



**THE HISTORY OF THE
Koonung Bushwalking
Club Inc.
1995-2005**

**By KEITH LIERSE
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PREFACE

On Wednesday evening 20th March 1985, I attended a public meeting at the Athenaeum Hall (now demolished) organised by Keith Lierse proposing the formation of a bush walking club. Keith at that time was President of the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs.

There were about 100 people in attendance and I could only recognise one other familiar face. I was about to retire at that time after 42½ years in the workforce and Betty felt that a walking club would get me out of the house. It was a wise decision, as Betty and I have never regretted becoming members of such a friendly, caring and successful club.

Over the years we have walked in rain forests, fern gullies, desert and semi desert areas, climbed mountains, walked beaches and followed rugged rocky coast lines and rivers. We have explored abandoned railway lines in old timber felling areas and long-forgotten routes to the gold fields where Cobb & Co. ran their regular services. We have also observed native animals, birds and wildflowers in the most beautiful natural settings imaginable; all this without mentioning the opportunity to participate in bike riding, skiing and exciting and adventurous interstate and overseas trips. The club has given us the opportunity to visit areas off the beaten track at a very low cost which would not otherwise have been available to us.

We may ask what are the important ingredients in the success of our club? One would be the commitment, energy and diligence of members prepared to carry out necessary committee roles, and also the willingness of those prepared to act as walk leaders. Over the years, these volunteers have provided walks and diverse interesting activities for the benefit of all members. Also of importance, are the members themselves with their sense of participation, friendship, sociability and mutual support. They are the soul of the club, and through, them the club has succeeded admirably in achieving its objectives.

As a foundation member and life member, I am honoured to be invited by Keith to make some observations in this update of the proud history of our club.

Good health, enjoyment and fellowship in the years ahead.

Bill Ling
Foundation Member
Life Member

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This history covers the 10 years of the club from 1995 to 2005, up to its 20th year. The history of the first 10 years, from 1985 to 1995, is covered in a previous history distributed to all members at that time.

As the club has grown older, so has its overall membership. Surprisingly, as members have come and gone, the total membership numbers have remained consistent at about 140-150. The percentage of females has risen to about 65%, and this is reflected in every activity the club undertakes.

The appetite of members to travel within Australia and overseas on club expeditions has continued unabated. In the past 10 years, there have been numerous expeditions within Victoria, throughout Australia and many overseas journeys. The trend of these trips is that generally they have become more “fluffy pillow” comfortable, even though the destinations are more exotic and far-flung than before.

It is pleasing to see that some members have got together to run private trips within Australia and overseas with great success.

The types of activities of the club have altered over the past 10 years. Whereas in the past overnight walks were a major feature, they have now declined to such an extent that only one or two are attempted per year, and are poorly supported. Likewise, skiing was a major activity in winter, with large numbers, waiting lists for accommodation, plus the regular week at the Rover Lodge on the Bogong High Plains in September. Because of the ageing of the members, uncertainty of public liability insurance and poor seasons, skiing has now all but disappeared from the club calendar.

The move away from overnight walking and skiing is typical of all Victorian walking clubs. Day walks have become the dominant activity. Strangely, unlike the experience of other clubs, mid week walks have been tried many times, but have had in general very poor support.

Bicycle rides, both day and overnight trips, have been undertaken by a small core group. Again, this activity has had very limited support.

Base camps (as opposed to expeditions) have proved to be very popular, especially those that are fully catered such as that at Howman’s Gap. These can be very enjoyable and enable members to visit interesting areas and enjoy the outdoors with a minimum of effort, plus the guarantee of a hot shower, meal and a comfortable bed every night

A major trend of the club has been the move to social activities. Many successful social events have been held, and indeed, some day walks, rightly or wrongly, end up in various coffee shops.

Members of the club have also undertaken “outside” activities such as a regular Mahjong group, and some members are involved in activities with U3A, such as walking, tennis, etc.

The ongoing committees of the club have done an excellent job of administering the club and meeting the members' needs. Somehow, at the end of each year, the club has a balance of \$4,000-5,000.

The operation of the club is totally dependent on its leaders. These dedicated people invest a lot of time, experience and money to run the club's activities. The leaders also shoulder a huge responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their groups, with the only reward a thank you, and the knowledge of a job well done.

The club has met continuously since its foundation at the Templestowe Memorial Hall, with the exception of a few months at the Lower Templestowe Community Centre while the hall was being renovated. Monthly meetings are held from January to November on the third Wednesday. Convening at 8 pm, these meetings are always attended by a large number of members, usually 50-80. The highlights of these meetings are the breadth and interest of the guest speakers. Some nights include presentations on past club trips, others topics range from the making of a will, euthanasia to subluxation, to name a few. After the formal meeting, a light supper is always available.

On the third Wednesday in December, the club has always had a BBQ in the Doncaster Municipal Gardens, Church Street entrance. Most times it rains, but always a good time is had by all until after dark. Lighting and hot water is supplied by a maze of wires from a secret power point in the public shelter. In recent times, Christmas Carols have been sung.

A few members have assisted with the Federation of Walking Clubs. These are: Tom Patton, James Patton, Keith Lierse, Dick Beton, Ron Karlstrom, Des Bain, Mary Atkins, Anne Brolly, Ann Wetherall and Wayne Rice.

Sadly, eight members have died whilst members of the club. They were: Keith Simms, John Noordzy, John Whitney, Michael King, Mark Owen, Maurie Myles, Heather Pratt and David Wetherall.

All of these past members made contributions to the club, and the club mourns their passing. See Appendix C for further details of these past members.

Being a community-based club, there has evolved a network of friendships and interests that would not otherwise be possible. Indeed, there have been many occasions when assistance and support has been given to members in need.

In the following chapters, the highlights of each year are condensed, as seen by the author. Unfortunately, not every member or event will be mentioned because this is not possible. Likewise, even though the material available was researched to the best of the author's ability, errors and omission may have been made, and apologies are tendered in advance. Finally, as you read the following chapters and appendices, ponder how such a diverse group, in a Melbourne suburban environment could achieve so much, contribute so much, and foster a genuine feeling of belonging and caring for a membership fee of only ten cents a day.

CHAPTER 2

1995 – 1996

This year was a very active and hectic time for the club. The 138 members had a wide choice of overseas and Australian expeditions, backpacks, weekend and midweek walks, base camps, cycling trips, canoe adventures, cross-country and downhill skiing, plus social events to participate in.

For all of this, the annual subscription remained at \$28 single and \$40 family per year.

In May/June, there was a 5 week expedition to Alaska and Canada led by Keith Lierse. Later in August, there was a 3 week expedition led by Doug Brewer to Canada.

Within Australia, Bill Ling led a 2 week expedition to the Flinders Ranges in September, whilst Don O'Flynn led 2 x 2 week expeditions in tandem to the Eden Ulladulla region of S.E. NSW. The reason that Don took 2 groups was because of the large number wanting to participate.

Don O'Flynn also led a successful 4 day canoe trip down the Murray River in the Echuca area. Of the 11 members on this trip, Connie and Dick Beton made it memorable for all when they bottled their canoe after hitting a snag.

There were many base camps during the year, including the Kosciusko N.P. over the Christmas period, with 24 members taking part, led by George Keyte; late January at Mt Hotham with George Keyte; the Browns' escapade at Pt Leo in February; Port Campbell with Ron Karlstrom leading 31 members; a Baw Baw base camp led by Dick Beton, and Doug Brewer led base camps in Marysville in November, Phillip Island in April and Tarra Valley in May.

There were only a few bicycle trips during the year which were led by Heather Thake, Don O'Flynn and Tom Patton. These trips had a limited, but enthusiastic following.

The support for backpacking was beginning to noticeably wane, with some being cancelled due to lack of support. One memorable trip was to Cowombat Flat in April where the first cairn of the straight line of the NSW/Vic border was found, as well as the source of the Murray River. However, after persistent heavy rain, the walk had to be abandoned before the Cobberas and Moscow Peak could be climbed.

Mid week walks were placed on the program, but these were poorly supported, much to the disappointment of the leaders.

Day walks during the weekend remained the staple of the club, with good attendances. The areas visited ranged from Yea to Point Nepean and a lot in between. One day walk in August was to Cement Creek, and was of interest because the 8 members trudged through 18 inches of snow. Also of interest was the club's first day walk to French Island in November led by Don O'Flynn.

During winter, the skiers were very active with several day trips to Lake Mountain, 3 weekends at the cottage near Mansfield to ski Mt Stirling, and a 6 day downhill trip to

Mt. Buller. Val Myles led the cross-country trips and Tom Patton the downhill trip to Mt Buller. There was no annual 8-day trek to the Rover Lodge on the Bogong High Plains this year due to the introduction of rules by the Rover Scouts that were not to the liking of the skiers. These rules were abandoned in latter years.

There were 2 track clearing days on the Millgrove track near Warburton.

John Whitney led a navigation training day at Kinglake in October with 4 eager participants.

Jenny Keamy and Karen Sheedy were appointed club leaders during the year.

The annual club BBQ was held as usual in December, with the usual good roll up of over 80 members. It rained! However, in April, Kevin Wilson ran a walk and twilight BBQ at his delightful berry farm at Warburton East.

Some of the new members included Anne and Jack Brolly and Lyn Fitzsimons.

On the social side, Val Myles ran 2 events, which included 26 attending the Austrian Club in Heidelberg West in October, and 36 attended the Park Orchards Chalet in April for a dinner-dance, with most doing the light fantastic.

At the end of the year, Audrey Killey retired after 5 years as the Editor of Walk Talk, and Don McKelvie retired after 3 years as Secretary. Both Alan Rose and Joan Robinson retired after serving 2 years on the committee.

During the year, the committee introduced a system of approving all expeditions well in advance, so that leaders and members could plan ahead, and to prevent the possibility of major trips competing with each other and possibly affecting their viability.

Walk Talk published a glycaemic index of all foods so that members could judge the best foods for energy uptake. The best food for energy was found to be Mars bars, which was no surprise to any experienced walker.

Don O'Flynn floated the idea of an arts group within the club. Early in the year, Kevin Wilson, as walks leader, polled the members as to their activity preferences. One wag suggested that the club should use motorised golf carts.

A successful club photo competition was run by Ken O'Sullivan in October. One of the years memorable guest speakers was Ken Haynes from The State Trustees who regaled us on the topic of wills, particularly when a person hasn't left a will. He also handed out a couple of free wills kits and various knick knacks.

On a day trip to Woodlands, Bill Ling had his car door badly bent when caught by a strong wind. After doing 200,000 miles, the silver Datsun of Keith Lierse had a heart attack and required an engine transplant.

The Department of Sport and Recreation advertised the start of an official Day Walk Leaders Course commencing in May. There were no candidates from Koonung.

CHAPTER 3

1996 – 1997

This year turned out to be one of the busiest for the club, although there was not an overseas expedition. However, there was some sadness due to the loss of two members.

The new committee saw George Keyte replacing Alan Rose as Vice President, Ray Marmion replacing Don McKelvie as Secretary, Ann Wetherall taking over from Audrey Killey as Walk Talk editor, and Kevin Wilson replacing Joan Robinson. Kevin Wilson was appointed Walks Leader which meant that the Walks Leader was reinstated on the club's committee.

The subscription for the year remained at \$28 single, but went up \$2 to \$42 for a family. At the start of the year, the club had about \$2,700 in the bank.

Jenny Keamy acted as Treasurer for 2 months while Tom Patton was away leading the club's Kakadu expedition in May/June. Fourteen members travelled by road to Darwin, and had a very enjoyable time en route, whilst 12 others flew up to Darwin in early June to meet up with the overland group. Don and Hilary McKelvie joined the party for a few days, interrupting their around Australia trip. Over a period of a fortnight, Tom took the party to locations such as Jabiru, Ubirr, Murella Park, Yellow Waters, Twin Falls, Katherine Gorge and Litchfield National Park. At Katherine Gorge, Don O'Flynn led an overnight canoe trip, and returned next morning with a fish hook embedded in his hand (but no fish). The hook was cut out (ouch!) using basic bush surgery.

There was another club expedition for one week in August to Kangaroo Island led by Doug Brewer. The trip was based at Cape de Couedic in lighthouse cabins built in 1910. This party ranged far and wide across the island, with a good time had by all.

There were plenty of base camps this year, eleven in all, excluding ski camps. The destinations included Portland with Doug Brewer; the Grampians with George Keyte; the Bird Observers Club of Australia (BOCA) camp at Linton led by Kevin Wilson; Sheepyard Flat with George Keyte; French Island in February with Jan Gray; Pt Leo in February with Alan and Jan Brown; Cape Otway led by George Keyte and Phillip Island with Doug Brewer in March; the Baw Baws led by Connie and Dick Beton; Cape Conran led by Alan and Jan Brown, and Tarra/Bulga NP led by Doug Brewer.

Each of the base camps was well supported and enjoyed by the members. On the Baw Baw base camp, there was a most unusual accident when Joan Robinson was hit on the head by a falling rock, which had been placed on top of a snow pole. Joan made a full recovery, although at the time, there was some concern as to Joan's welfare.

The overnight walkers had a good selection of walks to choose from, including trips to the West Kiewa/Spargos Hut area near Mt Hotham, led by Keith Lierse, a trip across the Bogong High Plains to Tawonga Huts (a joint USC trip led by Tom Patton), a walk across Donna Buang to the Watts River led by Val Myles, a three day Wilson's Promontory trip led by Alan Brown which included Marie Spowart, Gwen Waller, Lyn Fitzsimons and Mary Edgar on their first backpack. There were other backpacks during

the year led by Keith Lierse to the Bogong High Plains, McAlister River and an L-9-9 into the Wonnangatta Valley.

In early March, Val Myles led a beginner's backpack to Wilson's Promontory Light house, with 12 members staying in one of the old light keepers' house, and the remaining 8, (known as the annointed ones), stayed in an adjacent newly refurbished house with designer bedspreads, doonas, new fridges, stoves and a microwave. This surely was the beginning of the club's "fluffy pillow" era. Ken O'Sullivan described the sunset as the most beautiful he had seen, and the ladies dressed up to help Louise Lamont celebrate her birthday with a round of pre-dinner drinks. That night, a storm sprang up making it very difficult to open and close the front doors. The 19 km walk in and the 21km walk out was testimony to the fitness of the club members at that time.

There were numerous day walks, with the Wetheralls enhancing their reputation for well researched walks with 28 on a walk from Royal Park to St Kilda and 26 at Hanging Rock in February. Jenny Keamy led a walk from Lions Head to Cherokee, which at first glance was mistaken as a walk in Hong Kong, but as it turns out is close to Riddles Creek. Bill Ling led a very wet walk in September from Dom Dom to Fernshaw, but all survived. Later that month, Bill led an extremely interesting walk exploring the heritage of the Williamstown area. Ron Karlstrom led a 23 km walk to Warrigal Rock, surely a record distance. On a walk to Cape Schanck, David Wetherall offered hot meat pies at the start and ice creams at the end as a bribe.

A handful of mid week walks were available, but they were poorly supported.

In May, Connie and Dick Beton were the first to break the no-go zone of the Powelltown area since the club organised the 1995 Federation day walks by walking to Reids Mill and The Hump. The walk report said there was a little mud and no leeches, which was surprising for that area.

There were only two cycling events. On one around the city of Melbourne, Ron Karlstrom offered either a 20 or a 40 km ride. There were no details of how that was achieved.

The canoeists again visited the Murray River in November with Don O'Flynn in charge, with pre-trip practice sessions on the Yarra.

