



OLD SCOTCH BUSHWALKING CLUB

Tracknotes

June 2025

Number 112

OLD SCOTCH
BUSHWALKING CLUB

Visit the Bushwalking Club's page on: www.oscanet.com.au.
Click on 'Clubs and Societies', then 'Recreational Clubs'.

A great weekend at Horsham



At Horsham 12 members enjoyed the longer Saturday walk of 11km along the Wimmera River banks.

Twenty-one club members enjoyed our weekend away at Horsham in late March, albeit at a time and place local farmers were desperately in need of rain. We stayed at the very comfortable Horsham Riverside Caravan Park, nestled between the Botanic Gardens and the Wimmera River. Turn to page 8 for a report by Murray Hooper and Pam McLeod.

Murray is our new President

Former Vice President Murray Hooper was elected as our new club President at the club's annual general meeting, held at Horsham during our March weekend away. The other office-bearers elected for 2025 were Neil Hart-Smith (Vice President), Ian Hansen (Treasurer), Laurine Symington (Secretary), David Ashton, Norrie McLeod, Jenny Stewardson and Julie Walpole (general committee members). A full AGM report appears on page 3.



Inside:

Page 2 – Ten questions
Page 3 – President's Tree-Stump
Page 4 – *The Salt Path*: a review
Pages 5-7 – Our midweek walks
Pages 8-11 – Our weekend walks
Page 12 – Our 2025 program





Ten questions – Murray Hooper

Our new club President

How long have you been a member of the bushwalking club?

I have been a member of the bushwalking club for 28 years.

How did you find out about the club?

Di and I were members of the OSCA Wine and Food Club when we did a combined walk with the bushwalking club, which we then decided to join.

What are your links with Scotch College?

My father was at Scotch College from '21-'28. I am from the '66 class. My two sons Stuart '94 and Dwight '96 attended Scotch and my grandson Hugo is currently in grade six in the Junior School. Another two grandsons, Alfie and Henry, are enrolled to start in year seven.

What inspired you to take up bushwalking?

I have always enjoyed walking in the bush. I love the tranquillity and the beauty of its flora.

Is there a walk within Australia or overseas you've always wanted to tackle?

I have been lucky to have been able to do many great walks, including Mount Feathertop in Victoria, the Coast to Coast in England, and the Milford Track in New Zealand and the Overland Track in Tasmania. I am thinking about the walks around Mont Blanc in France.



What is your dream holiday in Australia or overseas?

I don't have a dream holiday but, having done The Ghan, I would like to do the Indian Pacific rail journey.

What are your hobbies and interests, other than bushwalking?

As far as hobbies go, I have always been a collector, initially philately. In recent years my focus has been 18th century English porcelain from the Worcester Factory. I am a subscriber to the Melbourne Theatre Company, and a member of the Anglesea Movie Club which is also a lot of fun.

What was your occupation?

I am a retired cattle and sheep veterinarian and a retired farmer.

What football team do you barrack for?

I barrack for Melbourne. 'Go the Dees'.

What is your favourite Melbourne restaurant?

My favourite restaurant in Melbourne is 'The Farmer's Daughters' in Collins Street. It has a five-course set menu featuring produce from Gippsland.



"Explain it to me one more time. Why do you need \$200 walking shoes, but I have to do 5 miles in bare feet?"



President's Tree-Stump

I was pleased to be elected as the club's President during the annual general meeting at Horsham in March. Thank you for the trust you have placed in me.

The walks this year have been very well attended, with the Blackburn midweek regarded as being one of the best ever. A big thank you to all of the walk leaders who offered their time to plan and pre-walk these walks. Special thanks also to our retiring president, Neil Hart-Smith, for his outstanding service to the club.

On our weekends away we provide the option of a shorter walk for those who would prefer it. It has been suggested that as time marches on we will need to do this for all our walks. This is problematic, because among other things we would require two walk leaders per walk, and we are struggling to get one. Any feedback as to whether this issue needs addressing would be appreciated.

