

Brindabella Bushwalking Club

DRAFT MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at St Margaret's Uniting Church, HACKETT ACT 2602
on Sunday 10th September, 2023 at 2:00 pm

Meeting commenced at 2:00 pm with Prue Deacon, Vice-President, in the Chair and 38 members having signed the attendance sheet. Copies of the draft minutes of the 2022 AGM, the agenda for the 2023 AGM, and Committee reports were distributed at the meeting as were the proposed constitutional changes and the Explanatory Memorandum.

Agenda Item:

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Margitta Acker, Peter & Shirley Aitchison*, Lou Alaimo, Peter Boyland*, Norm Burmester, Richard Calver, Anne Campbell*, Robin Chapple*, Bob Chittenden*, Elizabeth Daly, Alan Doolan, Janet Duncan, Margaret Dunkley, Caryl Finlayson, Colleen & Monty Fox*, Bill & Deborah Gibson, Kathy Handel, Sharon Johns*, Robyn Kelly*, Judy Leijins, Gary & Anneli Lynch, Heather McLoughlin, Maria Magdic, Karen Moore, Penny Moyes, Eric & Pat Pickering, Suzanne Sherwood, Joy Stone, Wendy Thompson*, Ian Tucker, Brigitta Wimmer.

* Indicates Proxy Vote received

2. Acceptance of Minutes of 2022 AGM

- There were no amendments to the draft 2022 AGM Minutes.

Motion: "That the minutes of the AGM held on Sunday 28th August, 2022 be accepted."
Proposed: Peter Dalton. *Seconded:* Peter Ford. **Carried.**

3. Business arising from the Minutes.

- There were no matters arising from the Minutes of the 2022 AGM.
- The Vice-President mentioned that five Club members had passed away during the year and they will be remembered by many:-
 - Judy Grant
 - Yvonne Scales
 - Robert (Bob) Stewart
 - Ann Tedder
 - Stewart Holman

4. President's Report [see Appendix A]

The President highlighted the two major issues that had occupied the Committee during the year namely a substantial revision of the Club's constitution brought about by changes to the ACT legislation governing associated incorporations, and processes for considering the granting of Honorary Life Memberships.

Members of the Committee had provided input to the ACT government sponsored “Namadgi Walking Trail” study emphasising the need for upgrading of tracks and facilities as well as measures to protect the environment from too much development.

Due to a small number of injury incidents on walks during this year, which were all handled competently by the walk leader at the time, additional guidance and education on how to handle and report on such situations had been conveyed to all members through the BBC Newsletter.

The President thanked all Committee members for their commitment and efforts during the year and gave special thanks to retiring members David Wardle and Prue Deacon for their contribution over the last 3 years as Walks Officer and Vice-President respectively. He apologised for his and Deborah’s absence from the AGM due to their overseas travels.

<p><i>Motion:</i> “That the President’s Report for 2022- 23 be accepted.” <i>Proposed:</i> Peter Wellman. <i>Seconded:</i> Ralph Seccombe. Carried.</p>
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5. Walks Officer’s Report [see Appendix B]

The Walks Officer reported that it had been another successful activity year for the Club with a significant increase in member participation in all Club activities. He drew attention to changes in the way members participate in walks with a strong preference for Wednesday walks while weekend walks have seen a decrease in numbers. He put this down to weekend family commitments taking precedence while midweek walks are easier to schedule into members’ busy lives.

The Walks Officer highlighted the many varied and interesting walks held every Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday at a range of levels of difficulty both within the ACT and further afield, with the Easy Wednesday Walk (now scheduled every Wednesday) proving extremely popular. There had been many trips away this year but the Walks Officer would like to see more consistency in the way walks undertaken on away trips are reported – some leaders opting to just fill in a single Walks Report for the whole trip away while others filled out a Walks Report for every walk. This had led to some underreporting of total walks undertaken.

The Walks Officer reported with some relief that the re-opening of Orroral Valley after a closure of several years enabling many more walks to be possible in this favourite area. He commended the hard work and enthusiasm of the many experienced leaders, joined this year by some new names, whose commitment to lead both new and familiar walks provides a fundamental service to the continued existence of the Club.

