

Walter Briggs Hut



Guest Information





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Welcome and history.

Welcome to the Melbourne Walking Club's Walter Briggs Hut named for the club's longest serving President Walter E Briggs (1915-1948).

Our original hut on Donna Buang was paid for and erected by club members in 1930.



At that time the hut supported club members

wishing to ski at Donna Buang being the closest ski field to Melbourne. Unfortunately, the original hut was lost in the devastating 1939 Black Friday bushfires.



The hut you are staying in tonight was rebuilt in 1941 on the same location with the support of the Forests Commission of Victoria

(now Parks Victoria). While the fit-out of the hut has changed over the years the basic structure is as it was in 1941.

We hope you will enjoy your stay. Please follow the instructions in this booklet to help us safe-guard and protect this unique asset of the club.



MWC Policies.

1. Use of the hut is available to club members, provided that,
 - a) all visits, including outside scheduled club events (private trips), must be pre-arranged with the Convenor,
 - b) and to protect the secrecy of the hut's location, any invitation to someone who is not a club member must be pre-approved by the Convenor or a member of the sub-committee.
2. Any group visiting or staying overnight must include a club member who will act as activity Leader.
3. Persons under 18 are not permitted unless supervised by their guardian and with prior agreement from the Leader.
4. No dogs or other pets are permitted.
5. No visit to the hut is permitted on a day of total fire ban.
6. The Convenor has discretion to cancel a booking for the hut or place limitations on use of the hut based on the forecast fire danger ratings or other extreme weather conditions.



Security.

Our hut has suffered loss and vandalism in the past but survives today because club members are committed to maintaining a level of secrecy over its location.

We ask that you follow some simple rules:

- (A) Only consider inviting visitors you trust to keep the location a secret.
- (B) Avoid entering or departing the bush from the carpark when you might be observed by passing traffic. If your group is large, consider breaking into smaller groups of twos and threes. On departing pause a few meters from the road and wait until traffic has passed before leaving the bush.
- (C) While at the hut avoid loud music, noise or unnecessary lights that might reveal to road users that there is something to investigate in the bush.
- (D) Follow the instructions in this booklet to extinguish fires and securely lock the hut before you leave or while you are away enjoying the local area.
- (E) Do not disclose the exact location of the hut and how to find it to friends and family.



Arrival checklist.

- Place a notice on your car dashboard to direct any enquiry from authorities about your car back to the Convenor.
- Unlock padlocks at the top and bottom of the door. Each lock uses a different key. Note the lock must be re-engaged before the key can be removed.
- The lower bolt on the front door **MUST** be hooked onto the nail to prevent it falling closed and locking you in.
- Place the keys on a hook near the door so these will not be lost.
- Open the window shutters by unscrewing the wingnuts inside the hut and pull the shutters open from the outside.
- Turn on the water tank valve at the base of the water tank.
- If staying the night unpack the self-inflating mattresses at least about 1 hour before you need to use them.
- Check location and condition of fire extinguisher, buckets, emergency transistor radio, woollen fire blanket and first aid kit.



Departure checklist.

- Deflate, rollup and hang up the grey mattresses in bags provided.
- Douse the fireplace and pot belly stove with water until cool to touch.
- All buckets are emptied of water.
- Replenish supplies of kindling and firewood in the boxes beside the fireplace.
- Collect any rubbish and food stuffs and take these away with you.
- Turn off the water tank valve at the base of the water tank.
- Close and bolt closed the kitchen cupboard.
- Make a list of things that need re-supply or fixing and share back to the Convenor.
- Secure window shutters with the wingnuts inside the hut while another member of the group holds the shutter closed on the outside.
- Padlock the front door both top and bottom and return keys to the Convenor.



