Brindabella Bushwalking Club

January 2026 Newsletter

Issue 102

Artefacts in the smaller Mt Ainslie quarry

In this issue

Tallaganda Ramble on Sun 30 Nov

From the President

I hope you all had a wonderful 2025. There were certainly some great walks on offer throughout the year. With the January-June 2026 program just released I am sure there are plenty of walks for you to enjoy this year.

I would like to thank Leigh, our Walks Officer, for putting the program together. It is a wonderful choice of walks with plenty on offer for all of us. There is a lot of effort and cooperation involved in compiling a walks program. Firstly, and most importantly, leaders have to volunteer to lead walks! Invariably, there will be gaps to fill and so the walks sub-committee members have to find leaders for those dates.

Secondly, the Walks Officer has to shuffle the walks around so that there isn't a run of easy walks, for example, and no medium ones. This obviously needs the agreement of the leaders involved.

Next, our proof readers check and edit the wording and details of the walks on the program before it is finalised and distributed.

I would finally like to thank the leaders who volunteer to lead walks. Without them, we wouldn't have a program. They volunteer their time to lead walks so that we, the members, can enjoy the day walks and trips away.

At present there is a position vacant on the committee for a Training and Development Officer. We need to fill this position so that the club can train new leaders. We only conduct one leadership/navigation course and one first aid course per year, and other club members assist with the conduct of these. If you feel you can help in this role, then please talk to one of the committee members.

I hope that you have a wonderful 2026.

See you on a walk soon.

Wayne

Facebook

Our Facebook Manager regularly posts photos, walk reports and information about upcoming activities.
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 our Facebook Manager at
facebook@brindabellabushwalking.org.au

BBC Website

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

Swiss Via Alpina – Bernese Oberland Section

Bill and Deborah Gibson

The Bernese Oberland is the highest region in the Canton of Bern, Switzerland, and the central "high peaks" section of the Via Alpina. It features a mix of high-alpine passes, deep valleys, and traditional villages. We walked this over eight days in early September 2025. No doubt the hardest walk we have ever done.

Engleberg to Engstlenalp - 13km +1300m -470m.

First day. Up promptly and in need of a good walk, having taken full advantage of the "all you can eat" on our visit to the Lindt Chocolate Factory the day prior. The day is sunny and warm, and, as it is the last Sunday of summer, there are lots of locals out. The track takes us up through lush green meadows and high pastures, criss-crossing under three ascending levels of chairlifts (very popular with the locals), until we reach Jochpass (2207m) from which there are magnificent views into the Engleberg Valley. A good introduction/warmup with no incidents and although weary, not sore/injured. Treated ourselves to a Hot Chocolate and an Erdinger Weissbeir (Bill)... Yum. At the hotel, the concierge feigned only able to speak German (mischievous joke on Bill) but our room was spacious and had a lovely outlook over the surrounding mountains.

Engleberg Valley

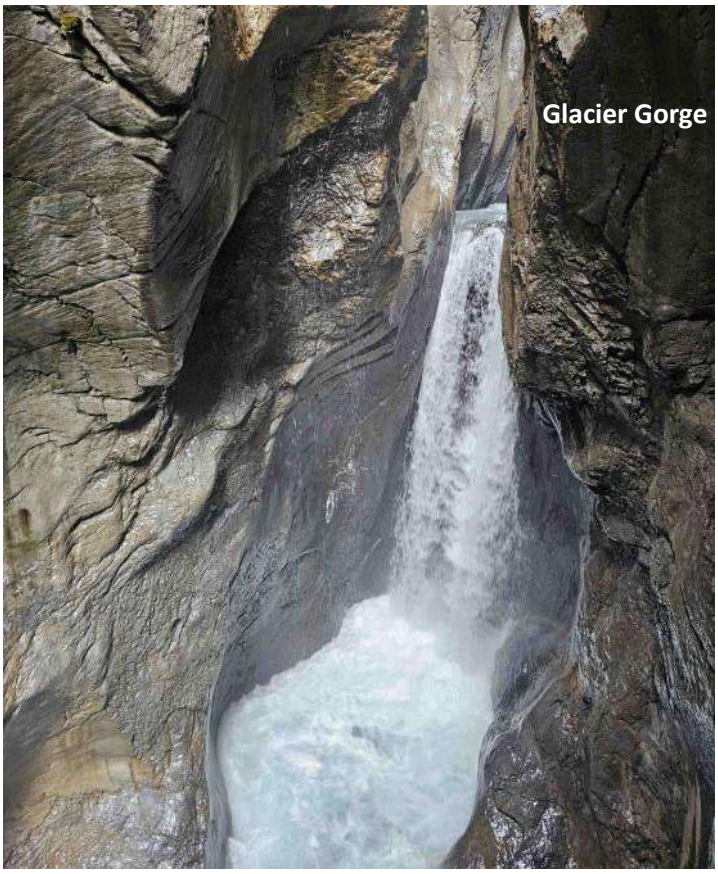
Engstlenalp to Meiringen – 23km +690m -1940m

Big walk from Engstlenalp to Meiringen - almost did Bill in, he felt a twinge in his Achilles on the 1900m, gravelly descent, but we continued on. The mountain scenery was stunning. There were two options for this part of the walk, a high path along the ridge or through the Gental valley. Although it was cloudy, we chose the high route which was a good choice as the high clouds cleared quickly, whilst the valley below remained in mist all day. The mountain views we had were expansive, and we were treated to the sight of three Griffin Vultures (2m wingspan) soaring at the top of our walk. These magnificent birds are slowly returning to the Alps after a re-introduction program launched in the 1990's, following their complete disappearance from the area in the first half of the 20th century—photo on next page.