The skiers had a bumper year. Val Myles led the normal warm-ups on Lake Mountain, with four fully booked weekends of 8 people staying at the cottage and skiing Mt Stirling. George Keyte led a series of beginner ski trips to Mt Hotham, a weekend at Mt Stirling, and finally, one week at Kosciusko with Tom Patton, Alan Brown and Heather Thake assisting. Seventeen members participated in George's beginner program. Keith Lierse led the annual ski trek to the Rover Lodge on the Bogong High Plains in September for 8 days with 16 attending.

Jan Gray attempted to run an overseas trip to Thailand, but cancelled it in March due to lack of support. Don McKelvie and Keith Lierse went to England and Spain in September to walk the Pyrenees, but got caught in early snowfalls. Don went on to Hong Kong to reconnoitre the 500 km of walking trails for club trips in ensuing years.

In February, Don wrote up a full page in Walk Talk extolling the virtues of walking in Hong Kong.

Kevin Wilson, as Walks Leader, published the results of his membership polling. The results were that we had 147 members, 57% women, 43% men; 24 leaders, 34% women, 66% men, and if each member walked one day a month, we would average 34 walkers on the track every weekend.

New members during the year included Gwen Waller (Winter) and Lyverne Newson.

New club leaders included Jan Gray, Bruce Ford, Connie Beton, John Archer, Michael Robinson and Lesley Uren.

All club meetings were well attended with between 50 to 75 members. On one night, the guest speaker was Chris Patton (son of Tom), who spoke about the SES, and brought along the SES truck and crew for us to inspect. At the April meeting, we had no guest speaker, but an old-fashioned sing-a-long with Connie Beton tickling the ivories, Chris Patton on the guitar and Dick Beton in a top hat vying with Tom Patton to be MC. Also, there were many good gags and skits.

The following is some snippets from Walk Talk during the year. An article explaining how to calculate the car pooling costs. Ray Marmion pleads for a PA system at meetings due to the poor hall acoustics; the club joins the YHA; visitor fees are increased from \$2 to \$5 per person per day because some visitors continually attended walks without any intention of joining the club (this was a practice that was affecting many clubs); Lesley Uren opened up her unit in Heidelberg over 2 days in March so that members could inspect her outstanding needlework.

Gayle and Doug got engaged, Ray Marmion had a knee operation and Maurie Myles had a heart bypass operation after a severe heart attack.

Lyn McMillan published a recipe for "Cheesy mince slice, excellent for base camps if you have access to a stove or microwave oven"; Hilary McKelvie places an ad to sell a pair of boots for \$99 with only 82 Scottish miles on the tread; and Ken O'Sullivan has a towbar and chains for sale.

The year saw two member deaths. In September, John Noordzy passed away after an illness. John joined the club in 1992, and his knowledge of the bush, sense of humour and unassuming manner endeared him to us all. His home-made billy stove that used only few twigs, would boil a billy of water in 5 minutes, enabling many a member to have a hot cup of tea on the track. John was a member of the club's 5-week European tour in 1995, and he was very helpful because he could speak several languages. The club organised a scattering of his ashes on 1 December 1996 along the Millgrove track at the request of his family. Although it was a miserable wet day, about 20 members attended.

On 10 May, Keith Simms, a new member, collapsed and died on the Cathedral Ranges on a walk led by John Archer. CPR was administered under the direction of Don O'Flynn, to no avail. Des Bain was able to contact emergency services by mobile phone, and a major operation was undertaken by the police and SES personnel to

recover Keith's body, and evacuate a party member incapacitated by the trauma of the event. Seven club members attended Keith's funeral and the club sent a wreath.

The club had a Leaders' training weekend on 23/24 November at Anakie in the Brisbane Ranges. There were no club walks for members that weekend. Eighteen leaders attended, and there were classroom topics of leadership, navigation, party management, first aid, etc. On the Sunday, the training director, Keith Lierse sent out the leaders in groups of four to cover a fairly strenuous practical navigation session for three hours.

CHAPTER 4

1997 – 1998

At the May 1997 Annual General Meeting, there were major committee changes. Tom Patton and Keith Lierse both stood down, and the new guard was George Keyte, President; Ken O’Sullivan, Vice President; Lyn Fitzsimons, Treasurer; and Lyn McMillan as social events convenor. Ron Karlstrom stepped down as Federation representative in June 1997, and a replacement was not found until 1998.

The subscription fees were increased to \$30 single, and \$45 family.

The year was very active with two overseas trips, twelve base camps, a good number of backpacks, a well supported cross-country skiing program, bike rides, a canoe trip, a host of day walks, including mid week walks, three track clearing days, a search and rescue practice, a real search and several social events.

Don McKelvie led a trip to Hong Kong on 16-30 January with eight participants. They stayed in three star hotels and hostels, and used every type of transport including trams, trains, buses, ferries, mini buses and on foot. A major problem was that when using public transport, everyone needed enough coins to pay on entry, with no change given. (Since that time, Hong Kong has introduced the Octopus smart card which covers all modes of public transport.) The group walked some of the 500 km of walking tracks, visited outlying islands, sampled the many markets and saw in the Chinese New Year. Reports tell of cold evenings in unheated hostels and very hard sleeping mats.

The other overseas trip was to New Zealand on 7-28 March led by Don O’Flynn, and organised by Derek and Lesly Hancock. There were 20 participants using three Tarago vans for transport. There were lots of interesting walks, including the Tongariro Crossing and Mt Nghuruhoe walks led by Colin Bellamy of the Tauranga Tramping Club (they tramp in New Zealand, not walk). The party also visited the Hot Water beach on the Coromandel Peninsula, plus many other destinations.

On this trip John Winter celebrated a pseudo birthday party at a McDonald’s on 22 March (his actual birthday is 24 December). The lowlight of the trip was the “snow dropping” of a large selection of clothing from the clothesline at Maunganui. This forced many people to restock their wardrobes at the local op shop so as to enable them to have sufficient clothing to complete the trip.

Base camps (except for ski trips) maintained their popularity with a total of twelve. They were at Mt Cole in June led by the Wetheralls; Marysville in August led by Doug Brewer; Bendigo Whipstick NP led by the Betons in September; Lorne State Forest in October led by Doug Brewer; Strathbogies in November led by John Archer; Phillip Island in December led by Doug Brewer; Howman’s Gap over Christmas/New Year led by George Keyte (the first of many such visits to Howman’s Gap); McCrae area led by Tom Patton at the end of January; Pt Leo in February led by the Browns; Walhalla area in February led by the Wetheralls; Snowy River NP in April led by George Keyte, and the Tarra/Bulga NP in May led by Doug Brewer.

All of these base camps were well supported. Howman's Gap was, and still is popular, due to the excellent facilities, all meals provided, hot showers and the easy access for walking on the Bogong High Plains. Some base camps had their moments, such as the rain and cold at the Mt Cole camp ground in June and the pleasant time had by 24 members at McCrae in late January, with golf on Friday, a 10 km walk to Sea Winds and Kings Falls on Saturday, topped off by a BBQ that evening, a bed at either the Beton's, Patton's or Pratt's houses, topped off with a walk around Greens Bush on Sunday.

As usual, there was a diverse range of day walks. Some included John Archer's walk to Trentham Falls in June with rain, fog and very cold conditions and, as a result, the walk was shortened to 10 km. At the other end of the scale, John Whitney led a walk to the Buttermans track area of Kinglake NP in March. It turned out to be a very hot day of 39°C, and the walk was shortened to 12 km. At the end of the walk, the eight participants went to the Pantom Hills hotel to quench their thirst with many pots of lemon squash. (It is now club policy to cancel all walks on total fire ban days or if the temperature is forecast to exceed 35°C.)

On a Tom Patton walk from Simons Bay to The Blowhole in June, two female walkers got zapped by an electric fence.

Two new leaders came on the scene during the year, with Jo Ridgeway leading her first walk to the Bunyip SP in October, and Gwen Waller leading her first walk to Mt Worth SP in January.

On a day walk to One Tree Hill in the Christmas Hills area led by Karen Sheedy on 17 August, June Pryor badly gashed her leg on a stick. By luck, a local CFA truck was in the area doing radio tests and the CFA assisted club members to evacuate June. After a few weeks, June made a complete recovery and was back on the track.

At the end of August, Doug Brewer led a marathon City to Bulleen walk ending up with a BBQ at his home. Kevin Wilson had 24 members attend his farm at East Warburton for a local walk and BBQ, admiring the beautiful rhododendrons.

There were eight mid week walks programmed. One was cancelled due to lack of numbers, one walk led by Bill Ling had 18 attending, and the others were in the range of 6-8 participants.

There were three track clearing days on the Millgrove track in August, November and March led by Bill Ling (1) and Keith Lierse (2).

The bike riders were offered three trips. Bruce Ford led a ride from Diamond Creek to Southgate, Don O'Flynn led a trip up Blind Creek, starting at Knox city, whilst Heather Thake tackled a ride around the Outer Circle railway.

From 28 November to 2 December, Don O'Flynn ran another successful canoe trip on the Upper Murray near Corryong. There were 16 participants, with some taking unscheduled swims, excellent scenery, wildlife, and a yellow bellied black snake swimming round Tom and Lesly's canoe. As they packed up to go home, Jackie ran over the McMillan's Trangia stove, nearly starting a fire. It wasn't Jackie's day, because

when she got to Wodonga, she locked her keys in her car which required the assistance of the RACV.

The skiers had a very busy season. Besides the normal warm-ups at Lake Mountain, Val Myles also ran four weekends at the cottage, all of which were booked out. On one weekend in August, the Mt Stirling runs were icy on Saturday, and after an extremely cold night of -5°C, it was agreed to walk Mt Samaria rather than inflict more bruises on the battered bodies of the group. George Keyte ran two weekends at Mt Stirling, staying at Sawmill Settlement and the cottage. During the first week in September, there was the annual pilgrimage to the Rover Lodge for eight days.

The backpackers had a good year beginning with a 3 day walk over Cup weekend in November with 11 members going to the Mt Cobbler area. On the drive in from Bennies, there was the rare sight of the Dandongadale triple falls in full flow after heavy overnight rain. Val Myles led a trip into Mt Samaria in December, and two trips to Wilson's Promontory lighthouse in early March and late April. The reason for the two lighthouse trips was due to member demand. Heather Goodwin wrote about one lighthouse trip thus: "the meat given for dinner was the finest steak, possibly obtained from the soles of old walking boots". The second weekend in March saw the regular trek into the Wonnangatta, whilst a three day trip in early April led by Keith Lierse to Youngs Hut, Dibbins and Blairs Hut in the Mt Hotham area was enjoyed by the seven members. However, on the morning of the third day it was evident that a large storm was brewing, and after an early departure, all made the top of Machinery Spur just as a cool change arrived with fog, wind and sleet. At the car park at Mt Loch, David Wetherall could not open his car doors due to the force of the wind. Driving home off Mt Hotham, Lyverne Newson had a small bingle in the fog, but there was little damage.

On the social scene, there was a film night on 1 July at the Capitol Theatre that 27 members attended to see Madame Butterfly. At the Darebin Arts Centre on 10 October, several members went to a performance of Godspell, and at the same venue on 23 October, a night of Celtic music with the Heart Dance Orchestra was enjoyed. There was the annual BBQ on 17 December at the Doncaster Municipal Gardens with the usual large attendance. The other social event was a tennis picnic-day held at Bacchus Marsh on 19 April.

Kevin Wilson, as Walks Coordinator, wrote an article in July Walk Talk entitled "Where Were You?" The gist of the article was that 32 members or 19% did not walk at all, and 71 members, or 42%, did less than two walks per year, and if more members walked, the club would have larger attendances on walks. In August, there was a very rare letter to the editor in Walk Talk from Patricia Patton pointing out that "many participants have other recreational and competing interests" and further "I enjoy the companionship, scenery and exercise when I choose and time permits". In an editor's note, Kevin replied "he was pointing out facts in the hope that it would encourage more support for leaders and input and ideas from members".

There was the usual interesting range of guest speakers at the monthly meetings. However in October, Ken O'Sullivan hosted an auction night of surplus walking gear ranging from Gortex parkas to a humble billy. There was a lot of hilarity and a good night was had by all.

Walk Talk was full of many diverse tit-bits. Ken O'Sullivan had a tow bar and chains for sale, and Kevin Wilson advertised a Toyota Landcruiser for sale at \$45,000. There were two recipes published. In July, Ken O'Sullivan had almost a full page on emergency information, which basically asked all members to carry personal information on a form in a sealed film container (Kodak of course) and to always carry it in their pack. In a shorter article, Ken explains how to find north without a map or compass. However, he admits at the end that you need a watch with hands, which is set to the correct time and that the sun must be shining.

Commencing in September, Tom's Tips reappear for four issues. In August, there is an article pointing out that the magnetic variation of 11° E in southern Victoria is very important, and the advice of a guest speaker to ignore it is incorrect, as it could lead to major navigational errors. In October, Mountain Designs offers members a 15% discount, and the Manningham Council warns the club that the Memorial Hall is to be refurbished in 1998, and as a result, we will require another venue during the renovation period. In early 1998, a first aid course is ran, and 19 members qualify.

Ken Beer receives a Menzies Award in January for his services to the Doncaster Garden Club. The Koonung Club is added to the Manningham Council info-lynx electronic system.

Kevin Wilson asks that the club skiers draw up their own program for the 1998 Winter season, and he advises that the definition of an extended trip is hereby changed from over seven days, to a trip exceeding three days, and that all future proposals from leaders are to be submitted in advance to the Walks Coordinator.

A members survey at the April meeting results in members being happy with the mix of day walks and base camps and some new exotic destinations were suggested, including Wyperfeld, Woods Point, Cape Jervis, Newcastle, Fiji and Tasmania to mention a few. The Federation offered a personal accident insurance policy priced at \$1.90 per member, per year, which was not taken up at the time.

In February, a revised Track Classification and Infrastructure Standard was released. Keith Lierse was a member of the Standards Australia Committee that issued the standard.

Several members attended the Federation weekend that was held at Mt Buffalo on 28/29 March.

On the Search and Rescue front, there was a winter practice weekend at Mt Baw Baw on 16/17 August with two members attending. On 16 March, there was a search at Wilson's Promontory for a lost, slightly mentally retarded seven year old boy. Chris Patton was one of a group of three rescuers who returned the boy to his parents after the little boy had spent a cold night in the bush.

Some new members for the year included Marjorie Dowd, Richard Homsey, John Winter and Emily Chan.

CHAPTER 5

1998 – 1999

This year was another busy one for the club with three Australian expeditions, eleven base camps, a very full ski season, eight bike rides, a canoe trip, five back packs, eight mid week walks and the usual large and diverse range of weekend day walks topped off with seven social events.

The year kicked off with four new committee members. Dick Beton took over from George Keyte as President; Alan Brown became Vice President from Ken O'Sullivan; Anne Broolly succeeded Ray Marmion as Secretary and Lyverne Newson took over as Treasurer from Lyn Fitzsimons. Margaret Archer was Walk Talk dispatcher until December, and when she moved away from the area, this task was taken over by Audrey and Ron Karlstrom. Julie Garland accepted the role of Federation representative in July whilst Bruce Ford acted as Walks Coordinator for two months early in the year when Kevin Wilson was absent.

There was an extraordinary meeting of the club on 15 July to receive and approve the 1997/98 accounts.

The first expedition was led by Doug Brewer in early March to Flinders Island, with a total of 14 members. Three old Sigma cars were used for transport around the island with petrol a whopping 91 cents per litre, with a further problem that only one vehicle had a workable fuel gauge. Many walks were done, including a one hour bush-bash up Wombat Rock, and a climb up the seemingly always cloud-enshrouded Mt Strzelecki the day before departure. As luck would have it, all the cloud dispersed the day they departed.

