

Brindabella Bushwalking Club



From the President **June 2024**

Issue 83

Deborah and I have recently been walking with fellow bushwalkers in remote areas of NSW and South Australia. I knew some of the walkers, but the majority were new to me.

Being very remote, access to the areas where we were walking was on rough and long dirt roads, only some of the cars were true 4WD with others being all-wheel drive.

What was pleasing was how the group worked exceptionally well together, this was true for both the driving and the walking. More experienced drivers/walkers were very supportive of less experienced participants providing advice and if necessary, even supplying items to make the experience(s) more enjoyable.

As I have mentioned in previous columns, in finding natural alignments of capability and experience meant that the group, even if divided into faster and slower walkers, had a most rewarding time and thoroughly enjoyed the walking.

Although we were walking together for the first time, the group were like minded and just got on with walking in the bush.

We made new friends and walking companions – bushwalkers are a good group to be with 😊

I do hope to see you on a walk soon, until then do take care.....Bill



A Rishi Sunak moment - With rain expected, Saturday's (11 May) planned day walk to Forster Hill and beyond was shortened to a morning walk along the Murrumbidgee Discovery Trail north from Kambah Pool. The river was noisy and the bush was dripping, but the rather wet walkers were undeterred.

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Editor

Peter Ford

Contributions welcome
Email [here](#)



Namadgi Ruby Jubilee

Allan Sharp

Namadgi National Park celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Its gazettal on 3 October 1984 followed years of campaigning for 'a national park for the national capital' – the slogan adopted by the National Park Association of



Australian Traveller

the ACT, which was established in 1960 to lobby for a national park.

From a packed public meeting convened by a small group at the [Australian Institute of Anatomy](#) on 1 March 1960 to consider the question of a national park for the ACT, it would be another 21 years before that dream was realised.

On a motion put to the meeting by the late Nancy Burbidge, a CSIRO botanist, the fledgling NPA ACT was formed, thus



Awildland



Trip Advisor

beginning a long and sometimes discouraging campaign during which many papers were written, and politicians lobbied.

A breakthrough came in 1979 when the Gudgenby Nature Reserve was declared.

In 1962 – 63, botanists and zoologists had surveyed the area around Gudgenby and Mount Kelly to draw up lists of the flora and fauna and prepare maps of the area. The compiled information was 'sent with high hopes to the appropriate officials and departments'.

The original area proposed now forms the core of the wilderness area of the very much enlarged Namadgi National Park, which covers 46 per cent of the ACT, ranging from grassy plains to snow gum forests to alpine meadows and wetlands.

Under Tom Uren as federal Minister for Territories and Local Government in 1983 – 84, the creation of a national park was given new

impetus.

Members of the NPA and Canberra Bushies had, at various times, taken Mr Uren out into the bush and shown him the area they wanted gazetted as a national park.

'He was interested in the environment, fortunately, and of course as soon as he saw it he just said to one of his offiders, "Well, this will have to be a national park – so see to it,"' [recalled NPA campaigner Reg Alder](#).

' And it was done! It was just so easy that last that you wondered why it had been so hard to get there

Another early campaigner, [Fiona MacDonald Brand](#) recalled: 'I don't remember that we had a big celebration. It wasn't until Tom Uren announced it as a national park that a group of us felt that it needed a big, special walk. [So] we walked up to Mount Namadgi and carried a couple of bottles of champagne and some food.'

The day of gazettal was also that of the first meeting of the Namadgi National Park Consultative Committee. At the meeting, an elated Tom Uren 'waved the gazettal notice happily' and commented that in a long political career 'it was one of his proudest achievements'.

In charging the committee with its task, Mr Uren said he wanted it to recognise and support one important theme: 'Namadgi is to be in every sense of the phrase a park for the people. I want it to be a living part of the ACT community, available for all to use throughout the year, but in a manner in keeping with the need to protect the important natural and human attributes of the area.'

'To have such a magnificent park on the doorstep of a national capital is a rare experience and one I am sure that will become increasingly appreciated by both residents and visitors.'

Forty years on, we would all still agree.



