



THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER is a monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc, Box 4476 GPO Sydney 2001. To advertise in this magazine, please contact the Business Manager.

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THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS INCORPORATED was founded in 1927. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8 pm at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli (near Milsons Point Railway Station). Visitors and prospective members are welcome any Wednesday.

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AUGUST 1997

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The Snows of Kilimanjaro: by Peter Freeman,

Part 2 of two parts.

We had completed about 15 kilometres but had only attained a total 300 metres ascent.

The rain abated during the night and in the morning the Barranco Wall was visible, though the top was obscured by cloud. The temperature was 3 degrees and the wind had dropped. I decided to sleep in and let my companions continue with their shenanigans with the warm water which was getting harder to organise with a lack of wood and the difficulties of heating water in the higher altitudes. As I ate my breakfast I noticed strange looking trees, which looked like alpine cactus. Some were about 8 metres in height.

We proceeded to the base of the Barranco Wall and Stuart was still suffering some of the effects of altitude sickness, but, he was determined to continue. Small cairns marked the track which we negotiated with a great deal of care as the rocks were wet and the route quite exposed in places. After about one and a half hours of climbing we reached the cliff top. While we rested, Thobias taught the party what he called "breathing technique" which essentially involved forcing air in and out of your lungs every second step. He advised us to practise it as we would need it tomorrow.

The weather turned nasty again with sleet and snow falling as we made our way across a number of small valleys, but essentially contouring around the mountain until we found shelter and had lunch of yes, you guessed it, a hard boiled egg, two slices of corn bread with jam and a mandarin. After lunch Thobias instructed us to follow the track marked by the cairns and that he would catch up.

The three of us continued contouring around, crossing more valleys and a large flat area littered with boulders. Meanwhile, the weather deteriorated even further with visibility being reduced to about 10 metres and the temperature dropped to minus 5 degrees. We reached a junction in the track after about two hours and waited for Thobias. After waiting for more than half an hour and becoming increasingly cold in what was an exposed position we decided to continue on as we had a map and knew which track to take and that it was at least a two hour slog up a steep boulder strewn ridge to Barafu Hut

campsite. Having left a note and made appropriate markings of our route and intentions we set off up the ridge.

As we climbed higher and higher the snow became heavier and the wind stronger and the cairns became difficult to find with limited visibility to the point that I lost sight of the other two who appeared to be coping with the altitude better than me. I gave a blast on my whistle and they returned a blast. I yelled that I was having a break and they acknowledged. When I commenced walking again I gave another blast on the whistle. To my dismay there was no reply. They had continued on up the ridge. I continued walking carefully following the cairns, becoming quite concerned as I thought I should have reached the hut by now. After about half an hour by myself I heard a whistle blast and in a matter of moments I found Stuart sitting on a rock, totally exhausted and suffering from altitude sickness. David had gone ahead to find the hut while Stuart waited for me. David returned and said he had found the hut and that it was just fifteen minutes away. We struggled up over slabs of rock covered in ice and snow to a small metal hut and huddled inside for half an hour before an obviously concerned Thobias arrived, who then acted as if nothing had gone wrong. (We later found out that the porters had threatened to leave as they had to carry extra wood to this campsite).

After soup and corn bread for dinner that night we were told that we would not be sleeping in the tents and that we would have to make do in the hut which had the door wrenched from its hinges and a hole where a window was. It was still snowing, and the wind was howling. I did not expect much rest that night.

We had completed 10 kilometres and climbed 800 metres in about 10 hours of walking in terrible conditions that day.

Thobias arranged that we would be woken at midnight for our attempt at the summit. This was to give sufficient time to reach the crater rim by sunrise and to make the descent to Horombo Hut during the day. The temperature in the hut was -10 degrees and I slept in a pair of thermals, polarfleece pants and two polarfleece tops, balaclava, gloves, two pair of socks and my water bottle to stop the water from freezing.

We were woken at midnight and yes, my companions wanted warm water to shave and when refused they produced battery powered shavers announcing that they had been saving the batteries. Unbelievable.

Foolishly I had left my waterproof gloves folded over my ski pole and they were now frozen solid with a fold across the palm. I had to defrost them in between my jacket and thermals.

By this time, the wind and snow had stopped and to my surprise when I walked out of the hut I saw a sea of stars. Down on the plain the glowing lights of Moshi, the town nearest to Kilimanjaro. The ridge steepened to a 1400 metre high scree slope and although no technical climbing was involved, this was one of the steepest climbs on the mountain and the ski poles were used constantly for balance and any fall resulted in a 10-20 metre slide through the scree. We zigzagged up and across the freezing ankle deep scree for five hours with everyone using Thobias' "breathing technique", huffing and puffing all the way to the snout of the Rebmann Glacier, where Stuart started to feel ill, hallucinating and stumbling, so we had a break. He took some codeine and recovered sufficiently to continue on. We then walked beside the glacier which is 20 metres high in places, for the next hour until we reached Stella Point (5700 metres), which is on the crater rim, and watched the sunrise on a perfect day. Unfortunately, the water bottle under my jacket had now frozen and I was starting to feel a little dehydrated.

The walk around the crater rim to the summit was spectacular with a steep drop into the crater on one side and the icefields tumbling down the slope to form glaciers on the other. The summit, called "Uhuru Peak" (5896 metres) has a plaque inscribed with President Julius Nyrere's speech at the time of Tanzania's independence in 1961. It reads, "We the people of Tanganyika would like to light a candle and put it on top of Mount Kilimanjaro, which would shine beyond our borders, giving hope where there was despair, love where there was hate and dignity where before there was only humiliation". We can only hope.

I lingered around the summit for about half an hour taking photos, enjoying the sunshine even though it was minus 10 degrees, and drinking in the views down to the African plains.

PRESIDENTIAL PICNIC

The following SBW past presidents: Malcolm McGregor, Brian Harvey, Bill Rodgers, Heather Joyce, John White, Frank Rigby, Spiro Hadjinakitas, and Helen Gray, invite all other past presidents* to join with them and extend an invitation to prospective, current and retired Bushwalkers to a 70th Anniversary get together at **Quarantine Reserve**, Spring Street, Abbotsford on Saturday, 18 October 1997 for morning tea & lunch, early arrivals welcome for breakfast. BYO food and drink. Shelter area covering barbeque and seats. Plenty of parking in Spring Street. (UBD old edition, map 65: D6)

BUS No 438 from Circular Quay to Altona St. or Fitzroy St. Abbotsford.

FERRY to Abbotsford Point from Circular Quay or from Parramatta, or from intermediate wharves.

As many member will be coming from far away for the Dinner on Friday and the barbeque on Sunday many of us would like to spend Saturday also with SBW friends. Ring Helen (044 64 1724 H) or Spiro (9699 1375 H) if you would like a lift or more information.

* see *The Sydney Bushwalker* page 13 July 1997, for the full list of past presidents.

OPEN INVITATION

The October issue of the Sydney Bushwalker is the 70th Anniversary Magazine. It will be published early in October and consists of an anthology of The Sydney Bushwalker literature. This edition is well in hand, however perhaps you, dear reader have in mind a particular piece of prose or poetry, published by SBW over the last 70 years, which you think should be included. If so, then as quick as a flash send me a fair photocopy of the article. Inclusion is likely but not guaranteed as such articles will need to match with articles already selected and with the size limit to the magazine. The following periods could be considered: 1938-1947, 1949-1956, 1958-1960, 1962-1966, 1968-1974, 1976-1984.

