look now? Dogs on leads are permitted and the tracks can be used by mountain bikes.

The Rules for walkers, the Walks Grading System and the email addresses of the Walks Committee are all in the current Walks and Social Program

Why does the Club pay Insurance and Affiliation Fees?

Our Club is a member club of Bushwalking Australia (www.bushwalkingaustralia.org) and is affiliated with them through Bushwalking NSW. These bodies arrange our annual Public Liability and Association Liability insurance policies. The policies are explained below.

Public Liability Insurance

Sometimes, due to unfavourable weather or unforeseen circumstances an accident may occur, and if a person, whether a member of the general public or a club member, suffers an injury or damage to their property and they feel that this is the fault of the club or its members, they may take legal action against the club or the members involved. If they can prove that the club and/or individual is responsible, then the club or member may be ordered to compensate them and this cost can usually be covered by public and products liability insurance. Most State Federations require member clubs to carry Public Liability Insurance to protect the club including office bearers, walks leaders, members and, in turn the State Federation.

The Public Liability Policy is designed to pay, by way of compensation on behalf of the Insured (the club), all sums which the Insured shall become legally liable to pay in respect to injury and or damage as a result of an occurrence in connection with the insured activities of the club, subject to the terms, conditions and exclusions of the policy. This Policy currently provides a Limit of Liability - \$20,000,000 for any one occurrence.

Associations Liability Insurance

The Bushwalking Australia Association's Liability policy protects office bearers, committee members and general members of incorporated organisations (i.e. clubs, state peak bodies and Bushwalking Australia) from being personally pursued for 'wrongful acts' that lead to claims against either the affiliate member organisation, the member/office bearer personally, or both. There have been considerable claims made in Australia against individuals for wrongful acts made in running of an association which have seen personal assets of members and office bearers put at stake. The Association's Liability cover gives members peace of mind that should they make a financial decision in carrying out their official duties that results in an action against them, they will be covered subject always to the terms, conditions and exclusions of the policy.

The office bearers, committee members and general members of an incorporated club affiliated with their state peak bushwalking body, and that have Public Liability insurance are automatically covered by this policy. The cost of this policy is met from Bushwalking Australia annual affiliation fees.

Affiliation Fees

Affiliation fees also cover the cost of Bushwalking NSW's and Bushwalking Australia's general administrative costs, including wages, rent and website management.

Costs

We pay a total of \$10.94 (this year) in insurance and affiliation fees per member per year, which is around 20 cents per week.

Walking the ACT Border

I intend to walk around the ACT border in October to raise funds for the ACT's peak environment organisation, the Conservation Council ACT Region.

The walk takes in some of the ACT's roughest and most beautiful country, but it also includes some relatively easy sections. I plan to complete it over 21 consecutive days.

Walkers can participate either for a part day, a full day, or over a number of days, as the border does have a range of access points where people could join or leave the walk.

While the walk has been completed a few times previously, none of these have achieved it in a single batch of successive days.

This walk will be exciting, challenging, and will allow those participating to experience parts of the ACT less travelled and, for the wider community, to gain a better understanding of the heritage and environmental diversity of the ACT.

So, is this something you might be interested in? It would be great if you were one of walkers on any of the stages but any support that you could provide would be welcomed.

As background, I am the president of the Conservation Council which, like many community organisations, is struggling financially. I have been heavily involved in the ACT's environment movement since moving here in 1988.

I am also an experienced bushwalker, with a special liking for long distance treks.

I'm contactable via my mobile 0410 875 731 or rod.blackdog@gmail.com.

Rod Griffiths

Madeira

There were only 8 on this walking trip as several pulled out because of vertigo risks.

For the first time ever, John hired a local guide to ensure that the group avoided any bad vertigo walks. The guide also knew which buses to catch and where to get on and off, thus saving a lot of research and making navigation a breeze.