Did you know that for cardiovascular health, walking is as good as running? It lowers the risk of high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and stroke by 20 per cent and heart attack by 40 per cent. Something to contemplate!

I hope to see you all on a walk soon.

Murray Hooper
President
0418 742 325
mndhooper@bigpond.com



Alfresco annual general meeting at Horsham

The club's annual general meeting was held in the open air on Saturday 29 March at the Horsham Riverside Caravan Park, during our weekend away. Chairs were set up not far from the banks of the picturesque Wimmera River, where the balmy breeze threatened to scatter the AGM paperwork at times.

At the meeting, former Vice President Murray Hooper took over the presidential reins from retiring President Neil Hart-Smith. Neil was thanked for his leadership during his second term as President.

The other office-bearers elected for 2025 were Neil Hart-Smith (Vice President), Ian Hansen (Treasurer), Laurine Symington (Secretary), David Ashton, Norrie McLeod,

Jenny Stewardson and Julie Walpole (general committee members).

After a discussion centring on the club's future, members voted unanimously in favour of a new program which, while including fewer walks, did maintain our popular weekends away and dining events at midyear and at Christmas.

During the meeting, David Ashton and Neil Hart-Smith were presented with Honorary Life Membership certificates in recognition of their exceptional work for the club. Richard Piesse had previously received his HLM award, and Graham Stanley will receive his HLM certificate at our midyear lunch on 6 July.



Incoming club President Murray Hooper congratulates David Ashton on receiving his honorary life membership certificate.



Murray congratulates Neil Hart-Smith on his honorary life membership.

The Salt Path – a soulful stroll through life's wild terrain



For those times when an Old Scotch bushwalk has helped you to clear your head and reconnect with nature, a new British movie, *The Salt Path*, will strike a familiar chord.

This film, which has been showing for some time now in Australian cinemas, brings to life Raynor Winn's bestselling memoir about walking, healing, and holding on when life knocks you sideways.

After losing their home and learning that husband Moth has a terminal illness, Raynor (Gillian Anderson) and Moth (Jason Isaacs) set off to walk the 1014km South West Coast Path, stretching from Minehead to Poole Harbour in south-west England. There is no fixed plan, and they have little money – just a tent, a couple of packs, and a desperate need to keep moving.

For bushwalkers, this story hits home. It's not just about the scenery – though the film gives us plenty of that with sweeping shots of Cornwall's wild cliffs, quiet beaches, and moody skies – it's about how walking becomes a lifeline. With each step, Raynor and Moth reconnect with themselves, each other, and the land.

Gillian Anderson and Jason Isaacs are wonderfully grounded in their roles, showing the grit and grace that long-distance walkers will recognise. They battle blisters, hunger, wet weather, and moments of real despair – but also encounter unexpected kindness and joy along the way. It's a journey of physical and emotional endurance, beautifully told.

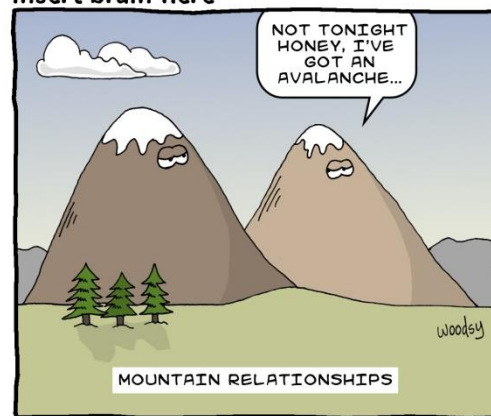
Director Marianne Elliott, in her first feature film, keeps the pace steady, like a good day's walk, and lets the story breathe. It's not a blockbuster, but something far gentler and more authentic. For those of us who know the rhythm of the track, it's a reminder of how the simple act of walking can be profoundly transformative

The Salt Path is a quiet triumph and a love letter to the power of the path. Catch it in cinemas while you can – and don't be surprised if you come out wanting to sling on a pack and get out on the track.