Swiss Vulture

Meiringen to Grindelwald - 22km +1950m -500m

Although Bill's Achilles was sore, we continued on (with the aid of some heavy pain-killers). To save 3km and 220m elevation we caught the funicular on the outskirts of Meiringen. The funicular, which is over 100 years old, takes you up to the top of the Reichenback Falls, a 250m cascade where Sherlock Holmes wrestled with his nemesis, Professor Moriarty, and both were thought to have fallen to their deaths. After viewing the falls, we walked up through wooded forest for a while, before reaching the small village of Rosenlaui. Here we took a diversion to visit the Rosenlaui Glacier Gorge, a World Heritage site, where a 550m path has been blasted into the rock to allow visitors to walk up through this very narrow gorge, formed by large volumes of glacial melt. The water was flowing furiously, and thunderously.



Glacier Gorge

On top of the world

To avoid another long descent like the one that caused Bill's Archilles injury, we decided to add a few more kilometres to the day, and an extra 400m ascent by walking along the ridge to the high point at First, where we caught the Gondola down to Grindelwald. A good decision as we would have got into Grindelwald quite late. Still, the day ended up being 25km and +1950m -500m, certainly the most elevation we have done in a day.

Grindewald to Alpiglen – 6.6km +700m -130m

Today was a rest day but we decided to do some of day 4's climb so we could catch public transport to the revised start of the walk the next day, thus shortening what was going to be another mammoth climbing day. We walked up from the Grindewald Valley floor to Alpiglen, mostly on road, and caught an almost antique looking train back down to enjoy an afternoon of city sightseeing and rest. Another nice day, cooler in the morning while we were walking and warmer and sunny in the afternoon.

Alpiglen to Wengen – 16km +860m -1180m

We caught the train back to Alpiglen and then walked on to Wengen taking a side-trip out to Mannlichen (2342m) where you get a panorama of the Mountains Eiger, Monch and Jungfrau (the third tallest mountain in Europe), all around 4000-4200m high. Spectacular views of these imposing snow-covered peaks from all along the track today. We chose a less-used path down from Mannlichen to Wengen which was very steep and narrow, but on track rather than road. Lovely weather except for the last 20 minutes when it started raining.

Mannlichen—view of the higher peaks

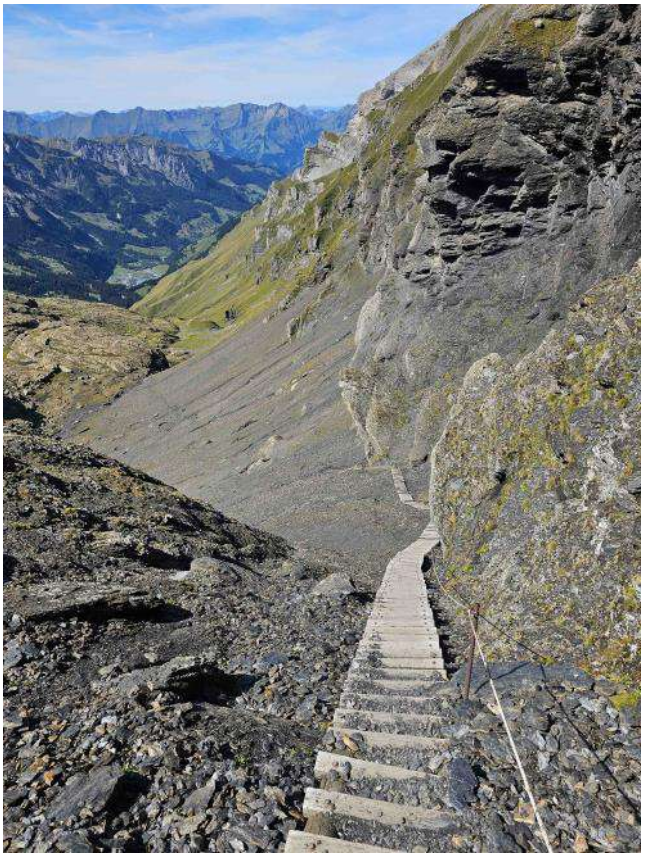
Wengen to Murren – 12km +1010m -640m

Walked from Wengen to Murren via Lauterbrunnen. A walk down -500m (elevation) from our hotel to the valley floor (Lauterbrunnen) and then pretty well immediately 1000m back up the other side . It was raining almost all the time. In Lauterbrunnen we read that J. R. R. Tolkien had travelled through the area in 1911 and that the Lauterbrunnen Valley was his inspiration for Rivendell in Lord of the Rings, and that the construction work underway on the Jungfrau railway at the time (still the highest railway station in Europe at 3,454 metres) gave life to the Mines of Moria. The walk was steep and slippery but we took great care and no incidents occurred. The sun started to make an appearance late in the day to give us glimpses of how massive the surrounding mountains really are. We could see (up in the clouds) Mannlichen away over the other side of the valley, where we had walked down from the previous day - it looked very high and extremely steep/cliff like, so clearly, we did well.

