

THE WALKING CLUB OF VICTORIA Inc.

INFORMATION PACK

Overview

The Walking Club of Victoria (WCV) (founded in 1947) is a Melbourne based bush walking club catering for men, women and families of all ages. Club members come from all parts of Melbourne. The club conducts activities 52 weeks of the year consisting of bush walks, suburban walks, base camp walks and overnight pack carries. These activities are supplemented by cycling and other active and social pursuits. Interstate excursions and occasional overseas trips extend the walking horizons. Membership is small enough to avoid being impersonal, resulting in close and on-going companionship.

Bush walks are scheduled for every Sunday of the year. These typically take place in National Parks or other suitable bushlands within easy reach of Melbourne. The walks are graded, allowing participants to select walks based on their ability. Walks typically range between 10 and 20 km and vary from easy tracks to more difficult terrain. Walkers usually meet at a suburban location close to public transport and then travel to the walk using car pooling.

Wednesday walks are less strenuous and provide a pleasant mid-week social atmosphere. These walks take place in the suburban green areas or in the nearby hills with the occasional trip further afield using Metro trains. The walks are again scheduled for every Wednesday of the year and are typically 10 to 14 km long, usually over easy tracks and frequently including coffee stops or even pub lunches. Being suburban, travel to and from the walks is inevitably by public transport.

Base camps, pack carries and other walking trips are organised on a less frequent basis but are essentially an extension of the Sunday bush walks. Details are organised and communicated specifically for each event.

The club meets on the first Thursday of each month (except January) to discuss the forthcoming events and listen to "Guest Speakers" or some other form of entertainment. The club house is currently located in Mount Waverley in Melbourne's east. Walks and other club activities are published in the club quarterly newsletter.

For further information or a copy of the latest program contact The Secretary on (03) 9878 9418, after 7p.m.(P.O Box 2239, Blackburn South, 3130), or Colin on (03) 9795 5326 or email walkingclubofvictoria@gmail.com.

How to Make Contact or Try a Walk

Walkers interested in trying walks or attending other functions to get a feel for the club are most welcome to do so. Contact the club Secretary on (03) 9878 9418, after 7p.m. (P.O Box 2239, Blackburn South, 3130). The Secretary can provide further information and/or provide the current walks and functions program as well as contact details for the leader of a particular walk or function. Guests can then book with the leader and obtain further information such as equipment required or walk difficulty. A small fee (currently \$5 for a day walk or \$10 for a week-end trip) is charged for guests to cover insurance and administration.

How to Become a Member

Walkers wanting to join the club need to complete three day walks as a guest (overnight walks count as two). After that it is a simple matter to fill in the Application for Membership form and send this to the Secretary. Membership is usually granted after the application form is submitted to the committee.

Sunday Bush Walks

Bush walks are scheduled for every Sunday of the year. These typically take place in National Parks or other suitable bushlands within easy reach of Melbourne. The walks are graded, allowing participants to select walks based on their ability. Walks typically range between 10 and 20 km and vary from easy tracks to more difficult terrain. Walk location and difficulty are advertised in the walking programme allowing members to select the walks they wish to attend. Walkers usually meet at a suburban location close to public transport and then travel to the walk using car pooling. Walkers need to book with the leader three days (preferably one week) in advance.

Sunday walkers should have some experience and be at an appropriate level of fitness to be able to complete a 10 Km walk with some hills at a reasonable pace. Walkers will require solid shoes or boots, rain gear and a day pack to carry lunch, water and spare clothing. The walk leader will be able to provide further information.

Wednesday Suburban Walks

Wednesday walks are less strenuous and provide a pleasant mid-week social atmosphere. These walks take place in the suburban green areas or in the nearby hills with the occasional trip further afield using Metro trains. The walks are again scheduled for every Wednesday of the year and are typically 10 to 14 km long, usually over easy tracks and frequently including coffee stops or even pub lunches. Being suburban, travel to and from the walks is inevitably by public transport. Wednesday walks are more spontaneous and final details are often only decided one or two days ahead of the walk. Walkers need to book in with the leader one or two days in advance.

Walkers do not require the level of experience or fitness needed for the Sunday walks. However walkers will need to be able to walk for 10 km at a reasonable pace and be able to cope with some hills. Walkers will require solid shoes/sneakers and should carry a small day pack for rain gear, lunch, water and spare clothing. Again, the walk leader will be able to advise on the fitness and equipment required.