The Walks Officer was particularly appreciative of the hard work put in by the Walks sub-committee members for their liaison with leaders to provide such a varied program of walks. He also thanked the two retiring Emergency Officers, Colin Boreham and Doug Finlayson for their service in this important role over many years and announced that both himself and John Ellis (both past Walks Officers) would take on this responsibility for 2023-24.

Lastly the Walks Officer put to the members present at the AGM a recommendation by the Committee that the Club cease printing and posting the Walks and Social Program with effect from the current program. He noted that the majority of members already receive the Program in digital form, and Wednesday walkers and those attending social events also receive their notifications electronically indicating that most members have access to a computer. He also emphasised the time consuming nature and difficulties faced by the Walks Officer in formatting the Program in a way that was suitable for a commercial printer when there were always last minute changes. He stressed that should a member face genuine difficulty in accessing a digital Program alternative arrangements would be made to ensure they received a copy.

Motion: 'That the Walks Officer's Report for 2022-23 be accepted.'
Proposed: Peter Ford. *Seconded:* Michael Clisby. **Carried.**

6. Treasurer's Report [see Appendix C]

The Treasurer's Report and attached Financial Statements indicated that the Club's financial status is very healthy showing a final balance of \$20,537.97 a surplus of \$1,378.37 over the previous financial year.

Income from subscriptions was higher this year due to a larger number of new members joining while expenses were also higher due to higher administrative costs and website/IT expenditure. The largest expense item continues to be the Club's Insurance premium and Affiliation fees paid to Bushwalking NSW.

The Committee recommended that there be no change to subscription fees for 2023-24 while transport costs will also remain unchanged at 14 cents per kilometre per passenger. The rate for transport costs will be kept under regular review by the Committee.

The Club's financial records were audited again by Louise Dalton and the Treasurer extended her thanks to Louise for her prompt and thorough review of the Club's financial statements.

Motion: "That the Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements for 2022-23 be accepted." *Proposed:* Lana Burmester. *Seconded:* David Wardle. **Carried.**

7. Membership Secretary's Report [Appendix D]

The Membership Secretary presented statistics showing the total number of members now stood at 459 representing 444 adult members and 15 children and indicating an overall increase in members from 442 in the previous year.

There have been more new and returning members recorded this year but, this has been balanced by fewer people electing to not to renew their membership.

The Membership Secretary advised of a change in the way emails are sent out to members. The Club's email list is now used by nominated Committee members instead of the database.

Members were cautioned not to renew their memberships for 2023-24 before receiving a reminder email. Some members inadvertently paid for their membership twice last year and rather than processing a refund the amount paid has been kept as a credit against this year's subscription. These members will not receive a reminder email as they are already financial members.

For those not intending to renew their membership the Membership Secretary requested they notify her quickly so that their details can be deleted from the database. They should also notify the manager of the Wednesday Walks list to avoid receiving unnecessary emails.

The Membership Secretary noted the disruption caused by some internet providers ceasing to provide ongoing email services and hoped that both she and the Wednesday Walks manager had been contacted by affected members to change their details.

Motion: "That the Membership Secretary's Report for 2022-23 be accepted."

Proposed: Deidre Shaw. *Seconded:* Lana Burmester. **Carried.**

8. Secretary's Report [see Appendix E]

The Secretary outlined the areas that the Committee considered in the three meetings held as normal during the year which were largely occupied by discussions on the proposed changes to the Club's constitution as well as processes for considering the granting of Honorary Life Memberships. A small working group comprising Peter Dalton, Peter Ford and Julie Pettit was established in January 2023 to research and consider the changes necessitated by recent ACT government legislative changes to the *Associations Incorporations Act 1991* and the accompanying Model Rules. Our deliberations and suggestions were then considered by the Committee.

At the first meeting held on 8th November, 2022 the newly elected Committee discussed the need for more guidance for leaders in handling incidents on walks and the importance of filing Incident Reports. The difficulties faced by leaders in organising trips away was also discussed with regard to coping with participants with unknown and differing capabilities and accommodation needs.

Our second meeting on 1st February, 2023 focussed on proposed changes to the Club's constitution with the emphasis on disciplinary and dispute settling procedures and the membership paragraphs. We also discussed the future need for a printed Walks and Social Program and the difficulties faced by all Walks Officers in producing a printed Program.