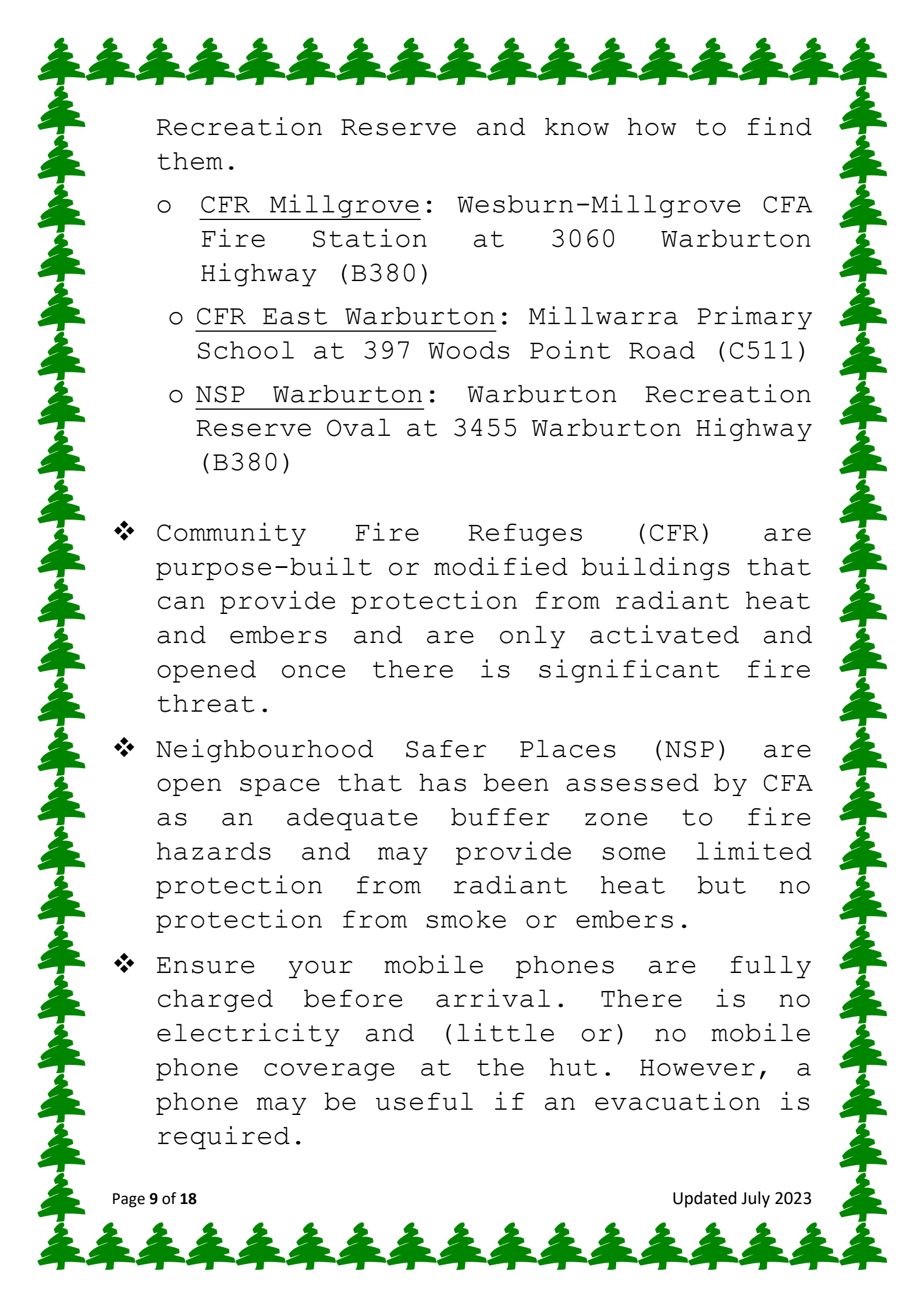
Fire evacuation plan.

Preventative measures.

Melbourne Walking Club rules prohibit walking activities and visits to the hut on days a total fire ban is declared.