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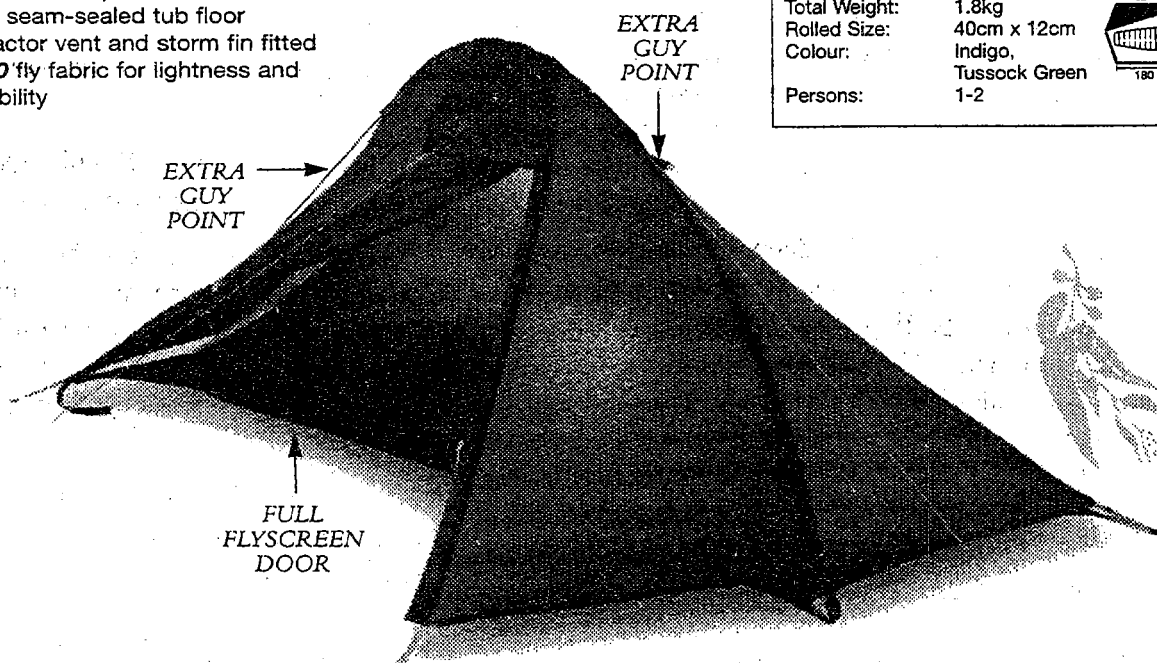
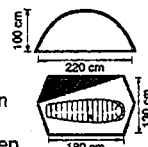
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ATTEMPT AT THE HAUTE ROUTE, or GUESS WHO'S COMING FOR DINNER by David Rostron, the second of two parts.

It was snowing the next morning, so six of us had a part-piste day with one guide. We did some trekking but visibility was poor for a few hours. It improved and we remained at the resort for some brilliant powder snow skiing. There were only about 10 skiers on the slopes and we carved tracks all over the mountain - it was a great afternoon.

The next day we went to the Great St Bernard Monastery/Hospice in Switzerland for two days and nights (we had intended to stop at the Monastery for one night on the planned trip). Transport was by taxi to the roadhead, followed by an 8-kilometre ski in to the Hospice. The large 300 bed, 16th Century building, has recently undergone extensive internal renovations. It was the most luxurious accommodation for the trip - very comfortable single beds instead of bunks, excellent food and fantastic hot showers. On the second night "The Treasury" was opened for inspection. This contained all the significant jewellery and other items donated since the 13th Century.

We climbed a 3,200m snow peak the following morning. Strong winds overnight had changed the snowpack to mainly crust and ice and it was almost all "survival" skiing on the run down.

The following day three of the party skied back down the road, whilst four of us went over a high col for an 800m descent on reasonable snow and met the others. Three then returned to Argentière by taxi and three accompanied the guide, Alan, on a 4-day trip from Verbier to Arolla in Switzerland - this is one of the small variations on the Haute Route.

Fortunately we were able to climb almost 2000m by 3 cable cars, to about 3000m and then ski down to the Mont Fort Hut, at about 2700m. This was another charming, 2-level stone hut with a superb panorama to the south which we enjoyed from the extensive balcony. The interior finishes of all these huts are timber with a slightly rustic feel, creating a delightful atmosphere. The food was again of a high standard. All the catered huts were in spotless condition.

A 7:00am start saw us climbing on icy snow to a col at 3200m. This was followed by a short descent and traverse, then a further lengthy climb on an extensive glacial plateau to 3400m. From this point we had one of our better ski runs over 2-3km in about 15cm of new powder snow. This was followed by a steeper descent over firmer snow to Prefouleri Hut at about 2600m.

It is the practice in the Alps to depart early - between about 4:00am and 7:00am and arrive at the huts about midday or in the early afternoon - to avoid the risk of avalanche and softening snow bridges over crevasses. We arrived at the hut at 11:45am and then had a long afternoon of inactivity broken by reading and card games. The guide had advised against further skiing because of the steep slopes in that area with the associated avalanche risk. This timber hut was a self-catered one at the site of an old quarry and not of the same high standard as the others.

The following day there was another 7:00am start, followed by 5 hours of climbing and traversing on mainly icy surfaces, to gain 900m and the Dix Hut. This was another beautifully-constructed, 3-level stone structure perched on a pinnacle above two glaciers, with outstanding views of the wall of Mont Blanc de Cheillon. We arrived just before midday and then enjoyed an extended lunch on the stone balcony, soaking up the sun and panorama.

It was back to work that afternoon for a 600m climb of an adjacent snow peak and our maximum height for the trip at 3550m - the Matterhorn was visible from the summit. I was certainly slightly breathless for the last 50-100m. The slopes had seemed reasonable for an exhilarating downhill run but did not live up to expectations with breakable crust, difficult powder and some icy surfaces. Near the base we were rewarded with some typically Australian Spring snow and were able to relax with some easy turns.

The hut could accommodate about 100 and the numbers gradually built up to about 60 with some parties arriving at 6:30-7:00pm. One Japanese group with a guide included a ski-mountaineering beginner. They had had a very long slow trip, having made a 4:30am start. It was no wonder the poor man just laid on the snow without removing pack or skis for half an hour after arriving at the hut.

There had been high cirrus cloud throughout the day and a change was expected. Our brilliant weather came to an end and we woke to 10cm of new snow, wind and limited visibility. There was no option but to exit to Arolla by the shortest route. A short ski across the glacier was followed by a 35m ascent of a cliff-face by way of steel ladders. Then it was off into the murk for a cautious downhill descent until we reached an established piste, where there was reasonable skiing for the last 2-3km to the village. We arrived about 1-1/2 hours before the scheduled time for our transport and enjoyed a leisurely cup of coffee. It was back to Argenti re for a reunion with the others. Kenn had been discharged from hospital the previous day and it was great to be all together again. Those who had remained at Argenti re had been enjoying some wonderful day tours with Richard, in that area. He joined us for our final night out at a local restaurant.

Those contemplating this type of trip need advanced downhill skiing skills plus a determination to plod up the long ascents with considerable weight on your feet - downhill gear with skins and ski crampons for icy sections. Unfortunately one is not always rewarded on the downhill descents. Some of these involve survival skiing and require no-falls technique. I often found myself thinking of our great spring snow conditions in Australia. I believe these are the best in the world.

Ode for Patrick (from Joan Rigby, source unknown)

Eye have a spelling checker
It came with my PC;
It plainly marks for my revue
Mistakes Eye cannot sea.
I've run this poem threw it
I'm shore your pleased to no
its letter perfect in it's weigh
My Checker told me sew.

Eighty Years of Conservation

The Fountain Court in Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney is the venue for the Colong Foundation's photography exhibition of the work of Alan Rigby and Henry Gold covering the period 1920 to 1997.