The last meeting of the Committee, held on 18th July, 2023 considered a number of policy documents initiated by our Webmaster, Peter Dalton covering procedures for

nominating and considering submissions for Honorary Life Memberships and guides to the Webmaster's various tasks. The need for a printed Walks and Social Program was again discussed and the Committee decided to put a recommendation to the members at the AGM that printed Programs be ceased. Arrangements for the AGM were discussed with the package of documents to be sent out to all members at least 21 days before the meeting as required when constitutional changes are proposed. It was agreed that subscription fees and travel costs should remain unchanged if the decision to cease the printed and posted Program was agreed but should the recommendation not be agreed subscription fees would need to be increased for the printed Program option.

Motion: "That the Secretary's Report for 2022-23 be accepted."

Proposed: Davinia Wells. *Seconded:* Peter Wellman. **Carried.**

9. Social Convenor's Report [see Appendix F]

The Social Convenor outlined the many varied and interesting social activities that had been organised during the year with increasing participation by members whose continuing positive feedback was testament to how much they valued and enjoyed these occasions.

In the warmer months events were held nearly every month and included a lunch picnic on the October 2022 long weekend, and a Spring picnic later the same month. This was followed by a Christmas party in December at Jillian and Geoff Bellamy's home and a New Years Day picnic at Bowen Park with a breakfast outing at the same location later that month. February saw the annual Mt Ainslie sunset walk with another successful picnic in March at Molonglo Reach and our usual octogenarian/nonagenarian celebration at Weston Park in April. All were well attended and enjoyed by many members.

The Club held a Potluck Dinner in April which was a great evening with delicious food and a very interesting speaker, Jenny Horsfield a writer and historian who spoke about her interest in the landscape and human stories of the Canberra region.

During winter there was a morning coffee get together at The Courtyard Café, Old Parliament House in June and a most successful day long outing to Captains Flat in July for walks, a gallery visit and an organised lunch at the local Captains Flat Hotel.

Elaine thanked all those in the Social sub-Committee for their work in organising Club functions and to other members who help on an ad hoc basis.

Motion: "That the Social Secretary's Report for 2022-23 be accepted."

Proposed: Mary Lindsay. *Seconded:* Leigh Hermann. **Carried.**

10. Training & Development Officer's Report [see Appendix G]

The Training & Development Officer's report advised that the Walks Leaders' First Aid Course while not mandatory is highly recommended for all leaders. It is tailored to the requirements of the Club with regard to cost, specific bushwalking first aid information for our leaders, and with consideration given to the fact that the practical component should only take 1 full day to complete.

The nationally accredited course is conducted by Canberra First Aid, is open to all BBC members with leaders being funded by the Club while other members attending pay \$100 for the nationally accredited senior First Aid course. Ten people participated this year undertaking a compulsory online component followed by a half day practical session. This year's course proved to be better tailored to BBC needs than last year. Next year it may be possible to invite CBC and NPA members to attend also if spaces permit.

The annual Navigation and Leadership Course aimed at providing new and prospective leaders with necessary navigational skills is also not mandatory but highly recommended for leaders and new members who indicate a desire to become leaders. This year it was attended by ten participants and comprised a one-day introductory course on daylight terrestrial navigation training (map craft, compass, GPS etc) and the duties and responsibilities of a Walks Leader. This was followed up by training in a bush setting conducted in two groups by experienced leaders, Bob Chittenden and Bill Gibson. The next course is scheduled for a Tuesday in October/November and will be advised by email.

Motion: "That the Training & Development Officer's Report for 2022-23 be accepted."
Proposed: Ralph Seccombe. *Seconded:* Peter Wellman. **Carried.**

11. Newsletter Editor's Report [Appendix H]

The Newsletter Editor outlined the various categories of articles that had appeared in the monthly Newsletters over the past year. These included reports on club multi-day walks, individual walks or trips, news items on bushwalking issues, social news and other articles of bushwalking relevance.

One member pointed out that there should be another category added for "Jokes" for which our Editor is renowned.

The Editor noted the many members who had made contributions to the Newsletters and urged all members to consider submitting articles on any matters related to bushwalking.

Motion: "That the Newsletter Editor's Report for 2022-23 be accepted."
Proposed: John Ellis. *Seconded:* Lana Burmester. **Carried.**

12. Webmaster's Report [Appendix I]

The Webmaster informed members that while routine maintenance of the website is a continuing process new items are added such as each new Program and Newsletter at the same time as they are emailed to members. Trip reports that are new as well as policy documents such as the recent Honorary Life Membership Nomination Process are added to the "Resources for Members" page.