Prior to arrival:

- ❖ Check the 4-day forecast of fire danger ratings for the CENTRAL District at www.cfa.vic.gov.au or ring the Victorian Bushfire Information Line 1800 226 226.
 - If any day during your planned visit is already declared a day of total fire ban, then DO NOT visit the Walter Briggs hut.
 - If any day during your planned visit has a forecast fire danger rating of High, Extreme or Catastrophic then reconsider your visit to the hut and discuss with the convenor.
- ❖ Community Fire Refuges (CFR) and Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) offer a last resort shelter options if you cannot leave the area because of fire.
- ❖ Identify the locations of the Community Fire Refuge (CFR) sites at Millgrove and East Warburton and the Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) location at Warburton



Recreation Reserve and know how to find them.

- o CFR Millgrove: Wesburn-Millgrove CFA Fire Station at 3060 Warburton Highway (B380)

- o CFR East Warburton: Millwarra Primary School at 397 Woods Point Road (C511)

- o NSP Warburton: Warburton Recreation Reserve Oval at 3455 Warburton Highway (B380)

- ❖ Community Fire Refuges (CFR) are purpose-built or modified buildings that can provide protection from radiant heat and embers and are only activated and opened once there is significant fire threat.

- ❖ Neighbourhood Safer Places (NSP) are open space that has been assessed by CFA as an adequate buffer zone to fire hazards and may provide some limited protection from radiant heat but no protection from smoke or embers.

- ❖ Ensure your mobile phones are fully charged before arrival. There is no electricity and (little or) no mobile phone coverage at the hut. However, a phone may be useful if an evacuation is required.



Action in case of fire.

Fire inside the hut:

1. Use extinguisher and sand buckets.
2. Extinguish flames on a person by wrapping them in the woollen blanket and rolling them on floor/ground.
3. Successful or not. Evacuate to car park closest to the hut and use mobile phone to call "000" and report the fire.
4. Remain at carpark to direct fire authorities.

Fire (or suspected fire) outside the hut:

1. Evacuate the hut. Leader to take extinguisher, woollen blanket, first aid kit, emergency radio and keys.
2. Assemble outside hut under the club emblem. Leader to confirm all persons present.
3. Proceed to your nearest parked car.
4. To report fire and hut evacuation:
 - a. Ring "000"
 - b. Advise Parks Victoria 13 1963.
 - c. MWC Convenor
5. From car park evacuate by car to East Warburton or Millgrove Fire Refuge.
6. If evacuation by car to Warburton is not possible or against advice from authorities, proceed to summit by car and report again to numbers above.

Fireplace & Potbelly stove.

The hut's historic fireplace and pot belly stove not only create warmth but are an inviting place at night to have a meal and a chat.



I promise you won't miss television, or the mobile phone and you will learn something new about your hut companions.

Please follow these rules:

1. To light the fire use screwed up newspaper and thin dry twigs plus a firelighter. DO NOT use liquids such as petrol/kerosene/metho to start the fire.
2. Set the fire towards the rear of the fireplace behind the cooking stand. Keep the loaded fire at the rear of the fireplace and under the chimney to prevent smoke entering the room.
3. Keep the fire guard secure in front of the fire when sleeping.
4. Appoint a member of your group to take responsibility for the fire.



5. Use water to extinguish the fire before leaving the hut unattended. Coals must be cool to touch before safe to leave.
6. Replace kindling (small branches) and firewood (large branches) in wooden boxes beside the fireplace.

Water tank.

The sealed water tank inside the front door collects rainwater from the roof and pipes this through to the sink. Turn on the water using the lever valve at base of the tank and shut this valve off before you leave.

Water from the tank should be boiled or treated before drinking.

Toilet.



The toilet is a long drop located 30 meters downhill from the hut. Bring your own toilet paper.

When not in use please keep the lid down and the door latched shut.

When in use you may choose to have the door open and enjoy the view of the bush.

At night take a torch.

Mattresses.

The hut is equipped with two self-inflating foam core mattresses. These are stored inside their carry bags and suspended from the roof beam.