From 17 April to 2 May, Keith Lierse led an expedition of 14 members in seven vehicles to Mungo, Kinchega, Broken Hill, Tibooburra, Cameron's Corner and Mootwingee – a total of 3,000 km, 1400 km on dirt roads. There was consistent fine weather during the entire expedition. At Tibooburra; the party camped at Dead Horse Gully for four days with one toilet, one water tank and a lot of dust. The whole party participated in the town's Anzac Day service, with Ken O'Sullivan helping the local policeman up a very long ladder untag the flagpole rope. After the wreath laying ceremony (including Koonung), a local digger gave a stirring speech on Australia's migration woes, then everyone retired to one of the two hotels for a wet lunch. There were interesting walks in the "Jump Ups" area, and constant entertainment from the Apostle birds. The Menindee hotel, which Burke and Wills imbibed at during their ill fated expedition, was severely burnt two days after the visit by the Koonung party.

The third expedition was from 17-31 May, led by Jo Ridgeway and based at Kendall Grange near Lake Macquarie. There were 26 participants who travelled by bus, train and car to their various activities. The Watagan Wanderers, a local walking club, hosted five events. The activities ranged from walking in the Watagan Mountains, exploring the Ku-ring-gai Chase NP, Lake Macquarie, and a trip to Sydney with a walk from Spit Bridge to Manly. Nine members learnt the art of abseiling on a very damp day in the Watagan Ranges. Bill Ling summed up the expedition as one of the most

interesting and successful the club had held, with a most enjoyable combination of compatible and happy bushwalkers.

Kevin Wilson planned an extensive expedition to the central and north east parks of Victoria for October, but it was cancelled due to insufficient numbers. This is always a disappointment, especially when so much thought and planning has been done by the leader.

The skiers planned for a bumper year with eleven events programmed. However, it was a marginal season for snow, with some events curtailed or cancelled. There were the usual warm-ups at Lake Mountain, with Tom Patton's "no snow, no go" mantra. Ken O'Sullivan led a mid week Lake Mountain trip and Val Myles led four cottage weekends and a mid week to Lake Mountain. Indeed, all bookings for the cottage were taken by the end of May, except for one weekend with only three spots remaining. On one cottage weekend, there was heavy rain on the Saturday night, and a flooded Broken River marooned the party until Sunday afternoon. Heather Thake led a ski weekend in early August to Sawmill Settlement. Judy Ryan came along even though she had sprained an ankle at home. Judy's excuse was that she wanted to experience the après ski scene put on by the club. Two ski weekends were curtailed, and Sunday lunch was spent in Alexandra and environs admiring the Goulbourn Valley.

Keith Lierse led the annual Rover Lodge trip from 5-13 September where there was more walking and sunbaking done than skiing. Gwen Waller had organised a trip to the USC at Falls Creek the following week, and when the party met up at Mt Beauty, the news was that the Falls Creek resort was closed for the season. No worries for the 16 members who settled in for the week at the USC, and prayed for snow. On Monday night the snow arrived, and everybody had a good time. Unfortunately, Gwen Waller fell heavily on ice early in the week sustaining a massive bruise, but no broken bones.

Don O'Flynn organised a canoe trip on the Murray for 7-10 November. Because of the death of his father, Don handed over the leadership of the trip to Alan Brown. Alan expertly shepherded the 11 members down the Murray from Strathmerton to Barmah, a total of 90 km. Apparently, on the first day, a storm struck the party, causing some pandemonium. There were also the usual unscheduled swims, mud and fun associated with canoeing.

The backpackers had only four events. On 21/22 November, Ken O'Sullivan led 17 members on a trip over Mt Howitt to Hell's Window. Hell's Window is writ in Koonung history as a little unlucky because of the number of times bad weather has intervened. Hilary McKelvie reported on the beautiful views from the McCalister Springs toilet, and a cold Sunday morning, but Hell's Window was conquered. Val Myles led 10 members on a backpack on 16/17 January over Mt Stirling to Craig's Hut. One particular car was left at Yea hospital in disgrace due to fuel problems which delayed the start of this walk. Because of the very warm weather, the weekend progressed from plan A to eventually plan E. Some tent poles were left at home and the March flies were ferocious. On the way home on Sunday, the temperature reached 40°C.

Keith Lierse led a trip into the Baw Baws, camping below Mustering Flat, where the mosquitoes were so bad day and night, that Ann Wetherall wrapped herself up in a cape

groundsheet. The annual Wonnangatta trek was led by Keith Lierse on Labor Day weekend with a usual feast of pears, blackberries, apples and fine weather.

The bike riders had a varied choice of seven rides. Tom Patton led a ride in June from Mitcham Road to Carrum with a tail wind most of the way. On 11 July Tom took several riders around the Maribyrnong River for 43 km, promising flat outbound and downhill inbound, which was hotly disputed by some; a planned ride in the Bendigo area in October was cancelled by Tom, and his last ride for the year was a Peninsula winery tour in the Red Hill area, visiting six establishments.

Gwen Waller led a successful Darebin Creek ride of 36 km on 31 October and Heather Thake went from Fairfield to Brighton at the end of November, some 45 km. Ken O'Sullivan, on 31 January, took his party from Eltham to Diamond Creek and return whilst Dick Beton stuck to the beach from McCrae to Sorrento. On 10 March, Bruce Ford led a mid week bike ride of 36 km on the Warburton trail circuit.

Again, base camps were popular with members and well supported. In early June, Tom Patton had a base camp at Avoca with a walk to Nowhere Creek plus some navigation practice. In mid June, Doug Brewer took 10 members on a weekend to Marysville, visiting Lake Mountain to see a little snow. Doug also had a base camp in mid July at Phillip Island, plus a weekend at Lorne in mid September. On 3/4/5 October, eleven members led by Val Myles, journeyed to Rotomah Island in the Gippsland Lakes, and battled the mosquitoes day and night, but had a thoroughly enjoyable time walking the island and enjoying the camp fire. The Beton's led a successful camp on 14/15 November in the Dunolly/Moliagul area.

Doug Brewer had another base camp at Phillip Island on Cup weekend and Tarra Valley NP the next weekend.

On 4/5/6 December, Val Myles led a trip to the Cape Otway lighthouse, which was fully booked. Members enjoyed the Laura Ashley furnishings, good weather, walks, good company and community cooking. Finally, the Browns had their annual Pt Leo sojourn with nice long walks led by Alan Brown. Jan Gray led a base camp to French Island on 6/7/8 March staying at Echo Farm, and on the Monday, the party did a rubbish collection along the beach to "Keep Australia Beautiful".

There was a huge range of day walks to whet the appetite of members, including eight mid week walks. Some of the walks included an S-1-1 amble around Emerald Hill (South Melbourne) led by Alan Brown in July, including coffee and markets; Ken O'Sullivan explored the new Eastern Freeway extension; Ron Karlstrom took 18 members to the Musk railway station near Daylesford in June; Doug Brewer explored Herring Island in August; the Wetheralls took eight members to Hepburn Regional Park in June in pouring rain. Don McKelvie visited Powelltown in October "for a bit of an uphill" which was about 5 km; Jo Ridgeway did her first famous Lost Children's walk in November, and Keith Lierse led a walk from Gembrook to Lakeside, returning on Puffing Billy, which stalled on the hill to Gembrook due to the lack of steam. Kevin Wilson had over 30 attend his birthday at his East Warburton farm, picking berries, taking a walk and topping it off with a BBQ.

Bruce Ford completed the Lilydale/Warburton trail along the old railway line with three separate walks, and Peter Goodwin led a walk to Dom Dom on 30 January, his first walk as a club leader.

The Federation Day walk was held in the Brisbane Ranges on 21 March.

Some new members included Angela Fong and Marcia Green. Peter Goodwin and Wayne Rice became new club leaders.

There was a diverse social events calendar, with a dine out at the Cherry Tree Tavern on 11 July; 25 attended the Manningham Concert Band Annual Gala Concert on 5 September; on 13 October there was a theatre night at Her Majesty's for \$62 each to see Chicago, a Cup Eve dinner dance at Doncaster Bowling Club for \$15 each, a jazz evening at the Zoo in December, an evening at the Moonee Valley trots in February, a tennis picnic day at Bacchus Marsh, and a film night at the Balwyn Cinema in April.

One of our leaders, John Whitney, died suddenly in October after suffering a severe infection. John was a Koonung member for five years, and was a very able leader. His favourite areas were Kinglake NP and Sugarloaf. Thirty club members attended his funeral on 28 October. On Sunday, 21 March, there was a combined Koonung/Diamond Valley memorial walk held in John's honour, which was well attended.

In Walk Talk there were the usual interesting tit-bits for the year. Tom's Tips numbers 6-11 appear, including number 9 that tells of adjusting bike seats using the bum wobble test, and another recommending after shave to harden your heels. Photos appear for the first time in the February issue with a fuzzy group on top of Mt Howitt taken by Ken O'Sullivan. Ken also wrote an article in the August issue describing how you can get a real snow report on the snow web cam.

Margaret Maxwell, a foundation member of the club, resigned in September, but she remained active with CAEX and DWLCC. In September, there is a plea to members to give leaders three days notice of booking on a walk or cancelling out.

In September, the club meetings move to the Bulleen Templestowe Community Centre and return in March to a refurbished Templestowe Memorial Hall. The October meeting is all about tying knots and some members get all tied up. There is a half page article on hyperthermia (too hot) in the December/January issue, whilst in March, Jan Gray reprinted part of an article about an English walker, A. Wainwright, who in 1936, walked for two weeks in the Lakes District, and the entire contents of his backpack weighed less than two pounds.

The AGM was moved from May to June because too many members were absent enjoying themselves. Finally, at the annual Christmas BBQ at the Doncaster Municipal Gardens, it did not rain.

CHAPTER 6

1999 – 2000

This year was again characterised by a large and diverse range of activities which were well supported. The activities included two expeditions, seven backpacks, two canoe events, thirteen base camps, six bike rides, ten mid week walks, a comprehensive ski program marred by limited snow, ten social events and a large range of weekend day walks.

At the AGM in June (deferred for one month due to the absence of many members on trips), Peter Goodwin took over as Walks Coordinator from Kevin Wilson, Louise Lamont became Walk Talk editor from Ann Wetherall and Lesley Uren undertook the role of Social Events from Lyn McMillan.

Subscriptions were unchanged at \$30 single, \$45 family.

The ski season was a tale of woe with poor, patchy snow. Two warm-ups at Lake Mountain were cancelled. Gwen Waller led a ski weekend at Rawson with 7 members because all had paid the accommodation. The highlights included walks to the Thomson River via the old narrow gauge railway line, an eat-out at Erica, with good food on cold plates, the outrageous behavior of a women's soccer club sharing our accommodation on Saturday night, and a walk to Mushroom Rocks near Mt Erica on Sunday.

The three cottage weekends led by Val Myles to Mt Stirling were well supported, but there was much walking to find decent snow. A week at the Fall's Creek USC led by Gwen Waller and Tom Patton with 12 attendees had the same problem of little snow, and the week at the Rover Lodge from 4-11 September led by Keith Lierse was spent searching for snow suitable to ski on, with the Rocky Knobs offering the best snow.

The first backpack of the year was a 55 km walk around Wilson's Promontory on 16-19 October led by Val Myles. Twelve members attended, and they used the new track from the lighthouse to Waterloo Bay. At the Roaring Meg camp on the first night, reports indicate that there was a major fracas about the ownership of a small scratchy pad.

The Cup weekend in early November saw a walk led by Keith Lierse over the Crosscut Saw being curtailed due to heavy rain on the Saturday that drenched the party, and forced a miserable retreat on the Sunday. Peter Goodwin led a group on 6/7 November over the Razorback to Federation Hut as an introductory backpack. It was described as being very wet, with apparent good views blocked by the clouds and rain.

An overnight walk planned by Tom Patton on 4/5 December on the Mornington Peninsula was turned into a day walk. On 29-31 January, Keith Lierse led a backpack around the eastern end of the Bogong High Plains with nine members. On the Sunday, there was a 24km walk in glorious weather to Timms Lookout and Ropers Hut. The Wonnangatta was visited again in early March by nine walkers led by Keith Lierse. Again, the weather was hot and dry with the usual free apples, pears and blackberries. A Wilson's Promontory lighthouse walk on 19/20 March led by Val Myles, was

drastically shortened due to extremely hot weather, and consisted of just swimming and lolling on the beach around Tidal River. This walk was jinxed from the start because Parks Victoria had, for this year, disallowed a booking at the Lighthouse Keeper's house because of their commercial trips. Thus, the option was taken to camp at Roaring Meg, then the hot weather. Finally, the Wetheralls had a very interesting backpack into the Lerderderg Gorge on 25/26 March, but it was cancelled.

The canoeists continued down the Murray River with a trip led by Don O'Flynn on 13-16 November, starting at Yarrawonga and heading downstream. Reports are that this was a thoroughly enjoyable trip in fine weather. Previously, on 10 November, Tom Patton led a Yarra River practice session.

On 12 April, Tom Patton led 8 members on the Maribyrnong River, canoeing from Footscray to Avondale Heights. (How can you have heights on a river?) Much fun was had by all, again in good weather, and a helpful support team.

On the expedition scene, Jan Gray had a total of seven women in September doing the coast-to-coast walk in England across Cumbria and Northumberland using bed and breakfast accommodation and vehicle support.

Bill Ling, barely out of his sick bed, led 25 members from 10-17 October to Victor Harbour. The accommodation was "fluffy pillow" in the townhouses overlooking Encounter Bay. Bill celebrated a big birthday on the Monday, and the expedition included a visit to Goolwa and the mouth of the Murray on Tuesday, a walk along part of the Heyen trail in three groups on Wednesday, a touring day on Thursday, including Cape Jervis and a spot of fishing for a few. Friday was a longish walk via the Heysen Trail and back, via Deep Creek Cove, whilst on Saturday, 12 members visited Kangaroo Island whilst the remainder had a rest day at "home". Some sketches by Don O'Flynn of the trip were published in January Walk Talk.

A proposed 14 day camping expedition from Mt Hope to Coffin Bay in South Australia in April, led by Keith Lierse, was cancelled due to insufficient numbers.

There was a large selection of base camps to choose from. Doug Brewer led trips to Marysville with 10 members on 19/20 June, nine members visited Tarra Valley on 3/4 July, Lorne on 18/19 September, Phillip Island 11/12 December and 29/30 January, Rawson Village 18/19 March and Phillip Island on 22/23 April. The Wetherall's led a camp at Toolangi State Forest on 14/15 August. On Cup weekend, Jo Ridgeway took 13 members to the Touchwood Farm Retreat on the Mooroolbool River whilst the Beton's took ten members to Vaughan Springs on 27/28 November with a proposed backpack turned into a base camp. This was very fortuitous, because the weekend turned out to be very hot. The Brown's had their annual Pt Leo bash on 4/5 March whilst the Beton's went to Lucyvale near Corryong from 10-14 March with 16 attendees exploring the Burrowa Pine NP, attending a local dance and getting very wet on the last day.

The most popular was the second Howman's Gap visit over the Christmas/New Year holiday. There were 26 members in attendance, led by Peter Goodwin, who took over from Jan Gray, who could not attend. There were the usual walks over the high plains, with the highlight being the show time concert on New Year's Eve. This concert

included the Spice Girls, Carmen Miranda, Repertory Groups, the Von Trapp Family singers, excerpts from The Mikado, Puffing Billy Tales and poetry reading of The Man from Snowy River. All of this fun was produced by Connie Beton with Dick Beton as Stage Manager.