FACEBOOK

Our Facebook Manager regularly posts photos, walk reports and information about upcoming activities. Please visit [here](#) and see what our members are planning or have recently been up to.

Please send your photos etc. to Heather at facebook@brindabellabushwalking.org.au

BUSHWALKING NSW

Bushwalking NSW newsletter and emails, which are available to all members, include some items of general interest such as:

[An opinion piece](#) suggesting a rebranding of bushwalking clubs;

[Photo Competition;](#) and
[Leadership Training](#)

Classic insults

"I've had a perfectly wonderful evening. But this wasn't it."
- Groucho Marx.



"He's complaining of chest pain, shortness of breath, cramps and dizziness. Do you sell earplugs?"

The longer I look at this the more I understand why aliens don't visit us anymore.



SOCIAL NEWS JUNE 2024

Friday 23 May: Potluck Dinner

Another successful social outing. 43 happy attendees. We enjoyed a welcome drink and nibbles while chatting to fellow members. These social occasions are a great opportunity for members who are no longer walking to catch up with their friends and reminisce over past adventures. Thank you everyone for your yummy contributions. Welcome to new members and others who attended a potluck dinner for the first time.

Guest speaker Pete Cotsell, Regional Manager Southern Parks and Reserves ACT covered topics such as his career, culling, endangered species and breeding, \$6m C'wealth Government grant to help ACT parks recover from the 2020 bushfires (eg improvements to tracks and steps). Pete has kindly agreed to write an article for the next newsletter.





Four 80th birthdays were vigorously celebrated.

Thank you everyone for pitching in with setting up the church hall and washing up etc at the end of the night. A special thank you to members of the social sub-committee, in particular Julie, who organised the equipment for Pete's presentation.

Upcoming Event: morning coffee/breakfast. Courtyard Café, Old Parliament House

Monday 10 June 10:15am (public holiday, hence free parking)

I will send out an email closer to the date. If favourable weather, I will lead a short walk beforehand. You could also visit MOAD (same venue), or other exhibitions in the Parliamentary Triangle.

*Elaine Atkinson
Social Convenor*



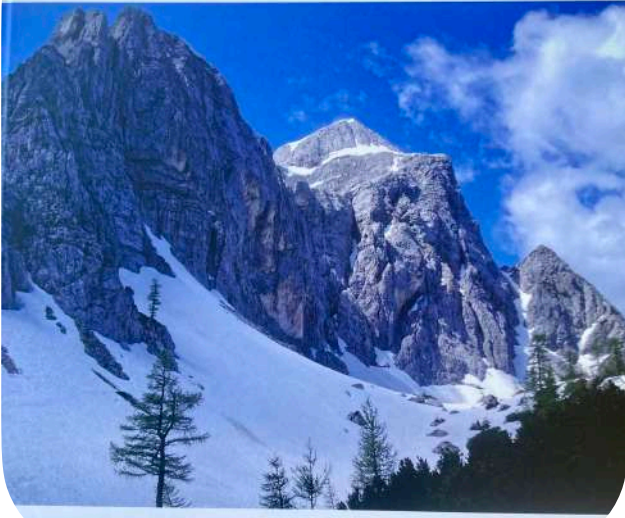
For those who remember 'Hair'

I've never liked housework. I get by doing little chores when I feel like them, in between painting. Who wants to chase dust all their life? You can spend your whole lifetime cleaning the house. I like watching the patina grow. If the house looks dirty, buy another bunch of flowers, is my advice.

Margaret Olley



HIKING IN SLOVENIA MAY 2009



PETER JAMES AITCHISON

This travel note is the first of an occasional series on trips that the club has done in the past.

Photos by Peter Aitchison (except as indicated)

If you have any record of a club trip you have done, you are welcome to send it to me.

Ed.