Opening dates and times are:

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| 9 am to 5 pm, | 22 Sept. to 3 Oct. with |
| 9 pm closing | 23, 24 and 25 Sept. only. |

Can We Believe What We Sea?

by Geoff Grace.

Way back in February 1988, I was one of a party of four led by Carol Bruce that traversed Tasmania's magnificent Western Arthurs. Apart from the first day or so, we experienced good weather with excellent visibility and fantastic views from the top of the dramatic saw-tooth peaks. Day after day, in perfect conditions, a long way in the distance between intervening mountains, could be seen the hard blue of the Southern Ocean. Somehow though, it seemed to me that too much of the sea was visible, considering its long distance from us. Was it thick sea haze or was the horizon line of the blue field in fact the true horizon of the sea?

I seemed to be alone in my view that the horizon we were viewing was not the true horizon of the sea. I was determined to check it out by calculations back in Sydney. From where we were on Mount Taurus, it was agreed that the line of sight to the (apparent) horizon intersected Precipitous Bluff slightly above the base of the Bluff's vertical line of cliff. This was an easily identifiable map feature and provided enough information to enable future calculations.

Out with maps, calculator and trigonometry books. By using the nominal radius of the earth along with the height of Mount Taurus, the angle of depression to the true horizon can be calculated. Knowing the distance between Taurus and Precipitous Bluff (38km) and using the previously calculated angle of depression to the true horizon, the contour on the Bluff at which line of sight to the true horizon should intersect, can be determined.

My calculations showed that the line of sight from Mount Taurus to the true sea-level horizon should intersect Precipitous Bluff close to the 430 metre contour. However, the junction of cliff and scree slope (close to the agreed intersection point) is in the vicinity of the 800 metre contour. In terms of scale, the difference between 800 and 430 metres is approximately equivalent to the total height from top to bottom of cliff line - hugely enough to cover viewing inaccuracies. It therefore appears that we were not viewing the true sea level horizon. I have since heard that false sea horizons from atmospheric affects over the Southern Ocean are not unusual. So far, my calculations have not been disproved but I welcome comments. Anyone for trigonometry?



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Kahurangi Kapers

by Sandy Larson

Part 1 the Heaphy Track of Sandy's Tour de New Zealand in two parts.

I've left my job and am in New Zealand with my 21-speed bike. "Retirement" is too strong a word; call it "indefinite leave". I had always wanted to do cycle touring around various parts of the world, but was not sure how I would go over the distances. NZ seemed like a good place to start and test myself out. I've allowed 4 months to get around both islands, see the country and do a few walks.

Well, I've made it to Nelson after about 2 months cycling around Northern New Zealand. I've done a few walks here and there around the North Island and the Sounds. But looming ahead is the famous Heaphy Track, regarded as one of the best in NZ. I'd missed it for one reason or another on previous trips, but not this time.

In to the Department of Conservation office in Nelson to organise 3 nights camping fees for \$6 per night. The Heaphy is now part of the newly formed Kahurangi National Park. It also has a "Great Walks" classification, meaning there are restrictions on where one can camp, and \$12 Hut fees.

My Nelson friend advised, "You also have to try the Wangapeka Track; it's totally different to the Heaphy and better in some ways". The Wangapeka is in the same park, roughly parallel to the Heaphy, and about 50 km south of it. Well, while I'm there....

Heaphy Track: Day 1:

On the bus at 7.30 am, \$40 to get to the start of the Heaphy track. Two changes of bus and some beautiful scenery get me to the track, along with about 10 other walkers, about 11.30 am. The weather has been looking cloudy and ominous, and it's raining as we start to walk.

The track is very wide and well defined; It was once surveyed to put a road through to the river mouth, which never happened. As a result nearly all the track is benched and with only gentle gradients. I climb gradually up through beech forest and drizzling rain, to the 915 m Flanagan's Corner viewpoint, the highest point on the track. Somewhere around here on a good day you are supposed to see Taranaki on the North Island, but certainly not today.

The weather has fortunately cleared by the time I get to Perry Saddle Hut, 16 km and nearly 5 hours walk. I pitch camp on the driest wet patch of ground. The hut is rather crowded from the bus people, but it's good to talk to all the other travellers.

Day 2: The plan is to go 24 km today to get to Mackay Hut. But I wake up with some kind of virus, a queasy gut and sore/weak all over. Must content myself with 13 km to Saxon Hut, with rest and frequent toilet stops. At least the weather is good. The track leads onto Goulund Downs, a broad "peneplain" with beautiful views over the red tussock.

Near the picturesque Goulund Downs hut I encounter two other walkers, a Netherlander and a New Zealander, who are over the moon about having seen a real live Kiwi bird walking around in broad daylight. "Yes it was really a Kiwi and we could get right up to it and we've got photos to prove it." They are spreading the news to every other walker they meet.

Goulund Downs contains a Karst area with lots of limestone formations, arches etc. to explore. Unfortunately I'm not feeling up to it today.

On through tussock and bush and riverbeds to Saxon Hut about 2 pm. That's enough for me that day. Some afternoon rain anyway. I have a much needed rest the remainder of the day, can't eat a lot.

Day 3: Felt a bit better today, but not much. 11 km to Mackay Hut and 12 km to Lewis. This part of the track has grassy river flats and Indiana Jones bridges to cross the rivers. Mostly level or downhill walking, with tussock and beech vegetation. The rocks and gravel are a beautiful pink granite, some of the oldest rocks in NZ. At the Mackay Hut, which is still high up, I am treated to a magnificent view down the Heaphy Valley right to the river mouth and the sea beyond; the best view on the track.

From there the track descends gradually to the Heaphy River and Lewis Hut. Again I've had enough for the day. Besides, this is a beautiful area to stop and enjoy, the junction of the Lewis and Heaphy Rivers. The tannin-coloured but clear Heaphy River offers an opportunity for a luxurious swim.

Sandflies are a real nuisance on the NZ west Coast; they land on any exposed skin, especially the ankles, and bite like rottweilers. You have to cover up completely. Fortunately they sleep after dark.

Day 4: Gradually feeling a bit better. I negotiate a couple of long swing bridges to cross the Lewis and Heaphy Rivers, then down the Heaphy for 8 km to Heaphy Hut. The beech forest has by now given way to podocarp (NZ pine) forest and nikau palms. This part of NZ has mild weather, and some of the vegetation is almost subtropical in nature. A few more swing bridges are provided to cross side creeks. Heaphy Hut is in another pretty area at the Heaphy mouth. Lots of sandflies but nice to stop for lunch and go for a wander on the driftwood-covered beach. I wouldn't mind staying there but feel I should get on, as I have only passes for 3 nights.

From Heaphy Hut it's 16 km along the coast to Kohaihai River and the track end. It's generally flat, and the track runs mostly parallel to and just back of the beach/rocks, with occasional excursions along the sand. The surf roars on one side and hills rise up with wind-sculptured bush on the other. Calender-perfect scenery, with weather to match. The sandflies make stopping for rests uncomfortable.

In to the carpark about 4.30 pm, just in time to catch a lift the 20 or so km into Karamea. I find a Backpackers hostel to stay at, and into the pub for a couple of beer and a feast of soup, garlic bread and roast beef dinner (well, I've earned it haven't I?). Starting to rain now, but I need a lay day here anyway to completely recover..

The Heaphy Track is not a spectacular track like some others might be. But it is pleasant, beautiful, and not overly intimidating. It's great selling point is the variety of scenery and vegetation over its length, from beech forest, tussock downs, river flats, limestone, podocarp and palms to ocean beach. Despite my temporary lack of good health, it was still eminently enjoyable.