The bike riders did some interesting and sometimes long trips. Ken O'Sullivan led a Docklands to Port Melbourne discovery tour on 10 July. There was then a time gap until 22 January when Gwen Waller tackled a 35 km trip from Westerfolds Park to Diamond Creek return. Tom Patton took ten riders from the Barwon River to Buckley Falls on 13 February and Karen Sheedy had seven attend her 30 km Wantirna to Upper Ferntree Gully return ride on 27 February. Heather Thake did a scenic 30 km Merri Creek, Royal Park, Southgate, Fairfield ride on 4 March. The daddy of them all was on 25 March when Bruce Ford took a bunch of riders 52 km from Diamond Creek to Southgate return, meeting a group of penny farthing bikers en route, plus meeting and greeting the Prime Minister, John Howard, walking the Yarra bank.

The mid week walks had fair support during the year. Bruce Ford led a walk along the Mullum Mullum Creek on 8 September; Gwen Waller journeyed to Anglesea on 13 October for a 12 km walk, including the Anglesea coal mine, with a total of 9 members. Ken O'Sullivan walked Kallista on 1 December and Don McKelvie did an "up and down" M-7-4 in the Lerderderg Gorge on Australia Day. In late February, Bruce Ford led a coastal art walk from Hampton to Mentone. On a very hot day on 22 March, Peter Goodwin retreated to cool Marysville for a 13 km circuit. Bill Ling explored the Murrindindi area on 29 March and on the 10th May Bill was meant to lead a walk to Mt Donna Buang. Because of a dicky leg, Bill handed over to Keith Lierse to lead the walk from the summit to Cement Creek. On the slippery descent, one member sustained a broken wrist, another one sprained an ankle, and there were a few bruises.

Keith Lierse tackled the Fernshaw to Dom Dom walk via Morley's Track on 26 April, and finally, Ken O'Sullivan climbed the Black Spur to Dom Dom on 25 May.

There were the usual numerous weekend walks ranging all around Melbourne and its environs. Of course, not all can be listed, but some of the eventful/interesting ones were as follows. In Late July, Don O'Flynn showed members around the City Link project, and on 3 July Alan Brown led 16 up Mt Little Joe which caused Hilary McKelvie to report in Walk Talk on the life aspects of the glow worms and the fungus gnat. Don McKelvie took a 20 km walk in late July and on the descent from Mt Jerusalem, it was reported that Don's compass-led march came out exactly to the cars.

In November the Wetheralls led a walk up to Mt Donna Buang from Warburton and return – only 14 km, graded M-8-6, but as a participant noted, that to start at Martyr's Road was what the walk was all about. A well patronised walk was Warrandyte to Eltham led by Gwen Waller in early November, whereas Doug Brewer only had seven in mid January to Kinglake NP, but it included a horse ride for the brave. Kevin Wilson offered a 14 km walk and BBQ with chestnuts at his East Warburton farm. Twenty two members thought that a good idea, but alas, the cockatoos had stripped the trees of all but five chestnuts.

Jenny Keamy was leading a walk from Bullarto Reservoir to Babbington Hill on 30 April when John Tilton had a heart attack. He was efficiently and expertly assisted out

to the Daylesford Hospital. John wrote a thank you letter to the club, which was published in Walk Talk, in which he spoke about his subsequent good recovery.

Finally, on 27 May, the Robinsons dared to go into the Doongalla SF with eight hardy souls, who endured cold, hail and flurries of snow. Well, it was nearly winter.

On the social scene, there was the Manningham Concert Band silver anniversary concert on 28 August; a jazz night at the Bridge Hotel, Richmond; a film night at the Balwyn Cinema in September with the exotic title of Runaway Bride; a Cup Eve dinner dance at the Doncaster Bowling Club for \$15 per person; New Year's Eve at the same venue for \$25 per person; Twilight Rhythms in the Fitzroy Gardens on 21 January (free); jazz at the Zoo on 18 February; a Manningham Concert Band recital on 27 February; back to the Balwyn Cinema in March to see Green Mile (a good walking theme); and finally, a theatre night in early May to see Sound of Music at \$61.50 per person.

Some new members for the year included Cyril Driver, Marie Archibald and Rod Taylor.

There was a swap/auction night held at the October meeting hosted by Ken O'Sullivan, which was a successful and funny evening.

On 6/7 May, there was a Search and rescue practice in the Mt Tanglefoot area attended by Tom Patton. Unfortunately, Tom was not 100% fit, but he assisted at base camp in the very wet conditions by keeping a fire going and drying wood.

Walk Talk had many interesting articles. In the August issue, Ron Karlstrom asked for a copy of a photo of himself with birds (feathered type) on his arm taken on the Northern Rivers expedition. Dick Beton had a full page in October dedicated to showing how to assess fuel costs. There was an extract from the "Daily Mail", almost a page long, giving the assessment that gyms are for muscles and walking is for brains. At the bottom of page 3 in November, there was one line "the allegations were denied by the alligators". What was that all about? The November issue had a full page on hypo and hyperthermia. In February, the proposal is put whether all members should have a copy of the membership address and phone numbers. This was rejected by the committee due to privacy concerns, and only committee persons and leaders are to have access to this information. A certain silver Datsun expired on the Eastern Freeway and is taken to the crushers.

In March, an article by Bruce Ford explains that he has found a pair of Nike sneakers, plus a pair of colourful socks in his car, and they were probably left there up to a year ago, and would someone please claim them. In April, the committee decreed that maximum visitor fee for a family was \$10 and that the AGM would be held on 17 May 2000.

The official reopening of the refurbished Templestowe Memorial Hall was held on 14 April, and Koonung was represented by Lyverne Newson and Louise Lamont, who were wined and dined, entertained by the Manningham City Band and five past Olympic athletes. There were no Tom's Tips for the year.

CHAPTER 7

2000 – 2001

This could be summarised as a steady-as-you-go year, with four expeditions, eleven base camps, ten bike rides, nine social events, two canoe trips, seven ski trips, three mid week walks and over 55 weekend day walks.

The committee changes were Alan Brown taking over from Dick Beton as President, and Dick Beton taking over the Vice President's role from Alan Brown. Lesly Hancock took over as Secretary from Anne Brolly.

From 15-26 July, Jo Ridgeway led a Simpson Desert Trek with the Outback Camel Company with eleven female Koonung members. Besides company staff, Mark, a single man, who was a Smithsonian photographer travelled with the group for the first few days. Their transport was two strings of eight camels each to carry all their supplies. There was recent heavy rain that enlivened the desert. Weight and water was at a premium, which meant that wet ones and toilet paper were used for many purposes. Most rode on the camels at some stage, and all had an enjoyable and memorable trip.

An interesting quote, cited in the Walk Talk article, of an expedition report, written by a British officer in Palestine in WWI thus: "Camels – patient, enduring hunger, thirst and pain with courage beyond all others. The first sign a camel may give that it is being asked to do the impossible is to drop dead." (Some could say that this applies to some Koonung walks).

In November, Doug Brewer led a party of eleven to Mt Gambier for a week. The party was based in Mt Gambier, and saw sights such as the Umpherston Sinkhole (a limestone cave), Mt Schank volcano, and a trip to Nelson and the Glenelg River.

In March, Peter Goodwin led nine members on a walking tour of the South Island of New Zealand. From Queenstown overnight walks were done on the Hollyford, Greenstone and Routeburn tracks as well as an overnight cruise on Milford Sound. The group endured sand flies, some crowded huts and the legend of old red socks was founded.

From 23 to 28 March, Dick Beton led fourteen members on an 82 km traverse of the Great South West Walk. The section walked was from Portland to Swan Lakes over a five day period, with the longest day being 20 km. Don O'Flynn drove the support vehicle with all the food and camping gear so that on the actual walk, only a day pack was required. One of the problems encountered by the walkers was having to contend with constant headwinds.

The skiers had a lean year with poor snow falls and, in some cases, rain, which quickly washed away the meagre snow cover. A trip to Lake Mountain in late June led by Keith Lierse was fairly successful although Lyverne Newson was aghast at learning that she had skied a black trail (Jubilee), and although tired and bruised, wrote that she had a coffee at Mansfield on the way home. (She meant Marysville).

Ken O'Sullivan led a Lake Mountain trip in early July, and Val Myles took seven to ski fresh snow at St Gwinear, staying at Rawson village. Saturday was good, but overnight rain saw the group having lunch in Walhalla, then going home. There were three cottage weekends led by Val Myles with lots of walking to find snow and, likewise, the annual trek to the Rover Lodge in early September was marked by sunny weather and patchy snow.

In early November, Keith Lierse led a three day backpack to the Mt Clear/Bluff area which was highlighted by continuous, thick fog for two days, and a problem with finding water. Another trip in late January to the Fainters had good weather, although very cold nights, with a member of the party being missing at the end of the walk. There was also another trip to the Baw Baws in February with incessant attacks by March flies. Val Myles took 17 members on a beginners' backpack over Mt Stirling in mid November, with a thunderstorm and rain on Saturday afternoon causing a little consternation. Finally, in mid May, Val Myles led six members into the Wilson's Promontory lighthouse on what turned out to be an ideal fine and sunny weekend.

An 80 km canoe trip was planned for mid November by Don O'Flynn in the Lake Mulwala area, but was cancelled because the camp site was under water.

In early May, ten members led by Alan Brown, spent the weekend canoeing from Kangaroo Ground to Finns Reserve. It was a cool weekend, with a Saturday camp at Longridge Park, complete with hot showers.

There were ten bike rides which were evenly spread across the year. In early June, Ken O'Sullivan led a shortish 16 km Yarra ride and in late June, Karen Sheedy rode from Pascoe Vale up to Gellibrand Hill and downhill on the home leg. Late July saw Don O'Flynn take eleven members from Royal Park to Thomastown and return, with a Rushall to Thomastown train trip on the outward leg. Mid November saw Heather Thake take a 30 km Kew/Yarra Trail ride and Tom Patton did a 40 km Mitcham/Carrum tour. Karen Sheedy led a mid March, mid week successful 30 km Wantirna to Ferntree Gully ride. On a Heather Thake ride from Kew to Templestowe on 21 April, Lesly Hancock took a tumble and had to return home to recover. At the end of April, Bruce Ford eventually took 13 on a ride from East Seville to Yarra Junction, a distance of 26 km. What happened was that four members got lost trying to find the starting location. Finally, in early May, Karen Sheedy took a party through the northern suburbs and Sandy Lucignani led her first bike ride from Dight's Falls to Southbank and Royal Park.

Base camps remained a staple event for club members with eleven well attended trips. Queen's Birthday holiday weekend in June saw twenty members attend Jan Gray's Anglesea event, and Doug Brewer ran a Christmas in July at Tarra Bulga NP. In early October, Val Myles ran a four day event based at Tidal River cabins. Thirteen members attended, and the walk from Telegraph Saddle to Sealers Cove return was a bit of a marathon in bleak weather.

Doug Brewer returned to Tarra Valley in mid October for a murder/mystery weekend and Peter Goodwin escorted a group to Mt Buffalo at the end of October. Mt Gambier was the location for a one week base camp led by Doug Brewer with eleven attendees.

Gwen Waller led a fully booked base camp over the New Year for six days, staying at the Mt Hotham USC. There was a wide variety and level of walks and a successful New Year's Eve party.

The Brown's had their usual Pt Leo event in mid February, and Jan Gray, with a female only group of 15 stayed at the Lady Northcote Camp in early March to explore the Anakie/Brisbane Ranges area.

The Beton's took a small party to Leichhardt Ski Club on Mt Baw Baw at the end of February, with David Cooper extremely happy at having a comfortable bunk and a pillow slip. To end the year, Sandy Lucignani led a successful trip in early April to Rosebud attended by 15 members, although the weather on Sunday turned out to be wet and cold when they walked Green's Bush.

There were only three mid week walks. In mid June, Alan Brown, with 12 members, did a shortest day of the year walk from Lower Plenty to Greensborough and return. After lunch at the Greensborough RSL, the return trip was in pouring the rain. Kevin Wilson, in mid November, did a 10 km S-1-1 walk from Bush Creek to Koonung Creek, and in early December Michael Robinson led a Wesburn to Mt Tugwell walk.

There were a host of day walks, about 55 in all. They ranged from a heritage Heidelberg/Eaglemont walk led by Bruce Ford with 21 attending, and Bruce proudly pointed out to his party a carport he built 40 years ago, to an M-7-6 Taggerty Crossing to Lake Mountain, where some bush bashing was part of the 13 km trip. Another interesting walk, on 5 November, was over the Centennial Trail from Yarra Junction to Warburton East, ending up at the Wilson's farm for a BBQ with an attendance of 40 members.

On the social front, there was a dinner at the Old England Hotel at Heidelberg on 3 June, and a dinner-dance scheduled for 6 July at the Shopping Town Hotel was cancelled because the hotel no longer "did these". The Manningham Concert Band was at Whitefriars College on 5 August, Les Miserables at the Nova Theatre, Nunawading, on 27 October, and the Victorian Welsh Male Choir the next night at the Melbourne Town Hall costing \$33 each.

A Cup Eve dinner dance was attended by several members at the Doncaster Bowling Club at \$20 each, a free jazz concert picnic tea in the Fitzroy Gardens, a film night at the Rivoli of Finding Forester and the final social event was a sumptuous 3 course dinner at the William Angliss Trade School costing \$20.50 each, with 26 members attending.

Club members attended the Federation Weekend on 20-22 October held in the Grampians, and the Federation Day Walk was held at Daylesford on 25 March.

Michael King, foundation member and life member of the club, died in August. Michael was a committee man, walks leader, and Walk Talk dispatcher. He was a participant on the club's trips to Cradle Mountain in 1986 and King Island in 1988. Michael served in the RAAF in WW2, flying missions from India to Burma. In civilian life he was one of the early TAA captains on DC3's, and on retirement was a senior captain flying 727 jets.

Keith Lierse was awarded a Life Membership of the club at the June meeting for his outstanding service to the club.

A photo competition was held at the July meeting with ten slides and 59 prints from members. The first prize went to Bruce Ford, second prize to Audrey Killey, and third prize to Karen Sheedy. Every other entry was highly commended.

The last of Tom's Tips appears in July Walk Talk on rubber bands. There is advice that the Council car park, used as a meeting place for club walks, is unavailable from June due to building works, and that the club members use Tully Drive in the interim for car parking.

There was a warning in July that there is a blitz on walkers entering water catchment areas, and that several people had been fined. Several recipes were published, the best-sounding being Connie Beton's rum fruit balls. Ann Wetherall asked for ideas on food for walks in the December issue and Hilary McKelvie kept asking for milk cartons to rabbit-proof tree seedlings. A rogaining training day was advertised for 7 August. Personal accident insurance for members, via the Federation scheme, was continued, with certain activities such as cross-country skiing excluded,(but pyjama parties were allowable!), at a total cost of \$2.15 per member, per year.

Four members renewed their first aid qualifications. An article in Walk Talk warns members of the dangers of heating water in a microwave oven, because the water in the container can superheat and cause severe burns.

Ron Karlstrom resigned as the club's No. 1 search and rescue contact, and this role was taken over by Mary Atkins and Ann Wetherall. Ron Karlstrom and Ken Beer represented the club at a local council reception on 1 October to recognise the club's service to the community.

Tom Patton attended the search for Linda Grimstone in the Powers Lookout area on 7/8 September. The weather was terrible, with persistent rain, and the terrain was extremely steep and covered with thick bush. The search was called off at the end of the second day, and her disappearance is still a mystery.

Chris Patton was awarded Citizen of the Year by the City of Darebin Australia Day Awards. Chris, besides his involvement in the local SES, has attended several bush and snow searches, and is a peer support member of the Bushwalkers Search and Rescue. There was a table in the February issue noting the lowest official temperatures in Australia, with Charlotte's Pass winning at -23°C.

Des Bain talked about PLBs (Personal Location Beacons) at the March meeting.

