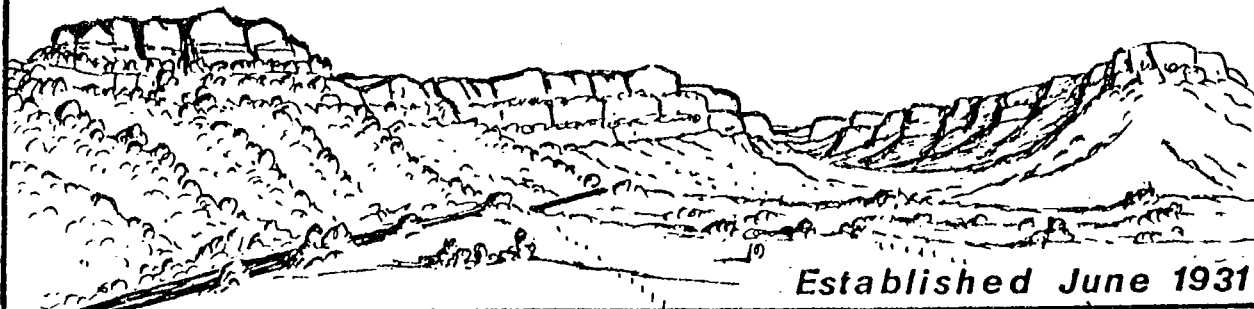


THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



WIDDEN VALLEY

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers Incorporated, Box 4476 GPO, Sydney 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8 pm at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli (near Milson's Point Railway Station). Visitors and prospective members are welcome any Wednesday. To advertise in this magazine, please contact the Business Manager.

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EDITOR Judy O'Connor, 43 Pine Street, Cammeray 2062
Telephone 929 8629

BUSINESS MANAGER Joy Hynes, 36 Lewis Street, Dee Why 2099
Telephone 982 2615 or 888 3144 (Business)

PRODUCTION MANAGER George Gray - Telephone 876 6263

TYPIST & LAY-OUT Kath Brown

ILLUSTRATOR Morag Ryder

PRINTERS Kenn Clacher, Les Powell, Margaret Niven,
Barrie Murdoch & Kay Chan

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Keith Muir dwarfed by the trees in the Blue Gum Forest

Photograph by Peter Solness

Reproduced courtesy of the Sydney Morning Herald

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday, 11th March 1992. The President, Office Bearers and Committee will be elected for the coming year. Only members may vote (not prospectives) and all ACTIVE MEMBERS are eligible to stand for every office. Come along and register your vote.

The Annual Reunion will not be held on the weekend after the AGM, but will be combined with the 65th BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS of the Club, to be held on 24th/25th October at "Coolana", our own property in the Kangaroo Valley.

However, on Wednesday 18th March, a BARBECUE will be held in the back garden of the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre at which the new President, Office Bearers and Committee will be formally presented to Club members.

BLUE GUM FOREST. The lovely photo of Blue Gum Forest, printed in SMH on 6/12/91, was obtained by our Conservation Secretary and included here to remind the Club that it is now 60 years since the Forest was saved.

* * * * *

KOSCIUSKO NATIONAL PARK - XMAS WALK

27th December '91 - 1st January '92

by Elaine Walton

George Mawer (leader) - Judy Mehaffey, Brian Bolton, Carol Lubbers, Laurie Quaken, Erith Hamilton, George and Elaine Walton, Bruce McDonald (prospective).

The first thing to be carried out after we all met at Muryang Power Station was a car swap to Guthega Dam and a food drop for our party on New Year's Eve. Now we were on our way to our first camp site which was along the service trail for 4 km. We made camp on the road as we were to climb Disappointment Ridge the next morning.

We woke to a sunny morning and looking forward to our first climb of the trip. This was the shortest route and after a short rock scramble we were confronted with mountain heath as high as the knee, this feature accompanied us on most of the trip. After lunch one only had to look to the south to see the mist rolling in. By 4 pm it was closing in and by 5 pm it was a matter of map and compass, but when one can't get a bearing it does become rather frustrating for the party. We decided to make for some trees shown on the map so we would have shelter but someone must have moved them as we ended our second day camping on the head waters of the Valentine River - couldn't see a thing. With only two stoves we all managed to have a hot drink and so we had an early night. Brian was prepared to bet we were on another location but he is fortunate we did not take up the bet.