Footnote: more than a decade after his terminal illness diagnosis, Moth Winn is still going strong, and has remained active.



insert brain here



by woody

Tracknotes

June 2025

No 112

*Tracknotes is the publication of the
Old Scotch Bushwalking Club*

Editor: David Ashton 0419 894 340
ashtonwriting@bigpond.com

Design: Norrie McLeod

Photography: Norrie McLeod

Thanks to our contributors.

Next issue: September 2025
Deadline: Monday 1 September

President: Murray Hooper: 0418 742 325
mndhooper@bigpond.com

Secretary: Laurine Symington: 0429 381 898
brian.laurine@gmail.com

Membership: Norrie McLeod: 0418 325 271
pn.mcleod@bigpond.com

Our midweek walks

Discovering a new path as we ‘bush-bash’ along the Yarra

LAURINE SYMINGTON

Was it the forecast fine weather, the description of the walk, or the starting point? Something jelled for our intrepid midweek walkers. Eighteen starters met at Kooyong on Wednesday 23 April for a stroll along Gardiners Creek and the Yarra River to the Botanic Gardens.

With many comments like ‘I did not know this path was here’, or ‘I have never been along here’, or ‘Where is the river?’ we bush-bashed (!) along the Kooyong to Heyington section of the Glen Waverley railway track. Crossing the rail and pedestrian bridge over the Yarra River, we arrived at the revamped Burnley Golf Course.



The serene Yarra from the rail and pedestrian bridge

Three new members who had participated in the walk now left our group, as they had pick-up duties. The rest of us continued to the Botanic Gardens Visitor Information Centre for a coffee or an ice-cream before we headed to the Shrine. I was delighted to discover that the balcony was open for visitors.

Those who had not left to undertake other responsibilities enjoyed a stroll around the balcony, and admired the Wednesday sailors on the bay and the detailed town planning of Melbourne. It was a fantastic walk.



Lunch on the Botanic Gardens lawns

Next we crossed to the south side of the Main Yarra River Trail, where we encountered fewer bikes, and again there were gasps that our walkers didn’t know these pathways existed. Stopping at Anderson Street (Morrell Bridge) we entered the Royal Botanic Gardens with lots of pedestrians, toilet blocks and queues for food at the food outlets.

We sat in the shade on the slightly damp grass, taking the opportunity to enjoy our lunch, the view of the lake, and a fantastic day to be alive.



The view towards the city from the Shrine balcony

There were 18 participants in the walk (including Norrie, the photographer).



Our midweek walks

A bayside ramble in brilliant winter weather

DAVID ASHTON

The weather forecast for Thursday 5 June of 'partly cloudy, with an expected top temperature of 15 degrees' did not do justice to what turned out to be a magnificent, sunny winter's day. Ideal conditions awaited the 23 club members – and John Turner and Simon Peek's dog, Taffy – who arrived at Green Point Gardens on Beach Road, Brighton Beach for the start of the walk. We were to be joined later for lunch at the Sandringham Hotel by David and Judy Wilmot and Tom Morris.

Some of us arrived by car, some locals walked, and some came by train to the meeting place, to be greeted by walk leaders, John and Joyce Isaac. These long-term beloved club members had organised a magnificently scenic walk along the Bay Trail, overlooking a beautifully flat calm Port Phillip.



23 members and one dog at Green Point Gardens for the start of the walk

We set off through Green Point in sparkling weather to view the city skyline and the iconic Brighton bathing boxes. The first of these was built as long ago as the 1860s, and the boxes further along the coast in the Dendy area were built between 1907 and 1933.

We did a U-turn and descended on the beach path to just above sea level. A clean-up operation was in progress, with groups of young people picking up litter and rubbish on the beach as a social service activity. Rock groynes in this part of the beach help to maintain beautiful wide, sandy beaches.