Some new members for the year include Sandy Lucignani, Brian Maslin, Heather Ambrose, Murray Armstrong, Mark Owens, Roslyn Asplin, Christa Houghmann, Ian Barr and Dorio Lucignani. New leaders included Sandy Lucignani, Richard Homsey and Chris Hunter.

Finally, a leaders training weekend was held at Camp McLeod, Lake Eppalock, led by Keith Lierse. There were no other club activities that weekend. The weekend was fully catered for by a cooking group led by Jan Brown. Training sessions included leadership, navigation, walk planning, food and legal responsibilities. On the Sunday, leaders were paired off to find their way around a rogaining type of course in the local bush. At the final session, there was quite a robust discussion on risk analysis of the club's activities. Overall, the camp was a memorable weekend, where the leaders were able to enjoy the company and bonhomie of fellow leaders of the club in a beautiful bush setting.

CHAPTER 8

2001 – 2002

This year showed clear indications of the decline in interest of backpacking, skiing and mid week day walks, and a continuing healthy interest in base camps, expeditions, bike rides and social activities, with day walks remaining the backbone of activities.

Indeed, there were 60 plus day walks (weekend), two mid week day walks, eight base camps, four expeditions, six backpacks, seven ski events, eight bike rides, one canoe trip and nine social activities.

Two members of the club died during the year. Mark Owens, a young, recent member, and budding leader, was an extremely keen walker, and had completed his last walk on 14 October from Jan Juc to Anglesea. Mark died whilst attending a conference for volunteers of the MS Society. Jeannine Desailly spoke on behalf of the club at his funeral service, which was held on 28 October. A memorial walk was held for Mark in June 2002 (see Chapter 9).

Maurie Myles joined the club months after it was formed, and was active participant in day walks, backpacks, ski trips and social events. He was a member of six overseas club trips, and spent one week at the Rover Lodge skiing the High Plains. Maurie retired from active club events, but for many years he collated and posted out Walk Talk, for which he was awarded an honorary membership.

Maurie was an expert artist, and produced a large number of paintings, including sailing boats, aircraft, cars, trains and portraits which are still admired by everyone who sees them. In WW2 Maurie was conscripted into the English army, and trained in the Parachute Regiment. He was one of the first to parachute into France early on the morning of D Day. He was captured by the Germans, and spent the rest of the war in POW camps. Maurie died on 19 May 2002 after a long illness, just days short of his eightieth birthday. The club was well represented at his funeral held on 23 May.

On the committee front, there were many changes. Hilary McKelvie became Vice President in lieu of Dick Beton; David Wetherall took over as Treasurer from Lyverne Newson; Keith Lierse became Walks Coordinator, taking over from Peter Goodwin, and Jeannine Desailly took over the Social Events role from Lesley Uren.

The committee resolved to continue the Personal Accident Policy with the Federation, and decided to purchase a slide projector, although this became a long winded saga.

The Treasurer insisted that all monies be handed to him in an envelope, clearly marked with the amount, and the name and address of the payee to prevent payment disputes, and to help oil the workings of the club.

Keith's Klues appear for the first time in the June Walk Talk. Wayne Rice is elected Vice President of the Federation. July Walk Talk had a list of 1976 prices such as \$24 for a wool shirt, \$8.55 for a pair of nylon gaiters, \$22.50 for a pair of Rossi boots and a Sigg bottle was a mere \$3.90.

The guest speaker for November was Dr Rodney Lyme, who spoke eloquently on the controversial subject of euthanasia. Pictures in February Walk Talk show members singing carols at the annual Christmas BBQ, and no rain in sight. A complete list of the club's library was included in the March issue. Don O'Flynn had an exhibition of his sketches at the Café Julia in Jackson's Court in April, and there was a 20% mega buying night at the Wilderness Shop in Box Hill, which was well attended by the clubs bargain hunters.

April 26 saw Bill and Betty Ling celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. Both are Foundation Members of the club, and have been actively involved in the club since its foundation.

Finally, the committee resolved to keep subscriptions at \$30/45 for single/family membership for 2002/3, which meant the subscriptions had been unchanged for six years.

There were four expeditions during the year – two overseas and two within Australia. Lesley Uren led 22 members on a trip to Vietnam from 5 to 26 August. The group arrived in Ho Chi Minh City and travelled extensively by bus and air to their departure point of Hanoi. One day, everyone got drenched by a monsoonal downpour whilst sightseeing on a river, which did not do some passports any good at all. There were some long bus trips, up to 16 hours a day, but these were relieved by the spectacular scenery. In Hanoi, on the last day, Gwen Waller was hospitalised after a road accident involving a motor bike, and as a result, both Gwen and John returned to Australia after the main party.

Keith Lierse led an expedition of eight members to Hong Kong from 7 to 19 February. The group was based at the Wesley Hotel on Hong Kong Island, which was convenient to public transport such as trams, trains, buses and ferries. Walks were conducted on all of the main walking trails, including two outlying islands. The highlight of the trip was the Chinese New Year celebrations, with gaily decorated buildings, free gifts and a magnificent flower market at the Victoria Park on Chinese New Year's Day. Amazingly, all the flowers and decorations were gone by the next afternoon.

Kevin Wilson led a party of 16 from 24 November to 1 December to the Kosciusko NP. The weather was perfect, they made it to the top of Kosciusko and Don O'Flynn caught his first brown trout in the Thredbo River. On the way home, Kevin showed the party around the Bethanga Valley, where he had spent his boyhood.

Dick Beton led the Great South West Walk from 22 – 27 March. The weather ranged from chilly to hot on the 85 km walk. Don O'Flynn ably assisted with transport and setting up campsites.

The first backpack of the year was to Mt Stirling in early November led by Val Myles in good weather, with a side walk to the Mt Buller ski village on the Sunday. Don McKelvie led a three day walk in late October to Lake Tali Karng with a group of 12 members. The walk to the lake from the camp site was pleasant, but the return uphill made some hot and bothered, with Hilary McKelvie saying that if she had met a Taliban, she was hoping he would pull the pin. Keith Lierse led a walk across the Baw Baws in late January, whilst Val Myles led a trip across the Bogong High Plains in

early March, camping at The Park. Peter Goodwin also led eight members around Wilson's Promontory on a three day backpack, from 18-20 May, with the second day being very wet and miserable.

The only canoe trip of the year was led by Alan Brown on 13/14 April from Kangaroo Ground to Templestowe.

There were eight bike rides, of which three were mid week. Heather Thake led a Kew to Merri Creek return ride in early August, while Sandy Lucignani in early October led a 40 km eastern metro ride. Don O'Flynn led three mid week events – the first on 21 October, a 35 km trip around Dandenong Creek, the second on 5 December to Studley Park and a 30 km Carrum to Pt Melbourne in late January. Bruce Ford took eight on a ride from Glen Waverley to Southbank on 2 March, Sandy Lucignani led a 40 km ride along Gardiner's Creek on 6 April, and lastly, Gwen Winter, on 20 April led a 25 km trip along the Darebin Creek.

The first base camp for the year was led by Sandy Lucignani to Rosebud on 10 November with local walks. Doug Brewer had his annual retreat to Phillip Island on 1/2 December, and the Wetheralls led a group of ten to Walhalla on 8/9 December. Almost 30 members went to Howman's Gap from 27 December to 1 January. Peter Goodwin led a successful ascent of Mt Bogong and return in one day. The New Year's Eve party was themed "Come in bad taste" and everyone joined in a fun night until midnight, then they all collapsed into bed. Alan Brown led a successful motor camp to the Buchan Caves area with ten attendees from 25-28 April. The last two nights at the Native Dog Flat camp was described as frosty. Doug Brewer returned to Tarra/Bulga NP on 18/19 May with eight members.

During Easter, at the end of March, Chris Hunter led fourteen members to the Grampians, based at a caravan park near Hall's Gap. Some of the highlights included visits to McKenzie Falls, Lakeview Lookout and the Major Mitchell Plateau. On the descent from Mt William on the Major Mitchell Plateau, Marie Spowart tripped and broke a leg. Police from Hall's Gap, an ambulance and two SES vehicles attended, and Marie was evacuated to the Ararat Hospital, where she spent the night. Marie was then transferred to the Warringal Hospital in Heidelberg, where her leg was screwed together with a metal plate. Marie was incapacitated for many weeks, but has made a full recovery.

The skiers had a reasonable season with good snow, but there was a noticeable drop in member attendance. There were the usual warm ups at Lake Mountain led by Val Myles and Gwen Waller. There were three weekends led by Val Myles at the cottage, which had been refurbished, with good skiing at Mt Stirling, Keith Lierse led a party of only thirteen into the Rover Lodge (four from Koonung) early in September. There was fair skiing all week, but when the party skied out the 13 km to Fall's Creek on Saturday, 8 September, they encountered a blizzard with 100 km winds. Even though the party left at 7 am, they had great difficulty getting through Wallaces Gap and Langfords Gap due to the strong wind and drifting snow. They eventually made it to Fall's Creek with only minutes to spare to catch the bus, taking over four hours for the ski out that normally takes 2 hours. On arrival at the bus shelter, everyone looked like Antarctic explorers in their ice-encrusted parkas.

There were only two mid week walks; the first was to Lysterfield Park led by Tom Patton early June with nine attendees, and eight members on a Jan Gray walk along the Yarra Trail to Westerfolds in early April.

The sixty odd weekend day walks programmed visited areas such as Pt Nepean, Geelong, the Cathedrals, French Island, the Dandenongs and even Mt Despair. Some interesting walks picked at random include the aqueducts near Taradale led by Alan Brown in July, Montrose to Olinda in early September led by Don McKelvie, a 17 km trek for twelve in pouring rain, the classic Wetherall's walk in October from Royal Park to St Kilda, a walk from Powelltown over the Bump in February led by Kevin Wilson, with comments such as mud, rain, leeches – no, armies of leeches! It is a credit to the leaders that they continue to choose such a variety of walks in a wide geographic area that attracts the support of members.

On the social scene, there was a Whitehorse Orchestra concert and a Manningham Concert Band concert, both held in July. On 16-18 September, Lesley Uren had open days at her Avondale Heights home to show displays of her magnificent embroideries. In early October, there was a three course dinner at Fountain's at Box Hill for \$18 per person, a Manningham Concert Band event in mid October and a Cup Eve dinner dance at the Doncaster Bowling Club costing \$20 per person.

There was the picnic tea jazz concert (free) in the Fitzroy Gardens in mid February, Gilbert and Sullivan's The Gondoliers at the Darebin Arts Centre on 22 March, and a final concert of the Manningham Concert Band on 14 April. In May, 29 members enjoyed a three course dinner at Fountain's Restaurant.

Some new members for the year included Patricia Borton, Jan Falconer, Harry Gill, Pamela Baker, Patricia Renfree, Karin Shepherd, Alan and Julie Marshall, Irene Port, Dawn Pratley and Phillip Tewksbury. The only new leader for the year was Chris Hunter.

CHAPTER 9

2002 – 2003

This was a watershed year for the club due to the demise of cross-country skiing, the diminished support for backpacks and mid week walks, countered by four major expeditions, fifteen base camps, ten bike rides, eight social events and over fifty day walks. There were no canoe trips.

The reason for the demise of cross-country skiing was because the club's Public Liability insurance excluded this activity, hence the club had no option but to exclude all skiing activities as from 1 July. The twist in the story of this fiasco was that cross-country ski clubs were banned from walking, but could ski. Further, a walking club was not allowed, under the insurance policy, to walk into an area where there was snow or snow was forecast.

The new committee was a landmark for the club, with five women and two men. Hilary McKelvie became President, taking over from Alan Brown, whilst Barbara Hetherington took over the role of Vice President. Chris Hunter took over as Secretary from Lesly Hancock. Louise Lamont remained as Walk Talk Editor, Jeannine Desailly continued with Social Events. David Wetherall and Keith Lierse stayed on as Treasurer and Walks Coordinator respectively.

Some new members for the year were Elaine Turnbull, Helen Armstrong, David McCabe, Susan Peterson, Terence O'Callaghan and Mary Burgess. Alan Marshall was the only new club leader.

The yearly subscriptions remained unchanged at \$30/45 for single and family members. The May 2002 AGM was adjourned until the June monthly meeting to enable the 2001/2002 club accounts to be audited. The audited accounts were accepted at the adjourned meeting.

As usual, there was a high standard of guest speakers at the monthly meetings, attracting interest to a large number of members. Three external speakers created interest. Ray Thomas, the coordinator of the Regent Honeyeater project near Benalla spoke in June, which resulted in club members attending tree planting weekends in the Benalla area. Chris Baxter, editor of Wild Magazine, spoke at the July meeting on the highs and lows of producing the magazine. At the November meeting, Peter Moate spoke about caring for your feet, which is very important for all walkers.

On Sunday 2 June, Alan Brown led a memorial walk for Mark Owen, which Mark had reconnoitered before his death. There were a large number of members, as well as Mark's family and friends in attendance.

In September, there was a detailed report on the Lake Mountain snow search for a day tripper lost on 10 July, in terrible weather conditions, which pushed the BSAR crews to the limit. Unfortunately, the lost person was found dead in a creek just prior to the search being scaled down.

The August meeting saw three stalwarts of the club, Bill Ling, Don O'Flynn and Tom Patton awarded Life Memberships for their outstanding service to the club.

Patti Hall had an exhibition of her paintings at Café Julia, Doncaster, in August, whilst at the August meeting there was a trading table for members to sell their pre-loved surplus gear. In September there was a plea from the Federation to ask members to lobby for a management plan for the Bunyip State Forest, because the area was being taken over by trail bike riders and 4WD users.

October Walk Talk reiterated the fuel cost policy, and there was a notice that Jeannine Dessaily had an exhibition of water colours at Café Julia in Doncaster.

There were huge fires in the Victorian Alps in January and February affecting many walking areas. Gwen Winter resigned as a leader in January.

Members were reminded in Walk Talk about the club booking procedures, and to walk safely. Audrey Killey and Fergus Ryan were awarded Centenary Medals "for their achievements and services to the Community". Ann Wetherall took over as membership secretary of the Bushwalkers Search and Rescue (BSAR).

At the April meeting, Patti Hall graciously presented Kevin and Myra Wilson with one of her paintings done on a trip to Lord Howe Island led by Kevin. A mystery letter arrived through the post addressed to the club with nothing inside, and the mystery was never solved. The committee approved, and the Walk Talk editor wrestled with the trial in May of sending out Walk Talk by e-mail.

The only ski trips this year were private ones due to the Public Liability insurance problems. There were no canoe trips. The first expedition was from 14 June to 8 July visiting Vietnam and Cambodia, which was led by Chris Hunter. The expedition went from Hanoi, Hue, Ho Chi Minh City and on to Phnom Penh and surrounds. It was a wide-ranging and interesting trip, but there were problems and delays along the way including a missed train and a substitute 17 hour train journey in very hot and humid conditions.

There were two expeditions to South Africa – the first led by Jan Gray from 1 to 22 November, starting from Johannesburg and finishing in Cape Town, and a reverse trip led by Gwen Winter, with the same tour company from 27 November to 17 December. Both expeditions of three weeks each, explored the spectacular African scenery, with sightings of many wild animals, whales and dolphins. There were minor problems with the vehicle, all taken in good humour. Both groups visited Robben Island and Table Mountain.

From 22 February to 2 March, Kevin Wilson led 30 members to Lord Howe Island. They stayed in self-service units, and undertook many walks to explore this World Heritage Island. There were glass bottom boat trips, snorkelling, painting and bird watching. Overall, it was a well planned and memorable trip, with good weather for most of the time.

There were only two backpacks, one to Mt Stirling with a party of five in December led by Val Myles, and a party of seven exploring the Snowy Plains led by Keith Lierse for three days in November.