Murren to Griesalp – 18km +1190m -1410m

We took the higher route via Suppenboden (1850m) and Schiltalp (1946m), as it promised memorable views over Murren as well as being a grassy traverse. This took longer the views were rewarding, and the softer walking underfoot was appreciated. Nonetheless, of course always climbing. The route rejoins the normal route at Rotstockhutte (2039m), after which it gets much steeper, with the climb to the col Sefinafurgga (2612m) in steep zigzags on shale/scree, finishing with a 50m of the ascent on wooden steps with fixed ropes to hold onto. At the col you get your final views of the Eiger (3970m) Monch (4107m) and Jungfrau (4158m) – just stunning as you seem to be looking down on these massifs from on high.

When you go over the col, you are presented with some 260 wooden stairs to start descending a very, very, steep and narrow scree section. Care had to be taken to not slip (or to get up too much speed). The second half of the descent into Griesalp was across rocky paths though high grass meadows, so we encountered numerous stock grazing, often using the track as a resting spot, making us walk around them. Only one incident when Deborah was charged at by a mother protecting her calf. The hotel we stayed in was cold and when we asked about room heating, we were politely told it wouldn't be cold enough to consider turning the central heating on for weeks yet.



Griesalp to Kandersteg – 16.5km +1480m -1224m

This was our final day, and the most demanding of the trip, but very rewarding. As we got closer to the highest point of our entire walk, the Hohturli col (2778m), we felt we were truly on top of the world. The walk up was on rough narrow paths, scree and moraine, with the last bit up 500 wooden steps. We were very pleased to eventually reach the col and rested/ate lunch there, enjoying great views over the glacier, before walking the last 50m up to the high point at Blumlisalphutte (2840m), a small hut with a café that was surprisingly busy. We then started the long steep descent, descending 800m over 3-4km, taking it slow, but still experiencing numerous slips. Part way down we realised we would get in after dark if we tried to do the full 1700 metre descent, so decided to skirt around the lake to the gondola at Oeschinen which takes you down the last -400m into Kandersteg. We got to the gondola around 5:30 with the last one down at 6pm – it was crowded so we had to wait in a long queue but it was worth it!

The Traditions to understand on a BBC Bushwalk

We've had quite a few new members join in the last couple of months and it is always refreshing to see them come along on their first bushwalks with us, but we recognise it can be a little daunting initially, so here is an introduction.

Ask the Leader. If you are unsure about your ability, the location of the meeting place or anything at all about the walk, ask the leader beforehand. They are always happy to chat about what they have planned. Read the walk description carefully - the distance quoted is not the only indicator of the difficulty of the walk.

Be at the meeting place a good 10 minutes before the walk departure as it takes time to organise people into cars and to brief the drivers. Double-check that you have everything you will need on the walk, especially plenty of water - one litre minimum (more in summer) and a good shady hat.

What to expect on the Walk. At the start of the walk, it is usual for everyone to get into a bit of a circle and introduce themselves. You won't remember all of the names but it is a good start. The leader will explain the walk and often get a map out to show you the route planned. The leader will appoint someone to be at the back of the group to keep an eye on everything if the numbers warrant it, so watch that you don't get behind this person. If anybody needs a slower pace, the tail-end walker will alert the leader. If you need to go to the toilet, only do so when the group has stopped and do let someone know so that they can watch out for your return; otherwise, you risk being separated from the rest of the group – i.e. lost. Whenever you leave the track for any reason leave your pack on the edge of the track so it is always known where you are.

Breaks. There will be a morning tea break around 10.30 or at an interesting view point, whichever comes first. You'll probably stop for about 15 - 20 minutes, enough for a cup of tea or coffee. It's much the same at lunchtime with more likely up to a 30-minute stop and more tea and coffee. Unless the description says otherwise, you will need to bring lunch. Usually there will be plenty of trees around for more discreet matters, but always let someone know. Don't worry how often you need to stop to go to the toilet – you haven't had enough to drink if you don't need to go!

This is not the time to let the leader know that you have to be back at a specific time to collect grandchildren, or to prepare dinner for your expected evening guests. While the leader can let you know of a rough expected time of return, certainly don't bank on it as anything can happen. If you have to be back at a very specific time, leave your walk for another day.

Some people feel that it is best not to chat on a walk about politics, sex or religion, but hey it would only leave one's own health to talk about, so don't worry. The final point is to always humour the leader because they are always right, even though they can often come out with some of the most outlandish thoughts or statements. Just listen politely and carry on. Enjoy your walk and always ask if you have thoughts or questions.