Next morning it was clearer and after a nibble we started off for the previous night's camp site at the Brassy Mountain, lit a fire and had brunch. Then it was off towards Cup and Saucer with Bruce showing his talent as a map reader, the day was fine and mild and we arrived at our camp site in time to enjoy the scenery.

Day three was to be a rest day for four, and the rest of the party did a trip to Jagungal. We woke to a heavy whiteout but the leader was confident it was to be a good day and so they set off around 9 am. It was a perfect day and the Jagungal group saw some superb scenery. Then late that afternoon the cloud started rolling in again and during the night we had some heavy rain.

We woke to a very heavy mist, couldn't see 50 feet in front so off we started on day five. It was wet, windy, can't-see-a-thing day. Too cold to stop for lunch so we got some nibbles

out and continued across the Kerries by compass all day. The leader did a perfect job of navigation as we arrived at Schlink Hilton Hut from the ridge. It was not so fortunate for Carol, Laurie and Bruce as they had to go and collect our party food and we had actually come down a ridge a bit further away from where the food was as we were expecting to camp on Dicky Cooper Bongong for New Year's Eve.

It rained heavily during early evening so the hut was very acceptable - the party went well, starting at 3 pm - a real gourmet setting to say the least.

Next morning it was decided to climb Dicky Cooper Bongong and complete our walk as planned. We were walking at the side of the Granite Peaks, just below a snow drift, on snow grass, when the leader did something not planned - he slipped and broke his ankle. Carol came forth and showed her expertise of bandaging an ankle, and the leader sat and gave his ideas of the best approach of getting him to medical aid. So off went Bruce and Carol to Muryang Power Station and the rest of the party made their way to a tree knoll for more shelter as we were in an exposed position. We had the help of a walker from Victoria who had spent the night in the hut with us. We had just lit a fire and then the weather turned, and we just got our tents up in time for a rather wild hail storm.

It was around 5 pm when we looked across the valley and saw an ambulance, 4WD plus eight men (five State Emergency Volunteers, two police officers, one ambulance officer) and Bruce. They couldn't drive any further along the very rough and overgrown firetrail so made their way to us by foot. After George was made comfortable on a stretcher we all made our way towards the vehicles, crossing a rocky fast-moving creek where Laurie showed his ability standing in very cold water holding the stretcher as they crossed.

We walked down to White's River Hut in front of the vehicles and once we reached the road our packs were put on the vehicles and we were all transported back to the power station. When we reached our destination we were met by Carol and by her expression it looks as though Jan may have another Kanangra-to-Katoomba walker in the not too distant future.

The accident happened at 11 am and by 8 pm George was entering the Jindabyne Bowling Club looking for something to eat, displaying a very autographable-looking plastered leg.

We all thank you, George, for a wonderful trip.

* * * * *

WEDDING BELLS

WEDDING BELLS

WEDDING BELLS

Congratulations to long time member and the Club's honorary auditor CHRIS SONTER on his recent marriage to GILLIAN COFFEY. We wish them both the very best of health, wealth and happiness and look forward to seeing them at future club functions.

NEW MEMBERS

Please add the following names to your 1992 LIST OF MEMBERS:-

HOGAN, Ms Marella - 6 Victoria Street, Waverley 2024	(H) 387 8199	(B) 363 3456
HODGES, Ms Jan - 69 Boundary Street, Roseville 2069	(H) 417 4394	(B) 411 9539
SYLVA, Ms Louise - 9/19/21 Myra Road, Dulwich Hill 2203	(H) 559 4264	(B) 257 2013

CONSERVATION

by Alex Colley

The Wilderness Red Index 1991:

The concept of the Red Index was derived from the Plant Red Data Book, published by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, which assesses the status of the world's threatened plant species. After several years of research the Red Index was completed in November 1991. It revealed that, in the four years since the passing of the Wilderness Act, only two of the 26 wilderness areas identified are satisfactorily managed. The status of the 26 areas is summarised in the table below:-

