



New Clubnight Venue April '14

The January to March clubnights (see page 2 for more details) will still be at the "Hub" - 80 Harbour Esplanade, Docklands - however Melbourne City Council's lease on this building is not being renewed so a new venue will be necessary.

From April, Clubnights will be held in the newly completed Docklands Library and Community Centre (Dock Square), situated on the waterfront at the intersection of Bourke St and Collins St. The [Clubnight web-page](#) will be updated closer to the time, and a message sent to everyone on the club's email list.

End of Year Celebration

The end-of-year celebration dinner at Rendezvous Grand Hotel was a success, with 50 people attending. The occasion was used to thank all those who'd led walks throughout the year, with special awards to some of the most hard-working. The honour of most Sunday walks led was a three-way tie between Lutz Lademann, Robert Potocnik and Sonya Radywyl. In the other category of most non-Sunday walks Ken Sussex was a clear leader with seven, followed by Paul Dorrington, David De Bondi and Bruce Meincke. Generously however, Ken donated his award to David Sale, who totalled eight walks across both categories including accommodated weekends.

A special token of appreciation was given to Paul Dorrington (below) for his efforts in putting together the walks programs this year and preparing a Sunday Walk Leader's guide.



Leaders' Web Page

A new web page with resources for trip leaders is planned to be launched early in the new year. This will contain the latest version of booking forms and sign-in sheets to download along with Leader Guides and other useful tips. The Sunday walk guide will be released as part of the launch, whilst similar ones for Accommodated and Overnight Pack-Carry trips are in preparation. An email will be sent to those on the club's leader list with instructions on how to access the site.



Not as scenic as a more typical "Yeti" cover photo, but for many years this vehicle was an integral part of the scenery for anyone venturing on a YHA bushwalk. Many hours were spent seated in the rear compartment, up to 40 walkers and their packs, as "The Van" laboured its way down remote dusty roads, with a chainsaw at the ready if necessary to clear a path to the start of a walk. Bushwalking in the 1960s was a period of youthful fun, song and tragedy - full story p11-13.

Also in this Issue

- ❖ **Clubnights in 2014** – Introduction to New Members, Bushwalking on a Budget, John & Monica Chapman and more (p2).
- ❖ **Great Walks for Great Long Weekends** – Overnight hikes on sections of the Great Ocean Walk and Great Southwest Walk (p3)
- ❖ **Something for Everyone – Summer 2014** – A range of trips from days walks along a beach or river, a beginner pack-carry, more challenging overnight walks in Tasmania, accommodated weekends and the ultimate marathon day walk (p4-5)
- ❖ **Parks Victoria Survey** Have your say on how our parks are used (p5)
- ❖ **Hello Goodbye** – An introduction from one new walker (and leader), but a farewell from another (p5-6)
- ❖ **Recent Walk Snapshots** – Larapinta Trail, Wilsons Prom Southern Circuit, Organ Pipes NP (p7-8)
- ❖ **Tips for Better Bushwalking** – Choosing a Tent (p9-10)
- ❖ **Gearing Up** – Trendy outdoor accessories for discerning walkers (p11)
- ❖ **YHA Bushwalking History** – Part 3: Rattling, Rolling (but no swinging) p12-14

If you are a regular walker, you can save money on booking fees by purchasing an annual Trip Card. Obtaining one has been made easier. All you need to do is:

- 1) Make the payment (\$35 YHA members, \$55 non-members) to the YHA Bushwalking bank account (details are on the back of the program).
- 2) Send an email to TripCards@yhabush.org.au containing your postal address and payment details.

You should receive confirmation from the Trip Card registrar (currently Bruce Meincke) followed shortly by a card in the mail.

YHA BUSHWALKING COMMITTEE 2013/14

President,	Andrew Stevenson
Secretary	Anne Donaldson
Treasurer	Kris Peach
Walks Secretary	Ken Sussex
Club Communications	Sonya Radywyl
Search & Rescue Rep	Paul Gottliebse
General committee	Jan Huang Lutz Lademann

Yeti Editor (non-committee) Stephen Smith

CONTRIBUTIONS TO YETI

These articles don't write themselves y'know, nor are they all plagiarised from the internet (well some of them aren't anyway). If you've enjoyed yourself on one or two YHA trips or have some thoughts about bushwalking which you'd like to share, then here's your opportunity to do so. Find a spare moment, jot your experiences or advice down then email them to yhabush@bigpond.com

YETI ONLINE

"Yeti" has its own website www.yhabush.org.au/Yeti containing downloadable copies of the latest issue as well as archived articles from past editions. The web sites is well worth visiting, as it often includes additional photographs not able to be included in the print version for reasons of space, as well as superior reproduction.

TRIP LEADERS

Take advantage of the opportunity to promote your upcoming trips in YETI with a more detailed description than space in the programme allows. Please contact the editor with the details.

YHA ACTIVITIES CLUBNIGHT

Is held on a Monday night once a month at the 'Hub', 80 Harbour Esplanade, Docklands (until March 2014) from 7.30pm to approx. 8:30pm. Special events start just after 7.40pm, everybody welcome.

YETI THANKS

The following contributors to this issue:

Andreas Biehler
Michael Carpinelli
Chris Cox
Paul Dorrington
Les Gamel
Robert Irvine
Sandra Martig
Bruce Meincke
David Sale
Andrew Stevenson

Summer Clubnights

Information Night – 7.30pm Monday 13th January

For those wanting to try bushwalking, but a little hesitant on how to take their first steps, here's another of our introductory Clubnights intended just for you.

Find out about the wide variety of bushwalks that we offer, from short evening social walks to epic overnight hikes of a week or more. We expect you'll probably be curious about what sort of people frequent our club and have a few questions about what you need to do to join in a walk. Following a presentation by YHA Bushwalking president Andrew Stevenson, there will be time to chat over tea and biscuits to some of the club's committee members and experienced walkers.

The venue for this Clubnight is the "Hub", 80 Harbour Esplanade Docklands. There is plenty of nearby unrestricted free parking for those who drive in, alternatively it is a short walk from the No. 48, 70 and 71 tram stops or Southern Cross station – more details can be found at www.yhabush.org.au/clubnight.htm

Budget Bushwalking for Beginners – 7.30pm Monday 3rd Feb

Serious bushwalking gear can be expensive, but there is no need to outlay hundreds of dollars just to get started. If you want to try bushwalking, you don't have to spend heaps to make it fun! Come to Robert Irvine's talk and find out how.

Here are a few ideas.

1. Borrow

Ask friends, family or work colleagues for a favour to use their tent, stove, pack (will need adjustment), sleeping bag (but supply your own inner sheet).

2. Share.

Ask club members or the trip leader about cooperating to either share or borrow equipment such as tents and stoves. You can learn a lot by observing others - see what stoves work or not, how complicated tents are to put up.

3. Use what you have at home

Clothes, hat, raincoat, footwear, sleeping bag, sleeping mat, (use an exercise foam). Nothing special is required use what you have.

4. Food

Freeze-dried meals are expensive, unnecessary on short trips, and many of them don't taste very nice anyway. Lightweight but nourishing meals can be prepared using ingredients you probably already have in your pantry or are readily obtainable from a supermarket.

You are not going into the Army. Follow Robert's tips at February's clubnight to be guaranteed lots of fun at minimal cost.