Lay Day: A rest day looking around Karamea, sheltering from rain, organising Wangapeka passes at the DOC, and buying food. I don't need to buy much, as I didn't eat much on the Heaphy. Karamea is a friendly, pleasant place, off the beaten track and wonderfully laid back. Good for a holiday on its own.

Carlton, Albert Arthur (Bert) of Carlton's Farm, died: 23 July 1997, aged 73 years; Bert was an honorary member of SBW. Details next month.

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June 1997 General Meeting.

Everyone else was out of town or something so your scribe took the chair for this one. If the notes are more scrappy than usual it's as good a reason as any other. We finally assembled the necessary quorum at around 2004 and began the meeting with approximately 20 members present. Surprisingly there were no apologies. New members Geoff Murphy, Klaus Umland, Melanie Andrews, Diane More, and Jacque Hunt were welcomed in the usual way.

The minutes were read and received with the only matter arising being notice from the treasurer of a deposit of moneys to a cash management fund.

There was correspondence from D. Turner, from Pam Allan the NSW minister and NPWS, providing details of the road closure at Newhaven Gap, and from the federal communications minister regarding the conservation fund.

The treasurer's report indicated that we began with \$13,371, received income of \$4,421, spent \$1,891 and closed with a balance of \$15,902.

The walks secretary was conducting a mapping test on some hapless prospective victim so the order of business was modified to give him time at his sport. Not only that, but the Conservation and Confederation reports were taken in reverse order due to a pervading belief the one has recently tended to overshadow the other. Why me! I could have been a lumberjack you know!

It seems the latest Confederation meeting was more interesting than average. As a result of the submission to the NSW government from the Public Land Users Group (PLUG) meeting, Confederation had received a letter from Keith Muir on behalf of the Colong Foundation protesting at the submission, and pointing out that it did not represent the views of many of the affiliated bodies, nor had it been agreed to by those bodies. Although Keith had been invited to the Confederation committee meeting by one of our delegates the meeting declined the offer for him to address the meeting. The committee debated the matter and passed a motion acknowledging that the president's engagement in the PLUG meeting had been intended to facilitate progress of the planning process. There were also

notes that the costs of printing the "Bushwalkers Code" were rising and that topo-image maps are being produced for seven areas north of Sydney.

The Confederation General Meeting, with 45 present, followed the Committee Meeting. A spirited debate commenced on the matter of the resolution from the Public Land Users Group and after a time the president was replaced in the chair to facilitate his ongoing engagement in the debate. The meeting exceeded the available time allowed and has been adjourned to another time.

Conservation report saw reference to a series of items placed on the notice board for general interest. An impact statement has been received for the proposed airport at Holsworthy. The ACF has provided details of possible adverse effects on environmental standards and controls in the event that leases are upgraded to freehold title as part of the government's response to the Wik decision. There are indications that funds from the Commonwealth Government's conservation fund (sic.), created from the sale of Telstra, will be used in job creation schemes in rural areas. Appeals for funds from both ACF and The Wilderness Society have focused attention on the re-direction of funds by the present Commonwealth Government away from these bodies. We have written to heads of the AEAMA workshop on access into Sydney Water restricted areas dissociating the club from views expressed in the Public Land Users Group submission. A NPWS ranger responded to our letter expressing our concerns at the evidence of increasing numbers of feral animals in the Kowmung River catchment. The letter included a request for assistance in a survey to determine the feral animal numbers in an area of the upper Kowmung. Unfortunately the letter reached us too late for us to organise a response through the usual channels. We replied asking for more notice on a future occasion. A further note on this may appear elsewhere in this magazine. Four SBWs attended a tour of the South East forest areas over the June long weekend.

At last it was time for the walks report, really! The weekend of 16, 17, 18 May saw Carol Lubbers with a party of 12 enduring a wet Friday night at the base campsite for her Tayan Pic/Pantoneys Crown trip. Conditions on the Saturday morning were marginal so they went up

Pipeline Pass later in the day. Sunday was a bit better so a remnant party of 7 set off to Pantoneys Crown. The small party made for rapid progress and they completed the walk early. They reported that the area of Pantoney's Crown near the visitor's book and the cairn has been extensively vandalised, with many of the pagoda formations smashed. There was no report for Kris Stephenson's walk out from Victoria Falls that weekend. There was also no report for Bill Ca... but wait, what's this, coming under the door? A slip of yellowed paper writ bold with details of a Bill Capon Nullo Mountain walk re scheduled to the weekend of 7, 8, 9 June! All those who can't stand the suspense may scan forward. The rest of us will continue our orderly chronological progress. Maureen Carter's Saturday 50 km stroll in the Royal went, under the leadership of Ken Smith on a beautiful day. There was a party of one. They all got along well together and even enjoyed views of the Hale-Bopp comet toward the conclusion of the trip. Bill Hope had 17 on his Sunday walk from Carlons. There was no report for Errol Sheedy's Waterfall to Heathcote trip on the Sunday.

Wilf Hilder's mid week walk went on Thursday 22nd with a party of 6 or 7.

The weekend of 23, 24, 25 May brought a touch of deja-vu with Maurice Smith scheduling another walk down Ettrema Creek. It must be becoming pleasantly cool in there by this time of year. The walk went, but no details were available to the meeting. Jim Rivers also had a trip in the Morton National Park programmed for that weekend. Unfortunately a member of the party suffered an ankle injury during Saturday morning, so they aborted the walk to assist in the return to the cars. Bill Holland led a party of 13 on his Saturday walk from Pennant Hills to Hornsby. The walk was described as delightful. They visited another natural arch and had afternoon tea at the leader's home. Tony Crighton's walk to Bluegum Forest the same day attracted a party of 14 on a nice day. They even managed to come out before dark. David Trinder led, or was pushed along, by the party of 7 on his walk to Mount Solitary on the Sunday. The day was clear and sunny so they took two lunches to enjoy it the more. They were a bit surprised when five base jumpers dropped in as they were crossing the Landslide on the return

leg. One can only presume the five have discussed approvals with NPWS, or possibly they take the view that it is not risk-taking if you do it right. For some reason our reporter at the meeting noted that there were no leeches. Must have been there in the rain once.

There was no report for Wilf's midweek walk on Thursday 29th although we are assured it did go.

The weekend of 30, 31 May, 1 June was all day walks. Tom Wenman led 20 on his test walk to Bluegum and back on Saturday, and Ken Smith had 3 on his walk from Springwood to Glenbrook the same day. They both reported cold conditions with Ken noting that the morning was glorious. Sunday saw Alan Mewett with a party of 16 braving the lantana maze somewhere out from Wondabyne. Nuri Chorvat led, or was led by, a team of 7 using the glorious day for a bit of map reading exercise on his walk out from Heathcote.

The June long weekend, 6, 7, 8, 9 June saw Kenn Clacher cancel his programmed walk from Kanangra Walls as he was still recovering from an injury sustained during a trip overseas. Bill Hope's walk on the Nattai saw a party of 9 enjoying beautiful winter conditions with cool sunny days and frosty mornings. Spiro had 10 on his walk to Mount Colong. Conditions were fine and cold, and the soak on the mountain was dry. The long awaited Bill Capon sortie to Nullo Mountain saw 4 members doing a bit of fiddling around to get in and out of Emu Creek. The going over the tops was easy and the views an excellent excuse to stop and catch one's breath. Ian Rennard had 9 on his Wondabyne to Yarramalong walk along the Great North Walk. Conditions were pleasant and the route well marked. Ken Cheng ran the only day walk that weekend. Well, mostly day walk, the party of 25 enjoyed the walk but ran out of light in the end.

General business saw a comment that Confederation should be engaging in the formation of a coalition of interests opposed to the proposed airport at Holsworthy. Announcements included notice that NPWS will be conducting a selective baiting program at Coolana to suppress dog numbers in the area. The meeting closed at around 2105.