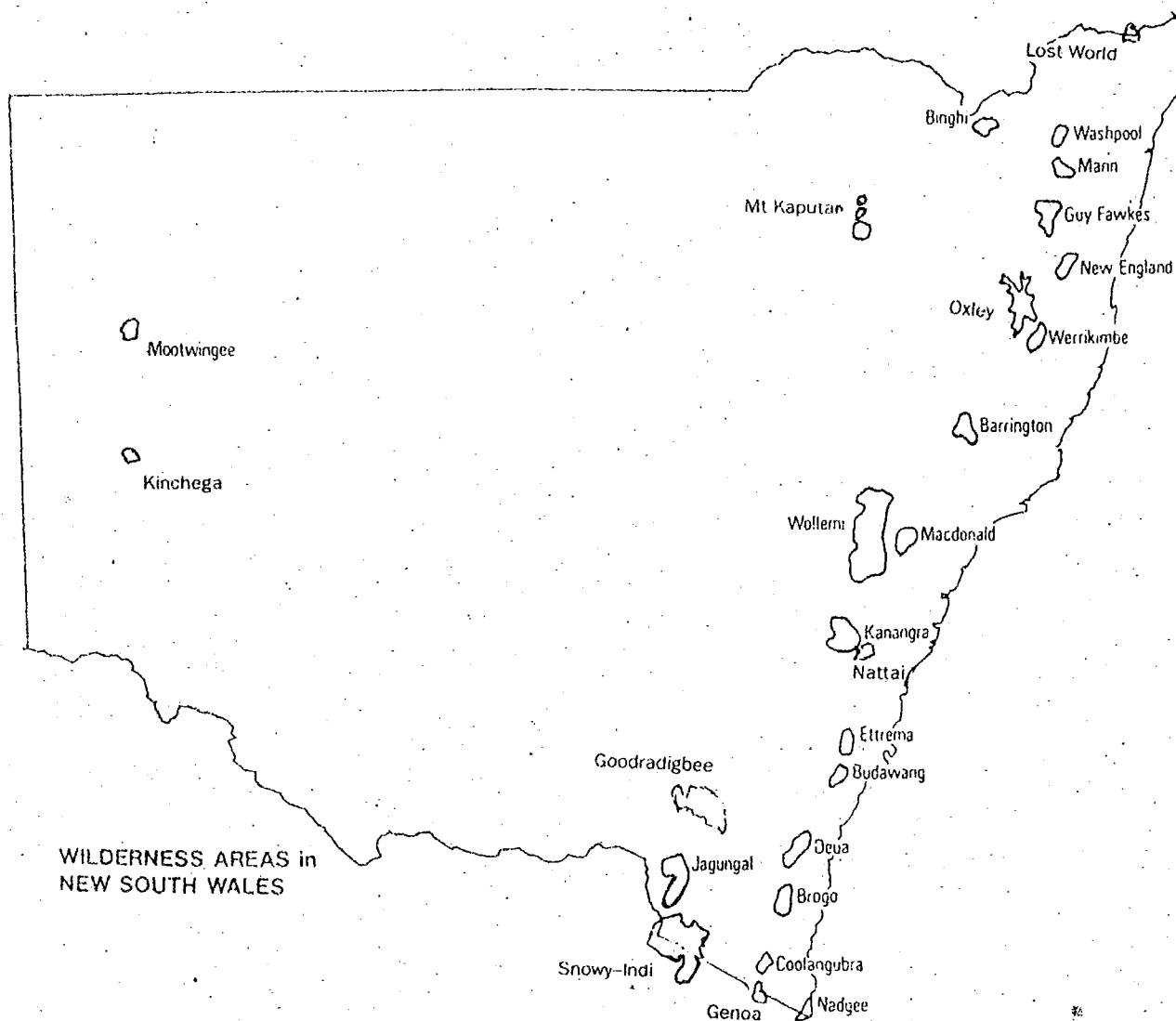
Name	Logging	Overburning	Trails ORV Horse riding	Powerlines Dams Mining	Pollution	Weeds Feral Animals	Management
Barrington	***	+	***	+	+	***	-
Binghi	***	***	***	**	+	***	-
Brogo	**	**	***	**	+	+	-
Budawang	***	***	***	+	+	+	-
Coolangubra	***	***	***	+	***	***	-
Deua	***	***	***	+	***	+	-
Ettrema	+	***	***	**	+	+	-
Genoa	***	***	***	**	+	+	-
Goodradigbee	***	**	***	***	+	***	-
Guy Fawkes	***	***	***	**	***	***	-
Jagungal	+	+	***	***	**	***	-
Kanangra	+	+	***	***	***	***	-
Kinchega	+	+	***	+	+	***	-
Lost World	+	+	+	+	+	+	#
Macdonald	+	***	***	**	+	***	-
Mann	***	***	***	+	+	***	-
Mootwingee	+	+	+	+	+	***	#
Mt. Kaputar	+	+	+	+	+	+	#
Nadgee	***	***	***	**	+	+	-
Nattai	**	***	***	**	***	+	-
New England	***	***	***	**	+	***	-
Oxley	+	***	***	**	***	***	-
Snowy-Indi	+	***	***	+	+	***	-
Washpool	**	+	***	+	+	+	-
Werrikimbe	***	***	***	+	+	+	-
Wollemi	***	+	***	**	**	***	-