John & Monica Chapman – 7.30pm Monday 3rd March

Bushwalking guide authors John and Monica Chapman have been popular guest speakers on several previous Clubnights, so we're pleased to welcome them back again, this time for a presentation "Pilgrims and Prayer Flags - Yunnan Province China". The talks and photos will feature the Inner Kora (4 days as day walks) and Outer Kora (11 day trek) in and around the Kawa Karpo Range on the border region of Western China.

One or two of their books will be given away as a door prize, there will also be the opportunity to purchase the latest edition of their existing ones (and have them autographed).

Looking further ahead into 2014, Clubnights are also planned from Bushwalking Search & Rescue and the Victorian High Country Huts Association.

Great Walks for Great Long Weekends

Here's a chance to hike sections of Victoria's two "Great" coastal walks on three of 2014's long weekends – The Great Ocean Walk and the Great Southwest Walk. While these walks aren't recommended as first-time pack carries, they should suit anyone who's comfortably handled any other beginner walks on the 2013 or 2014 program.



Great Ocean Walk (Australia Day 25-27th Jan)

The 104 kilometre Great Ocean Walk (GOW) starts at Apollo Bay and now finishes at the Twelve Apostles. The full walk takes about a week; this three day trip will cover the final section from Johanna Beach to the Twelve Apostles. Highlights include Melanesia beach, Lion Headland, Moonlight Head and the superb cliff top campsite at Devils Kitchen. This will be the first time that the club has walked the extended track to the Twelve Apostles; when the GOW originally opened, one of its flaws was that it ended in a

somewhat anti-climactic fashion at Princetown. This was remedied by extending the track another 10km to provide a more spectacular finish to the walk.

The trip cost is \$25 for campsite permits plus booking fee, payable by 17th January. Due to the limited number of campsites available, the maximum group size is eight. This will also rely on sleeping two people per site, either by sharing a two-person tent or each person having a compact one person tent.

Grading: *Medium* **Enquiries:** [Andrew Stevenson](#) 0413-410-887

Great SW Walk: Nelson (Easter 18-21st April)

Great SW Walk: Three Capes (25-27th April)

Great SW Walk Combo: (18-27th April)

The Great Southwest Walk is a 220km circuit that nominally starts and finishes at Portland. The northern section traverses forest before reaching the Glenelg River and following it to its estuary at Nelson. From Nelson the track follows the Discovery Bay coastline, climaxing with the rugged cliff tops of Capes Bridgewater, Nelson and Grant.

The complete walk requires approximately two weeks to complete. Two sections of the walk will be done on the Easter and Anzac Day weekends, taking in parts of the river, coastal and cliff top sections. The Easter and Anzac day holidays are one week apart in 2014, with only three working days separating them. Consequently it is likely that some people will take the intervening days off as well to give themselves a decent break. To cater for this, as well as booking on the main Easter and Anzac day walks individually, there will also be an option to do both and some additional walks in between, including a visit to Mt Gambier's Blue Lake without having to drive back to Melbourne.

1. Easter: Glenelg River – Nelson – Lake Monibeong.

It will be necessary to leave Melbourne by Thursday evening, however overnight accommodation will be arranged in Hamilton rather than drive all the way to Nelson.

The first two days will follow the Lower Glenelg River to a spectacular gorge section as it nears Nelson. Daily distances are 17-18km, but the track is fairly flat so this should not be particularly difficult as long as participants have done at least one pack-carry to make sure they don't have any problems arising from ill-fitting or badly adjusted packs.

On Easter Sunday, the walk from camp to Nelson is only 3km, allowing a coffee stop before commencing the coastal section along Discovery Bay. The next two days are shorter



(10-12km), although walking along sand will be slower going. The Sunday night campsite is a Great SW Walk site only accessible to walkers, with the walk finishing next day at Lake Monibeong camping area.

2. Anzac w/e: Three Capes (Bridgewater Lakes-Portland)

The highlight of the Great Southwest Walk features a winning combination of beaches, cliff tops and a lighthouse. Each day will be around 17km, however as with the Easter section, the track is well defined and relatively flat. The first day starts at Whites beach and takes in Cape Bridgewater. Binoculars are recommended for both bird-spotting and observing seals in a colony at the bottom of the cliffs. The next day covers Cape Nelson, with refreshments available from the lighthouse café (yes this will be a tough walk). The final day passes through the "Enchanted Forest" before rounding Cape Grant and Point Danger to finish in Portland.

Bridging Days: April 22-24th

For those wanting to do both the main walks and staying on between them, day walks will be organised on two of the days, probably the sections linking Lake Monibeong – Swan Lake and the start of the Three Capes. The other day will feature a relaxing side-trip to Mt Gambier and the opportunity to do some short walks based around its famous Crater Lakes. While in the area, there is also an option to visit Princess Margaret Rose cave, visible on the other side of the Glenelg River from the Great Southwest track.

Grading: *Medium* **Enquiries:** [Stephen Smith](#) 9387 6481

Something for Everyone - Summer 2014

As usual, there is a wide variety of walks on our current program, from easy day walks to multi-day pack-carries in Tasmania. As long as you have some interest in bushwalking, there should be a trip that appeals to you - here's a selection.

A Beach & Cliff Top day walk Anglesea Sunday 5th January



This 15km circuit walk based on the Great Ocean Road town of Anglesea offers a variety of scenery. After following the river out of Anglesea and then along tracks to the summit of Mt Ingoldby, the route descends through coastal heathland to the ocean. A three kilometre beach section to Point Roadknight should lead to a perfectly timed afternoon tea stop at an ice-cream kiosk. The final stage follows the Surf Coast walk along cliff tops back into Anglesea, with several good lookout points.

Grading: *Medium* **Enquiries:** [Chris Cox](#) 0411-846-866

A relaxing long weekend base-camp Bright 25-27th January

Accommodation consists of base camping (ie you will need a tent) at the Freeburgh Tourist Park near Bright. The cost is \$36 plus trip fees for the three nights.

There will be full day walks at Mt Buffalo on Saturday and Sunday, with a possible short walk near Bright on the Monday prior to returning to Melbourne.

The first day is a 16km return walk from Rollason's Falls car park to the Chalet. This is the second section of the 'Big Walk'. A short extension at the end of the walk leads to the falls where one can swim.

The second walk is Og Gog Magog – Eagle Point – Mt. Dunn (approx 15km from Lake Catani/Long Plain). Starting from the Reservoir, this visits Og Gog Magog (unusual granite rock formation), with 360° deg views at Eagle Pt & Mt. Dunn, and a possible swim in Lake Catani at the finish.

The half-day option will be the 6 km Bright Canyon river walk.

Grading: *Medium* **Enquiries:** [David Sale](#) 0407-667-624

An Ideal pack carry for Beginners Wilsons Prom 8-9th February

The spring walks to Wilsons Prom proved popular, too popular in fact as some people missed out due to a limit on the group size. Another trip is being offered, this time an 11+11km return walk to Little Waterloo Bay instead of Sealers Cove, so it should still appeal whether or not you did the earlier walk. This area is ideal for beginner pack-carriers, as the track is well marked without any big hills to climb. If you missed out before, be sure to book as early as you can this time around, as numbers are once again limited to 12.