July 1997 General Meeting.

The meeting began at around 2012 with some 15 or so members present and the president in the chair. That Tony is a natural born risk taker, again no symbols on the table! The world's going to the dogs I tell you! There were no apologies, although later in the meeting someone remembered someone, but it was all too late. There were also no new members.

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

Correspondence saw receipt of a leadership training and accreditation implementation guide from ORCA, with a cover letter from Nuri Chorvat. A motion that we write objecting to the guide as inappropriate for our organisation and refuse to participate was passed. We received a letter from Geoff Rigby noting the failure of the club to assist with the survey for feral animal numbers in the upper Kowmung River. Committee has responded to Geoff, pointing out the time scale problems encountered. NPWS wrote to us responding to our letter about weed infestation in the Shoalhaven River and asking to be advised of any other locations where there are problems. This was covered by a notice in last month's magazine. We received letters from the NSW cabinet, the relevant minister and Wayne Merton regarding the SE forest submission. Confederation also sent us a copy of the minutes of their latest meeting.

The treasurer's report was next, with news that we began with \$13,371, received income of \$2,741, spent \$12,070 and closed with a balance of \$4,042. Don't panic, most of the expenditure shown was a deposit to an interest bearing fund.

The walks secretary then rose to present the walks report, which went something like this. Wilf's mid week walk on Thursday 12 June probably went, but no details were available to the meeting. Saturday, June 14 saw Ken Smith leading a party of 2 on his walk out from Glenbrook. It was reported as a good walk, with an encounter with a Lyre bird so intent on practising mimicry and dance that it failed to notice the observers close at hand. John Poleson also had a walk that day, out from Wentworth Falls. Conditions were clear and crisp with good views. Whether the raisin toast was crisp or the views suburban, rural, or

wilderness on Patrick James' Sunday mystery walk, we know not, but cappuccino there was, and a good walk. Other than that all is mystery. Eddy Giacomel's walk had more details than anyone would have wanted. Those who read the article by Gail Crichton in the previous magazine will know all about it. There was a detail who walked out to Anvil Rock, a detail who went to get them, a detail who went back to get a vehicle, a detail who assisted Gail out to the vehicle, and even a detail who stood by her in those long hours at the hospital casualty department. The most important detail is that the entire party worked together to overcome the problem.

Ian Rannard's midweek trip in Brisbane Waters National Park went on the Tuesday with a party of four. Conditions were cold, windy and damp.

The weekend of 20, 21, 22 June saw fine clear conditions and a full moon for the party of 5 on Carol Lubbers' walk to The Castle in the Buddawang National Park. There was no report for Wilf Hilder's Stages 5 and 6 of the Great Illawarra Walk and Kenn Clacher's cross country ski trip did not go. Of the day walks, Zol Bodlay led his Marra Marra National Park walk on a nice day wearing a plaster cast on one arm. Ken Smith had 3 on his Faulconbridge to Lawson walk on a fine clear Sunday. The area is regrowing from earlier fires, but it is not clear whether this was the reason the party came out after dark at 1930 hours.

There were no details for Wilf's Thursday midweek walk from Cronulla but there was a general remark that Thursday is not proving to be popular with the masses. They're probably just not selling it properly, if we are to believe the advisers of our politicians.

Over the weekend of 28, 29 June the rain in the plain fell mainly on the rogaine, on Sunday at least. When Ken Smith says there were no Sydney Bushwalkers present we are left to wonder whether this is a second-hand report or whether Ken was wearing some other hat at the rogaine. Alan Wells' Saturday start walk out from Carlons did not go. Margaret Sheens' Saturday cycle trip around the coastline to Palm Beach did not go due to a clash of dates. If you left it to the last minute to book on Don Brooks' Sunday walk out from Glenbrook you would have been too late. It went on the Saturday with a party of 23! They also

encountered some spitting rain in the morning and rerouted the trip to avoid the hazard of wet rocks in the creeks. Carole Beales and Kris Stephenson led a party of 15 on their Sunday walk from Newport to Manly in changeable conditions. The rain that prevailed between Newport and Narrabeen caused some dropouts, but the rest of the party completed the trip.

There was no report for Wilf Hilder's midweek walk on Thursday the 3rd of July.

Ken Smith's Faulconbridge to Lawson trip over the weekend of 5, 6 July did not go. There was no report for Ken Cheng's Saturday walk in his backyard or for George Mawer's Sunday navigation training and exercise walk out from Glenbrook. Dick Weston had 9 from 17 starters on his Sunday walk to Mount Solitary and back. There was a persistent drizzle that wet the bushes and spread the party out on the return leg so they arrived at the end over a 45 minute period.

There was no report for Ian Rannard's midweek walk on the Tuesday. Possibly not the most inspirational end to the walks reports, but there you have it.

Conservation report brought mention of the continuing Sydney Water Corporation's Adaptive Environmental Assessment and Management Process for determining access controls on the restricted catchment areas. We are to lodge a submission. A plan of management for the Wollemi area is available. This includes a recovery plan for the Wollemi Pine.

Confederation committee meeting saw tabling by Nuri Chorvat of a 35 page procedure for document handling. Confederation's budget was debated and an increase of 25 cents in capitation fees approved. A maximum limit of \$1400 per club will apply. By reducing the extent of mail outs to member clubs a saving in postal costs has been achieved. This amount has been added to the conservation funds.

Confederation General Meeting has passed a motion approving of the newer photo-topo maps. A proposal to spend around \$8,000 on brochures was defeated. Agreement is near for blanket consent arrangements covering risk taking activities in areas controlled by NPWS.

Details of the 70th anniversary activities will have appeared in the magazine by the time you read

this. If you haven't already done so, lodge your reservations soon.

There was no general business to present so we moved to the announcements, and closed the meeting at around 2118

For Your Information, Knowledge Convenience and Consideration.

At Katoomba

Paddy Pallin has a new store in Katoomba (166b Katoomba Street) which will service local walkers, and give walkers visiting the Blue Mountains an opportunity to purchase last minute items, including maps & guidebooks, before their trips, as well as providing a source of knowledge & advice about the local area and conditions. Tel: (047) 824466.

At Parramatta

The Paddy Pallin Parramatta store has relocated to 74 Macquarie Street, just around the corner from the old location. The new store is bigger, brighter and carries more stock & therefore offers more customer options. Tel: (02) 9633 1113.

At Jindabyne

Ex SBW member, Peter Sharp operating as Halcyon Guiding Services, offers fly fishing instruction and guiding (its a hard life but someone has to do it). Call Peter on 064 56 1438.

At Kangaroo Valley

All SBW members and their guests (family, kids, spouses, significant others, etc.) are invited to take part in the working bees at **Club Coolana**. See the walks program for details. Coolana is looking beautiful at present and further work is required to make the place perfect for the 70th Anniversary Reunion on 11 and 12 October 1997.

In Sydney

Bookings are now open for the 70th Anniversary Dinner on 17 October. Tickets are \$30 per person and **MUST** be booked before hand, no ticket sales on the evening itself (repeating, no ticket sales, nil tickets i.e. zero ticket sales at the venue itself) because we have to plan ahead, balance our budget and advise the numbers attending so the right number of potatoes can be peeled.

Lawrence Graham Harrison (Mouldy)

by Christine Austin

On June 13th 1997, I was one several Sydney Bushwalkers who attended Mouldy's funeral at St. Chad's Anglican Church, Cremorne Point. The congregation was overflowing, testimony to my parents' words "Mouldy has friends everywhere". During the service Ruth Tridgell, Mouldy's niece (daughter of Ken Harrison, Mouldy's brother) read the following extract from one of Mouldy's bushwalking diaries.