Key + None/not significant
 ** Threatened
 *** Continuing/existing

Management

Satisfactory
 - Unsatisfactory

STATUS OF WILDERNESS



The Index is in the form of a data bank, which will be available to conservation organisations. A summary brochure is available from bushwalking equipment shops or from the Colong Foundation, 18 Argyle Street, price \$5.

The Index was launched by the Colong Foundation's Patron, the Hon. Neville Wran, at a Wilderness Summit held on 2nd December 1991. The SBW President and four other members were there, together with Roger Lembit from the Confederation.

In formally launching the Index, Mr. Wran quoted Bob Carr, who said, when introducing the Wilderness Bill in November 1987: "We've got an historic choice, will we as a nation, on the eve of the 200th year of European settlement, continue to destroy, piece by piece, the great natural areas of this country? Will we continue to be unmoved by the fact that many of this nation's plants and animals are threatened with oblivion? Or do we resolve that the very fibre of this continent should be treated with greater respect, that our much diminished wilderness should be protected and that our country should earn a reputation for excellence in its approach to conservation?"

Mr. Wran went on to explain that the Red Index is directed to the fact that the machinery for the implementation of, not only the words of the Wilderness Act, but the spirit and intention of the law, have largely been neglected. He concluded by saying, "Although I am not a great supporter of the general philosophy of the RSL, I sometimes think that the environment movement can adopt its motto "The price of peach is eternal vigilance." Certainly we can put the emphasis on eternal vigilance.

On completion of Mr. Wran's address, Milo Dunphy, Director of the Total Environment Centre, described the "reluctance" of the NPWS to manage wilderness because of "Its high staff turnover, loss of experience staff, shrinking budget, inadequate staff numbers, the high level of Ministerial and local MP interference in day-to-day management decisions, constant attack by entrepreneurs and the National Party, have produced a siege mentality."

Peter Maslen, Chairman of the Colong Foundation then moved: "That this meeting calls on the Government to immediately implement the Wilderness Act." This motion was passed unanimously.

* * * * *

KIMBERLEY EXPEDITIONS

Willis's Walkabouts is offering special advance purchase discounts on two of our 1992 Kimberley Expeditions.

The Moran River: April 19 - May 9

This is one of the most incredible wilderness areas we have ever visited. It is also one of the least accessible, even more so early in the year when the rivers and waterfalls are still flowing. We are going to overcome this by using a combination of helicopters and light aircraft from Kununurra. This will also allow us to put in a food drop at the half way point.

Drysdale River National Park: May 23 - June 15

This is the largest and perhaps least known of the Kimberley parks. It contains a variety of landscapes and a wealth of aboriginal art. This will be our fourth and longest visit. We will use our Moran helicopter to put in a food drop allowing us to get further into the back country than we have ever done before.