In May 2009 Eric and I joined the FBI (Family Bushwalking Inc.) Group to spend two weeks walking in the Julian Alps led by John Clune. We were booked into an hotel in Ribcev Laz near Lake Bohinj for one week and the second week we were based in Kransjk Gora a little farther north near the Austrian border. Our accommodation in Ribčev Laz was at the Hotel Rožič, a family run hotel, where Janja Rožič made us so welcome and catered for all our needs. Earlier we had arranged for half board but we changed to full board after the first day. We were all amazed at the big breakfast, complete with offerings of bacon and eggs

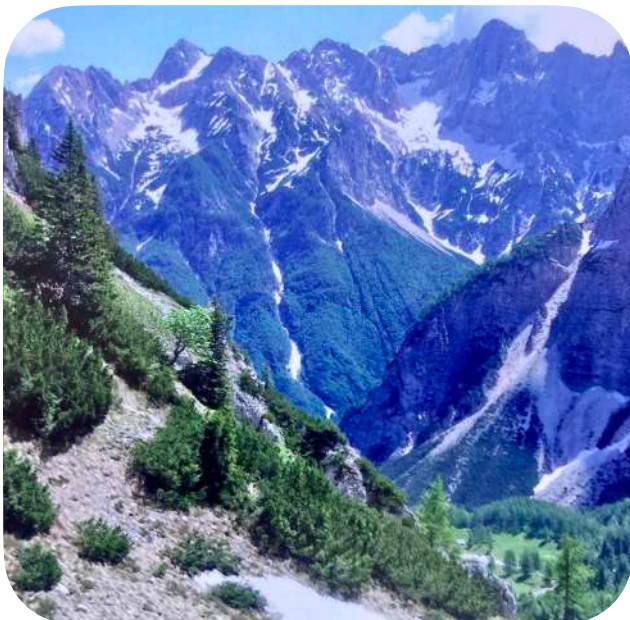
most mornings. It was very convenient to take an extra roll with some slices of cheese or meat for our lunch rather than to walk to the local supermarket so it was arranged with Janja to change to full board for an additional four euros.

Janja could speak English but her main drink and dinner waiter Angelique could not understand us and often had a blank expression. She reminded us of Manuel, the waiter in Fawlty Towers, so many of us referred to her as Manuel. She eventually understood our requests for a glass of beer, or red wine and was always eager to please, so we have very fond memories of her but she will always be 'our Manuel'.

We completed six or seven day-walks each week. In the Ribčev Laz area we were able to walk out of the hotel and start walking – there was no need for bus or taxi rides on most days. Walks from Ribčev Laz went to waterfalls,



delightful meadows covered in masses of spring wildflowers and some snow covered peaks. There was too much snow to climb above 1800 metres on the high peaks but we managed to almost reach Pršivec (1761 metres) that gave us grand views of Lake Bohinj and the surrounding mountains. One of our party had a narrow escape when a large clump of earth with bush attached tumbled over the top of her. It removed her hat, which ended up several



metres down the snow slope, fortunately she was not hurt, only shaken. We all went to Lake Bled by bus one day, a very popular tourist place. It is very picturesque with an island in the lake complete with an old church where tourists continue to ring the 'wishing bell'. Upon arrival at the lake, our party divided into three or four groups, some walked around the lake and visited the castle on top of a rocky knob overlooking the beautiful lake. Another group walked to a very pretty gorge with lots of running water while another group visited some other nearby villages.