April 1931 (aged 22) We followed the river for some distance, making several crossings;- then a clearing - open grassland with giant bluegums - huge trees seeming all the more massive because of the absence of scrub or undergrowth. All round the trees, to their very trunks, grew a brownish green grass. There we had our lunch. Again the good, nourishing, quickly prepared damper, cheese and honey, and two prunes each, with of course, plenty of tea. The river oaks at the edge of the clearing were particularly large, being in many cases 150 feet high. The staghorns and crow's nest ferns seemed to thrive on these trees.

On our way. Through shaded jungle, past enormous ficus trees, one of which sheltered Jean and Ernie in a cavity between the roots - through small patches of stinging nettles and through the river. We made 33 crossings, most of which were wet ones. We passed two more open patches of country and finally stopped in an open gum forest. Here our tents were pitched; then firewood gathered, and soon after we enjoyed a swim in the happy Boonabilla creek. We had a really beautiful bathing pool right at our side door.

Then - Oh Wonderful! A savory pottage - the Stew! It was eaten with much readiness by us all. The sweets consisted of stewed apples and custard.

Here mention might be made of the camp routine.

Packs down. Ernie would select the tent sites, Jean start unpacking the food, and Mouldy collecting firewood for the cooking fire; then Ernie and Mouldy would get the fire sticks and tent poles, and portion of the wood for a large fire. Erection of the tents by Ernie and Mouldy - Jean industriously cooking tea. A joint gathering

of large firewood - Jean still cooking tea. A wash, and then, Jean having finished cooking tea, consumption thereof.

After tea would come a short period for digestion and washing up. Afterwards, the cooking fire having been greatly enlarged, would come one of the greatest delights of camping - the 'Camp-Fire', round which all signs of formality and shyness are forgotten. Tongues are loosened, opinions aired, and friendships ripened. It is the peaceful solitude, the quiet calm, and childlike trust in each other that make it so delightful.

I think that he who can really appreciate the 'camp-fire' is tasting of 'The solid joys and lasting pleasures'.

Extract from a letter written in May 1953 to a friend in London

At Easter time I think I had the most perfect walking trip for some years. The weather was excellent, warm, and yet a tinge of Autumn in the evenings. The Shoalhaven River was like velvet and Bungonia Creek still had its wonderful properties for cleaning ones toenails.

Below are some extracts from a short autobiography Mouldy wrote on 16/5/89. The complete version was read at his funeral. I have included it for those who were not fortunate enough to know this remarkable man. Thank you to Ruth Tridgell for allowing us to print it.

To start at the beginning, I was born on the 18th April 1909, weighed 9lbs and had short black hair. At the age of 4½ I was allowed to go on stage and recite a nursery rhyme. A little later I contracted polio and was confined to bed for 18 months. They had to roll me over and prop me there with a pillow and an hour or two later roll me on the other side. It was during this period that my interest in flowers started, as school friends would bring in things like rose buds which would hold my interest as I watched them unfold day by day. I still remember vividly the wooden saucer with moist blotting paper and mustard-cress sown on it. Since then I have always maintained an interest in plants and gardening.

We moved from Strathfield to Warrawee when I was 7 and stayed there for three years, later going to Wahroonga, Turrumarra, Killara and for the last 50 years I have been at Cremorne Point.

I went to school at Warrawee Public School for 3 years, later going to Wahroonga Grammar School and then on to Barker College. I had an undistinguished record at school but did manage to pass the Intermediate Certificate.

In 1923 my father, with one secretary, started A. S. Harrison & Co. to import raw materials for the rubber & paint trades, later including the plastics trade. I joined them in 1928. Our offices were then in Clarence Street, where we remained until 1970. At the end of 1939 we commenced making factice which we had previously imported from Britain. As the war had broken out export licences were no longer available so Bill Purnell suggested that we make it. This we did, and still do to this day. In 1936 I made my first commercial trip to England, spending 9 months there before returning home after spending 6 weeks in America.

I have had a further 15 trips to the UK since, and about the same number to the USA. The most interesting trip to London was in 1971 when I flew to Katmandu and then joined a Penn Tour Group traveling by bus from there to London. It took ten weeks and was filled with interest. Only one member of the party died on the way. My trips abroad have included visits to Russia, Alaska, China, Iceland, Mexico, Nepal, South America.

In 1928 I joined the Sydney Bushwalkers and was a very active member for about 40 years; in fact at a recent party to celebrate my birthday there were ten walking friends whom I had known for a period of over 50 years! I still meet with Dungallas, who are also known as the "Geriatric Section" of the Sydney Bushwalkers.

As mentioned at the beginning, I had an early interest in flowers which developed into horticulture, and I became a member of the Royal Horticultural Society in England about 50 years ago. When in England I try to visit the Wisley Gardens at least once or twice per trip, and I have been lucky in attending four different Chelsea Flower Shows. I have a fair knowledge of plant names, which is mistaken for a knowledge of gardening!

When in a foreign city, and I have time to spare, I visit the art gallery or museum and go straight to the Chinese porcelain section. In 1974 I went to China and found my visit especially interesting,

seeing so many places that had made the old Chinese porcelains, as well as modern kilns. One factory had been producing continually for 600 years.

Since 1937 I have been associated with the Chamber of Commerce, Sydney, and for many years with the Chamber of Manufactures. I have attended international conferences with the Australian delegation of the International Chamber of Commerce in Vienna, Madrid, Manila, Stockholm, and last year in Istanbul.

I was invited to join the C.E.M.A. which later became the Arts Council of Australia. I remained on the State Council for 25 years. The idea was to take the arts to the country and also bring country drama to the city. It functioned very satisfactorily in a great number of country towns.

We staged the first performance of "Corroborree" in the old Empire Theater with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Later it was restaged at the old Grand Opera House for the Queen's visit. During my years with the Arts Council we had a lot to do with Opera groups. I have since enjoyed opera performances in many countries of the world.

I was an original subscriber to the ABC Symphony orchestral concerts and in fact arranged for a group of 53 other people to join at the same time. I am still a subscriber to the orchestral series of Symphony Concerts.

I was a foundation member of the Plastics Institute of Australia and was on that Council for twelve years, twice as president. Along the way I collected the George Milne Memorial Medal from the Institution of the Rubber Industry; the Plastics & Rubber Institute in England awarded me the Hancock Medal for Meritorious Service to their industry, and Her Majesty the Queen somehow heard about me and in 1981 slipped me an OBE for service to Australian industry and commerce.

I have been a church warden of St. Chad's Anglican Church at Cremorne Point. I am also a Life Member of the National Trust and Art Gallery Society and a number of other bodies.

For the last twenty years I have been Governing Director of A S Harrison & Co and associated companies. I still go to the office each day and enjoy being there. I am looking forward to a full and active life for many years to come.

Scone to Sydney via the Hunter Valley !

by Almis Simankevicius

Similar to a grand bushwalk, I was tempted and challenged by the prospect of some country cycling. Carol and I have been with the Sydney Bushwalkers for 12 years and wanted to pick up the pace again. Cycling and bushwalking have a number of similar aspects; the feeling of movement and exploration coupled with your own efforts bring a sense of accomplishment. So here we go.

An ominous growl followed us up the highway as a gigantic coal truck whooshed past, the side draught causing us to wobble on our bikes. You'd be flatter than a pancake if one of those babies hit you. Enroute between Scone and Sydney on a 7 day cycling trip this 8 km of road between Branxton and Belford was a tense, rubber in your face experience. The enormity of the coal trucks and the constant stream of traffic played havoc with our balance. It was a relief to turn off into vineyard country at Belford (North Pokolbin). Within a few kilometres we would be comfortably ensconced at the Thistle Inn Guesthouse.