To inflate:

- Remove mat from bag and release compression straps.
- Open the two screw valves and place the mattress on a bunk.
- Leave to self-inflate for 60 minutes.
- Close the screw valves and you are ready to go.



To deflate and store:

- Open the screw valves and roll up from the non-valve end.
- Close valves and unroll.
- Re-roll up with valves closed to squeeze remaining air to valve end.
- Open valves and to release remaining air and re-close valves.
- Re-apply compression straps.
- Store mattress back inside carry bag and suspend from roof beam.



What to bring.

- Sleeping bag or quilt
- An inflatable mattress
(two mattresses supplied in the hut)
- Food and drink
- Cooking and eating utensils
- Toilet paper
- Torch
- Mobile phone (for emergencies)
- Clothing suitable for exploring the bush
- Stories to tell while you watch the fire, sip your hot chocolate, and consume toasted marshmallows.



Walks in the area.

Mentioned below are some of the many walks available in the Warburton/Donna Buang area. For more walks, information and maps visit the Warburton Visitor Information centre at The Waterwheel 3400 Warburton Highway.

Website: www.visitwarburton.com.au

Phone: 03 5966960

Email: info@visitwarburton.com.au

1. **Rainforest Gallery and Skywalk.**

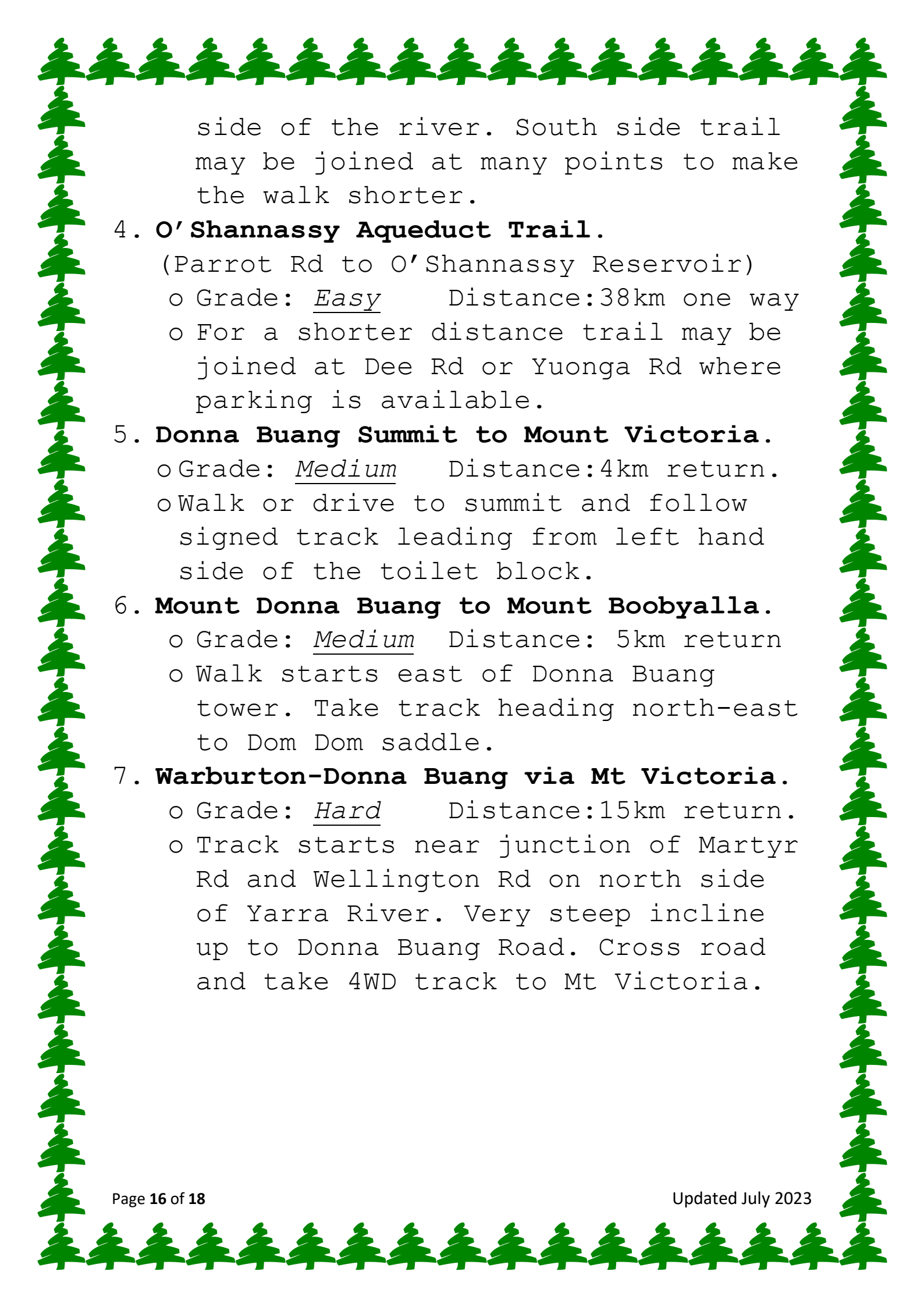
- o Grade: Easy Distance: 350m
- o Drive to Cement Creek (junction of C507 and C505). Includes a viewing platform and 350m elevated walkway. Lots of steps. Toilets available.

