



Easter at Bright

After some long bus journeys over the past few Easters, we've decided to opt for a shorter drive this year to "Camp Wandiligong", located only a few kilometres from Bright in the heart of Victoria's alpine region. The accommodation is hostel-style self catered, which means you get a comfortable bed but need to bring your own food (although there is plenty of opportunity to eat out or pick up lunch supplies at nearby Bright).

Numerous day walk options will be offered to suit the needs of the group, ranging from easy to quite challenging, and flexibly scheduled to take best advantage of the weather. Some possibilities include "The Big Walk" from Mt Buffalo entrance up to the Chalet (it's not as difficult as it sounds), Mt Buffalo plateau, Mt Feathertop from Bungalow spur or the Razorback, the historic gold mining country around Wandiligong, or an easy stroll along the autumn imbued Ovens valley.

The cost is only \$60/ person (\$65 non-members); we've allowed for a good-sized group, but given the prime location and time (the heart of the Autumn Festival), early bookings are advised.

Navigation Training and Practice Days

It can't be recommended strongly enough that anyone who bushwalks regularly should have basic map-reading and navigation skills. Don't be content to just blindly follow the leader like a flock of sheep – you never know when circumstances require someone else in the group to help out. Anyone who has a map/compass, understands where they are and the route they are following is much less likely to get lost in the event they are separated from the rest of the party.

To encourage map and compass skills within YHA Bushwalking, regular practice days have been scheduled throughout autumn and into winter, led by some of the club's most experienced (and prizewinning) navigators. These events are meant to be fun as well as well as instructional, so don't be put off. Contour lines, grid references, magnetic deviation, taking bearings may appear undecipherable, but with a bit of practice they start to make sense surprisingly quickly. There is a lot of satisfaction and confidence gained when you emerge from an untracked section of forest within metres (or occasionally right on top!) of the landmark you were aiming for.

WANTED COMMITTEE MEMBERS

All positions on the YHA Bushwalking committee will be declared vacant at the annual general meeting on Monday 26th March 2001

If you are interested in becoming a committee member, please contact one of the present committee members ASAP

Navigation training dates:
March 31st, April 28th, May 26th

Oh, and anyone who thinks they don't need to know how to use a compass now that GPSs are becoming more affordable, think again. GPSs are a useful tool, but relying on high technology in such a down-to-earth activity as bushwalking is courting disaster. They won't tell you the best route to take, don't work particularly well in deep valleys or thick forests and don't work at all if the batteries go flat, the computer crashes or the US Government decides to switch off public access next time a war breaks out.

First Aid Course + Information Night

The Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs accredited First aid course, Level 2 is highly recommended for anyone who is involved in outdoor pursuits, particularly leaders. While it is similar to other level 2 first aid courses, it has an emphasis on first aid in the outdoors, making it more suitable for bushwalkers and cyclists. It will be run in May at this stage. Known YHA leaders who complete this course may be entitled to one of six partial reimbursement packages being offered by YHA Bushwalking .

Want to know more? Shirley McInnes, first aid instructor, will be giving a talk on First Aid, and specifically the Vicwalks course, which she is running, at clubnight on 30th April. Or contact Jenny Sykes at the Vicwalk office on 9455 1876. Information leaflets can be collected from the Bushwalking noticeboard at clubnight.

YHA BUSHWALKING COMMITTEE 2000/2001

Chairman Neil Gebert
 Secretary Jean Braakhuis
 Treasurer Linda Butcher
 Walks Sec. Stephen Smith
 Social Sec. Wendy Davidson
 S & R Ken Sussex

General Committee

Rob Adams
 Ron Bell
 Mark Beyer
 Andrew Brown
 David Ford
 David Sisson
 Robert Wright

Newsletter Jane Harding
 Mark Beyer

YHA Bushwalking emergency mobile phone (For
 emergency contact on walks) 0428 313 880
 (not always in range)

Enquiry phone 0500 500 272 (for info on club)

It is important to the committee that walks and activities run smoothly and are enjoyable and safe. If there is any aspect of a walk, including the behaviour of other walkers that causes concern, please contact the Chairman. All matters will be treated confidentially.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO YETI

Contributions to YETI are welcome subject to editorial approval. You may send news, articles, gossip, letters etc relating to bushwalking to YETI, GPO Box 25A Melbourne 3001, or via e-mail to janeeharding@yahoo.com or markhbeyer@hotmail.com. If you do not have the time to write, please contact the editors with details of your contribution.

TRIP LEADERS

If you wish to have a brief description of your upcoming trip printed here in YETI please contact the editors with the details.

TRIP CARD

YHA Bushwalking trip card is available at clubnight. A single payment of \$30 (\$25 concession) covers all trip fees for the year. Purchasers must be current financial members of YHA Victoria.

YHA ACTIVITIES CLUBNIGHT

Is held on Monday nights at the YWCA building, 489 Elizabeth Street in the city, from 8pm to approx. 9:30pm.

CLUBNIGHT SPECIAL EVENTS

All welcome. Come along for an enjoyable evening. Proceedings start at 8:15pm.