First Aid Kits. All walkers must carry a first aid kit, to cater for their own personal needs and preferences; e.g. aspirin instead of paracetamol. See the **Rules for Walkers** and **enjoying Bushwalking** on the BBC website for more details.

Enjoy the scenery, the exercise and the socialising – you'll feel much better for all of these.

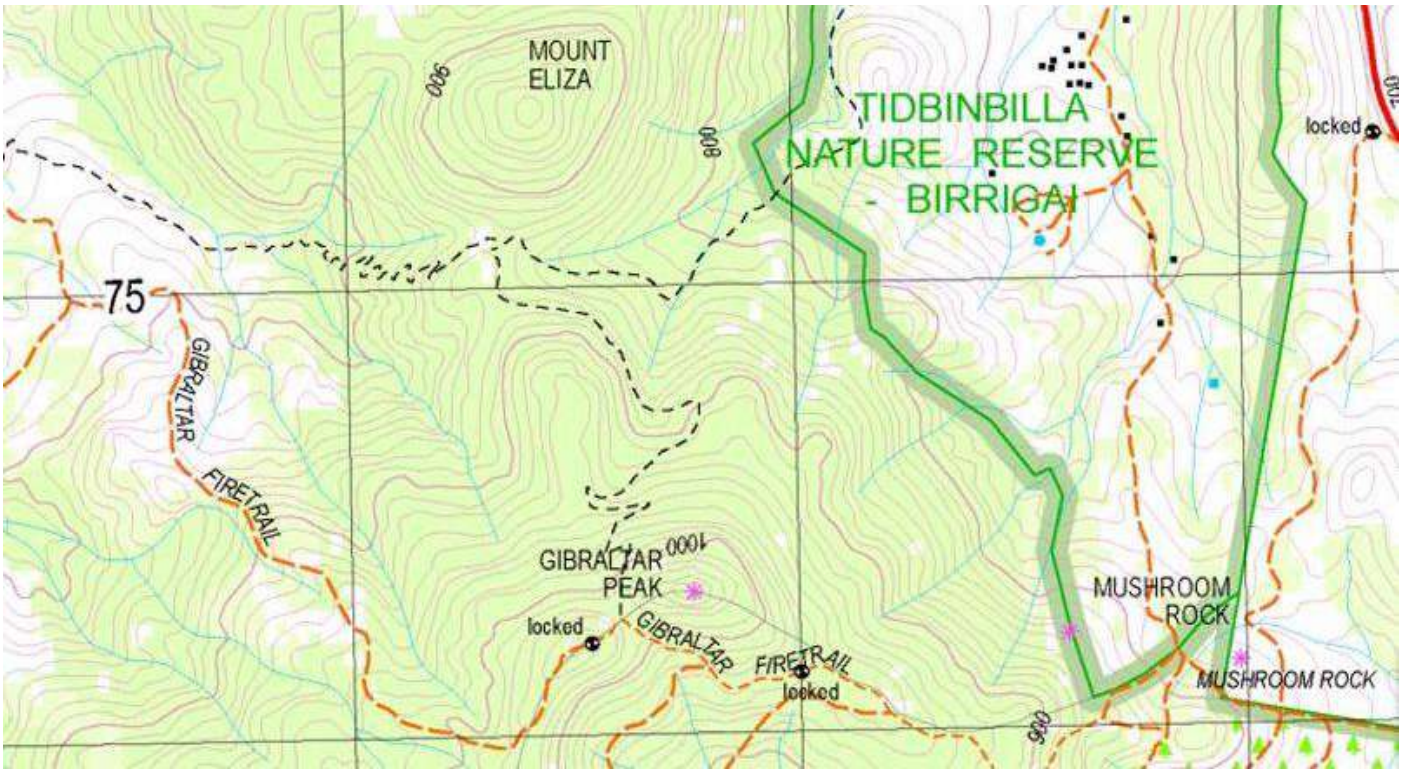
Oh, and at the end of the walk, don't forget to thank the leader!

So many people are quick to judge these days.

I can tell just by looking at them.

Where to get Australian topographic maps for Bushwalking

[Courtesy Caro Ryan at lotsafreshair.com]



NSW and ACT Topographic Maps

[NSW Spatial Services](#) – Topographic Maps
[NSW SIX maps eTopo](#) – Topographic Maps
[NSW Topographic Map Catalogue](#)

QLD Topographic Maps

[QTopo](#) (current)
[SunMap](#) (old series, with lots of good info!)

VICtorian Topographic Maps

[Vicmap](#) (general info & options)
[Vicmap Viewer](#) (purchase print or digital maps)
[Vicmap Viewer App](#) (in-app purchase digital maps)

Western Australia WA Topographic Maps

Landgate (WA Gov) (purchase PDF for printing)
WA topographic map catalogue

TASmanian Topographic Maps

Land Tasmania – Tasmap
Tasmap eShop (purchase printed and digital/ download products)
Tasmap 1:50,000 map catalogue
Tasmap Tourist/Recreation Map catalogue (eg: South Coast Track, Maria Is, Bruny Is, etc)

South Australia SA Topographic Maps

SA 1:50,000 map catalogue (only available for the southern part of the state, including Ikara/Flinders)
Mapland (SA Government retail arm)
Digital topographic maps via Avenza (navigation app)

Northern Territory NT Topographic Maps

Geoscience Australia 1:50,000 series
NT Geospatial Resources GIS tool

Visiting and walking in Malaysia

Malaysia consists of West Malaysia (Peninsular Malaysia) and East Malaysia (Malaysia Borneo).