We passed the boarded-up tramway tunnel, which was built in 1861 to connect Brighton Beach station with the pier, enabling freight to be moved from boats to the station.

After about 1.7km we followed the path to street level, where we encountered a bronze sculpture, *The Swimmer*, created by Jeffery Wilkinson. The sculpture

commemorates the life of Kitty Witts, a local minister's daughter who taught many children to swim. Tragically, one day after a lesson Kitty jumped off the pier and was killed by a 4m black shark.

Descending to the beach path, we passed the Bayside Triathlon Club, the Sandringham Anglers' Club, and the Guide and Scout Water Activities Centre. We were tempted to stop for a coffee at a café here, but Joyce pointed out that our lunch appointment at the Sandringham Hotel was only about an hour away, so we pressed on.

After about 5.5km we reached the Sandringham Band Rotunda, located on Beach Road almost opposite the Sandringham Hotel. Built in 1926, the rotunda could accommodate 25 musicians on its upper level. Bands played here regularly on Sunday afternoons in the 1920s and '30s.



Overlooking Sandringham Yacht Club

Our midweek walks



Walkers admire The Swimmer, a bronze sculpture by Jeffery Wilkinson

With lunch just half an hour away, Joyce and John suggested a 1km walk along the Bay Trail which took us to a point overlooking the Red Bluff in Black Rock. The wreck of the *Cerberus* could be seen in the distance; this former Victorian and Royal Australian Navy ship was sunk as a breakwater in 1926.

Retracing our steps to the rotunda after about 800 metres, walkers crossed Beach Road for lunch at the Sandringham Hotel, where the \$19 two-course seniors' meal proved a popular menu choice.

Many thanks to John and Joyce for organising such an interesting walk of about 6.6km, and for making sure the weather was brilliant for walking!



The Sandringham Band Rotunda, located on Beach Road



Diners enjoying the \$19 two-course seniors' meal at the Sandringham Hotel

Back from the dead – 10 Australian animals once thought extinct



Leadbeater's possum

Picture credit: Esther Beaton/Australian Geographic

Known for its unique flora and fauna, Australia unfortunately also has one of the worst records in the world for recent extinctions, in particular of its native animals.

But according to an Australian Geographic Society report, there is reason for some hope. Monash University biological sciences lecturer Dr Emily Roycroft says Australia also has a remarkable reputation as a place where animals believed to be extinct – sometimes for more than a century – have been rediscovered.

'It's always important to have hope in conservation,' Dr Roycroft said. 'The resilience of nature gives us that sense for the future that we can do something to preserve our biodiversity. 'With a little bit of extra support from conservation efforts, perhaps we can really turn the tide for these species that have been through a lot, and improve their prospects for survival.'

10 species believed to be extinct which have been rediscovered:

1. Mountain pigmy possum
2. Lord Howe Island stick insect
3. Central rock-rat
4. Armoured mist frog
5. Leadbeater's possum
6. Mahogany glider
7. Bridled naitail wallaby
8. Victorian grassland earless dragon
9. Night parrot
10. Gould's mouse

Cameras in Kosciuszko National Park recently captured a sighting of Leadbeater's possum in NSW, where it was thought to be extinct. A forest ecologist, David Lindenmayer, said the population is probably a new subspecies of the critically endangered mammal.

Our weekend walks

A great weekend of walks and fun at Horsham

MURRAY HOOPER

Enjoying superb autumn weather (though farmers desperately need rain) a group of 21 of us stayed at the Horsham Riverside Caravan Park during the weekend of 28-30 March. It was a beautiful location, nestled between the Botanic Gardens and the Wimmera River, even if the many corellas provided early wake-up calls.

Horsham, approximately 300km north-west of Melbourne, was established in 1849 and is the largest service centre in the Wimmera. It has a population of 20,456.