Grading: *Easy-med* **Enquiries:** [Les Gamel](#) 0413-404 217

Challenging but highly scenic pack-carries Frenchmans Cap & Mt Anne Circuit 13-22nd Feb



The Mt Anne Circuit and Frenchmans Cap are separate walks to 1400m peaks in south west Tasmania that can be comfortably completed in 3-4 days. Both peaks dominate their region and in good weather provide outstanding views. So as to get good value from the cost of flying to Tasmania, this trip will do both walks with a rest day in between. As they are relatively short, these walks are a good introduction to Tasmanian walking, but are not introductory pack-carries! Participants must have overnight walking experience in Victoria's or other alpine regions and be prepared for possible harsh weather. Frenchmans Cap will be done as a return walk from the Lyell Highway, taking advantage of a much improved track that has duck-boarded over what was the notoriously muddy "sodden Loddon" route into the peak. A day walk to Irenabyss Gorge (Franklin River) is planned in the itinerary, however doing the return-walk option means it won't be necessary to swim across it.

Grading: *Med-hard* **Enquiries:** [Paul Dorrington](#) 0419-335-545

Beechworth BBQ & Bakery Walks

Labour Day w/e 8-10th March

2014 marks the 75th anniversary of walking with YHA, so a number of celebratory events representing the range of club activities are planned during the year – this is the first of them.

Accommodation will be at Beechworth's Old Priory, with a cost of \$135 for dormitory bed, \$150 for a shared room, plus booking fee. A variety of easy to medium+ graded walks will be offered around Beechworth and Mt Buffalo. Evening activities will include a group BBQ and trivia contest Saturday night, then hitting the town on Sunday. Monday will be a free day to explore what Beechworth has to offer in the way of local beer, cakes, honey and sweets before heading back to Melbourne.

Reservations have been made for a large number (36) of people, but payment still needs to be well in advance: deadline for bookings is 1st February, payment in full by 10th February.

Grading: *Easy-med*

Enquiries: [Andrew Stevenson](#) 0413-410-887

A Marathon Day Walk

Around the Prom in a Day (Sat 5th April)

Feel like a challenge? Or perhaps you'd like to do some walking at Wilsons Prom, but don't want to give up a whole weekend? Then look out for the inaugural "Around the Prom in a Day", covering a very scenic 40km. The walk will be limited to eight participants who have already established themselves among the club's fitter and regular walkers.

There will be a camp Friday night, to allow an early (6-7am) start, and Saturday night as well to ensure everyone is well-rested before driving home.

Grading: *Hard* **Enquiries:** [Andrew Stevenson](#) 0413-410-887

An Accommodated High Country Getaway

Dinner Plain 18-21st April (Easter)

Dinner Plain is an alpine village located near Mt. Feathertop in the middle of the Alpine National Park. Although originally developed to cater for visitors during the ski session, it remains open for the rest of the year to entice other types of visitors, in particular bush walkers.

The accommodation is the SnowDrop lodge located in Dinner Plain. It sleeps 12 and includes a BBQ, full kitchen, pool table and medium size spa. Cost is \$121 + trip fees for 4 nights accommodation.

There will be three full day walks. The first is Cobungra Ditch circuit walk (18km) which follows the Cobungra historic water sluice used for gold mining in the 1870's with a return track along the Mt. Hotham-Dinner Plain trail. There is also a short side trip to the old Brandy mine.

The second is the Hut's walk (15km) which includes Silver Brumby Hut, Swindler's Creek, Spargo Hut, Derricks Hut, and an optional side trip to views at Mt. Loch.

The third is the Razorback track to Mt. Feathertop (22km, 8hrs). This is a scenic relatively flat walk to Mt. Feathertop, with only the last 1.5km being a moderately steep climb to the summit. The track mostly follows a ridge above the tree-line with views across adjacent valleys. Although a long walk, it is worthwhile. Also, since it is a return walk, it is possible for participants to stop part-way.

The last half-day walk is planned to be a semi-circuit walk to The Twins with spectacular views from the top [9km, 3.5hrs].

Grading: *Medium* **Enquiries:** [David Sale](#) 0407-667-624

Parks Victoria Survey

Parks Victoria have commissioned a survey to find out how people use public lands (all national parks, state parks, forests and reserves) and how they would like them to be managed. Questions cover attitudes to access, facilities within parks, grazing, mining and logging.

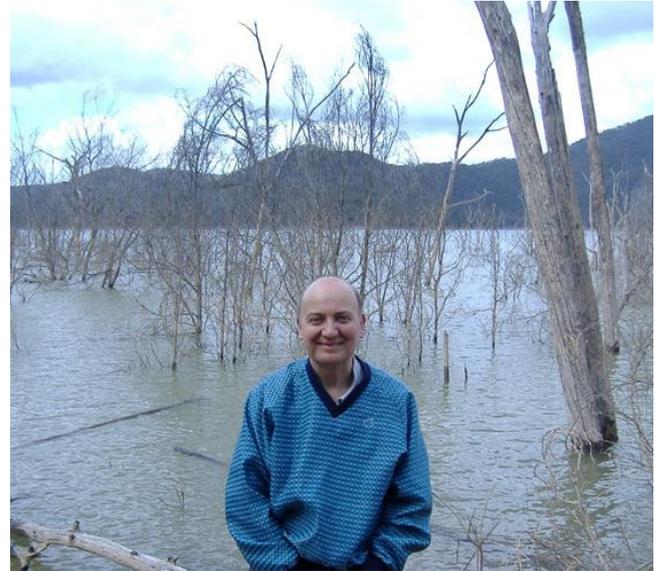
The online survey is at www.parksvictoria.net; a simple step is required to obtain an access code. The survey can be completed anonymously, however there are incentives to provide contact details. These include being emailed a copy of the results and having a \$10 donation made on your behalf to organisations such as the VNPA or Australian Wildlife Conservancy.

If you are interested, act quickly as the survey closes on 31st December 2013.

Hello - Goodbye

YHA Bushwalking has long had a history of being a means for those who've moved to Melbourne from interstate or overseas to pursue their interest in hiking on local trails whilst meeting new friends in the process. Two of our latest visitors have written about their experiences, the first an introduction from one of our newest leaders, the other a fond farewell after just a temporary stay in Australia.

Hello from our latest walks leader, Chris Cox....



I cannot decide whether fell walking (UK) or bush walking (Victoria) started my interest in geology or whether the geology field trips at school and university got me into walking. Anyway, over the years both passions have intertwined and brought me to Australia in January of this year. I am employed as a Geotechnical Engineer in Melbourne, having spent the previous 24 years working in similar positions for UK civil engineering and environmental consultancies.

At my employer's technical conference in Sydney last February, I was introduced to a colleague who works at our Brisbane Branch but previously worked in the Melbourne office. We chatted and I discovered that he had a similar interest in bush walking. He informed me that he attended YHA Bushwalking Club's weekend walks during his time in Melbourne and gave me the Club's website address. My first encounter with the Club was in the Blue Mountains last Easter.

Bush walking in Victoria, especially in areas surrounding the Great Ocean Road, is similar to the walking trails I enjoyed in the warm, temperate climate of the Greek Islands, Spain, Italy and Croatia. The Mediterranean countries and Victoria share stunningly beautiful coastlines, abundant forests of eucalyptus (gum) trees, lush ferns growing in rocky gorges which dissect volcanic plateaus and sandstone cliffs; and wattle, hottentot fig and osteospermum grow in rock crevices and niches on coastal sand dunes. Whereas in mainland Europe you are likely to encounter carts being pulled by donkeys on Roman and Minoan trails through olive groves; kangaroos, wallabies and wombats can be discovered hiding below enormously high gum trees with koalas, kookaburras and cockatoos close to trail-bike tracks in the Victorian bush.