The Webmaster advised that the management of the website is not difficult to master and is easy to maintain. He urged any member who is interested in taking on the role to contact him.

Deidre Shaw queried why details on the Office Holders did not appear on the website. Peter Dalton advised that Office Holders' details are not listed separately but appear in the front of the Walks and Social Program which is on the website. The Vice-President also added that for privacy reasons details of Office Holders were not listed separately.

Motion: "That the Webmaster's Report for 2022-23 be accepted."
Proposed: Lana Burmester. *Seconded:* Sonja Weinberg. **Carried.**

13. Facebook Administrator's Report [Appendix J]

The Facebook Administrator highlighted the ongoing success of the Facebook Page which this year had over 883 likes and more than 1000 followers.

The Facebook Page provides members and others interested in the Club with information about walks and social events being conducted by the Club. The Administrator posts articles that she considers would be of interest to members, and the Facebook Page provides a useful contact point for answering queries about membership and other issues.

The Messaging/Inbox feature is also well utilised by both members and visitors mainly asking how to join the Club.

Heather expressed her appreciation for the contributions from members and followers with their walks and trip reports and photos.

The Facebook page continues to be a valuable means of advertising the Club and informing members and followers of upcoming walks and events. She encouraged members to keep up the flow of photos, with or without a report on walks, whether with the Club or multi-day walks independent of BBC especially interstate ones as they may be useful and informative for members planning trips away.

Motion: "That the Facebook Administrator's Report for 2022-23 be accepted."
Proposed: David Wardle. *Seconded:* Lana Burmester. **Carried.**

14. Subscriptions

The Vice-President reminded members of the agreement at the 2018 AGM that the Executive Committee be given authority to regularly review and vary Transport Costs in accordance with the approved set methodology.

The Committee considered these costs against the background of current fuel costs over the last 6 months or so and has decided that the transport fee remain unchanged from 2022-23 rates at 14 cents per passenger per kilometre effective from 1 July 2023.

This rate is reflected in the July-December Walks and Social Program and will be kept under ongoing review in the coming months with further changes implemented if necessary under the agreed methodology. This is based on rates being reviewed and set during the calendar year rather than the membership year so that the current rate can be advised as each new Walks Program is issued.

As proposed by the Walks Officer in his report to the 2023 AGM the printed and posted Walks and Social Program is to be ceased with effect from 31 December 2023 and only a digital copy is to be distributed to members (with special arrangements to be put in place for any member genuinely not able to access a digital copy of the Program). This was agreed by members at this AGM in carrying the Walks Officer's report.

Therefore, the annual subscription rate for single members for 2023-24 remains at the 2022-23 level of \$20. The subscription fee for families of \$35 also remains unchanged.

If necessary, increases or decreases in fees may be proposed at next year's AGM warranted.

Motion: "That, as recommended by the Executive Committee, and noted in the Treasurer's report the rates for subscriptions for 2023-24 remain unchanged at \$35 (family) and \$20 (single). Transport costs are to remain unchanged at 14 cents/per person/per kilometre."

Proposed: Prue Deacon. *Seconded:* Peter Dalton. **Carried.**

15. Other Business

Proposed Constitutional Changes

The Vice-President appointed David Wardle as the Returning Officer to conduct the vote on the proposed changes to the Club's constitution and turned the position of Chair of the meeting over to him.

The Returning Officer reminded attendees that the proposed changes to the constitution were sent out to all members in a package of documents for the AGM in early August and additional copies were available at this meeting for members to refresh their memories. He explained that the proposed changes are aimed at meeting the requirements of recent

changes to the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991* (ACT) and the accompanying Model Rules, and also to simplify the Club's constitution and make it easier to understand.

For a more comprehensive explanation of the proposed changes members were referred to the documents received by them entitled – “Draft Proposed Constitutional Changes AGM 2023” and “Explanatory Memorandum _Constitutional Changes.” The Returning Officer asked members present if there were any matters they wished to raise concerning these changes.

A Special Resolution was then put to the members with a show of hands indicating those “in favour” or “not in favour”

Special Resolution:- “That changes to the constitution of the Brindabella Bushwalking Club Inc. as proposed be accepted.”