Often before clubnights that feature a talk or slide show, walkers meet at La Porchetta near the Vic Market from 7pm for pizza or pasta. If you wish to join us please check with one of the committee members before attending.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

If you recognise an article in this newsletter it is probably because it has been plagiarised from another source. This is the only way we can bring you this newsletter. YETI makes no apology for any offence caused.

Chairman's Report

Welcome to the first issue of YETI under the co-editorship of Jane Harding and Mark Beyer. YETI has returned after an absence of some 12 months, during which time the editor's position remained vacant. We hope that you will enjoy the publication and support it by forwarding items of interest and your comments to our editors.

In the past year the YHA Bushwalking committee has continued to run the activity successfully with a greater emphasis on safety. To this end, the committee has purchased the following safety items to assist with the running of walks:

Walkie Talkies (2)

These are available to be used on Day walks by the leader and whip to improve communication and thus, better coordinate the group.

GPS (Global Positioning System)

This equipment is intended mainly for use on weekend and extended walks. The GPS will enable a leader to instantly identify where the group is by providing an accurate grid reference. This is particularly useful in situations where the group's position is uncertain. In addition, the GPS has other facilities to assist with navigation.

First Aid Kits

Two First Aid kits have been purchased and made available for leaders of both Day and Weekend walks. They contain the necessary items to provide First Aid in most situations.

EPIRB (Emergency Portable Rescue Beacon)

This item is intended mainly for use on weekend and extended walks. The EPIRB is basically the safety item of last resort and is to be used only in critical situations where a rescue is required due to injury or death. The EPIRB, when activated, sends a signal to a satellite indicating the coordinates of the beacon. When the signal is received, the appropriate Search and Rescue authorities will initiate the rescue.

All of the safety equipment above and the mobile phone are available upon request. Contact Stephen Smith or myself.

In addition to the above, the committee has arranged for heavily subsidised accredited First Aid courses for YHA Bushwalking leaders. These courses are scheduled for later this year. Contact Jean Braakhuis for details.

The Bushwalking AGM is scheduled for 26th March and, as always, I encourage all financial members of YHA to attend the meeting. This is your annual opportunity to 'have your say' regarding the running of the activity and to seek nomination for a position on the committee. If you are willing to join the new committee, please see a committee member or myself prior to the evening.

Happy walking,
 Neil Gebert (Chairman)

Training for Overnight Walks

by Stephen Smith

The transition from day walks to overnight pack carries is a major one; unfortunately many people attempt to make it in one jump, fall short and are too put off by the experience to try again. The annals of YHA Bushwalking are littered with cases of folk who, in their one and only appearance with the club, decided to try an Easter walk (or even a Christmas –New Year hike) sadly under-prepared and suffered through what should have been the highlight of their year. Moving to a first overnight walk doesn't have to be a jump; with time and planning it can be built up to in small steps.

Step 1 – Distance: Make sure you can comfortably manage at least 15-20km on a day walk, including a few hills. Note that people who haven't done any regular walking often tend to tire within 10km, so even the day walk training may need a bit of gradual progression

Step 2 - Weight: 15-20kg on your back takes some getting used to. If it becomes too much of a burden your only choice is to throw it away or persuade someone else to carry it. On a weekend walk the heavy gear is usually vital and or costly to replace, so the latter option is the only viable one. Why not train however in a situation where you can jettison excess weight. Go on a day walk but with a weekend pack loaded with things such as water containers that can be emptied or maybe the odd rock! A simple enough idea, but very few seem to have the time to do it, preferring to rush headlong into the real thing. When you are confident you have no problems handling the weight, it is a good idea to have a full dress rehearsal with your pack loaded with the equipment you intend to carry. Some problems can be due to weight distribution rather than the overall weight, e.g. too much pressing on one spot somewhere between the shoulders and hips. Packing for real gives extra confidence that these types of problems won't occur, and allows time to resolve them (usually as simple as rearranging the pack or adjusting a few straps).

Step 3 - Equipment: Many who aren't sure what to take on an overnight walk, particularly in the way of food, end up taking too much. Base-camps are a good opportunity to check how efficiently you've packed. While experienced walkers generally rejoice at base camps, taking food and creature comforts they wouldn't contemplate carrying, a useful exercise is to pack as if you were on an overnight walk and just live off that: have some spare food stored separately in case you have badly under-catered, and some bottles of social lubricant to consume anyway, but otherwise don't touch anything outside your pack until the end of the walk, then see what you haven't eaten, worn or otherwise used.

Step 4 - Time: Don't make your debut on a long weekend: you have to carry more weight, carry it further, and if problems arise, endure them longer. Start with a single overnight camp, and choose a walk that isn't rated as particularly difficult. Ordinary weekends are good training for long weekends, just as long weekends are good practice for anyone planning for long distance trekking.

Remember, that there are always experienced walkers attending clubnights each week available to provide further advice on walk preparation, so come along for a chat if you need to know more.