On Saturday morning the more energetic left for an 11km circuit along the banks of the Wimmera River, ably lead by Norrie, while the remainder enjoyed a shorter 5km circuit. The shire is to be congratulated for the sealed walking/cycling tracks and facilities, including barbecues, playgrounds and the two magnificent pedestrian swing bridges that cross the river.

Members also took time to explore the Botanic Gardens designed by William Guilfoyle in the 1870s and to visit the silo art site in town. The brilliant art, painted by street artist Smug (aka Sam Bates) in 2022, depicts a local First Nations man who was instrumental in finding three white children lost for eight days in the bush in 1864, and who also toured England as a member of the First Nations cricket team in 1868.

The AGM was held overlooking the river and two of our founding members, David Ashton and Neil Hart-Smith received their well-earned Honorary Life Membership certificates and citations. I was elected as the club's President, after Neil Hart-Smith's successful presidential term.



Outgoing President Neil Hart-Smith hands over the Presidential walking stick to Murray Hooper.

After drinks and nibbles, we relocated to the conference room in the Horsham RSL to enjoy typically generous country fare followed by Pam's impossible questions quiz. Thank you, Pam.

Sunday morning saw all of us take a short walk to the Gulgurn Manja shelter in the Northern Grampians with its accompanying rock art. It was a special place with its expansive vistas of the northern plains and the incredible wave-like rock formations above.

(Editor's note: the club is grateful to Murray Hooper, and to Norrie McLeod, for their great work in organising the weekend's walks.)



The view from our front door

Our weekend walks



The broad expanse of the Wimmera River near the Horsham Riverside Caravan Park



Annual general meeting scene



Post-annual general meeting drinks at the caravan park



A group shot at the Gulgurn Manja shelter on Sunday morning.



At the Gulgurn Manja shelter: Norrie McLeod (left) and Angus McMichael

Our weekend walks

Saturday long walk

Along the picturesque Wimmera River

PAM MCLEOD

On Saturday morning at Horsham, 12 walkers set out at 10am for a walk of 11km along the banks of the Wimmera River.

When planning a walk in a new area, it is usual to look up Google Earth on the region and zoom out to find green forests and national parks that could be walk sites. In this case, Horsham is surrounded by sweeping plains and wheat fields – thus the river walk was chosen. This was confirmed after a visit to the local visitor information centre where we received a map detailing the very walk that had been planned.

From the caravan park we headed east along the well-formed river bank path to the Hamilton Street pedestrian bridge. We passed heritage signs to historical sites, Lone Pine Grove and the Horsham showgrounds.

Crossing the river, we proceeded along the south bank, accompanied by the noise of flocks of white cockatoos constantly overhead. We passed an imposing pedestrian bridge – the Anzac Centenary Bridge – that had been opened in November 2017.

Further down we reached the weir, which maintains the broad and sweeping river enjoyed upstream in the cityscape. Downstream from the weir the river reverts to its natural form with wetlands and billabongs, and the path became a bush track. This area is tranquil and beautiful, with majestic gum trees and understorey of heath and thryptomene. It is a haven for local birdlife.

We walked on to the Curran Boardwalk, which we used to cross to the north bank, and then to the Weir Park where



Pausing on the Wimmera North Bank

we stopped for a picnic lunch. The park was very well appointed with picnic tables and shelters, and was tidy and well maintained – as was the entire walk.

The weather was warm and perfect for a peaceful and lovely walk along the Wimmera River's north bank, back to the caravan park, arriving by 2pm.



Along the Wimmera River path during the 11km Saturday walk



The Saturday longer walk group poses at the Anzac Centenary Bridge over the Wimmera River.

Our weekend walks

Rugged surf and calm bay views offered contrasting vistas

NORMA HINSHELWOOD

Sixteenth Beach to Bridgewater Bay (part of the 30km Coastal Walk) is a rugged ocean beach walk with spectacular vistas, located within a section of Mornington Peninsula National Park. The name refers to the 16th beach or gap from the Heads.