Proposed: David Wardle. *Seconded:* Peter Ford. *Result:* **Carried** (100% in favour)

Special Resolution 1:- Result	In favour	Not in favour
Votes from meeting attendees	38	0
Votes by proxy	11	0
No. attending and voting (38 at meeting, 11 by proxy)	49	0
% votes	100%	0%

[Note:- Associations Incorporation Act 1991, Part 4 para.70 states:- “A special resolution of an incorporated association is taken to be a special resolution if –

- (a) it is passed at a general meeting of the association, being a meeting of which at least 21 days notice, accompanied by notice of intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution, has been given to the members of the association; and
- (b) it is passed by at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the votes of those members of the association who, being entitled to vote, vote in person or, if the rules of the association permit voting by proxy, vote by proxy at the meeting.”]

The Returning Officer returned the Chair to the Vice-President to introduce Agenda Item 16 – Election of Officers.

16. Election of Officers

All positions were declared vacant. David Wardle was appointed as Returning Officer to conduct the election of Office Bearers and to seek expressions of interest for participation in the Walks and Social sub-Committees.

Prue Deacon (Vice-President) and David Wardle (Walks Officer) are stepping down from their roles after several years of service in these positions. The Committee thanks them for their dedication and commitment to their roles during their tenure.

All other current Committee members have agreed to stay on in their positions for the coming year, however the Returning Officer emphasised that it was open to any member to nominate for any of the Committee positions.

Office Bearers

Nominations for the following positions were received:-

Position	Person	Nominated by	Seconded by
President	Bill Gibson	Peter Ford	Julie Pettit
Vice-President	Robyn Gallagher	Prue Deacon	Mary Lindsay
Walks Officer	Leigh Hermann	David Wardle	Prue Deacon
Treasurer	Lana Burmester	Davinia Wells	Elaine Atkinson
Secretary/ Public Officer	Julie Pettit	Davinia Wells	Elaine Atkinson
Membership Secretary	Davinia Wells	Prue Deacon	David Wardle
Training Officer	Bob Chittenden	Sheree Bamforth	Lucinda Ward
Social Convenor	Elaine Atkinson	Davinia Wells	David Wardle
Committee members [3]			
• Webmaster	Peter Dalton	Lana Burmester	Peter Ford
• Facebook Administrator	Heather McLoughlin	Lana Burmester	Peter Ford
• BBC Newsletter editor	Peter Ford	Heather McLoughlin	Peter Dalton

Nominations were called from the floor for each of the above positions but none was received. All the above members were duly elected to the positions as indicated.

Other Officers [Non-official]

The Returning Officer thanked the outgoing Emergency Officers – Colin Boreham and Doug Finlayson for their many years of service in this role.

Emergency Officers:- David Wardle and John Ellis have accepted the roles of Emergency Officers.

Public Officer:- Julie Pettit agreed to continue in this role.

Sub-Committees

Walks sub-Committee:- Expressions of interest were called from the meeting and the following members were appointed:

Leigh Hermann [Walks Officer]	Convenor
Leigh Hermann/ Ian Tucker	All weekend walks
Kathy Handel	Easy/Medium Wednesday Walks
Peter Wellman	Medium/Hard Wednesday Walks
Robyn Kelly/ Colleen Fox	Easy Wednesday Walks

Social sub-Committee:- Expressions of interest were called from the meeting and the following members were appointed:

Elaine Atkinson [Social Convenor]

Colleen Fox

Wendy Thompson

Mark Hopkins

Ian Tucker

Julie Pettit

Lorena Nesa

Gayle Buttrose

Jillian Bellamy

17. Closure of Meeting

Prue Deacon formally took over the chair and thanked members for attending the meeting.

Prue thanked David Wardle for acting as Returning Officer for both the constitutional changes and the election of Committee members, and congratulated the elected members of the Committee and appointed members of the two sub-committees for agreeing to serve the Club in this capacity. This was supported by acclamation.

Peter Dalton moved a Vote of Thanks to David Wardle and Prue Deacon for the three years of service each had given to the Club in the roles of Walks Officer and Vice-President respectively. This was acknowledged by acclamation.

The position of auditor for the Club would be the responsibility of the incoming Committee executive to decide.

Meeting closed at 3:15 pm and was followed by afternoon tea.

Julie Pettit

Secretary