My favourite walk in Europe is 'The Ascent of Whernside' from the sleepy village of Dent in the Yorkshire Dales National park. The walk was created by the infamous English fell walker, Alfred Wainwright. It is a fantastic walk on a fine day with excellent views of Whernside, the highest of the 'Three Peaks' (namely Ingleborough, Penyghent and Whernside) in limestone country, and the Howgill Fells. Although it can be sometimes tedious underfoot, especially on the ascent to the Whernside tarns, it is the best of all routes up Whernside. Karst landscape features such as pot holes and caves are discovered below the millstone grit and coal seams of the Yoredale Series; waterfalls and springs emerge where shale and coals are situated conformably over sandstone or limestone, or geological faults have down-thrown limestone next to older mudstone and slate. The walk is pretty in all seasons especially in the autumn where the leaves on the deciduous trees change in colour from green to gold, orange and red; and eventually fall to the ground when they are brown and crinkly.

In Australia I have walked pretty and challenging trails in the Otway National Park, Lake Eildon, Yarra Valley and the old gold mining terrains of Blackwood, Creswick and Warrandyte but my favourite walk, to date, has been Govett's Leap / Bridal Falls (Grose Valley) in the Blue Mountains.

The reason is not for the numerous thigh-aching steps I climbed, but my appreciation of the vast size of this section of the Great Dividing Range, a microcosm within the changing landscapes of Australia; and my first encounter of the blue haze hanging over the precipitous, sandstone cliffs and dense canopy of gum trees.

You are very welcome to join me on Sunday, 5th January 2014 in Anglesea where I will guide you through environments of wetlands, coastal heathland, cliffs and surf beach. Hopefully, we will watch kangaroos share Anglesea golf course with the players, the surf crash against Urquhart Bluff, seals sunbathing on the mollusc bored sandstone rocks of Point Roadknight, and a New Year surfing competition near to Soapy Rock. After the walk, you may fancy a swim in Bass Strait or enjoy 'afternoon tea' in one of the pretty tea shops and bakeries in this delightful, Great Ocean Road seaside resort.

...And farewell from Andreas

Dear Friends,

After two years here in Melbourne and a significant number of bushwalks with the YHA I am moving back to Germany and it is time to say good-bye and thank you.

When I came here, I was very much on my own and felt quite lonely without my family and friends. Luckily after a short time I got introduced to YHA bushwalking club and met a lot of new people. The open and friendly atmosphere with people from a very diverse background in addition to the nice and interesting walks made me come back regularly.

I still remember my first trip to the Alpine national park with Robert Potocnik where our car got nearly lost as we passed the assigned meeting spot and drove two hours through the absolute dark night to nowhere before we decided that most likely we had missed the meeting point ☺. But also a lot of the other extended trips with David Sale to Walwa and Lorne, with Andrew Stevenson to Beechworth and Wilsons Prom or Lutz Lademann and Jan Huang to Lake Eildon will always remain unforgettable memories. Also unforgettable



Andreas hiking in the Bavarian Alps

Will remain some of the blisters from hiking in wet boots to the Wilsons Prom lighthouse or from the tree planting at Benalla. – I would not want to miss any of them. On normal Sunday walks and the extended trips I got to know the best spots in Victoria and had great views and encounters with the wildlife including most native birds, kangaroos, wombats and echidnas. But most important for me were the people I had the pleasure to meet. Over many Sunday walks and a significant number of accommodated trips, I got to know a lot of the YHA members better. The vastly different backgrounds with a constant friendliness and openness to me made it a true rewarding experience of being part of YHA. The people that make up the YHA bushwalking club were essential to make feel home in Melbourne. Having a lot of interesting discussions did not only allow me to understand the individuals but also the Australian and Chinese culture. Over the course of the next year several of you became real friends that I hope to stay close despite the significant geographic distance to Germany.

I also want to use this opportunity to thank these people who spend significant time and effort to lead the YHA bushwalking club, who make up the committee, volunteer as trip leaders or help to publish the Yeti. Without you and your dedication this great club would not exist. – Thank you I hope to be able to see as many of you again either here in Melbourne or in Europe. If anyone of you comes (close) to Bavaria please do not hesitate to reach out and I am happy to share some of beauty of the Bavarian Alps, the Bavarian culture (yes there is more than beer) and some of the highlights of Munich.

Now that I've left Australia, I can be contacted on my private e-mail and the following address:

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email: BiehlerA@gmx.de

Best regards
Andreas

Recent Walk Snapshots

Organ Pipes – Day walk October 12th

Less than 30km from the CBD, the Organ Pipes national park's officially marked trails can be easily walked within half an hour. Consequently this area tends to be overlooked as a bushwalking destination, however it is possible to spend a few hours fully exploring the park and be rewarded by good views and wildlife sightings.



The walk was led by Robert Irvine with assistance from another Friends of the Organ Pipes volunteer. Since its proclamation as a national park in 1972, a successful tree-planting program has been carried out to revegetate the area. With a higher than expected survival rate of the saplings, the concentration of native trees is probably higher than existed originally. An ongoing challenge has been a battle against weeds such as prickly pear and aloe vera, which still manifest the border regions of the park. This suffered a setback recently as the park's only full-time rangers were both made redundant following DSE cutbacks.

The walk followed tracks not shown on the park map plus some off-track sections, crossing Jacksons Creek and climbing the escarpment. Robert remarked that he'd never seen a snake in the park during his 30 year involvement with it. Sure enough, this tempted fate as later on he recoiled from a reptile slithering amongst the old homestead ruins.



A panoramic view of the Organ Pipes formation

There are plans to construct additional walking trails, but the existing ones are sufficient to deservedly run the occasional Sunday walk here and take advantage of the very short drive from the city.

Larapinta trail sections 1 to 6, June 2013

For the third consecutive year a group of pack-carry walkers tackled part of the Larapinta trail in the West MacDonnell Ranges west of Alice Springs. To our great pleasure the rugged red terrain was covered with an amazing green hue due to some rainfall two to three weeks before we arrived.

We spread trail sections 1 to 6 into nine days of walking with a food drop at the end of day four. This arrangement proved to work well for the group. However, because of the low water levels in the waterholes we decided not to rely on them on day two and walked straight through to the next camp site with a water tank. The resulting long day tested everybody's stamina but also shortened the following day which ended with an afternoon free to linger around Jay Creek (or climb Mt Lloyd as some did).