We first got the idea of a Scone cycling trip from Leigh Hemmings book - 'Great Australian Bike rides'. I had missed out on the RTA 1996 Big Ride and still felt like an outdoors holiday. Carol began warming to the idea so we outfitted her 25 year old Peugeot with a pannier rack, a rear flag and lights. My MTB had panniers, lights and a cycloputer. We would be staying at motels and guest houses.

We booked the Countrylink train to Scone and booked our bikes on as well, being at Hornsby station 50 minutes before departure so that we could box our bikes for train freight. It turned out that the luggage officer was a keen cyclist and was planning to cycle across Russia in the future.

Three and a half hours later we disembarked with bikes at Scone Station in the late afternoon sun and went searching for a quiet motel. We had never cycled such distances before (about 340 kms) so we wanted to get a good night's rest before we started out the next day.

Next morning the weather was magnificent and T-shirts were the go. If this was winter, then give me

more. We left Scone and followed the quiet rural roads towards Lake Glenbawn dam. The countryside and ambience were reminiscent of France. We marvelled at our awareness of the surroundings. Travelling at an average speed of 14 km/hr cyclists tend to be far more in touch with and alert to their environments.

It was pleasant to stop for morning coffee from the thermos near a clear water stream at the base of the dam. A few more hills further on , and accompanied by the chirping of birds enjoying the sunshine we rolled into Aberdeen. Being Saturday afternoon, we had arrived at Croft's Bakery for pies and cakes just before closing time. The proprietress wasn't aware that her shop was mentioned in the guide book, so it was a pleasant surprise for her.

Crossing the mighty Hunter river, we followed some lovely quiet back roads. Through pastures of dairy cattle and lucerne fields. It was green and lush here, but not as lush as the local farmers would have liked.

The scene was English bucolic as we spied the two church spires of Muswellbrook in the distance. It had cooled down by now and were glad to be close to accommodation. Finding a map of the town took some doing, and eventually we pointed our bikes in the direction of the John Hunter motel with pool, hot spa and McDonald's next door.

You know the old saying-'red sky in the morning, shepherd's warning.' There were lots of pinky red clouds next morning and I thought that it was time to get out the wet weather gear (Gortex coats and trousers), but the colourful clouds dissipated and we welcomed another glorious sunny day.

However it was to be a long day and full of decisions. Would we stop here? Would we go there? You know that sort of day. The plan was to cycle to Singleton via Jerry's Plains. Maps are so deceptive to the unwary. We were learning that squiggly lines meant hills. Ever the optimist, I kept saying 'we'll make it, just keep cycling' So, 73 kms to go.

We followed the Edderton road and then turned left into the Denman to Singleton road. This road to Jerry's Plains was fantastically smooth with a

gentle downward gradient. With the wind behind us, we made extra good time. Truly exhilarating. It made up for all the previous slopes and hills.

Travelling at these speeds (30-45km/hr) ideas of safety flashed through my mind. 'What would happen if the wheel nut came off, what if the cars couldn't see us? I pushed these doubts out of my mind quickly. We were wearing reflective vests similar to ones worn by council workers, and they were highly visible. We had checked all our equipment before we left Sydney, so were quietly confident. However, knowing that the toolkit was complete gave us added peace of mind.

Pushing on to Singleton we encountered the rolling hills amongst coal mining country, and lots of electricity pylons. We had cycled 66 kilometers and were now out of puff. A chain had come off Carol's bike so we had to stop. Over the top of the crest a four wheel drive moved towards us and slowed down to check us out. A guardian angel in the disguise of Robert asked if we needed a lift into town. Singleton was still 8 kilometers away; was the pope a catholic? Yes - please.

Fairoak, the bed and breakfast in Singleton that we had booked beforehand, was just the slice of luxury and comfort that we deserved after a long and tiring day. We slept in.

Singleton is set on a plain. So when the winds came howling across, it was lovely to be cosseted inside enjoying breakfast, music and heaps of magazines, waiting for an appropriate time to begin the day's cycling.

Finally we left Singleton, taking a wonderfully quiet route through Glendon and Ellersie mainly following ridges from which we saw the convoluted topography of this region. By now our muscles had become accustomed to the daily exercise and we were feeling fit. Cycling across the mighty Hunter river yet again and up a monster of a hill. Then came the delightful descent to Branxton. Unfortunately the historic Branxton Inn was closed, so we couldn't try their cappuccinos for which they are famous.

Then that eight kilometers of tense highway to Belford, where we turned into Hermitage road and the haven of the wine country. There are a lot of

guest houses in this area and we had already booked at the Thistle Inn. A clean, simply appointed establishment run by Teddy Twonames (nickname) and his wife. Quiet surroundings with Chloe the tame kangaroo and the duck. Excellent hospitality with half a bottle of wine included. We were getting used to good living by now and dinner that night was at the Heritage restaurant down the road. Huge servings beside an open fire.

Breakfast was served under a cloudless sky. We could smell the grapes in the air as we cycled through the evocative vineyards. The whole vista was inspiring; the huge Brokenback ranges in the distance framing the vine clad hills. A medium amount of traffic. We joined the Tyrells winery tour. Our tour guide, a Scot with a keen sense of humour made it memorable. He mentioned three of Tyrells employees; Jack who lifts the barrels up at one end, Dwayne who empties them, and Phil who has the job of refilling them with new brews. He also told us that acetic acid is another name for English wine. Tasting next.

Carol ordered a mixed case of Tyrells, not the English wine. All this tasting had given us an appetite, so we cycled off to McGuigan Brothers to buy some cheese from the Hunter Cheese factory. I love brie and camembert, and there was a gourmet's selection to choose from. The only remaining gastronomic item in this meal was fresh crusty bread, and that we procured from Sylvester Bros. bakery in Cessnock later that afternoon. That night we stayed in Nulkaba guesthouse, a double storey house based on an American design, run by Val and Jack.

Carol had ridden over a piece of metal which had fractured the outer layer of her tyre. Cessnock bicycle shop proved to be just the place for repairs. Two new tyres and a replacement water bottle for her and a mirror for me. My semi slicks had kept in good condition throughout. It was a change to walk around Cessnock's shopping centre instead of being perched upon our bikes.

Now fully equipped again, we found our way to the information booth to check the best way to Morisset. Best to cross the mountains at the legendary Heaton Gap we were informed. So along route 82 we set out. The road was smooth

and well graded; the pseudo bike lane gave us a sense of safety. Another warm sunny day.

Our muscles were working again as we saw the signs to the approaching Gap. Fortunately, just before the beginning of the incline, we spied a welcoming oasis nestled amongst a cluster of trees. How could we miss stopping for 'Devonshire coffee' at Rose cottage?

Ah. Fortified again. The incline beckoned (we couldn't avoid it any longer), so we put our best pedals forward and gradually ascended, dismounting and walking when it was too steep. Actually, it wasn't that much tougher than some of the previous hills that we had cycled over.

The descent was magnificent. All the perspiration was blown away by the wind as we experienced an effortless freewheeling downhill ride. At the base the road continued, occasionally crossing high over the Newcastle freeway.

We chose Dora Creek as our overnight stop. This is a tranquil spot sited in a lovely backwater area on Lake Macquarie. Very appealing, however no accommodation could be found. And they like it that way - in Dora Creek. So, onto Morisset to the Bay Hotel Motel at Bonnell's Bay. This is part of a sprawling village shopping centre. The fish and chips went down well with stout.

There was a noticeable change in the air the next morning. Still sunny, but with a real chill. Pastries and coffee while observing the magpies. A shift in our journey had occurred. The road was very busy, a chilly headwind and the realisation that in 36 hours we would be back in Sydney had diluted some of the easy, free feeling that we had till then.