The base camps for the year were as follows: Bright in July (Doug Brewer); Regent Honey Eater at Benalla in August (Chris Hunter); Mt Samaria in October (Kevin Wilson); Federation weekend in October at Lorne (Wayne Rice); Whroo in November (Kevin Wilson); Steiglitz in November (Don McKelvie); Howman's Gap late December (Keith Lierse); Cape Conran in early February (Alan Brown); Pt Leo late February (Alan Brown); Howman's Gap in early March (Keith Lierse); Cobberas in late March (Dick Beton); Hall's Gap in mid April (Jan Gray); Regent Honey Eater in Benalla during April; Lorne in late April (Chris Hunter), and Phillip Island in mid May (Doug Brewer).

All of these camps had something to offer and were well supported. Two base camps were in the wake of the huge alpine fires in January/February. At Cape Conran, a DC3 aircraft landed at the nearby airstrip carrying fire fighters and caused great interest. At the Howman's Gap camp in early March, the devastation caused to the alpine area around Falls Creek was awe inspiring, and the 45 minute video of how the camp at Howman's Gap was saved was a thriller. Also, eight huts were visited and found to be safe and sound, even though some reports said they had been destroyed.

Of the ten bike rides, five were mid week led by Don O'Flynn (4 off) and one by Tom Patton. There were three days trips on weekends, one led by Karen Sheedy in November (Wantirna to Upper Ferntree Gully), the second led by Dick Beton in February (Safety Beach to McCrae) and the third a whopping 54 km from Diamond Creek to Southbank led by Bruce Ford, although some joined up at the halfway point at Heidelberg.

From 14 to 18 October, Don O'Flynn led a tour along the newly opened Bright to Wangaratta bike trail with a side trip to Beechworth. The total distance was 93 km and the 14 riders were assisted by Lyn and Jim McMillan doing the car shuffles. From 16-18 May, Don O'Flynn led a large party along the Bellarine rail trail ending up at Queenscliff. Some of the party on day two got separated but were rounded up after completing an extra 10 km. Unfortunately, it rained on day three, with some returning home early, whilst the remainder explored Queenscliff.

There were only three mid week walks – a walk around Westerfolds by Jan Gray in December, a Melbourne Golden Mile walk by Bruce Ford in February, and an Eltham area walk by Jan Gray in early May.

The 52 days walks on weekends had attendees ranging from four to 27, ranging from S-1-1 to a quite steep M-7-7 led by Don McKelvie around Mt Robertson in the Kinglake area on 1 September. Again, the walks were conducted in a variety of areas, and it is a credit to all the dedicated leaders that they continue to program such a wide variety of interesting destinations.

Some humorous things do happen. At the end of a walk in Olinda Forest on 28 July led by the Wetheralls, David announced to the 12 members present that they taken 17,000 steps, travelled 13.118 km and consumed 707 calories. On another walk on 22

September, the leader forgot to come to the Council car park. Bill Ling took over and instead of Flowerdale, took the 11 members up to Siberia Junction. A bit of a problem was encountered because a car rally had blocked off the forest roads. This did not faze our deputy leader. With a quick U-turn, a drive down the road, a pleasant day was had clambering around the Mt St Leonard area.

Another interesting walk was when Tom Patton took 27 people on the Flinders cliff top walk, partly over private property on 12 October. As a result, Elaine Turnbull wrote a letter of thanks to Mr Baillieu of "Clondrisse" for allowing the party to traverse his property. Another party member, Sylvia from Berne in Switzerland, a visitor, sent an e-mail to the club describing how Ian Barr took her to the start point where walkers were protecting their ankles and legs with special clothing. Snake bite protection she was told, which worried Sylvia somewhat for the rest of the day. She also noted that she thought it was closer to 16 km, not the 12 km announced by the leader. Aussie kilometres, Sylvia, not Swiss ones!!

Alan Marshall led his first walk on 27 April in the Brisbane Ranges, Bear Gully area with eleven attendees

There was a steady stream of social events. At the end of July, 14 attended the opera La Boheme at the Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre, and another opera, Tosca, at the same venue at the end of October. There was a Cup Eve dinner dance at the Doncaster Bowling Club costing \$20 per head and a dinner at Fountain's at the end of November costing \$20 per head. Schramm's Cottage was the venue for a \$22 spit roast in mid February and a return to the Darebin Centre on 21 March for Mavis goes to Timor. The Manningham Concert Band held a concert in early July at the Koonung Theatre, Box Hill North and on 6 April at the Bulleen Community Centre.

The State government gave a grant to the Outdoor Recreation Centre (ORC) to write a "Standard for Bushwalking". Some of the proposals included compulsory accreditation and training of leaders, the necessity of always carrying items such as a GPS, mobile phone and EPERB, and a paper trail of the risk assessment of each trip, etc. The Federation opposed this as a matter of principle, especially the point that any standard is only issued by Standards Australia on a national basis. A public meeting was held in March in East Melbourne, and over 70 walkers attended from about 30 clubs. It was a spirited meeting, with most clubs opting to ignore the recommendations. The ORC did several redrafts, but it was clear that although it had merit for commercial walking activities, the walking club scene saw very little benefit for their members and leaders, and the proposal has sunk without trace.

One positive outcome though was a Risk Management Strategy, where clubs could determine where there were risks and how to manage those risks. One of the risks that affect walkers is hot weather, and Koonung set a policy at a later time that all walks would be cancelled on total fire ban days, and if the forecast temperature was over 35°C. Of course, all leaders have the right to cancel any event if they believe there are inherent risks, whether it be heat, cold, rain, snow, bushfires, etc.

CHAPTER 10

2003 – 2004

At the AGM in May 2003, there were only minor changes on the committee. Dawn Pratley replaced Chris Hunter as Secretary, and after four years as Walk Talk editor, Louise Lamont bowed out in favour of Robyn Buttlng.

Again, the dedicated leaders gave the members a wide range of activities with three expeditions, nine base camps, four bike rides, six backpacks, over 50 day walks, including three mid week walks and eight social events.

This year saw the club enter the electronic age. Walk Talk was made available at members request via e-mail, digital photos were published in December of the Leaders Training Weekend, and the April issue was adorned with photos of the Flinders Island No. 2 expedition. At the end of the year, the club's website was born under the guidance of our Webmaster, Ian Barr.

Wayne Rice became Federation Secretary, and was forced to resign as a leader in February due to a hip problem. (These two events were completely unrelated). The guest speakers for the year were of the usual high quality. A sample of the speakers included Ken Haymes from the Public Trustees giving a humorous account at the July meeting about why you need a Will, and at the September meeting, Claude Tobgui introduced the club to the problems of subtaxation, whilst at the May meeting Helen McKelvie took us through the legal issues of organ donation. However, at the June meeting there was a mix up when two guest speakers arrived. Louise Fitzgerald was preparing to give her talk on the Kokoda Trail, and Senior Constable Karen Liphthorpe arrived to speak on community policing. This was no problem to our agile President, who met the challenge by having two guest speakers address the club.

Besides Keith's Klues appearing monthly in Walk Talk, other members contributed articles. Tom Patton in September put the case for the restoration of the Wallermeryong name for Main Creek on the Mornington Peninsula; Don O'Flynn in November wrote an article on understanding your bicycle gears, and David Wetherall wrote an article in the December issue explaining how easy it was to calculate fuel costs .

Two recipes appeared in the April issue for Chinese soup and a creamy caramel nut slice, which was sourced from our hosts at the Tumbarumba base camp.

There were two ads during the year. Julie Marshall had a size 39 pair of boots for sale – worn only once, and Mary Zehan wanted a pair of walking poles. Kevin Wilson reported in the February issue about a very large tree limb that fell on his 4WD which caused \$4,950 worth of damage. The moral of that story is to look up before you park your vehicle.

Other tit-bits include an article on walker etiquette in June, Don O'Flynn represented the club on risk management issues and attended a meeting with the local council, and members are asked at the July meeting for their ideas on new walks. A plea goes out to members in the July issue to wear their name tags, to carry their personal information capsule on walks, and to bring a coffee mug to the monthly meeting.

Café Julia mounted exhibitions of Don O’Flynn’s art works in July, Jeannine Desailly’s water colours in December, and Patti Hall’s paintings in March.

There was a Leaders Training weekend at Camp McLeod, Lake Eppalock on the weekend of 8/9 November. There were no other club activities on that weekend. The camp leader was Keith Lierse, with Jan Brown as head chef. The topics covered included leadership, clothing, emergencies, navigation and the future trends of the club. During the navigation field test on the Sunday, one couple managed to walk over the lake, (it was dry), whilst the techno freaks, complete with a GPS, were beaten in the navigation time trial by an unfazed couple with only a compass and map.

Lesley Uren had an exhibition of her marvellous embroidery at the Castlemaine Art Gallery during September, and a walk led by Jenny Keamy in the area visited the exhibition on opening day.

The club took out limited Personal Accident Insurance for all members early in the year. A coronial enquiry into the death of a Lake Mountain tourist in the snow (found by a BSAR member) found that he was inappropriately dressed for the conditions. The message was that all walkers should always dress appropriately for the expected conditions.

The committee decides that the 2004/2005 subscriptions will be increased to \$35 single, \$55 family, and because many of the committee and members will be absent in May, the AGM was put back to June 2004. The club had its annual Christmas BBQ at Ruffey Lake Park on 17 December and it didn’t rain.

Sadly, our good friend and fellow club member, Heather Pratt, died on 3 November. Heather was a foundation member of the club, serving as Secretary (1986-89), Treasurer (1989-93) as well as Walk Talk editor for part of this time. Heather’s husband, John, joined the club in 1990. Heather did two trips to Nepal (1989, 1992) and with John, travelled on club expeditions to New Zealand (twice), Hawaii, Europe, Tasmania, Vietnam, Tibooburra and South Africa. John and Heather were keen backpackers, skiers and bike riders. At her funeral on 10 November, held at St Andrew’s Uniting Church in Rosebud, over 200 people attended, including a large group from the Koonung club. Heather’s passing was a great loss to her family, the community and to the Koonung Bushwalking Club.

There were no club ski trips due to the limitations of our Public Liability insurance policy, but there were many privately organised ski trips.

There were three expeditions during the year. The first, led by Kevin Wilson for six weeks from early August, saw 12 members in six vehicles traverse the Nullarbor Plain and go north to the Peron Peninsula NP on the NW coast of Western Australia. This was one of the most ambitious overland trips the club has ever done, and was thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. They endured unseasonable rain, some of the coldest weather ever recorded in the region, bogged vehicles, flat tyres and headwinds travelling west and headwinds coming home. The distance travelled varied because of the return route, but Kevin Wilson did 10,000 km, a total fuel cost of \$1,425 which averaged \$1.05/litre. They also saw magnificent scenery, many historic places and went to areas that few people see, let alone know about.

There were two expeditions to Flinders Island, which were run in tandem with different leaders. The first, called No. 1, from 28 February to 6 March saw 15 members led by Ann and David Wetherall fly to the island in two aircraft. They climbed Mt Strzelecki, walked the island in general and partook of many roasts and crayfish, plus a birthday party for Marie Spowart. Again, everyone had an enjoyable and happy week.

The second Flinders Island expedition from 8-14 March was a group of four led by Ian Barr. This was written up in the April issue of Walk Talk as a single page of eight photos. The photos were our transport (a 6 seater aircraft), Castle Rock, Liz with dinner (a crayfish), a craypot at Killiecrankie Bay, a headland, Windy Walkers Lookout, a busy beach (no people) and a view from Mt Strzelecki. From all that it can only be assumed the Flinders Island No. 2 group also had a happy and good time.

There were nine base camps for the year. A tree planting at Benalla for the Regent Honey Eater project on 9/10 August led by Chris Hunter; Bendigo and Strathfieldsaye bike ride led by Tom Patton on 16/17 August; a Bendigo walk and dance on 20/21 September led by Chris Hunter; Doug Brewer led base camps to Tarra Valley on 22/23 November, Phillip Island on 21/22 February and Grantville SF on 15/16 May, whilst the Browns hosted their annual Pt Leo camp at the end of February. Jan Gray led the camp to Howman's Gap at the end of December, with all the usual walks around the Bogong High Plains and the New Year's Eve party.

An interesting time was had by the sixteen members who went to Tumberumba for a week at the end of March to the Laurel Hill Lodge, led by Jan Gray. This base camp was situated several miles out of town, in what was, in a previous life, a country prison. The food was good, the walks interesting, although the dirt roads were very dusty. A visit to the nearby town of Tumut and surrounds demonstrated a rich heritage and history. Some even collected the giant pine cones in the pine plantations to adorn their homes back in Melbourne. All of this for \$339 each.

The bike rides consisted of a 30 km Merri Creek/Western Ring Road tour on Wednesday, 25 June by Don O'Flynn; a Dandenong Creek to Blind Creek 35 km circuit led by Bruce Ford on 13 September, and another ride led by Bruce on 15 November described as a Manningham circuit of 28 km, but for the five riders it was a very hot day, with a reported temperature of 39°C. The last bike ride of the year was a Melbourne, Williamstown, Fairfield circuit led by Ian Barr on 26 October, but only four riders participated.

The backpackers had a lean year too. Two trips were cancelled – the Snowy Plains trip in early November due to extreme weather and the Crosscut Saw trip in early March due to insufficient numbers. Val Lierse led a Mt Stirling beginners trip on 15/16 November where a mini storm on the Sunday nearly blew the tents away. Keith Lierse led a trip to the Baw Baws with a small group on 3/4 April, and Ian Barr had a trip to Cape Otway on 1/2 May. Dick Beton led a successful supported backpack from Walhalla to Stronach's Camps via the Baw Baw plateau from 23/28 April. There were twelve walkers and two drivers. This party saw no one on the track for the whole trip, and they had to cope with some very overgrown sections of the Alpine Walking Track. The weather held out until the last day, when most got very wet.

There were only three mid week walks, all held on a Wednesday. Karen Sheedy led four people on a Banyule Parklands walk on 19 November, the day was very hot; Jan Gray led five on a Westerfolds walk on 3 December, and Tom Patton braved the Yarra River/Mt Lofty area on 24 March.

Of the fifty or so weekend walks, the number of walkers ranged from four to 31. There were extremes of weather too, such as Lyverne Newson reporting that on Des Bain's track clearing walk at Powelltown, it was leech infested, wet and diabolical. Wayne Rice led a walk at Daylesford on 15 February, and it was so hot that the walk was shortened, with a rapid return to town for cool drinks.

The Wetherall's ran an L-8-6 walk on 7 December from Donnelly's Weir up to Mt St Leonard and return, a mere 24 km. As the day wore on, everyone got tired, and they just made it back to the cars at 6 pm, just before the gates were locked by the Ranger. On another Wetherall walk, Royal Park to St Kilda on 12 April, the party of 22 lunched at the Myer Music Bowl, inspected the newly opened crypt of the Shrine, and returned on a tram from St Kilda with the tram driver conducting a quiz with the passengers. Doug Brewer had an interesting day walk at Ballarat on 4 October. On the way to Ballarat they visited the Ballan market, then the St Anne's winery, and later extinguished a fire in a VW beetle on the highway before reaching Ballarat.

Brimbank Park and surrounds on 13 July saw the Wetheralls lead 29 members along the Maribyrnong River. After a couple of phone calls by the leaders, the entire party arrived at Lesley Uren's house for afternoon tea and to view her magnificent embroideries. Now that is a day walk – fresh air, food, good company and art.

On the social side, there was a Manningham Concert Band performance on 9 August and three theatre nights at the Doncaster Playhouse – they were *Set the Traps*, on 12 September, *The Cemetery Club* on 28 November and *Life After George* on 1 April. There was a night at Fountain's Restaurant on 21 August costing \$20 per head, a Cup Eve dinner dance at the Doncaster Bowling Club for \$20 per head, and a spit roast at Schramm's Cottage on 21 February for \$23 per head. The next evening there was a twilight jazz concert at Blackburn Lake for free.