2. **La La Falls.**

- o Grade: Easy Distance 3km return
- o From Warburton Hwy take Park Rd and follow signs to La La Falls car park at Irruka Rd.

3. **Yarra River Walk and Redwood Forest.**

- o Grade: Easy Distance: 16km return
- o Start at Scotchmans Creek Road and cross river to walk along north side of Yarra River to reach and enjoy the Californian Redwood Forest and return via the trail on the south



side of the river. South side trail may be joined at many points to make the walk shorter.

4. **O' Shannassy Aqueduct Trail.**

(Parrot Rd to O' Shannassy Reservoir)

- o Grade: Easy Distance: 38km one way
- o For a shorter distance trail may be joined at Dee Rd or Yuonga Rd where parking is available.

5. **Donna Buang Summit to Mount Victoria.**

- o Grade: Medium Distance: 4km return.
- o Walk or drive to summit and follow signed track leading from left hand side of the toilet block.

6. **Mount Donna Buang to Mount Boobyalla.**

- o Grade: Medium Distance: 5km return
- o Walk starts east of Donna Buang tower. Take track heading north-east to Dom Dom saddle.

7. **Warburton-Donna Buang via Mt Victoria.**

- o Grade: Hard Distance: 15km return.
- o Track starts near junction of Martyr Rd and Wellington Rd on north side of Yarra River. Very steep incline up to Donna Buang Road. Cross road and take 4WD track to Mt Victoria.

Photos of the hut interior.





EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

MELBOURNE WALKING CLUB

Convenor Walter Briggs Hut	0422 804 816	(Kim)
Club President	0412 136 124	(Trevor)
Club Treasurer	0400 037 291	(Terry)

PARKS VICTORIA

Local Park Ranger	03 5954 4018	(Conrad)
Central number	13 1963	

(Yarra Ranges office located at 7-9 Symes road Woori Yallock)

MEDICAL - Ambulance

Emergency call	000
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- **Yarra Junction.** 35 Yarra St (approx. 35 min to summit)
- **Healesville.** 23 Westmount Rd (approx. 55 min to summit)

MEDICAL - Doctor

Warburton Medical Group	(03) 5966 5988
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3476 Warburton Highway which is on southside of highway between Shell Petrol Station and CFA Fire Station.
Mon-Fri 8:30-5:30pm Sat. 9:00-12:30pm Sun. Closed

FIRE or OTHER EMERGENCY

Emergency services	000
Vic Emergency Hotline	1800 226 226

(provides information during major bushfire incidents)