For details of these (please specify which interests you) and our other trips contact

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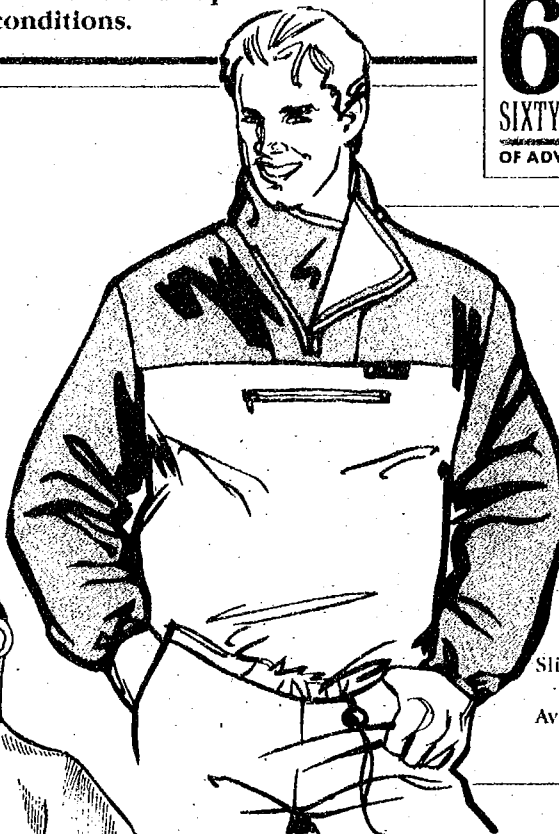
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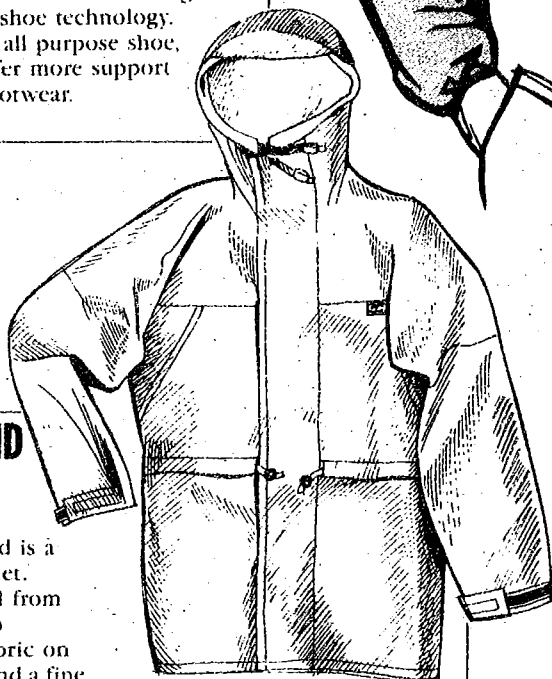
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SLIPSTREAM \$99

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Sizes: XS-XL



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THE JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

The meeting began at around 2030 with the President in the chair and your scribe in the kitchen shovelling food into his face. These combined committee/general meetings are hell, I tell you. There were some 30 or so members present, and Erith Hamilton and Kay Chan sent apologies.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with no matters arising.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we received income of \$6,937 and spent \$3,416. Various accounts for payment were passed.

And so it was that the meeting, whipped into a frenzy by the preceding events, came at last to the Walks Reports. The weekend of 14,15 December saw Sev Sternhell leading a party of unspecified size in the rain on his Wollongambe walk. Bob Hodgson's family boating weekend was a sad disappointment with no takers. It is unclear whether this was due to a lack of families, a lack of boats (seems hardly likely as Bob was offering to provide these) or whether everyone was just busy getting organised for Christmas. There were no details of Greg Bridge's Erskine Creek, Dadder Cave swimming trip.

December 21st saw Wilf Hilder leading a party of 4 on his Great North Walk Stage One trip. The weather remained threatening all day but held off until the party were safely under cover at Chatsood Station before releasing the downpour. There was no report of Peter Christian's Dufaur's Creek lilo trip.

The Christmas/New Year period saw a large number of trips, mostly off program. The 15 starters on Ian Rannard's walk enjoyed a wide range of weathers in the Victorian high country. They reported some problems with water but otherwise all went well. George Mawer crashed and burned so to speak at the end of his Kosciusko N.P. walk. He slipped on ice lurking below the snow grass and broke a bone in his ankle. We are pleased to report that the party of 9 did not resort to the old "small but dignified cairn of stones" trick and George is well on the way to recovery.