There are 2 states in East Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak), and when people said they went to Borneo, it usually means East Malaysia. The rests of the states are all in West Malaysia, and that's where the capital and more advanced states are.

If you are interested in visiting Malaysia, for some short walks and sightseeing, maybe you could do the following (based on what I did recently).

Fly to KL and spend a few days there. Possible places to visit: Batu Caves, China Town, Pasar Seni (Central Market), KLCC, KL Tower, Thean Hou Temple, Muzeum Negara (National Museum), Botanical Garden. These are all near to city centre and you can take public transport to get there. If you want some walks, can go to Bukit Kiara which is not far from the city centre. Or if you want to visit a fishing village, you can visit Pulau Ketam (Crab Island) as day trip. (How to go to Pulau Ketam 2024 | What to do for a DAY TRIP - Where is Mai)

Some random websites you can check out if you want to know more:

Batu Caves: Everything You Need To Know BEFORE Visiting Here - Malaysia Uncovered

Homepage - Central Market Kuala Lumpur

If you want to see some nature and rainforests, you can go to Taman Negara National Park. There are various packages to choose from, or you can do a DIY. I did a 3d2n package from KL.

Full Guide To Taman Negara National Park [Must Read!] - Malaysia Uncovered

Taman Negara (National Park) | Taman Negara Travel

Canopy Walk in Teman Negara—Malaysia's largest National Park

From Taman Negara, I went to Cameron Highlands. Cameron Highlands is popular for its tea plantations. I think you can do some crazy walks there, but I only did a short walk on my own while there but it was an adventure with mud, ropes and ladders to get to the peak. I stayed for only 2 nights. The public transport there is very limited and would need a car to go to most places.

18 Best Places to Visit in Cameron Highlands (2025 Guide) - Travel Malaysia

From Cameron Highlands, you can go to Penang. Or if you skip Taman Negara and/or Cameron Highlands, you can go to Penang directly from KL (by train, bus or flight). If you take train, you will have to take a short ferry trip from the mainland to Penang Island. Places to visit in Penang include Bukit Bendera (Penang Hill), Kek Lok Si Temple, Penang NP, Penang Street Art, Batu Ferringghi Beach. I was only there for 3 nights and it was raining every day. Penang is also famous for its street food.

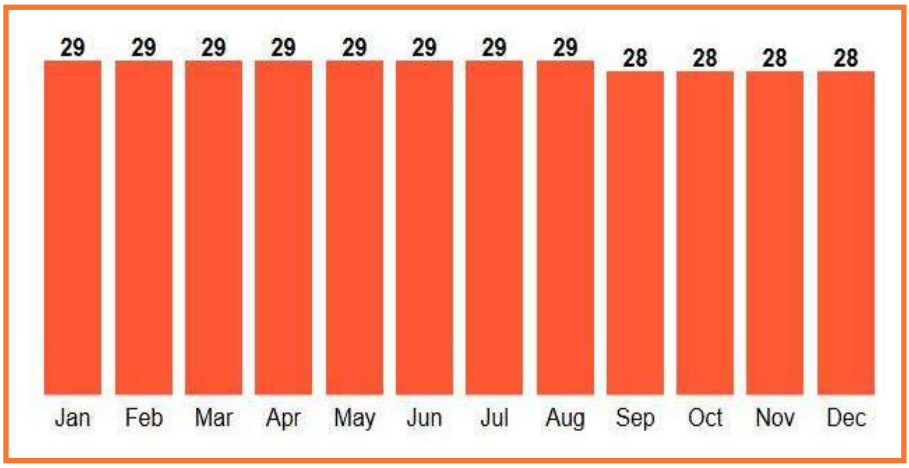
24 BEST Places to Visit in Penang (2025)

AMAZING things to do in Penang: your 2026 guide

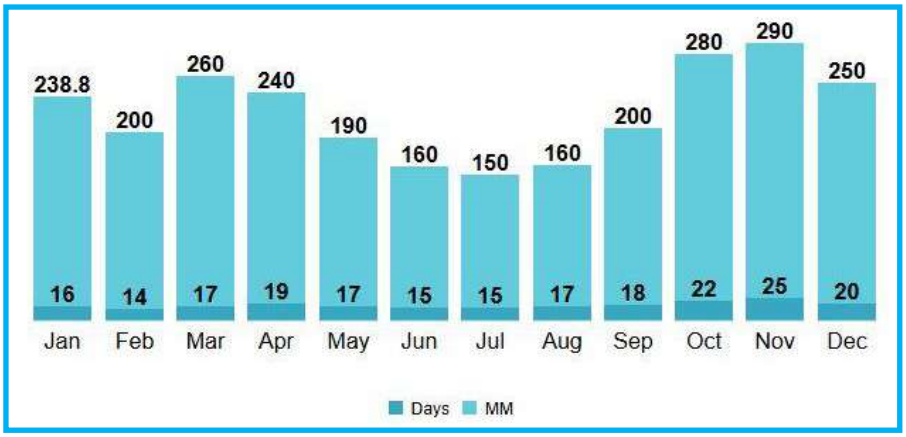
From Penang, you can take train/bus back to KL, or fly back to Australia from Penang (via KL).