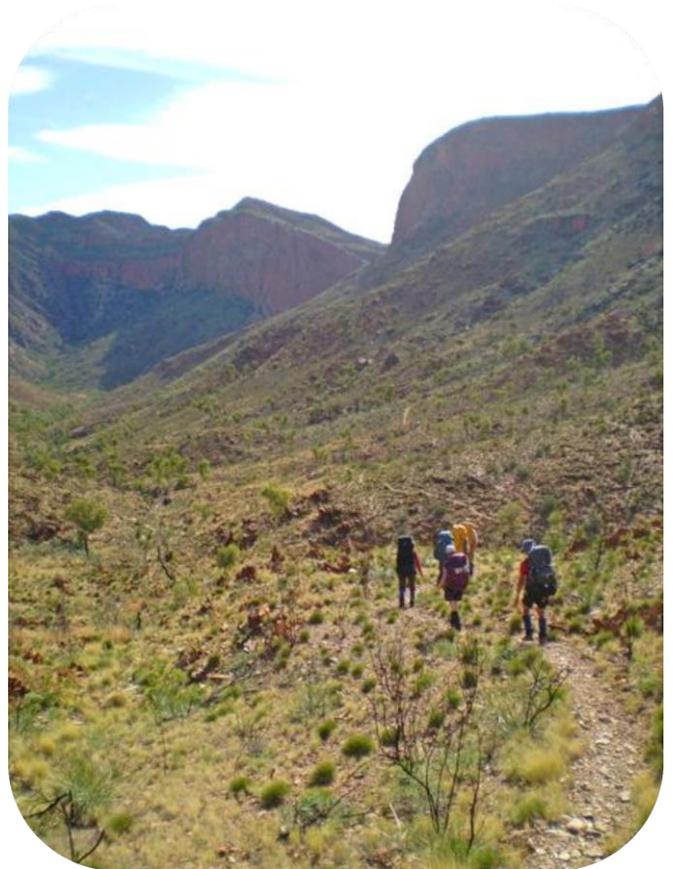


photo: Lisa Steinberg

Unfortunately, one of our group fell with the pack and broke her wrist. With the spirit unbroken though, she soldiered on through the remaining days, only regretting that the incapacitated hand forced her to choose the easy (as opposed to the fun) line of scrambling through the gorges. The other casualty was a sandfly attack on another group member presumably at the Jay Creek campsite. Maybe the surprisingly warm nights (there wasn't a single night below zero) contributed to the increased insect activity.

Sections three to five of the Larapinta trail are incredibly varied with climbs onto the ridges of the range, providing stunning views of the surrounding valleys and ranges, as well as scrambling through gorges where ancient rivers eroded their way. The descent from the range down to Millers Flat on day four, scrambling through a gorge full of cycads, was certainly one of the highlights of the trip.

Sandra Martig

Wilsons Prom Southern – Melbourne Cup Weekend

Not leaving Melbourne until Saturday morning made for a quick, relaxing drive to Wilsons Prom, punctuated by a breakfast stop at Korumburra bakery. Marina, Stephen, Kathryn and I departed Telegraph Saddle around midday. The other three were an hour late, eventually catching us up at a lunch stop a couple of kilometres down the track. Sections of the track had been upgraded following flooding in 2011. New concrete bridges replaced earlier wooden ones which had been washed away.

After arriving at Roaring Meg around 5pm and setting up camp, we set off on the 7.2 kilometre return trip to South Point, the southernmost location on the mainland. In the late afternoon sunshine we enjoyed views of Rodondo island and noticed ships navigating the narrow strait between the point and the island.

Overnight the weather became more windy and unsettled. Upon leaving the campsite I noted that there was probably twenty to thirty campers spread amongst the two small camping areas, including some who'd arrived overnight while we slept. Intermittent showers occurred as we headed towards the Wilsons Promontory light house, turning to a fierce hail storm just as we reached it. Luckily everyone was able to run to the nearby public shelter for protection. After the weather cleared a little we all went into the lighthouse museum for a look around. A few of us got a closer look at Rodondo island through a telescope in the radio station.

Once the weather cleared, we returned to the track junction and set out for Little Waterloo bay campsite. This section of track is heavily wooded, with numerous streams intersecting the track. After a slow gradual climb the track descended towards Waterloo bay, treating us to spectacular views of its wide sandy beaches. The campsite at Little Waterloo bay is just behind the fore dune of a small bay to the north of Waterloo bay. This would be our home for the night.



By the next morning the weather had cleared and we all set off early for Sealers Cove. The areas around North Waterloo bay had a subtropical appearance with long reedy plants taking over along creeks. After climbing out of the Waterloo bay are we took the side track to Kersops Peak (photo, left). For lunch we stopped on the beach, just outside the Refuge Cove campsite. The weather had now cleared. In my opinion Refuge Cove was the most beautiful area we visited on the trip. The large cove contained several beaches and with a narrow opening to the sea the water is almost dead calm. Shortly before exiting the bay we viewed a collection of whale bones displayed in the boat owners campsite.

The final night was spent at Sealers Cove. This was the busiest campsite with around forty to fifty campers, including many groups who appeared to have spent the entire weekend there.

Walking along the stretch of beach towards the Telegraph Saddle track I noticed pieces of black coal. This is often the result of a shipwreck breaking up. As the wreck breaks up the coal is released from the ship and can be washed up on nearby beaches. Windy Saddle was nothing like its name that day, as we basked in the sun for a lengthy morning tea break. The Sealers Cove track had only recently been reopened after numerous landslides caused by the 2011 deluge. The painstaking work to rebuild the track was impressive; given the enormity of the damage, it was a credit to those involved that the track was only closed for two years. We arrived back at Telegraph Saddle around lunch time, with a short wait for a bus down to the car park. Thus ended an enjoyable trip where the weather had been much kinder than predicted. There was only seven of us in the group; a few others had wanted to come, but by the time they booked there weren't any more camping permits available, so the lesson is to get in early next time this classic walk appears on the program.

Michael Carpinelli

Next Issue: Stewart Island – A Trumper's Tale

In the deep, deep south of New Zealand, the group was coming down with kiwi fever. Easily contracted from any of the multitude of bogs squelched through over the past few days, the only treatment was a clear sighting of the elusive bird. Other groups had reported seeing kiwis on the track, on the lawn outside their huts, on the way to the toilet in the middle of the night and just about every other type of encounter short of joining them for evening cocktails. A glimpse of one bird's backside scurrying amongst bushes in the dark forest had provided some temporary relief, but its effect would soon wear off - a permanent cure was needed soon...



Tips for Better Bushwalking

- #22 Choosing a Tent

A famous detective and his equally notable assistant went camping. Waking in the middle of the night, he roused his companion – “Watson, look up and tell me what you see.”

“Why Holmes, I see thousands upon thousands of stars.”

“And what does that tell you?”

Watson pondered for a minute. “Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, I observe that Saturn is in Leo. Horologically, I deduce that the time is approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, I can see that God is all powerful and that we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?”

Holmes was silent for a minute, then spoke. “Watson, you fool. It tells me that some scoundrel has stolen our tent!”

Staying warm and dry during the night is a crucial requirement for safe and enjoyable camping. Yet choosing which design of artfully stretched fabric will protect you from the elements is far from an elementary decision.

The first step to solving this mystery is to understand that there is no such thing as the perfect tent. Whichever tent is selected will be a compromise between several factors; price, weight, space, strength, stability and water resistance. There is a tent that is best for you, but this article won't be neatly revealing it in its final line – all that will be provided are a number of important clues to aid your investigation. Also assisting will be a number of the club's experienced overnight walkers, offering assessments on the types of tent they use.

Whichever tent is best depends on individual circumstances - the relative importance of these factors to you and under what conditions it is intended to be used.



Marina:
Macpac Nautilus (\$400)

Good points: Waterproof floor, warm, stable, vestibule OK to fit packs.

Not so good: Cosy 2-person, yet weight (2.7kg) is relatively heavy for just one person to carry, can't cook in the vestibule.

Size and Space – aka comfort at night: The first, and arguably most important consideration is the minimum length, width and height you need to be comfortable inside a tent. Camping should be enjoyable, but a tent that is cramped to lie down in, let alone being unable to sit up, can be a miserable experience. The main trade-off for size is weight, but if you don't sleep well, you won't walk well and will lose any advantage from carrying a tent that is a few hundred grams lighter than a roomier model.