The following weekend walk would be suitable for first timers:

April 7-8, Otways base camp. Contact Andrew Brown on 9484 5273 for further information.

Food for Bushwalkers

by John Braakhuis

Food, food, food. If we're not actually eating food we are probably planning or reading about eating or perhaps having guilt complexes about what we shouldn't be eating. In our modern society of plenty, where less and less of our time is spent growing or obtaining food, more time is spent simply shopping or dining out. Instead of going out for the hunt for days on end to spear that bison or woolly mammoth, we get impatient at a one-minute delay in the queue at McDonald's. All our spare time can now be spent driving across town to the latest restaurant, reading and talking about eating, worrying about whether the food is causing heart disease or cancer, going on diets and exercising. Our over active homo-sapien brains have now replaced the fear of not getting enough food, with fears about getting the wrong food, eating too much, or whether we are over dressed for eating out at the snazzy new restaurant.

Pity then the poor bushwalker who can't simply put down the pack when he reaches camp and walk into the nearest 7 eleven for a feed. The bushwalker is required to actually think about the food he or she is eating and plan for the whole trip. Unfortunately the latest advice on food simply panders to modern paranoia about the latest fad diet, food fashion or its disease causing effects. The main thing to remember is that food like sex has been going on in human society for a long time and more information about it doesn't necessarily add to its enjoyment. If you want authoritative information about the latest diet then read page 10 of Womens' Weekly, which is required before you get to page 23 which has the recipe for double chocolate Bavarian mud cake with extra icing.

Continued overleaf

Food for Bushwalkers cont.

OK then what do the experts agree on? Well there is general consensus that food is in fact required for general health and wellbeing. Although at least one group disagrees. There is a cult who believes that it is possible to live on air alone and that thinking about food replaces its consumption. Unfortunately the followers of this cult have been known to expire, whilst the cult leader has been caught sipping cups of tea and snacking on the occasional TIM TAM. (Not to mention being photographed eating a vegetarian meal at a London airport – Ed.)

Well given that we know that food is required then how should the average bushwalker plan for a weekend or longer trip? The main approaches to food planning can be categorised as follows:

The pantry method. Most often practised by beginners and inexperienced walkers. Basically the fear of going hungry causes the bushwalker to bring everything in the pantry including tins, plum puddings and two kilos of sugar. Most often practiced by school age students and young scouts going on their first hike. The poor blighters end up carrying 35 kg packs because their mums were worried they would go hungry. This method is highly recommended as it contributes to the happiness and enjoyment of others in the group who would otherwise miss out on a yummy plum pudding for desert. The main disadvantage is the beginners never come on another walk so that a constant supply of newcomers is required.

The diet method. This is the opposite of the pantry method. Generally practised by older generations that decide the 7-day walk is an opportunity to lose 10kg. Generally the proponents of this method try to survive on half rations and are known to finish their dinner around 4pm and drool for hours over other people's dinner. The diet method people often try to make good friends with proponents of the pantry method. This method is also highly recommended as it provides hours of entertainment during dinnertime - much like throwing scraps to sea gulls at the beach.

The gourmet method. Generally followed by survivors of the pantry method. Proponents still have the fear of going hungry but have wised up to the weight problem and they go down to the hiking shop and spend \$12 for a shrink wrapped freeze dried 'meal' which despite its enticing packaging still comes out like porridge flavored with chicken stock cubes.

The food pill method. In 1965 it was believed that by 2001 technology would be so advanced that everyone would be eating food pills and we wouldn't be bothered eating ordinary foods. Now it's 2001 and all we have is Power bars that seem to contain a magic ingredient called dried fruit. This method is also highly recommended as it provides hours of entertainment talking about the relative energy rating of Power bars versus dried apricots.

The scroggin method. If you know what scroggin is and what it means then you are a member of the inner sanctum of experienced bushwalkers. Proponents of this method know the best way to consume scroggin is to give it all away on the first day and then ask for return favours on the subsequent days. Highly experienced walkers know to avoid actually eating scroggin and only accept pure jelly babies and milk bottles because the mix of salt from the peanuts really destroys the flavour of chocolate freckles in the scroggin mix.

Living off the land method. Proponents of this method generally only last the first hour of a walk. They are characterised by their attire - usually army fatigues and carrying a blunt knife from the army disposals store. They also talk a lot about Rambo or Chuck Norris movies. Aboriginals once lived off the land, but unfortunately for us all the best bits were nicked by our forebears - only to leave the unproductive areas without enough food, unless you enjoy Bogong moth.

In summary just remember the following tips:

- Don't carry too much - leave the tins and puddings home. Carrying excess is guaranteed to ruin your walk.
- Don't follow fads or try to diet on trips - this is not the time to try new things.
- You don't need to buy "specialist" hiking food - everything you need can be found in the supermarket.
- Eat what you are familiar with.

In the next edition of YETI we will talk more about the recommended diet and what to bring on a bushwalk. If you can't wait, then a fail proof way is to try page 23 of the Womens' Weekly. If you bring a double choc Bavarian mud cake on a walk then you can trade your way out of difficulty.