Jim Calloway had 9 on his Helensburgh to Otford trip on Sunday the 29th. The attendant overcast weather reduced swimming to a minimum. Maurie Bloom led a party of 18 on a race against time in the Snowies. Alan Mawett, Barry Wallace and Helen Gray were all out there somewhere with various parties as well. The hills were alive, I tell you.

Meanwhile back in the workaday world of real walking, over the weekend of January 12th Geoff McIntosh led a party of 21 on his Waterfall to Otford via the squeeze-hole trip. High seas precluded a visit to the Figure Eight Pool and the walk was tough enough to sprain Wilf's knee. There was no report of Peter Christian's Hole-in-the-Wall abseiling trip, maybe they're still out there. Bill Holland's tiger walk in the Eloura bushland had 11 on the walk and 35 at the barbecue that followed. George Mawer was the only one with a genuine excuse. If that was a walk, then this is the end of the Walks Report.

In one of those "great moments in forward planning" series the Social Secretary announced that the "Safety in leadership night" has been cancelled due to George Mawer's accident.

The Conservation Report brought news of - but wait. It was all reported in last month's magazine. Whew, damn near thing that, Kath!

The FBW Report indicated that user pays camping permits will be introduced in the Royal and Heathcote National Parks starting at \$6.00 per year.

General Business brought a decision that the next Reunion will be held in October. There were various announcements about the coming Annual General Meeting, but they will all be printed in the magazine so we won't cover them here. But if you hurry you can still stand for a position on committee.

There will be a Coolana working bee on the next program. Watch that space!

There was also some discussion of an idea by Jim Oxley about running a combined test walk, mapping and first aid instructional, plus testing, all on the same trip. It seems the idea is to clear a backlog of prospectives. There was a body of opinion which suggested that this was all a bit much for one weekend.

Announcements included a caution that the book on the Great North Walk appears to contain a number of errors of detail.

The meeting closed at 2112, but the Committee was on detention in order to clear a backlog of prospectives.

* * * * *

SOCIAL NOTES

by Fran Holland

For all those who bought a ticket in our raffle and were not able to come to the Christmas party, Keith Sherlock's painting of the Blue Mountains was won by Margaret Niven - congratulations, Marg.

On the 26th February Alan Spendlove of Macpac is going to talk about care of our bushwalking gear and show the latest developments in new equipment.

The first Wednesday in March is as always the Committee and our Annual General Meeting is on the 11th, so come along and elect or re-elect members on to the 1992-93 Committee.

On the 18th March we will have a B.B.Q. in the garden behind the Neighbourhood Centre. These barbecues have proved to be very popular. Activities commence from 7 pm and as this follows the annual elction we will have the traditional inauguration ceremony for the new Committee.

25th March will be the "Safety & Leadership" workshop led by George Mawer - a very interesting evening for us all - leaders (current or potential) and followers.

ADDITIONAL DAY WALK - SUNDAY, 1st MARCH.

(A sort of "Leap Year Special Walk" - repeated by request.)

Great North Walk - Stage 1.

Assemble at Macquarie Place, City at 9.30 am, join ferry from Circular Quay at 9.50 am for Woolwich.