There are other places to go in West Malaysia like Pulau Langkawi, Melaka, Ipoh etc. If you like beaches and snorkelling or scuba diving, there are few islands at the east coast of West Malaysia which are beautiful.

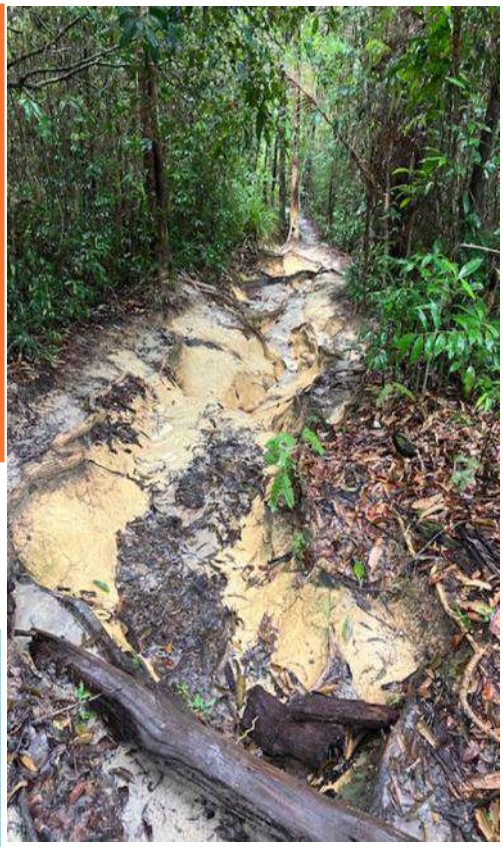
Malaysia is a tropical country, so it's hot, humid and **wet all year**. Best month to visit Malaysia depends on which part of Malaysia you plan to go. To give you an idea of average temperatures and rainfalls in KL, Malaysia:



Average daily maximum temperatures



Average daily rainfall



One of the trails in Taman Negara leading to a waterfall

In recent years I've travelled to, and walked in, most of the places mentioned above. These were mostly short walks, which the links describe. Malaysia is the wettest country in SE Asia, but the scenery is spectacular. Also, everything is relatively cheap compared to Australia (1 AUD = 2.7 MYR).

The following are photos I took on some of my walks.

Lam, Sen Fei

Batu Caves: 272 steps leading to a Hindu temple

Tea plantation in Cameron Highlands

Kek Lok Si Temple in Penang

A fishing village in Pulau Ketam (Crab Island)

Coming Up This Month

(See the program on the website for more details; Wednesday Walks have been omitted)

Date	Walk Title	km	Rating	Leader
Wed 1 Jan	New Year's Day Early Evening Picnic, Bowen Park, Barton	-	n/a	Elaine Atkinson
Sun 4 Jan	Calvary Ruin and Return	9	Easy (7)	Bob Chittenden
Sat 10 Jan	Nursery Creek	10	Easy (6)	Michael Clisby
Sun 11 Jan	Yerrabi Track to Old Boboyan Road	14	Medium (8)	Bob Chittenden
Sat 17 Jan	Urambi Hills & Tuggeranong Dry Stone Wall	7	Easy (7)	Leigh Hermann
Sun 18 Jan	Rendezvous Creek to Yankee Hat Rock Art	10	Easy (7)	Bob Chittenden
Sat 24 Jan	Walk to Legoland	4	Easy (6)	Janet Duncan
Sun 25 Jan	London Bridge to Burra	15	Medium (8)	Bob Chittenden
Fri 30 Jan	Mt Ainslie Sunset Walk	3	Easy (5)	Elaine Atkinson
Fri 30 Jan	**Last date to book** for PARKS AROUND LITHGOW	-	Med & Hard	Deborah Gibson
Sat 31 Jan	Hill 1409	8.6	Hard (12)	Henry Gardner
Sun 1 Feb	Trees of Gigerline Nature Reserve	8	Easy (7)	Peter Dalton

The serious need for silliness

(courtesy NSA December News)

Silliness has its place. It's not about being immature; it's about staying open to joy.

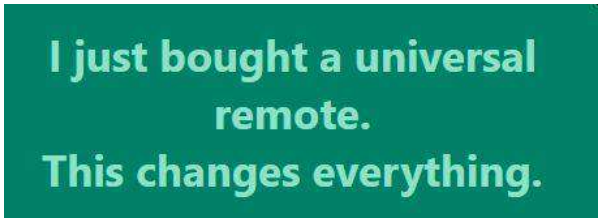
A bit of playful absurdity can lighten the heaviest days. Whether it's dancing in the kitchen, telling a corny joke, or wearing odd socks, silliness invites spontaneity into our lives. It reminds us not to take ourselves too seriously, even when life demands seriousness.