Tents a bushwalker is usually interested in, depending on how many they expect to share with, are described as 1, 2 or 3-person. What this actually means is they will fit 1, 2 or 3 standard-size sleeping mats (183 x 51cm) but there is no guarantee of much space left between the mats or the side-

walls of the tent. Pay attention instead to the tent's dimensions – the length should be few centimetres more than yours and allow 65cm/person width when sharing unless you don't mind being extremely cosy. Unless those in the tent will be small or shorter people, “1-2 person” or narrow “2-person” models are best suited to single occupants, whilst two people are better off in a 3-person tent. Even specified dimensions don't tell the full story, as tapering of the roof or sides can lessen the amount of usable space. If intending to sleep more than one person in a tent, make sure that the design allows each occupant to enter or leave without having to clamber over their companion(s).

Before deciding to buy a particular model tent, crawl inside one and stretch out, ideally with whoever you intend to regularly share it with. Do this either in the outdoor shop or ask around to see if anyone in the club has one of the models that you are interested in.

Another space-related consideration is whether you like to have much of your gear inside the tent or left outside in a pack. Are you content to leave your pack totally exposed (albeit covered) outside your tent or do you prefer to keep it in a vestibule? Vestibule size is also important if you are likely to camp in inclement conditions with no other shelter such as a hut to cook in.



Stephen:
Mont Moondance-2 (\$500, 2kg, “2-person”)

Good points: Relatively lightweight, roomy for one.

Not so good: Inner is mostly mesh, fly doesn't fully extend to ground level, so a relatively cold tent.

Weight – aka comfort on your back: What is the maximum weight you are prepared to carry? If you are just base-camping, weight is irrelevant, but for pack-carriers without the physique of the Incredible Hulk, this is a close second to space in importance. The main trade-off for weight is price, as high-tech materials used for lightweight poles and fabrics cost more. Anyone able to carry up to 2.5kg tent-weight has a good choice of quality, sufficiently spacious tents. Below 1.5kg either the price increases disproportionately or there are sacrifices in space and other factors such as strength and water resistance. Another contributor to low weight is a high proportion of mesh used in the inner shell. This makes for a cool, airy tent – not necessarily bad, but using it in cold may require extra weight in other gear (eg sleeping bag) to compensate.



Bruce: Hilleberg Anjan2 (US \$570, “2-person”, 1.7kg)

Good points: Lightweight, easy to put up, strong, rip-proof material.

Not so good: No local retail outlet, only able to be purchased online in Australia.

Above 2.5kg, if a tent isn't cheap (under \$300), make sure that the reason for the weight (eg a four-season tent or a palace under canvas) is something you really need.



John: Salewa Micra (\$350, 2.4kg, "2-person")

Good points: Easy to set-up, stable, room to keep a pack and a person inside.

Not so good: Fly is too close to the inner, wind causes them to touch and let in water; remedied with elastic bands to separate them.

Price: Budget limitations may mean carrying an extra few hundred grams instead of spending an extra few hundred dollars. Yet even if money is no object, there is still no such thing as an ideal tent. Make sure what you spend gets the features that you need, but conversely that you aren't paying extra for unnecessarily high strength or water-resistance. Expect to pay at least \$300 for a suitable hiking tent.

Very cheap tents tend to be: single skin, non-breathable, not very waterproof and relatively heavy – but are fine if you just want to car camp in summer.

Expensive tents are often described as "expedition" models.

Shape: The choice of shape for a hiking tent is between a dome and tunnel (yes, don't bother considering A-frames or tepees). Each design has advantages over the other, so it's a case of deciding which advantage is of most importance.

Dome tents have a pole cross-over point, whilst a tunnel design uses 2-3 poles in parallel hoops.

The chief advantage of a dome tent is that it is free-standing, ie it doesn't require pegs to stay upright and hold its shape (although they are still handy to stop it from blowing away!). Free-standing tents are useful if there is a likelihood of having to camp in confined spaces or on rock/hard soil that pegs can't be pushed into. They are also easier to clean by picking up and shaking out any dirt or debris.

The advantage of a tunnel-design is a greater ratio of space to weight (as poles are shorter) and more headroom.



Ken: Snowgum Storm Shelter (\$350, 3kg, "2-person")

Good points: Easy to pitch, a "2-person" tent that comfortably fits two people and gear.

Not so good: None to speak of.

Strength & Stability: On a calm night, the inherent strength and stability of a tent's design is of no issue. The main elements which apply stress to a tent are wind and snow; the level of these you expect to encounter determine what you need. Unless camping in a very exposed alpine location, wind fierce enough to break a pole is rare, but a tent that doesn't handle wind well will be noisy, making it harder to sleep. Dome designs offer more stability, although tunnel tents still perform well if pitched in line with the wind direction.

A dome-design generally provides better resistance to heavy snowfalls than a tunnel, as snow tends to slide down rather than collect in the middle and possibly collapse a 2-pole tunnel tent. If you aren't intending to camp in snow, then anything billed as a "snow-tent" will have extra weight and cost that you don't need, and may even be uncomfortably warm in summer.

Water Resistance: To stay dry inside, a tent needs to both keep out rain but also allow water vapour to escape outwards without condensing. Most hiking tents with a double-skin design above a price point of \$300 are adequately waterproof. The main exceptions to watch out for are the ultralight models, where lighter materials such as nylon come at the expense of waterproofing. Some tents list a hydrostatic rating; 2000-3000mm is sufficient for typical use in Victoria, even alpine areas. Higher ratings affect a tent's price and weight and are only worth the investment if planning to be used in high rainfall areas such as SW Tasmania. Some tents require seam-sealing after purchase, as manufacturers regard this as disproportionately expensive to do themselves. Don't forget, or wait until rain clouds approach before doing this, as the weak points where leaking is most likely to occur are the seams.

Outer vents help reduce condensation, so look for these in a tent's design – the vent should be usable in all but very heavy rain, otherwise simply leaving the tent entrances partially unzipped will be just as effective. Mild condensation may dampen the walls of a tent, but shouldn't drip inside. Avoiding touching the walls (see "Size and Space" earlier) will prevent moisture being soaked up by a sleeping bag.



Michael: Mountain Designs Positron (\$400)

Good points: roomy, good height, not too heavy (2.3kg), large vestibule.

Not so good: Wind blows in under the side. Described as 2-person, but very cosy, and single side-entrance.

Well that's the end of the clues. If you are still confused about what to buy, the final hint is to talk to others in the club. It isn't necessary to have your own tent before coming on a first-time pack-carry (and we suggest that you don't), sharing or borrowing one can be arranged provided you tell the trip leader well beforehand. Once you are part of an overnight walk, wandering around campsites observing what others are using will provide more insight than browsing catalogues or outdoor shops. Happy camping.



Season's Greetings



On behalf of the YHA Bushwalking committee, I would like to wish everyone all the best for a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

We look forward to providing more activities for you in 2014 to help celebrate YHA Bushwalking's 75th year so hope to see you on the track.