He guided the walkers on 11 of the 13 possible walking days at a cost of about 5 euro per person per day - an absolute bargain.

The local buses were used for all of the walks. Most walks were along levadas. Rainfall is mainly in the mountains and irrigation water is brought down to the farms along canals called levadas (this word for an aqueduct is unique to Madeira). Walking along these is easy but getting to and from them is often on steep paths. A couple of the photos on the next page clearly show levadas.

The group used one of the other two days to look at Funchal and relax, and on the other day did a bus tour of the island using the public buses. John led his only walk on this day, about 2 hours walking down to Porto Moniz at the north-western tip of the island.

A holiday on Madeira is not expensive, with buses being cheap and covering most of the island, meals were inexpensive and everybody was looked after very well in the hotel.

Everybody enjoyed themselves - see the photos on the next page.

Thanks must go to John for once again arranging this trip and for introducing Club members to another part of the world in his usual style and without any fuss.

Anonymous.



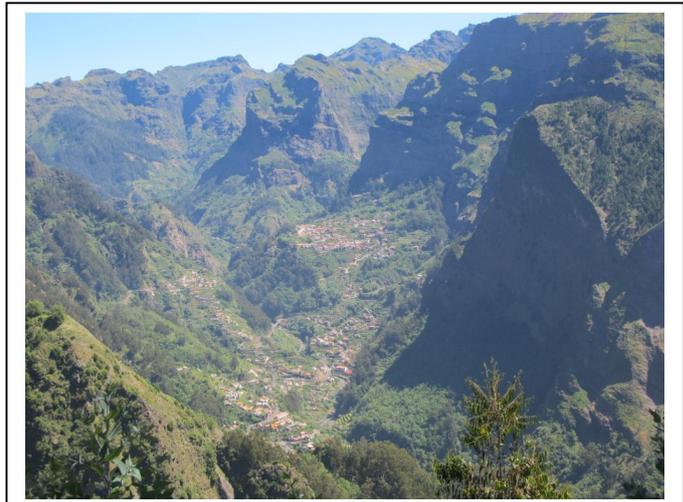
Levada (Madeira)



Another Levada



Porto Moniz (Madeira)



Nuns Valley (Madeira)



Blue Gums on Madeira



Funchal (Madeira)

This 'n' That (President's pontifications)

Work is under way on improvements to our website. The aim is to make it more user friendly and therefore more used. If you wish to put forward any suggestions please send them to a member of the committee.

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We have responded to an invitation to comment on draft Australian Adventure Activity Standards by putting in a submission which was settled after consideration by the committee and consultation with members. We also joined with the CBC and the NPA in writing to the Chief Minister of the ACT to seek an exemption for clubs. The Chief Minister has since responded acknowledging that 'ACT based bushwalking clubs have their own standards or guidelines appropriate to their duty of care' but encouraging us to 'use these activity standards as an aid when reviewing' our risk management frameworks.

Note: At a subsequent meeting of the Recreation Users Stakeholder Group, we were given assurances that:

- 1) there will be no regulation implementing the standards in the ACT; and
- 2) the definition of 'dependent' is being revised to take account of comments received in our submission.

This takes things further than the Chief Minister's letter and represents, I think, a good result.

The Chief Minister's hope that we would use the standards, when finalised, as a reference document when we next review our own rules etc. was repeated.

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On a recent walk on the Three Capes Track in Tasmania, which coincided almost to the day with that of some other club members, I learnt some interesting statistics and stories - in its first 18 months of operation, the track has attracted more than 16,000 walkers; the first track to Cape Pillar was pioneered by members of the Hobart Bushwalking Club; the track was constructed to relieve pressure on the Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair Track and its design and the design of the huts took account of comments on that track.

Peter Ford

Conclusion

We hope you've enjoyed this newsletter and, as always, we'd be very happy to consider items from you for inclusion in the next newsletter - these can be emailed to walks@brindabellabushwalking.org.au