On Sunday 18 May, 11 members set out from the 16th Beach car park to walk to Bridgewater Bay. The weather was better than forecast, cool but with plenty of sunshine. The initial walk meanders on the historic Lifesaving Track into dense bushland with moonah trees and the sound of the ocean in the background. The Lifesaving Track was built in the 1890s to provide better access to the coast following shipwrecks.



Sonia leading along the ocean

A short flight of steps led up to the clifftop section of the walk, where we encountered some wild surf and rockpools as it was low tide. The stony track is undulating with some narrow sections, but the



There were 11 participants in the walk

reward is the views. The track passes two inland exits before reaching picturesque Dimmicks Beach.

Continuing on, it traverses sand dunes and spectacular cliff tops before reaching Bridgewater Bay, where we left the track at St John's Wood Road. We then walked along formed pathways to Blairgowrie bay beach and our lunch stop.

We sat close enough to the beach to watch sailing boats and to enjoy the calm bay views after the rugged surf. Sufficiently rested we walked back along St John's Wood Road, turning towards Rye until we reached the national park and rejoined the track back to the car park.

Discussion took place as to how far we had walked, with varying distances recorded; but the total was between 11.5 and 13km. However, everyone agreed the walk was most enjoyable and successful.



Wild surf was encountered along the ocean path

The club's 2025 program

The dates for our 2025 walks are final, but the location of nominated walks may need to be changed

	2025	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun		Walk (Proposed)	Leader
Public Hol.									Feature		
New Year	Jan			1	2	3	4	5	New Year		
	Jan	6	7	8	9	10	11	12			
	Jan	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
	Jan	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Australia Day		
Australia Day	Jan	27	28	29	30	31	1	2			
	Feb	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Altona	Neil Hart-Smith	
	Feb	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Valentine's Day		
	Feb	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	St kilda	Jenny Stewardson	
	Feb	24	25	26	27	28	1	2			
Labour Day	Mar	3	4	5	6	7	8	9			
	Mar	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Blackburn	Julie Walpole	
	Mar	17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
	Mar	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Horsham	Murray Hooper	
	Apr	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	Day Sav Ends		
	Apr	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
Easter	Apr	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Easter		
Anzac Day	Apr	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	Anzac Day	Yarra/Shrine	L Symington
	Apr	28	29	30	1	2	3	4			
	May	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Mother's Day		
	May	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Bridgewater Bay	N Hinshelwood	
	May	19	20	21	22	23	24	25			
	May	26	27	28	29	30	31	1			
King's B'day	Jun	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Bayside	J&J Isaac	
	Jun	9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
	Jun	16	17	18	19	20	21	22			
	Jun	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
	Jul	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	Box Hill Golf Club	I Hansen	
	Jul	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
	Jul	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Rosanna	R Pugsley	
	Jul	21	22	23	24	25	26	27			
	Jul	28	29	30	31	1	2	3			
	Aug	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	* * *	Neil Hart-Smith	
	Aug	11	12	13	14	15	16	17			
	Aug	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
	Aug	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	* * *	M&I McMichael	
	Sep	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Father's Day		
	Sep	8	9	10	11	12	13	14			
	Sep	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Lyonville	S&G Stanley	
	Sep	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	AFL Grand Final		
	Sep	29	30	1	2	3	4	5	Day Save		
	Oct	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	* * *	W Le Get	
	Oct	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
	Oct	20	21	22	23	24	25	26			
	Oct	27	28	29	30	31	1	2			
Cup Day	Nov	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Marysville	P&N McLeod	
	Nov	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	Rememb Day		
	Nov	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	* * *	Liz Rand	
	Nov	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			
	Dec	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Christmas	H Hunwick	
	Dec	8	9	10	11	12	13	14			
	Dec	15	16	17	18	19	20	21			
Christmas	Dec	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	Christmas		
	Dec	29	30	31							
	31 =	School Holidays								09-Jun-25	