Andrew Stevenson, President

Gearing Up

Outdoor accessories for the discerning walker, compiled by Andrew Stevenson



Camelbaks new All Clear is a USB rechargeable water purifier that can treat 750ml of water 80 times on one charge. <http://www.camelbak.com>



Em's Powers Cookies are a delicious treat for the trail that easily digest and are made from all natural ingredients. <http://www.powercookies.com/>



Black Diamonds new ReVolt is 110 Lumens USB rechargeable and will also run on alkaline batteries. <http://blackdiamondequipment.com/>



The Exped Mira I weighs in at only 1.5kg that is a 3 season tent perfect for lightweight adventures. <http://www.exped.com>



The Trangia Triangle can turn your Trangia spirit or gas burner into lightweight stove for when you want to keep things simple. <http://www.trangia.se/english>



Back Country Cuisines Primo Pineapple is a great little tasting treat for the trail when you need that quick energy hit! <http://www.backcountrycuisine.co.nz>

Are you looking for a new tent? You've just read the previous article (p9-10), but have decided that artistic merit and being the centre of attention are more important factors than price or weight? Then you need to choose from the FieldCandy gallery. Fun but functional, who said A-frames weren't cool?

<http://www.fieldcandy.com>



l-r: 'Animal Farm', 'What a Melon', 'Get a Room'

YHA Bushwalking History: Part 3 1957-1969 Rattling, Rolling (but no swinging)

For its first five decades, YHA Bushwalks were communal experiences that began in the city with a group either boarding a Flinders or Spencer St train or being picked up in a van at what was the upper section of Batman Avenue. A walk didn't end until its sometimes wet, often weary, but nevertheless exulted participants were deposited back in the city on Sunday evening. The journeys were as memorable as the walks, with many friendships and romances forged whilst huddled together over the long miles back from a day or weekend outing.



An age of chivalry: YHA Bushwalking 1966 (photo: Fred Bloomer)

Rail Trails Away

A highlight of the bushwalking committee's 1957 programme was a diesel railcar excursion to northeast Victoria. After being part of a regular service to Wangarratta, the YHA Bushwalking carriage was decoupled from the train and continued as a charter trip to Wodonga, then onwards to Cudgewa. Along the way it passed through the newly relocated Tallangatta (just prior to the inundation of the old town), then over trestle bridges as it climbed to what at almost 900m was the highest ever point of the Victorian rail network. At Cudgewa there was time for some short walks up a nearby hill, which coupled with fine October weather revealed the inspiring sight of "Kosciuszko country, snow-clad and crystal clear". Saturday night was spent partying back in Albury, before Sunday's train journey up to Beechworth where they were welcomed by the shire president and a crowd of excited youngsters keen for a ride. The event was more socialising than walking, but was judged a stupendous success and a similar trip organised in 1958 to Castlemaine and Maldon. A few more rail excursions were featured during the last years of the 1950s, although the Bushwalking committee stopped organising them themselves and linked in with trips arranged by the Victorian Railways Historical Society.

During the first decade of YHA, trains were the chief mode of transport for bushwalks, but by the late 1950s they'd become the exception. As the club branched out to a greater variety of locations, so the branch lines contracted. Some didn't close for a few more decades, but increased car ownership post-war was already having an effect, with passenger services scaled back. Those on the rail tours knew they were witnessing the end of an era. Nevertheless bushwalks to a few areas still favoured access by train until the mid-1970s. In the 1960s a day-walk in Werribee Gorge

was somewhat longer than those of today, as it required a walk-in from Bacchus March station. It would have been faster-paced too, as anyone burridging along at the rear would struggle to make the last train back to Spencer St. The Daylesford region was another favourite, thanks to a branch service from Carlsruhe. Red-rattler carriages with horse-hair stuffed leather seats and metal foot-heaters to stave off the wintry, sometimes snowy, weather outside gave bushwalkers a choice of stations at Trentham, Bullarto and Daylesford to connect their hike.

Transforming Transport

As trains fell out of favour, the mainstay of club transport from the 1950s to the late 1980s was the "van". To entice customers they were described as "picnic vans", but more precisely they were converted removalist trucks. Mild-mannered furniture-ferrying Bedfords during the week were transformed on Friday afternoon by fitting bench seats into the rear storage area. Two benches lined the side walls whilst two others sat back to back down the centre, providing seats for 40 people plus extra in the front cabin.

Furniture vans were first used as people movers in the 1920s; by the 1950s they were booming, with almost 500 registered nationally. As a cheaper transport option to buses or coaches they were used by every bushwalking club of the time along with myriad sporting and other social groups. In the 1950s YHA Bushwalking used Eyle's vans for a while, switching to Gronows after an incident where a wheel fell off on the return from a walk. In 1961 they changed to Les White's van, beginning a loyal relationship that lasted over three decades. Les was already a veteran of the industry, having transported bushwalkers since 1936, including a narrow escape from bushfires in the lead-up to 1939's Black Friday catastrophe. His son Norm also drove for the club and eventually took over the business. On circuit day walks he'd sometimes join in, but more often he'd while away the time fishing. In an interview in 1986, Norm recalled one particularly memorable trip to Mt Stirling. "I was taking them to the top of the mountain, but it snowed so heavily we got stuck. I couldn't turn the bus around so the 40 of them just got out, picked up the tail of the bus and spun me round on top of the snow." And on another walk "I tried to cross a dry creek bed at night but got marooned. The back wheels were off the ground because the chassis got jammed on the bank."

An incident he probably preferred to forget was the bus rolling off the Licola-Heyfield walk. Several bushwalkers were injured, fortunately none seriously enough not to see the humorous side of taking over the maternity ward of Heyfield hospital for treatment.

Clubnight – the start point of all activities

For anyone wanting to go on a bushwalking van trip, the adventure began at YHA Clubnight. Following the formation of separate activity groups in 1947, the first Clubnight was held on 27th July 1948. After a few venue changes due to rent increase or the need for more space, it transferred to the Victorian Railways Institute (VRI) ballroom above Flinders St station in March 1952 and settled into what became a 33 year long halcyon period until the ballroom was closed for renovation (and not reopened to this day) in 1985. Held weekly on Monday nights, typical attendance in the 1950-60s was 100-200, with throngs of people up to three-deep

gathering around each activity's table. Here was where members met up, chatted and shared photos from previous walks whilst enquiring about and booking onto their next one. The fee for a van trip was dependent on the distance – as an example from the start of decimal currency in 1966, \$4.50 bought a weekend trip to the Grampians or Mt Feathertop; with CPI adjustment this is equivalent to about \$50 in 2013 money.



(l-r) Marion Paule, Jan Cameron (then 17, later to found the Kathmandu outdoor retail chain) & Gillian Burnett at Cradle Mountain 1969 (photo: Bruce Meincke)

Singing All the Way

Standard departure time for a van trip from Batman Avenue was 6.00pm Friday evenings or 9.00 Sundays; trips were scheduled every week apart from the Christmas period, but alternated between day and weekend walks. Running Sunday and weekend trips concurrently was still some decades away. Packs were either hung from overhead cords along the side or stored at the front above the cabin. With backsides planted firmly on the hard wooden benches, the slow grinding uncomfortable journey began, but it had its compensations otherwise the walks wouldn't have remained popular. Groups generated their own entertainment, singing all the way from old-favourite folk songbooks with a mix of printed and unprintable lyrics. Those who wanted a bit of extra camaraderie sat in cuddling seats covered in blankets at the front of the compartment. Everyone huddled together to ward off cold drafts, whilst on hot summer trips the van would be awash from water fights. Weekend trips would have a dinner stop before eventually depositing everyone late at night at a dark, often freezing roadside campsite from which the walk would start next day.

The Bushwalking club flourished throughout the 1960s. Although some years saw a drop in numbers compared to the previous one, and new committees sought to rejuvenate the activity, there was nothing like the crisis that had occurred at the beginning of the 1950s. This was despite the club once again taking on responsibility for organising regular hostel trips for newcomers. New generations of leaders were more easily nurtured, helped by an annual leadership training weekend at Warburton Hostel.