Some new members for the year included Cynthia Nagel, Robyn Lee, Kim Ackroyd, Eric and Dianne Morris (past members who rejoined).

New leaders for the year were Philip Tewksbury and Ian Barr. Philip's first walk was to Mt Slide Spur on 17 April, whilst Ian Barr's first leadership role was a bike ride from the City to Williamstown and Fairfield on 26 October.

Finally, one of the great debates at the end of the year was whether the club would or should buy a GPS (Global Positioning System). The techno-freaks stated that this was the way to go, we should modernise and the system is foolproof. The Luddites countered with, what happens when the batteries go flat, it is extra unnecessary gear to carry, and only fools use foolproof equipment. What happened? See Chapter 11.

CHAPTER 11

2004 – 2005

The twentieth year of the club commenced as an anti-climax, with the AGM and club elections deferred until 16 June because many key people were absent during May.

At the June AGM, the committee changes were that Hilary McKelvie stood down as President in favour of Kevin Wilson, and Jan Gray took over from Barbara Hetherington as Vice President. David Wetherall retired after three years as Treasurer and handed over the books to Marjorie Dowd.

The club's subscriptions remained at \$35 single and \$55 family, and at the end of June the club bank account stood at \$3990.00.

The July Walk Talk signalled the new direction of the club driven by Kevin Wilson. The Walk Talk masthead now included the words "The Friendly Club", and inside there were photographs and word summaries of committee people, and in subsequent issues, club members. This lasted until the December issue, probably because members were too shy to be photographed.

Ten minute talks were introduced at each meeting where a member would describe their "Best Walk in Australia". The seating at the hall for monthly meetings was changed to face the stage and speakers urged to use the microphone.

Publicity was cranked up with a large photo of the Wilson's and Lierse's on the front page of the local paper pretending to walk at Westerfolds. On 1 August, the Koonung website was officially launched by our Webmaster, Ian Barr, and two weeks later, after bowing to the techno-freaks, the club purchased a Magellan GPS.

The evaluation and approval of expeditions was set out in September Walk Talk; members were also informed that a full reply had been sent to DSE on the draft management plan for the Warrandyte State Park; members were informed that the \$16.15 Federation capitation fees are spent thus: \$6.50 administration, \$5.85 Public Liability insurance and \$3.80 Personal Accident insurance. On the issue of cattle grazing in the Alpine NP, over 400 submissions had been received by DSE, including many from Koonung club, with a ratio of 3:1 against grazing. The Victorian government took the decision a few months later to ban grazing in the Alpine NP.

The possibility of Diamond Valley and Koonung sharing walks was floated, but after some preliminary discussions, the idea was formally abandoned.

The Federation weekend was held on 8-10 October at Walhalla, with 14 members attending. Wayne Rice continued as Federation Secretary and Des Bain continued his long association as the club's Federation rep.

Chris Patton was made an honorary member of the club in November for his dedication and work with the Bushwalkers Search and Rescue (BSAR) in past years, particularly his attendance on many difficult searches.

The Manningham Council approved a grant of \$500 to the club in November to be spent on training within the club. Des Bain had an interesting article on ticks in the December issue of Walk Talk and the March issue warned members about the dangers of cinnamon fungus (die back) being spread by boots and vehicle tyres. The May issue warned walkers about theft from cars left parked in the bush, and to take care.

The club BBQ in December had about 70 members attending in fine weather, and there were photos in February Walk Talk.

Keith's Klues continued to appear in every issue, and Bill Ling continued in the role of equipment hire and maps, a position that Bill Ling has willingly held continuously for at least the past 10 years.

In the April issue, members are again asked to update the information in their capsules, and the club had applied to the Department of Family and Community Services for two EPERBs for club use.

Keith Lierse received a Menzies Community Australia Day Award in January for services to the community, particularly his long involvement in outdoor activities. Ken O'Sullivan ran a successful photo competition at the February meeting. Overall winners were: 1st - Alan Marshall (Dead Vlei, Namibia), 2nd - Audrey Killey (Bushwalkers on Bogong Track) and 3rd place to Alan Marshall (Sunset at Spitzkop Namibia).

The club received news in January that Michelle hut and the Federation hut had been rebuilt after the Alpine NP fires.

One of the unusual guest speakers for the year was Kate Blood of the Primary Industries Rapid Response Team, who gave an interesting illustrated talk on invasive weeds. At the end of the club's financial year, the cash balance was \$4928.00. The AGM for 2005 was deferred until 16 June because of the large number of members absent on the Fraser Island expedition.

Although not part of this year, a twentieth birthday party was held in the Templestowe Memorial Hall on Thursday, 16 June 2005. The hall was gaily decorated, there was a spit roast meal, many prizes and lots of talk amongst the 80 people who attended. The cost of this gala night was mere \$15 per head.

In early January, Ann and David Wetherall resigned as leaders, due to David suddenly becoming very ill. David's last walk with the club was on 11 December from Wright to Gembrook, and this sudden change in his health shocked everybody who knew him. David died on 30 June 2005, and a large number of members attended his funeral, with Alan Brown speaking on behalf of the club. Ann and David joined the club in 1990, and quickly became leaders. Their detailed reconnaissance and interesting destinations were very popular, and they set the standard for the correct way to run a walk. Both were very active participating in day walks, backpacks, expeditions and overseas trips. David was Treasurer of the club for three years, retiring in June 2004. His friendship, humour and enthusiasm will be missed by all who knew him.

This year saw the ongoing fiasco of our Public Liability insurance of whether cross-country skiing was to be included or excluded. Officially, the word came down earlier in the year that cross country skiing was approved. However, at the end of the ski season in September, the ruling was that you could slide, walk, fall over in the snow, but if you skied, the insurance was void. It was a great season, with visits to Lake Mountain and Mt Stirling using the cottage, and a week at the Rover Lodge in September. Attendances were small, and it is almost certain that this would be the last year the club would be conducting cross-country skiing.

During the year the club ran three expeditions, six base camps, four backpacks, four bike rides, five social events, seven mid week walks and over sixty weekend day walks.

The first expedition was led by Jan Gray to southern Africa from 17 October to 15 November commencing at Cape Town, and travelling by road in a red, open safari truck through Namibia, Botswana, Zambia and ending in Johannesburg, a 25 day trip. The 13 adventurers slept in hotels, hostels, huts and tents and enjoyed the spectacular scenery, flora and fauna. They saw elephants, rhinos, zebras, huge sand dunes and the Botswana border post with free condoms for males and females.

The second expedition was led by Alan Brown from 21-27 November in the Mitta Mitta/Omeo area of north east Victoria. It was a motor camping trip, staying at The Walnuts near Mitta, the Big River Bridge camp site and Omeo. Places of note visited included the Dartmouth dam, Pioneer mine site, a walk up to Mt Bogong, the Tallangatta Ski Club and a search for the Glen Valley race course and Route 107. The constant backdrop of this expedition was the widespread damage caused by the 2002 Alpine NP fires. The weather was perfect, and the 20 members attending had a good time.

The third expedition for the year was from 21-28 May to Fraser Island, led by Kevin Wilson. The 36 members stayed in the plush Eurong Resort, four to a room. The party soon found out that the beach was used as a road, airstrip and footpath. They visited Wabby Lake, Lake McKenzie, Indian Head, Pile Valley and Lake Benaroon. The dingoes were regularly seen although they had been recently culled due to a tourist death on the island caused by a dingo. During the time on Fraser Island, Kevin and Myra Wilson celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. This trip was a very large undertaking, and it was to Kevin Wilson's credit that the entire week went like clockwork. There were only three backpacks during the year. On Cup weekend, Keith Lierse led a three day walk in the Snowy Plains with six members. One tent was lost during the walk in, but after a line search in the bush it was found. On the last day, the Snowy Plains airport was alive with helicopters and vehicles because of a fire in the Wonnangatta Valley. Five members walked the Mt Stirling area in early November, led by Val Lierse. A backpack at the end of February for three days in the Mt Feathertop area, led by Keith Lierse, had four members and a visitor. The weather was perfect, although water had to be carried from a spring 1 km away because of the dry conditions. John Pratt brought a visitor, a retired police inspector from England, who insisted, after advice to the contrary, of stripping off to the waist and lying in the sun to tan his lily white English skin. Suffice to say, severe sunburn caused the walk out on day three to be very slow.

There were eight base camps during the year. Doug Brewer led a party to the Tarra-Bulga Park on 21/22 August; Chris Hunter led a small group to Benalla for the Regent

Honey Eater tree planting on 4/5 September; Wayne Rice led 14 members to the Federation weekend at Walhalla on 8-10 October; there was the annual pilgrimage to Howman's Gap led by Jan Gray from 27 December to New Year's day, a combined group with Diamond Valley totalling 28; the Brown's had their annual Pt Leo camp on 18-20 February hosting eight members; and finally Jan Gray led a party to the Anglesea Recreation Camp from 23-25 April.

There were only four bike rides. Ian Barr visited Hastings and Red Hill on 12 September and Ken O'Sullivan led a party on the Outer Circle railway on 14 November. Bruce Ford took 15 on the 45 km Manningham Circuit on 26 February,. Ken O'Sullivan returned to the Outer Circle railway on 22 May with five attending.

There were seven mid week walks with fair attendance. Bruce Ford did two Melbourne walks covering the Golden Mile and Docklands; Alan Brown led a walk along Darebin Creek and a later one to Strath Creek; Jan Gray took one walk to Monsalvat where a painting exhibition was enjoyed, and a mid May walk to Gellibrand Hill. Tom Patton took a walk to Mt Lofty in the Warrandyte SP in mid April.

There were close to 70 weekend day walks programmed, but eight were cancelled due to insufficient numbers or hot weather. Again, there was the usual breadth of locations visited. The numbers attending ranged from 28 to only 4. Most walks went as planned, but there were some, in retrospect, that stood out because of what transpired. For Peter Goodwin's walk on 15 August, the leader was given 10/10 for deception by Ian Barr because of a late morning tea and a rubbery distance calculation. On 19 June, Lyverne accused the leader, Philip, of a lie when he pointed to a paddock and saying "that's where we walk across to the cars". (Could this be the first mutiny on a club walk?) They were in the Werribee Gorge and it was windy, wet and cold. On a lighter note, on 28 November on a Creswick walk, the whip was lost for some time, and on a walk in the Cathedrals on 2 December, it was with great glee that a report clearly said that the GPS failed due to a flat battery. On a Somers to Sandy Point walk on 12 February, Jan Gray called it a day at 1 pm due to adverse weather, and on a Ruffey Lake walk on 26 March, Bruce Ford was the only man with 18 women. On 3 April at Lake Mountain, Alan Marshall had a party of 14, with the forecast of showers described as torrents, and it should be called "leech mountain". To cap the day off, Lyverne Newson got a leech in the eye, which looked pretty nasty in the photo published in a later Walk Talk.

Philip Tewksbury also copped some bad press about some walks he had led, so much so, that Lyverne Newson in the May issue decried that his walks: "should not go unmentioned or unheralded". After one of Philip's strenuous walks, Alan Marshall wrote in Walk Talk "that their names be engraved on a tablet of stone, and hung in the meeting hall for lesser mortals to wonder at".

The social events of the year included two concerts by the Manningham Concert Band on 7 August and 14 November, open house at Lesley Uren's house on 10/11 September to view her embroidery works of art, a theatre night on 29 October at the Sherbrooke Theatre to see *Murdered by Death*, and on 19 February, a spit roast at Schramm's Cottage for \$21 per head.

Some new members for the year included Pam Peverelle, Paul Merriweather, Claire Harris, Angela Durbridge, Cheryl Kidston and Michelle Wharton.

CHAPTER 12

The Future

Experience has shown that most voluntary organisations have a cycle of about seven years, i.e. they lose their initial enthusiasm and energy, and gradually wane. The majority of voluntary organisations do not last beyond 12-15 years.

The Koonung club has endured 20 years and is still going strong. The reasons appear to be good management by the various committees, regular and interesting monthly meetings, an atmosphere of friendship and mutual respect, a common community base and, most importantly, a dedicated group of leaders who are able to offer a range of events to suit everybody in the club, if members so desire to participate. The club is also financially secure, and has met at the same venue on the same night since its founding, except for a few months when the Templestowe Memorial Hall was being refurbished.

The question is, “how long can the club last?”

The answer depends totally on the availability of trained and experienced leaders. The leaders are, in the main, ageing with the club and, unlike the club, people get dicky knees, hips and other problems associated with the onset of the years. Skiing and backpacking, along with canoeing and bike riding, have almost disappeared from the club’s activities. This is not unique to Koonung, as most walking clubs in Victoria report exactly the same trends.

Base camps, expeditions and day walks are the future of the club. The members are affluent enough to afford these activities, and most retired folk have flexible time schedules.

The club also needs an injection of younger members to ensure that the demographic age of the members does not increase to the point that it becomes an old peoples club. Similarly, without leaders, the club becomes a social club.

The next cycle, i.e. 7 years, of the club, is going to be critical. It will survive, but whether it remains the vibrant, active, happy, friendly and caring club it is today, will depend a great deal on the future leadership and leaders of the club.

A quote from our ten year history: “the future isn’t what it used to be”.

The future of the club is in the hands of its collective membership, and it would be nice to think that it is every members wish that their club will continue to prosper and serve its members and the community.

APPENDIX A

FOUNDATION MEMBERS 1985-2005

Mary Atkins

Alan Brown

Jan Brown

George Keyte

Keith Lierse

Bill Ling

Betty Ling

Tom Patton

Pat Patton

Don Stewart

Laurel Stewart

APPENDIX B

LIFE MEMBERS OF THE CLUB

YEAR AWARDED

Michael King	1995 (Deceased 2000)
Keith Lierse	2000
Bill Ling	2003
Don O'Flynn	2003
Tom Patton	2003
Kevin Wilson	2005

APPENDIX C

DECEASED CLUB MEMBERS

John Noordzy	September 1996
Keith Simms	May 1997 Died on a walk in the Cathedral Ranges.
John Whitney	October 1998
Michael King	August 2000 Life member
Mark Owen	October 2001
Maurie Myles	May 2002 Honorary Member
Heather Pratt	November 2003 Foundation member
David Wetherall	June 2005

APPENDIX D

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

YEAR	SINGLE	FAMILY
1985/86	15	25
1995/96	28	40
1996/97	28	42
1997/98	30	45
1998/99	30	45
1999/00	30	45
2000/01	30	45
2001/02	30	45
2002/03	30	45
2003/04	30	45
2004/05	35	55

Note: Life members and Honorary members do not pay membership fees.

APPENDIX E

MEMBERSHIP LIST 2005

LM is a Life Member: FM is a Foundation Member: HM is a Honorary Member.