Base Camp Walks

Base camp walks are organised on an ad hoc basis and usually occur on long week-ends or other holiday periods e.g. Easter or New Year. A base camp walk involves staying in one place for a number of days and carrying out day walks from the base camp. This allows travelling further afield than the normal Sunday walks would allow and to locations of particular scenic interest where different and varied walks are possible. Accommodation for base camps varies from lodge accommodation, to tents or motels. Accommodation is usually organised by the leader and numbers are usually limited. Base camp walks are normally planned well in advance and walkers need to book early.

The walks carried out from the base camps are similar to Sunday bush walks but may in part be longer and more difficult. Obviously walking for several days consecutively requires a greater level of fitness. Depending on numbers, several walks of various difficulties may be scheduled each day.

Pack Carries

Pack carries are also organised on an ad hoc basis. On pack carries walkers carry all of their own equipment including food, tents, cooking utensils, clothes etc. for the duration of the walk. The walks vary from two to six days. The location of the walks varies greatly and ranges from relatively close to Melbourne to interstate or even beyond. Location and duration, travel arrangements and other details are co-ordinated by the walk leader. Pack carries walks are again planned well in advance. Numbers are limited and walkers need to book early.

Pack carry walks are generally difficult especially given the load that needs to be carried. Walkers on these walks need to be fit and experienced and will be expected to have a good walking record. Walkers need to provide their own equipment however the club has some equipment which is available for hire (see below).

Other Activities

The club also carries out a number of other activities. Some of these are:

- Restaurant nights are held monthly, usually on a Friday evening, in a suburban restaurant. This allows members to socialise in a relaxed environment. The restaurants are usually BYO thereby keeping the price reasonable.
- Cycling events or cycling base camps are held on an occasional basis for members interested in a change and/or cycling.
- Interstate or overseas trips involving walking and/or base camps are held on a less frequent basis. Advance notice is given in the program. These events give members the opportunity of a great holiday on a shoestring budget!

Club Meetings

The club meets each month (except January) to discuss the forthcoming events and listen to guest speakers. The club house is currently located in Mount Waverley in Melbourne's east. All members and guests are welcome.

The ordinary business of the meetings is to discuss the forthcoming walks for the month and raise any other club business. Annual General Meetings are also held in this forum.

The formal business of each club night is followed by a presentation or activity loosely related to walking. There have been presentations of overseas walks, upcoming overseas trips, and first aid in the bush, walking equipment, trivia nights and films.

The meetings also provide an opportunity for members to meet and compare notes over a cup of coffee or tea.

Club Publications

The club produces two quarterly publications which are emailed out to all financial members.

1. The program of events covers the walks and other functions for the next three months.
2. "Contour Lines" is the club newsletter covering past events, news and future events.

Club Fees

Club fees are currently:

- Single member: \$50 per year
- Family member: \$75 per year
- Junior: \$37.50 per year
- Holdingr: \$25 per year
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Fees are payable yearly in March.

The subscription includes four newsletters (Contour Lines) and event programs annually.

Walking Experience & Equipment Needed

The experience and equipment needed on WCV walks varies depending on type of walk and the difficulty of the walk itself.

All WCV walks require solid walking shoes or boots (sneakers are OK on the easier walks), a day pack, water (at least 1 litre), sun screen, hat, rain gear, warm gear and in most cases lunch. For the more difficult walks, boots are recommended and some people take walking poles although these are not an essential. Basic first-aid supplies such as band-aids etc. are desirable.

The level of experience and fitness is again dependent on the walk. All walks cover a distance of at least 10 km over a period of 3 to 4 hours, so walkers need to be capable of this level of walking. The more difficult walks are longer (both distance & time) and will include hills which will make even experienced walkers “puffed” so a greater level of fitness is required. The walk leader will be able to advise the difficulty of the walk and the level of fitness or experience required. It is important that, when booking in, you discuss your abilities with the leader in order to assess if the walk is within your capabilities. Once on the walk, it may be difficult to bail out early or to get help if any medical emergencies arise.

For all walks, it is essential that you let the walk leader know, at the time of booking in, of any medical or health problems you may have or of any other issues which may affect your walking.

Club Equipment and Resources

Help is available from members on what to bring on a day or overnight walk and both hire and purchase of equipment. Discounts are available to members at most suppliers of walking gear.

The club also has a library of walking maps and books which can be borrowed by members for planning and leading club walks or for private walks.

The Best Part

The best part of the WCV club is undoubtedly its members and their companionship. Members come from all walks of life and have varied interests and backgrounds but share a common love for the bush and for walking. Many members have a great many years experience of walking in Victoria and no matter what the walk; someone will have been there before. With this sort of club background, the WCV is as much a family as it is a walking club.