In fact, silliness can be a quiet act of rebellion against the pressures of adulthood. It says, "I see the weight of the world, but I choose to smile anyway."

That choice can be empowering. It can help us cope with grief, navigate change, and find light in dark times. It's a way of reclaiming a sense of control – not by denying reality, but by choosing how we respond to it.

As we age, we don't lose our need for laughter. In fact, we need it more. It keeps us young at heart, flexible in spirit, and connected to others. It reminds us that joy is not just for the young, but for the young-at-heart. And in a world that often feels too serious, a little silliness can be a radical act of hope.

And so, the silly jokes will continue to be a feature of BBC newsletters!



New Guidelines for Leaders and Walkers

Have you organised, or are thinking of leading a walking trip for the club? Have you enjoyed trips that others have organised?

Walking trips away are very enjoyable, but organising a trip can be a big job. To help leaders, a new set of Guidelines is now available to help navigate issues that arise. And to complement these guidelines, there are also Guidelines for Participants, with advice on how to make the leader's job easier and thus ensure a happy experience for all.

Check out the new guidelines on the club website:

Guidelines-for-Leaders-of-Trips-Away.pdf
Guidelines-for-Participants-of-Trips-Away.pdf

Duct Tape for Bushwalkers

There are plenty of reasons for carrying a small roll of duct tape in your pack. Here are a few.

First Aid

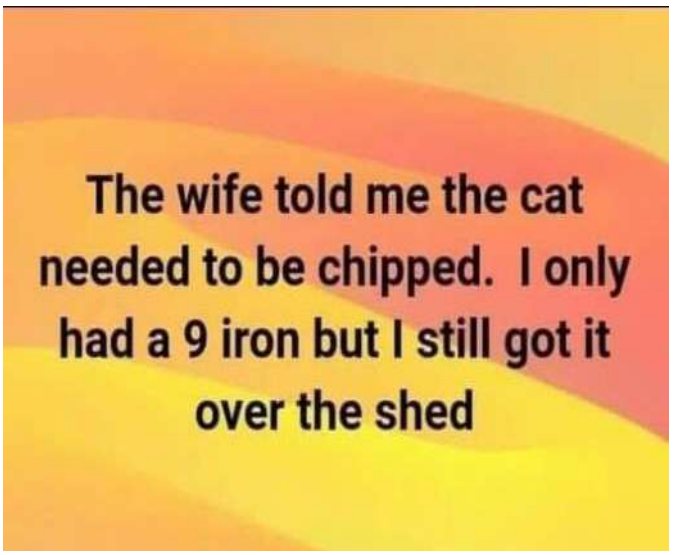
Wounds – use as a waterproof cover over dressings or even to firmly hold a gauze pad.
Blisters – a piece of duct tape can prevent a blister forming and lessen the effect of rubbing.
Splinters and prickles – duct tape will often be enough to remove prickles and splinters.
Splints – secure splints on fingers and limbs.

Repairs

Holes – patch holes in sleeping bags, tents and raincoats.
Hydration bladders – patch small holes.
Poles – temporary repairs to tent poles (splint with wood) and walking poles.
Boots – tape up that loose flapping sole or patch 'blow outs' on the sides.

Miscellaneous

Duct tape burns well, so use a piece as a fire starter.
Repair broken glasses.
Silence the non-stop talker in the group.



Walk Statistics for December

The last Easy Wednesday walk was held on the 10 December; they will recommence in February.

To cope with high numbers on Wednesday Easy/Medium walks, CBC and BBC ran two EM walks each December Wednesday. Short Weekend walks continue to be offered.

Weekend Walks

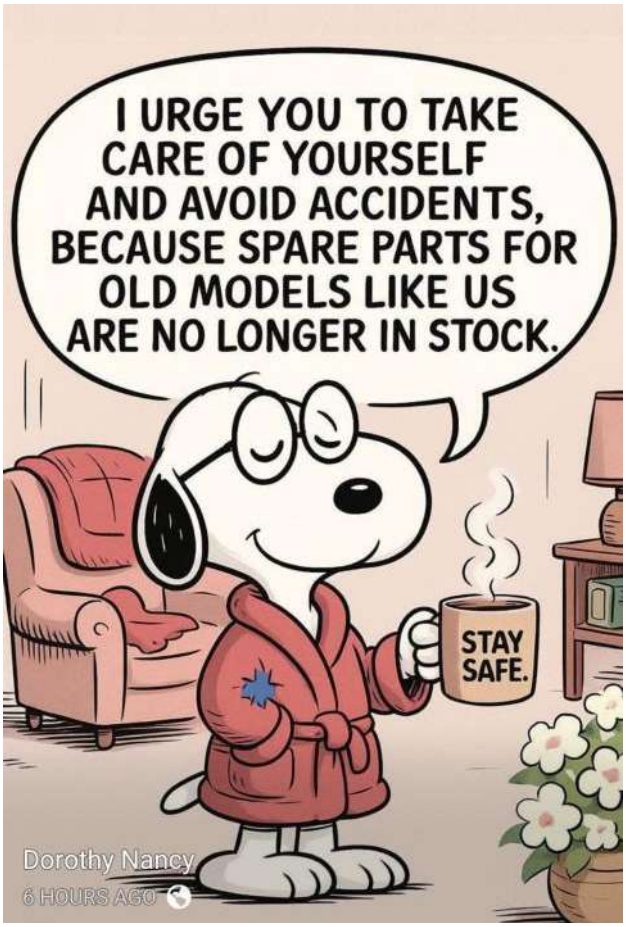
Date	Activity	Attendees
06-Dec-25	ANU Sculptures	6
06-Dec-25	A Day in the Brindabellas	7
13-Dec-25	Gordon and Point Hut	14
14-Dec-25	Cooleman Ridge	11
21-Dec-25	Jingera Hill	6