Ackroyd Kim	Ambrose Heather
Archibald Marie	Armstrong Helen
Atkins Mary (FM)	Baker Pam
Bain Desmond	Barr Ian
Beer Kenneth	Beton Dick
Beton Connie	Blount Barbara
Blount Barrie	Borton Patricia
Boyd Julie	Boyd Noelle
Bresky Karl	Bresky Elisabeth
Brewer Douglas	Brown Alan (FM)
Brown Jan (FM)	Burgess Mary
Buttling Robyn	Capaul Barbara
Chong John	Ciauarra Umberto
Cooper David	Desailly Jeannine
Douglas Denyce	Dowd Majorie
Durbridge Alison	Ebringer Lorna
Falconer Janece	Fandrich Jacqueline
Fitzsimons Lynne	Ford Bruce
Ford Diane	Freeman Noel
Galloway David	Galloway Christine
Gill Harry	Glover Bill
Glover Ro	Goodwin Peter
Goodwin Heather	Gray Jan
Green Marcia	Grocock Dorothea
Grosvenor Bob	Grosvenor Nola
Gruner Lucian	Hall Patricia
Harris Claire	Haug Deitmar
Hetherington Barbara	Holland Jan
Howard-Wilks Miles	Hunter Chris
Hurst Sue	Jones Deidre
Jones Ian	Keamy Jennifer
Kearney John	Kearney Judith
Keyte George (FM)	Kidston Cheryl
Killey Audrey	Kirkpatrick Pam
Lamont Louise	Launder Gwenneth
Lee Robyn	Lierse Keith (FM, LM)
Lierse Valerie	Ling Bill (FM, LM)
Ling Betty (FM)	Loh Janis
Longley Pamela	McCabe David
McCann Gayle	McKelvie Donald
McKelvie Hilary	McMillan Jim
Maling Neil	Maling Jan

Mangan Margaret

Marshall Alan
Martyn Cheryl
Merriweather Paul
Nilsen Deb
O'Flynn Donald (LM)
O'Sullivan Kenneth
Pascoe Patricia
Patton Tom (FM, LM)
Peterson Susan
Port Irene
Pratt John
Renfree Patricia
Rice Diane
Ridgeway Josephine
Robinson Joan
Ryan Fergus
Sheedy Karen
Spranger Elfi
Stewart Laurel (FM)
Thake Heather
Turnbull Elaine
Turner George
Uren Lesly
Walton Joyce
Wetherall Ann
Wharton Michelle
Wilson Ian
Wilson Myra
Winter Gwenneth
Zekan Joseph

Marguccio Rosa

Marshall Julie
Moon Sue
Newson Lyverne
O'callaghan Terrence
O'Flynn Joan
O'Sullivan Linda
Patton Patricia (FM)
Patton James (Chris) (HM)
Peverelle Pam
Pratley Dawn
Quinert Barbara
Rennie William
Rice Wayne
Robinson Michael
Ryan Judy
Scales John
Spowart Marie
Stewart Donald (FM)
Tewksbury Philip
Tran Em
Turnbull Karl
Turner Elizabeth
Vernon Ron
Walton Frank
Weimar Jenny
White Moira
Wilson Kevin
Winter John
Zekan Mary

APPENDIX F

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 1995-2005

1995/96

President	Keith Lierse	Vice President	Allan Rose
Secretary	Don McKelvie	Treasurer	Tom Patton
Editor	Audrey Killey		
Ordinary Member	Val Myles		Joan Robinson
Walks Coordinator	Kevin Wilson (not a committee member)		

1996/97

President	Keith Lierse	Vice President	George Keyte
Secretary	Ray Marmion	Treasurer	Tom Patton
Editor	Ann Wetherall	Ordinary member	Val Myles
Walks Coordinator	Kevin Wilson		

1997/98

President	George Keyte	Vice President	Ken O'Sullivan
Secretary	Ray Marmion	Treasurer	Lyn Fitzsimons
Editor	Ann Wetherall	Social Events	Lyn McMillan
Walks Coordinator	Kevin Wilson		

1998/99

President	Dick Beton	Vice President	Alan Brown
Secretary	Anne Brolly	Treasurer	Lyverne Newson
Editor	Ann Wetherall	Social Events	Lyn McMillan
Walks Coordinator	Kevin Wilson		

1999/00

President	Dick Beton	Vice President	Alan Brown
Secretary	Anne Brolly	Treasurer	Lyverne Newson
Editor	Louise Lamont	Social Events	Lesly Uren
Walks Coordinator	Peter Goodwin		

2000/2001

President	Alan Brown	Vice President	Dick Beton
Secretary	Lesly Hancock	Treasurer	Lyverne Newson
Editor	Louise Lamont	Social Events	Lesly Uren
Walks Coordinator	Peter Goodwin		

2001/02

President	Alan Brown	Vice President	Hilary McKelvie
Secretary	Lesly Hancock	Treasurer	David Wetherall
Editor	Louise Lamont	Social Events	Jeannine Desailly
Walks Coordinator	Keith Lierse		

2002/03

President	Hilary McKelvie	Vice President	Barbara Hetherington
Secretary	Chris Hunter	Treasurer	David Wetherall
Editor	Louise Lamont	Social Events	Jeannine Desailly
Walks Coordinator	Keith Lierse		

2003/04

President	Hilary McKelvie	Vice President	Barbara Hetherington
Secretary	Dawn Pratley	Treasurer	David Wetherall
Editor	Robyn Buttling	Social Events	Jeannine Desailly
Walks Coordinator	Keith Lierse		

2004/05

President	Kevin Wilson	Vice President	Jan Gray
Secretary	Dawn Pratley	Treasurer	Majorie Dowd
Editor	Robyn Buttling	Social Events	Jeannine Desailly
Walks Coodinator	Keith Lierse		

APPENDIX G

WALK LEADERS 1995-2005

NAME	YEARS	TOTAL	COMMENTS
John Archer	96-01	6	
Ian Barr	03-05	3	
Des Bain	00-05	6	
Dick Beton	94-05	12	
Connie Beton	97-05	9	
Doug Brewer	91-05	15	
Alan Brown	91-05	15	
Jan Falconer	05	1	
Bruce Ford	96-05	10	
Jan Gray	96-05	10	
Peter Goodwin	99-05	7	
Richard Homsey	00-01	2	
Chris Hunter	01-03	3	
Ron Karlstrom	86-88:92-99	11	
Jenny Keamy	95-05	11	
George Keyte	85-87:89-98	13	
Keith Lierse	85-05	20	
Val Lierse (Myles)	88-05	18	
Bill Ling	87-02	16	
Sandy Lucignani	00-02	3	
Don McKelvie	89-05	17	

Alan Marshall	03-05	3	
Don O'Flynn	87-03	17	
Peter Osborne	05	1	
Ken O'Sullivan	88-05	18	
Mark Owens	01	1	Deceased October 2001.
Tom Patton	85-05	20	
Wayne Rice	98-03	6	
Jo Ridgeway	97-01	5	
Michael Robinson	97-00	4	
Joan Robinson	97-00	4	
Karen Sheedy	95-05	10	
Heather Thake	91-01	11	
Phillip Tewksbury	03-05	3	
Ann Wetherall	93-05	13	
David Wetherall	93-05	13	Deceased June 2005.
Kevin Wilson	89-05	17	
John Whitney	94-98	5	Deceased October 1998
Gwen Winter (Waller)			
	98-02	5	

Keith Lierse and Tom Patton have been leaders since the clubs formation.

APPENDIX H

GUEST SPEAKERS OF THE CLUB 1995-2005

Note: The December meeting is always a BBQ held in the Doncaster Municipal Gardens on the third Wednesday in December commencing at 6PM.

Date	Speaker	Topic
1995		
June	Derek Hancock	Slide show and talk of his China trip.
July	Keith Lierse	Talk and slides of the clubs trip to Alaska and Canada
August		First aid practical demonstrations by Don McKelvie, Heather Thake, Don O'Flynn and Keith Lierse
September	Ken Haymes	State Trustees-all about wills.
October	Barry Ring	Model trains. Also club photo competition.
November	Bill Ling	Talk and slides of the club trip to the Flinders Ranges.
1996		
January	Peter Goodwin	What's in my day pack.
February		First aid practical with Don O'Flynn, Tom Patton, Don McKelvie and Keith Lierse.
March		Social evening-no guest speaker.
April	Don O'Flynn	Talk and slides of the club trip to Kosciusko.
May		AGM.
June	Kevin Wilson	Australian National Parks and their birds.
July	Helen Perry	EO of the Bushwalking and Mountaincraft Training Board.
August	Phillip Lloyd	Wilderness shop-outdoor equipment.
September	Don O'Flynn Ken O'Sullivan	Talk and slides on the clubs trip to the Northern Territory and Kakadu.
October	James Patton	Role of the SES.

November	Lesley Uren	Talk and display of her embroidery work.
1997		
January	Keith Lierse	Talk and slides about his 50 years of walking.
February	Kevin Wilson	Talk and slides about Borneo and Malaysia.
March		Social evening-no guest speaker.
April		Sing a long night with Connie and Dick Beton.
May		AGM
June	Lizette Beton	Working and living in Saudia Arabia.
July	Bob McInnes	Macson Trading-Compasses and GPS's.
August		Members slide night of various club trips.
September	Chris Jarvis	Federation Search and Rescue activities.
October		Club auction night of pre-loved equipment.
November	Ken O'Sullivan	Talk and slides of the club trip to Tasmania.
1998		
January	Derek Hancock	Talk and slides about his times as a younger man.
February	Hilary McKelvie Bev Williams	Talk and slides of the club trip to Hong Kong
March	Neil Blundy	Wilderness shop-outdoor equipment.
April	Derek Hancock	Talk and slides of the club trip to New Zealand.
May		AGM
June	Keith Lierse	Talk and slides on his recent trip to Antarctica.
July	Gwen Waller Jan Gray	Talk and slides on India, Nepal and Tibet.
August	Ted Walsh	Navigation techniques.
September	Ken O'Sullivan	Talk and slides on New Zealand.
October	Lesley Uren	Talk on her recent trip to Turkey.
November	Kevin Wilson	Talk and slides on their adventures from Cape

	Myra Wilson	Otway to Cape Conran to Cape York.
1999		
January	Bill Oakley	Sleeping bags.
February	Lesly Hancock Ed Goodieson	Talk and slides on their recent trip across Asia and Europe by rail.
March	Peter Smith	Bureau of Meteorology-weather forecasting..
April	Don Stewart Laurel Stewart	Talk and slides of their African safari.
May	Ken O'Sullivan Keith Lierse	Nostalgic Slides of past club events.
June		AGM
July	Ken O'Sullivan Keith Lierse	Talk and slides of the club trip to Tibooburra and Camerons Corner.
August	Jo Ridgeway	Talk and slides about the Lake McQuarie district.
September	Elizabeth Bailey	Victorian Ambulance Service-practical first aid.
October	Ken O'Sullivan	Club auction and gear swap night.
November	Jan Gray	Talk on the clubs all women English coast to coast walk
2000		
January	Bill Ling	Talk and slides of the clubs Kangaroo Island trip.
February	Pam Robinson	Talk on the Regional Forest Agreement
March	Kevin Wilson Myra Wilson	Talk and slides of the Rocky Mountains in the USA, Canada and Alaska.
April	Lesley Uren	Talk about her recent trip to Vietnam.
May		AGM
June	Ken O'Sullivan	Talk and slides on his trip to Norway.
July	Ken O'Sullivan	Club photo competition.
August	Chris Solnordal	Talk on rogaining.
September	Jo Ridgeway	Talk and slides of the club camel trip to Central Australia.

October	Prof Meg Morris	Talk on gait analysis, balance and coordination.
November	John Bilney	Talk and slides of his 60 years in the outdoors.
2001		
January		Social evening-no guest speaker.
February	Bruce Ford Dianne Ford	Talk and slides on Egypt.
March	Des Bain	Talk about Personal Location Beacons.
April	Dick Beton	Talk on the history of Powelltown.
May		AGM
June	Rebecca Hawkins	Talk on exercise.
July	Laurie Bunn	Talk about the Puffing Billy Railway.
August	Jan Gray	Talk and slides of her trip to China.
September	Keith Lierse	Talk and slides about the last 50 years in Melbourne
October	Alan Brown Michael Carter	Talk and slides of the Inca Trail, Bolivia and Argentina.
November	Dr Rodney Syme	Talk on euthanasia.
2002		
January	Lesley Uren	Talk by member of the recent club trip to Vietnam.
February	Julie Marshall	Talk and slides of her trip to Tibet.
March	Kevin Wilson	Talk and slides of the club trip to the Kosciusko NP
April	Keith Lierse	Talk and slides of the club trip to Hong Kong.
May		AGM
June	Ray Thomas	Regent Honeyeater Project.
July	Chris Baxter	Editor of Wild magazine.
August	Peter Goodwin	What's in my daypack.
September	Ken O'Sullivan	Talk and slides of the many world places he has visited.
October	Chris Hunter	Talk on the club trip to Vietnam.
November	Peter Moate	Talk on problems of the feet.

2003		
January		Social evening-no guest speaker.
February	Julie Marshall	Talk and slides on her trip to Sikkim and Bhutan.
March	Jan Gray	Talk and slides of the club trip to South Africa.
April	Kevin Wilson	Talk and slides of the club trip to Lord Howe Island.
May		AGM
June	Karen Siphthorpe Louise Fitzgerald	Policing in the Manningham area. Talk and slides of her trip on the Kokoda Trail.
July		Members night discussing possible future club events
August	Ken Haymes	State Trustees-all about wills.
September	Claud Tobgui	Posture and feet problems.
October	Val Lierse	What to carry in your pack.
November	Kevin Wilson	Talk and slides on the club trip to W.A.
2004		
January		Social evening-no guest speaker.
February	Heather Ambrose	Talk on the activities of U3A.
March	Val Lierse Keith Lierse	Talk and slides of their trip to Antarctica.
April	Ian Barr	Talk on the clubs proposed Website.
May	Helen McKelvie	Legal aspects of organ donation.
June		AGM
July	Karina Doughty	Talk on the work of the Wilderness Society.
August	Susan Peterson	Talk and slides of her trip to Kakadu.
September	Julie Marshall	The Nudibranch's of Heron Island.
October	Chris Smyth	ACF-marine parks of Victoria.
November	Bonnie Ryan	Victoria's tracks and trails.
2005		
January	Julie Marshall	Talk and slides of her trek in Ladakh.

February	Ken O'Sullivan	Club photo competition.
March	Kate Blood	Invasive weeds in Victoria.
April	Ian Barr	Talk and slides of the clubs trip to Southern Africa.
May	Tom Patton	Bushwalkers Search and Rescue.

On Thursday, 16 June, 2005, the clubs 20th birthday celebrations and AGM were held in the Templestowe Memorial Hall.

About the Author

Keith Lierse was born in Greensborough, and reared on a dairy farm at Plenty. He started his working life as a Technician in Training with the PMG, became a Senior Technician, then gained an engineering cadetship, and qualified as an Engineer. His engineering work included the automisation of large areas of country Victoria and the introduction of STD. His later work included the 24 hour repair facilities for the long distance transmission network in Victoria, and the introduction of digital and optical fibre technology in the 1980's. He retired as National Manager of Telstra's major buildings.

Keith first commenced bushwalking and skiing with the Rover Scouts in 1954, and has continued enjoying these activities up to the present time. In the 1980's, he was President of the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs for 5 years, and it was during this period that he was able to introduce paid staff to help run the Federation's office, formed four Melbourne based walking clubs, of which Koonung was the first, and increased the overall membership of the Federation.

His other interests have included being a founding member of the local Jaycee Chapter and a Life Member of Jaycees International, a member of the Ski Rescue Service, a foundation member of the Nordic Rescue Service and the Outdoor Recreation Centre. For 20 years he was an advisor, assessor and staff member of the Bushwalking and Mountaineering Training course, and the Ski Tour Leaders course. For many years, he was the owner of a 1928 Armstrong Siddeley vintage car, and he participated in many car rallies. He is a standing committee member of Standards Australia on walking tracks and infrastructure, and is a regular volunteer guard, signaller and trolley driver on the Puffing Billy Railway.

He has travelled widely within Australia and overseas, including visits to the Arctic and Antarctic regions, and has led 8 major expeditions of the Koonung club, including a trip to the Mt Everest base camp in Nepal.

Keith is married to Val, who is also an active walker and skier, and at present they reside in Templestowe.

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