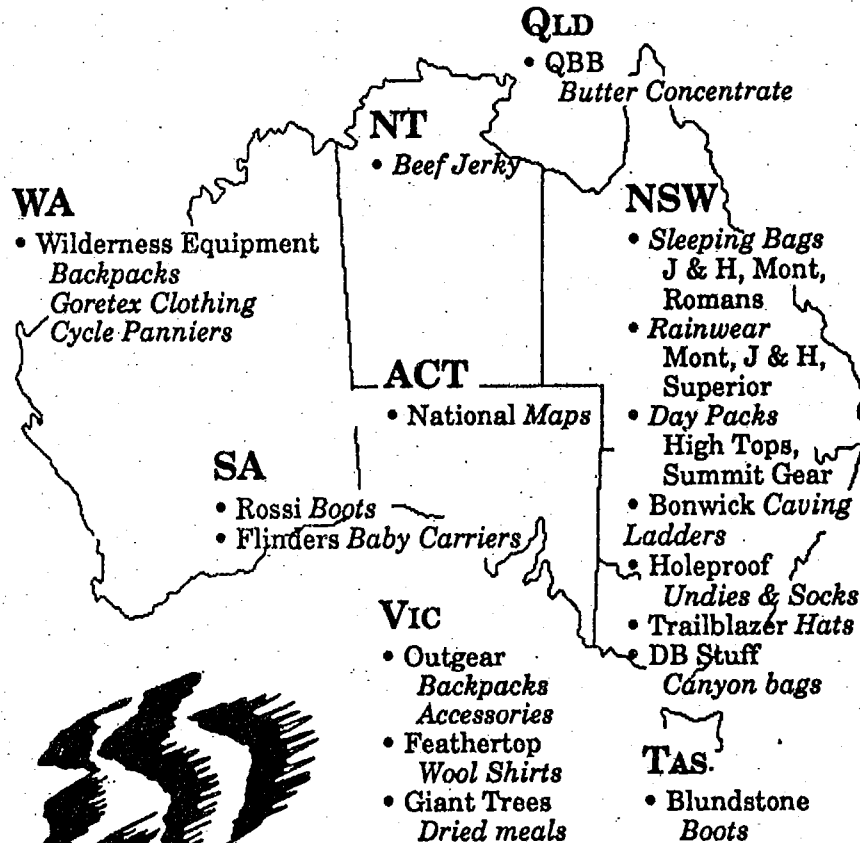
Valentia Street Wharf - Kelly's Bush - Brickmakers Creek (see Tipperary Falls) - Lane Cove River - Buffalo Creek - Kittys Creek - Clifford Love Footbridge (at un-named waterfall) - Lane Cove State Recreation Area - Chatswood Station. EASY/MEDIUM 15 km (Map - Lands Dept "Great North Walk - Lane Cove River")

LEADER: Wilf Hilder - Phone (business) 228 6121

* * * * *



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CANOE THE MACLEAYA great river to canoe

by Geoff Grace

June '91. Steady rains had been falling over the New England area for a few days. The Bureau of Meteorology told us the good news - a full metre of water at Bellbrook. All the Macley's upper tributaries would be feeding water into its main course running down to Kempsey and on to the sea.

The canoe was already at Kempsey at son-in-law Cameron's - a flying instructor. Friend Fred and myself jumped on the train, arrived early afternoon, picked up some tucker and after a night's rest, roped the canoe onto the utility and away we went with Cameron. We stopped briefly at Bellbrook - the river height was 1.2 metres - great! We travelled further upstream into the mountains to George's Creek, unloaded the canoe and said goodbye to Cameron. By road we had come over 100 km. It would be 150 km of paddling to get home.

Pushed off. Conditions were good with the river flowing full and wide but five minutes later at the first rapid we were shocked into freezing reality by a catastrophic upset. Brrrr, it was cold! Not so clever after all. We made it to shore, emptied out, and after a billy of tea, our teeth had stopped chattering. The incident sobered us. We decided to rope down the more adventurous rapids from then on!

Camped early and finished drying out in front of the fire.

A relaxed start next day. Great paddling with some long, fast runs of water. The countryside started to open out. We were moving out of the mountains. In the late afternoon we attempted to identify our position. Hmmm.

Camped - plenty of great campsites to choose from and lots of firewood.

On the move again. Beautiful scenery, lots of colourful cedar trees on the river bank. The river clean and friendly. Huge mussels peeping out from the pebbly bottom. Cheeky tortoises swimming about in their native environment. Sea eagles soaring on thermals. Buzzards. Ducks and swans. Egrets. Sometimes pleasant lanes of water running fast between trees - sometimes a little too fast! Sometimes open scenic views of the river winding on ahead. Good fun scooting along down great wide long slides of water with plenty of visibility to the quieter runs ahead. Even in the quiet, long pools the river moved us along fairly well. A few times thundering rapids required portages, but they were easy portages.

The idyllic days merged one into the other. We topped up provisions at the Bellbrook store.

Six days had passed. Each one a beauty. Bird life abounding, fishing, kangaroos ashore, great scenery, we actually saw some human beings on a couple of occasions! On the seventh day, a light plane droned overhead, turned and swooped down low over us. It was Cameron. A hand appeared out of the cabin window and dropped something into the river nearby. A plastic bottle with note inside. "Will pick you up at Sherwood Bridge."

And he did!

There's no doubt - it's worth doing all over again.

* * * * *