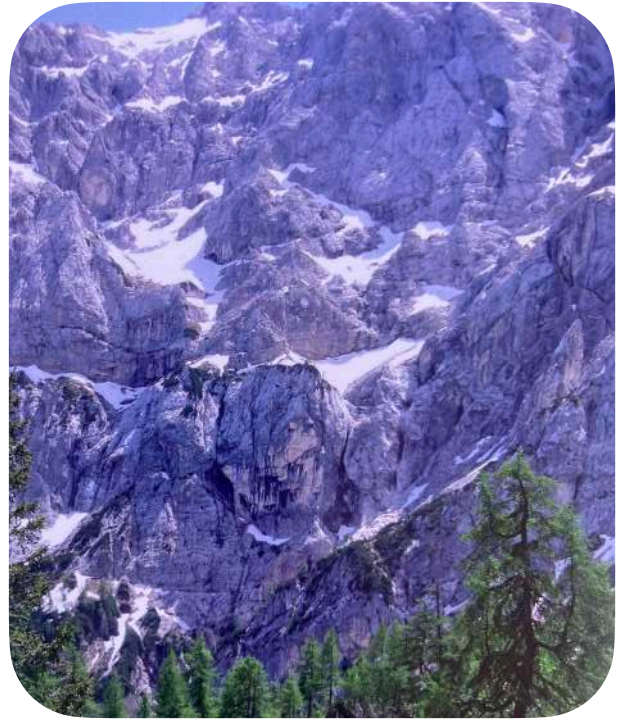
On our second week when we were staying in Kranjska Gora we often caught the local buses to neighbouring villages to start our walks. Most of these villages had very old fourteenth century farmhouses still standing midst the modern hotels for the tourists. Some of these old stone buildings had been cared for lovingly over the years and it was interesting to see the old religious frescos on the outside, often with a date above the door. I was particularly interested in seeing the huge traditional ceramic heating ovens in their main living rooms. They



Photo supplied by Eric Pickering

take up a large space but people, usually children, sit and sleep around the base and on top of these ovens. These ovens are usually connected to the fire in the adjoining kitchen so they do not often cook on them in the living room but use them to provide warmth during the long winter season. They are called peč and we saw several very decorative ones in modern buildings too.

We made quite an impact on the town when twenty Aussies tuned up at the local bus stop to travel to a neighbouring village to begin a walk. Fortunately, it was early in the tourist season so there was always room for everyone on the bus. The only day we caused a slight problem was the day when we all moved from Ribčev Laz to Kranjska Gora using local



buses. We all had one big suitcase or backpack plus a smaller day-pack. Just loading the big cases in the luggage section took a long time that upset the bus time-table so we missed a connecting bus en route. This worked in our favour as we had time for a coffee break so nobody complained.

One of the walks from Kranjska Gora started with a taxi ride to Vrsič Pass. It was too early in the season for a bus to tackle the road to the pass so we called a taxi company to take fourteen walkers to the pass and we would walk back to the hotel. We all had a surprise when the two taxis turned up with the words 'Strip Club' on the side. We could not resist the temptation for a photograph! The road wound up the 1611 metres with 24 hairpin bends with patches of snow very visible all around. Once out of the taxi I almost wished I could return to the valley as it



Photo supplied by Eric Pickering

was freezing. Extra layers of jackets, beanies and gloves were quickly donned while Eric made arrangements for the taxi to meet three of us at the Russian Chapel way below at three o'clock. Eric, Peter A and I wanted to explore higher on the mountain before we descended. The others set off on their track to the hotel while we searched for the track to Sleme 1911 metres. It was a sunny day and once away from the freezing windy pass we were rewarded with fantastic views of impressive rugged crags, deep ravines and snowy slopes, with the occasional green tips of new plants emerging from their

dormant state. We climbed to Vratca (1799 metres) before deep snow blocked our way.

We retreated to the pass then followed an old road built by Russian prisoners during WW1. This was a delightful, grassy, well-graded cart track that zigzagged down the hillside with well-built rocky embankments and the occasional old bunker or guard-house. We rested for lunch beside the new main road then continued to our rendezvous with the taxi at the Russian Chapel. The Chapel was built as a memorial to the 100 Russians prisoners and some Austrian Guards that were killed by an avalanche in 1916. As we reached the Chapel our taxi simultaneously arrived, precisely at three o'clock. Well timed!



Our fortnight of walking with our Canberra friends came to a close on the 1 June. We all disbursed in different directions. A few flew home via other destinations but we continued our travels in Croatia and Northern Italy. More stories to tell later.

Participants: John Clune, Liz Conway, Eric and Pat Pickering, Peter Wellman and Mary Lindsay, Bob and Jenny Cooper, Allan Mikkelsen and Robyn Kelly, Colin and Val Boreham, Peter and Truus Ford, Judy Grant, Chris Perrers, May-Kai Lok, Anne Campbell, John Ellis and Peter Aitchison.