Wednesday Easy walks

03-Dec-25	Weston Park & Westbourne woods	27
10-Dec-25	Molonglo River	15

BBC led Easy/Medium and Medium/Hard walks

03-Dec-25	Mulligans Flat Loop	29
03-Dec-25	Bogong Rocks	13
03-Dec-25	Geodetic Dome & Orroral Homestead	9
17-Dec-25	Legoland	19



Brindabella Bushwalking Club First Aid Training Tuesday 3 March 2026

The Club's annual First Aid training for leaders and members will be conducted by Canberra First Aid Training at their Training Rooms on the first level of the Fyshwick Markets on Tuesday 3 March.

This course is designed specifically for BBC and will deal with the majority of issues likely to be encountered on a bushwalk. There is formal recognition of your studies on completion of the course (HLTAID011 - Provide First Aid) which is valid for three years. Priority will be given to those members who are leaders and the Club will meet the course costs of those members. Where space is available other club members can also participate. The cost of this will be around $110.00 and a firm cost will be available by the end of the month.

Some of the issues to be addressed during the course will be:

- Sprains and fractures (usually ankles and wrists).
- Cuts, gashes and spearing by branches hidden in long grass.
- Head injuries (caused by falls or low hanging branches).
- Mild shock.
- Eye injuries (mainly caused by branches springing back onto walkers).
- Hypothermia and hyperthermia.
- Dehydration.
- When and how to lift and/or move patients.
- When to call for paramedic help at the site of an incident, if phone coverage available, or send a couple of experienced walkers to find phone coverage.
- When to use, or not to use, a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB).
- Snake bite
- Ant or other insect bites.
- Allergic reactions.
- CPR.
- Choking.
- Burns.
- What items to carry in a personal first aid kit.

The course will consist of two parts:

1. An online component of about five hours (training videos and assessment) at your own pace followed by,
2. A practical element of approximately five hours duration on **Tuesday 3 March 2026.**

Obviously, the more people on a walk who have had training, the safer everyone will be, so please consider expressing your interest in this course.

Further details about the course and requests for registration will be sent out to all Club members later in the month. The course will be restricted to 18 participants.

If you have any questions, please ask

David Wardle
wardle@webone

SOCIAL NEWS JANUARY 2026

Sunday 7 December: BBC Christmas Party

What a wonderful turnout of 76 members for the annual BBC Christmas party. Thanks Kathy & Keith for arranging a great weather day and being great hosts at their block in Wamboin.

What a perfect, relaxing venue under the wonderful old gum trees by the dam (on lovely green grass). It was a great opportunity to catch up with many friends, old and new, young and old. Great food too. Thanks too, Kathy, for leading a walk around your block.

Thanks. Terrylea, for the fabulous photos and everyone who pitched in and helped to make this a successful Christmas party. Thanks to members who sent wonderful texts and emails thanking me for organising the party. (it was a great team effort). Thanks to Nancie for the fun photo on our Facebook page. Could you guess which member was Santa?

Upcoming Events: Thursday 1 January - New Year's Picnic; and Friday 30 January - Sunset Walk

Elaine Atkinson
Social Convenor

Reminder — Tomorrow — New Year's Day

The weather is looking good (11-24) for Tomorrow 1 January for our annual late afternoon/early evening picnic.
TIME: from 4 pm (On Lake Café closes at 4:30 if you wish to buy a coffee). Look for the club banner.
WHERE: Bowen Park, Wentworth Ave, Barton (between Kings Ave Bridge and Canberra Glassworks.
PARKING: small carpark at Bowen Park or Eastlake Parade Kingston or near Telopea Park.
BRING: your own picnic tea and something to share if you wish. Chair and something warm.
No RSVP needed. Come at a time that suits you and meet up with fellow club members for dinner and a chat

- Do we have a doctor here?
- Yes, I'm a doctor.
- What's your specialty?
- I'm a doctor in Mathematics.
- My friend is dying.
- Minus one.

A dung beetle walks into a bar and asks...

"Is this stool taken?"