One of the club's main movers and shakers for much of the 1960s was Bob Tait. Chairman for two years 1964-66, he large number of walks and impressed many with his quiet yet strong, efficient and professional manner. Like the 1950s, the majority of the leaders and committee members including Bob were in their late teens or early 20s. Another continuing trend from the '50s was the frequency of engagements and

marriages that had most leaders or committee members pairing off within 2-3 years. Someone who probably lasted a little longer before getting hitched was Ken Moschetti (photo below, centre). By running a few day walks in 1967, he became the youngest leader in the club's history aged just 14.



Kosciuszko NP, December 1967 (photo: Bruce Meincke)

Average attendance on day walks increased from 20 in 1964 to 26 in 1969, with 1967-68 seeming to be boom years. Weekend averages were also in the 20s, in some years slightly higher than day walks. The statistics are slightly skewed by the cancellation of any trips with much less than 20 bookings to avoid running at a loss. Nevertheless weekend trips with 30-40 common. What's more, everyone walked as one big group. "Burn, bash and bury" was still the approved method for disposing of rubbish and anyone concerned by the environmental impact of 34 people camping in what were then unregulated areas such as Major Mitchell plateau or Wilsons Promontory was ahead of their time. It wasn't until the 1970s that a van load would be split into more than one walk option. Still, it's impressive that for a demanding walk such as Diamantina Spur, there were 45 people capable of doing it.

A Christmas walk in Tasmania, usually the Overland Track was an annual event from 1963, peaking at 64 people in 1967.

A Dash of colour

The club often likes to describe its Walks Programs as varied, or exciting; from 1963-68 they were also colourful thanks to Ian Sheers. His walking wasn't particularly stylish – loud stomping through the bush enabled him to be heard or homed in on from a long way away – but as an apprentice printer he provided considerable style to the programs. Access to professional typesetting and printing facilities produced some of the most attractively presented walks programs in the club's history. They stand out like beacons against those bashed out on manual typewriters immediately before and after this period. Also produced during this period were personalised trip booklets handed out to everyone on major walks to record their observations.

Not So Swinging Sixties

YHA Hostels used to have some fairly strict rules about what you could (but mostly couldn't) do in them; the same applied to its activities. A discipline committee would regularly sit in judgement on hapless members accused of breaking any these rules, meting out punishment either as temporary suspension or cancellation of membership. Thus it was forbidden for those on bushwalks to swear, consume alcohol or share a tent with a member of the opposite sex unless they were married to them. These rules were generally enforced, although there were some whose popularity and personality

caused blind eyes to be turned. One of these was Bob Prudhoe, aka 'Yogi Bob', a very strong walker as exemplified by a 30-day expedition in Tasmania. Eschewing the usual dried food on long hikes for a diet of alfalfa sprouts and yoghurt, he had the strength to carry a guitar on walks and carry women into his tent. With a reputation as a ladykiller, he was never short of female attention on his walks, one memorable girlfriend carried several tops, stopping to change into a new one whenever she got sweaty.



Bob Prudhoe entertains - Wilsons Prom 1966 (ph: Fred Bloomer)

Music around the campfire always went down well; another tale concerns Steve McFadyen carrying a gramophone into Lake Tali Karng – it wasn't as well received as he'd hoped, as he didn't bring along any of the latest music everyone was hankering to hear - Beatles records.

Like most eligible men in the club of that time, Bob Prudhoe soon found himself engaged. Nowadays he is best known for his tree house at Warburton which has attracted the attention of tourists but the ire of the local council.

Tragedy at Sealers Cove

Although Wilsons Promontory is Victoria's oldest national park (est 1908), its popularity and development didn't take off until after WWII. By the 1960s, Tidal River was bursting at the seams with summer campers, but tracks to its eastern shores were limited. A path had been cut to Sealers Cove, but only as far as the swamp – there was no boardwalk over the last two kilometres and nothing to assist bushwalkers to proceed onwards to Refuge Cove other than their map and compass. Since the early days of YHA Bushwalking, a trip to the Prom had usually been programmed for one of the summer long weekends. Easter 1966 was no exception; a group of 25 set out to Sealers Cove, with a side trip up Mt Wilson from Windy Saddle; other than a camping fee, there were no regulations on the size of the group, where they could walk and where they could camp. Due to the difficulty accessing it however visitors to Sealers Cove were mainly fishermen or experienced bushwalkers. It was April, but the weather was still very warm so a dip in the bay was more than welcome. On Sunday 10th April, 20 year old Robert Turner and two others decided to swim across Sealers Cove. Reaching the other side, they set off for the return swim back to camp. Along the way Robert disappeared and despite an extensive search his body was never found. It was concluded that the very cold water probably resulted in cramp or exhaustion that led to him drowning. This was the only fatality on a walk in the club's 75 year history.

An Era Finally Ends

From as far back as the 1950s proper, comfortable coaches were hired for larger trips such as Easter, but the use of private cars was infrequent until the 1980s. Anyone wanting to drive was discouraged by a rule that they still had to pay the van fee unless the van was full. Reluctance to use cars was also due to legal uncertainty over what could be perceived as driving for hire or reward. YHA lobbied the Victorian government in the late 1970s to clarify the law and formally recognise car-pooling. Even when it became clear in the early 1980s that the era of the van was drawing to a close, the Bushwalking committee had some trepidation about how walk transport would function without it, for despite its discomfort and slowness, the van offered several advantages. Leaders didn't need to spend time organising car-pooling. Walks with different start and finish points were a breeze to organise without a car-shuffle. There was the occasional breakdown and other hiccup – a Sunday walk in the Brisbane Ranges didn't return to Melbourne until midnight due to the driver being misdirected to a different finish point – but overall this worked well. For many it was simply the convenience of being able to finish what could be a fairly tough day's walking without having to worry about driving home.

Coach companies had long lobbied against the picnic vans that cut into their business. As the years passed, the argument against these relics of an age when it wasn't compulsory to wear seatbelts let alone have them fitted gained more traction. Transport regulations were toughened, firstly ceasing the issue of any new passenger-van licences, then making it harder to retain existing ones. Les White retired in 1980, leaving Norm by the middle of the decade holding the last two remaining licences in the state. YHA Bushwalking had priority over other clubs for White's services and so became the last survivor hiking from the back of a furniture van. Although a van was still available, the club's usage of it declined from the 1980s. Attendance on weekend trips was no longer enough to break-even, and many were more than happy to turn to faster, more convenient and lower cost travel by car. The van was still used for the occasional Sunday walk until 1994 where there was an advantage such as avoiding a car-shuffle or offering a true "mystery trip". Its final journey came on 22nd November 1998 with a reunion walk aptly organised by Bob Tait. For one last ride bushwalkers veteran and new crammed together to travel "nouveau jika jika" class as they shared their collective memories of "The Van".

Next issue: Part 4 – Breaking the Ice: Up until 1969 the YHA Bushwalking program still had a major weakness – it sagged during winter. Snow trips weren't held until October, until a young school teacher pioneered annual pilgrimages up the likes of Mt Feathertop whilst they were still firmly in the grip of Jack Frost. And from these far from abominable snow men came a new mascot that lives on to this day.

Yeti Online Extra: [1960s Trip Reports](#) ; [1967 walks program Trip Booklet Overland Tk Xmas 1965](#) (courtesy Bruce Meincke)

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