On the map, our route to the Entrance had looked idyllic, but the repetitive streams of traffic kept irritating me. A morning tea of local cakes at a park in Wyee. Through Doyalson and Budgewoi we cycled till a side trip brought us to the Norah Head lighthouse. By now the weather had darkened, the roads from earlier rain. Rugged solid clouds, the grey tossed sea and the cold wind gave this headland a feeling of bleak adventure. Back on the road, a rain shower made us cycle faster in case it turned out to be a real drencher.

Over the wide spanned bridge at the Entrance and into Shelley Beach where we searched for a comfortable night's accommodation. The Palm Court motel in Bateau Bay had just the right feel about it, and Veronica made us very welcome. Dinner was taken in the adjoining restaurant and we complimented the 23 year old chef and owner on his fare. The carpetbagger steak was fantastic.

Our final day. There was 20 kilometers of cycling yet to reach Gosford from where we could catch the Citylink train back to Sydney. The traffic was now just plain irritating. Drivers were not discourteous - there were just too many of them! This was like cycling in busy Sydney suburbs. We had been pampered by the quiet open spaces and roads of the Upper Hunter Valley. We turned into the main street of Gosford and took a last breather at the pleasant memorial park.

I thought, as the train crossed the Hawkesbury river - what an absolutely fabulous holiday it had been!

Wild Call of the Wild, Steve Lengarkis

*The wind dropped, the storm passed,
fast lifting fog revealed new peaks;
hungry dingoes still howling down the gorge.
Stop! Stop for a moment and listen:
Can you hear the wild call of the Wild?*

*Colourful tents popped up like giant mushrooms
under the poor shade of tired casuarinas,
the creek below murmurs suspiciously,
the dirty billy is boiling angry.
Can you hear the wild call of the Wild?*

*Down Dingoe Creek
a new rhapsody echoes,
as bellbirds and lyrebirds challenge each other.
Can you hear the wild call of the Wild?*

*The sun sets fire over Wild Dog mountains,
the whole campsite glows pure gold!
Stop! Stop for a moment and listen:
listen to the magic flute of silence,
to the whispering voice of the dreaming Bush.
Can you hear the wild call of the Wild?*

Golden Stairs - Mt. Solitary - Kedumba River - Kings Tableland - Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital on Sunday, 13 July 1997

The original leader, Bill Hope, had to fly to Europe on business on the day before, so Carol Lubbers took up the challenge. Party: Steven Belfor (P), Michael Bickley, Ian Morrey (P), Roger Treagus & David Trinder

The day dawned damp in the Blue Mountains, but not in Sydney. After waiting and waiting for 4 members who did not bother to tell us they would not be participating, we launched ourselves half an hour late from the Golden Stairs with 6 very keen starters, ultimately making for a very brisk pace, enhanced later by a very brisk, cold and wet airflow! We were subsequently advised by a group of CMW walkers who descended Wall's Pass it had snowed briefly on Narrowneck and Mt. Solitary that day.

The sun shone weakly as we ascended the Mount and we raised quite a sweat! Along the tops, we were treated to views in different directions at each vantage place we stopped, directions new to some of us, giving a whole new aspect on the geography and geology of the area. Far along, near a very nice campsite beside a steepening gully, we found an interesting creek leading to a little canyon leading to a drop, all of which we thought could be investigated, next time. We marvelled at how we were going to conquer Kings Tableland that afternoon. As we progressed, it became obvious where we would exit the Kedumba Valley - a great ochre slash zigzagged the cliffside, indicating the Water Board access road.

Due to sudden icy cold wind carrying light rain, we shortened our lunchbreak at the end of Solitary and scuttled down off the Mount, thanking our lucky stars that we didn't have to walk UP that way. I do not remember it being THAT steep when I carried a weekend pack up there 5 years ago! (But that was before 5 operations, I suppose.) The rain steadily increased and the temperature steadily decreased. No-one wanted to stop for long, so we streaked on down the ridge towards the Kedumba River. By now, our lovely views were blotted out by misty rain clouds through the whole valley.) We could just see a rapidly disappearing dark patch above us which we guessed was our lunch spot.

Crossing the Kedumba River was by flying leap. Unfortunately for a few, the crawl under a huge log was marred by nettles and the unwary learned quickly about the efficacy of dock leaves. We followed a marked track up, up, up, ever up the ridge to the Water Board road system and then hit the REAL hill. You could tell we were on the home stretch - the racehorses took off. After all, it was the last day of the school holidays and they had heard about the traffic jams on the Great Western Highway.

Plodding on and on, up the beastly cliffside, which no-one believed we could ever climb when viewed from Mt. Solitary earlier that day. We zigged and zagged the big W shaped road and, just when I thought we were at the top, there was MORE up, all the time, flanked by what appeared to be pristine lush green vegetation. Quite beautiful. The bush there does not seem to have suffered much from the interference of regular road grading. No time to stop, it was too cold and wet. Someone had leg cramps because of the cold and dragged at the back of our little pack, now strung out with David towing me up the cliff road. Damn those glasses of red wine the night before.

By 3.30 PM, we had all arrived at the cars, one raced off to Sydney to beat the traffic and 5 of us crammed into Michael's new SAAB with the HEATED front seats (and everything else that opened and shut, switched on and off, either automatically or intentionally, including a thermometer which indicated 3 degrees C). Car heater on FULL, wet pants slowly drying, we set off for Katoomba. Most pleasant sensation, that intermittent hot flush from the basement! Highly recommended under the circumstances! The fellas in the back seat had to content themselves with cuddling together. The SAAB got an approval rating of 11 out of 10.

Lightening fast change of clothes performed at Narrowneck (too cold to even change my underwear) and then on to the Parakeet for hot chocolate, hot coffee, hot food, hot, hot, hot anything to thaw us out.

Despite the weather, we were all glad that we had completed the walk to programme as the area was one we each had been curious to visit or re-visit for some time. Thank you, Bill, in your absence, for the opportunity.

CAPE YORK ADVENTURE

An exploratory walk in the McIlwraith Range by Tom Wenman

"There it is, 'Hill 824', the highest point in the range hereabouts. Now we shall be able to check our location, and from there it should be easy to locate the old, Leo Creek gold mine track" So hopes ran high as we poked our heads above the rainforest and scrub of the McIlwraith Range for a rare glimpse of the country through which we were walking. The trip notes, quoting from an earlier expedition, had said that due to the vegetation and terrain, navigation was a nightmare, we had found this to be so right. We set a bearing for the 'Hill' and plunged once more in the scrub and rainforest of this remarkable area.

There were nine of us on Morie Ward's exploratory walk in the McIlwraith Range, a seldom visited area of rainforest, rugged creeks, gorges and ridges. In fact to say the area was seldom visited is an understatement as the last known visit by a walking party was about ten years ago and before that, since the turn of the century, it is not known, other than no doubt the occasional prospector. Apparently, not even the aborigines ventured into this area. We had departed Cairns by charter aircraft for Coen after having been entertained by our good friend John Hogan, now a tour guide and operator in Cairns.

The country surrounding Coen is rather dry, open bush, at this time of year, grazed by the occasional small herds of cattle. We left Coen with our +20kilo packs containing our food for the next thirteen days at about midday. It was hot and the packs were heavy. A local was heard to opine that whatever we had done, it surely would have been easier to go to goal! Our first marker was the local slaughter yards, after that we were on our own. A small but pleasant and swimmable creek encouraged the first afternoon tea of the trip and we relaxed gratefully in the shade of the trees. Peter lit a fire and boiled the billy, the first of many, mostly very pleasant. We camped that night in a rather dry rainforest much frequented by cattle alongside a creek with pools of water similarly visited, but we had seen our first Cooktown Orchid in flower and we were into our trip after all the planning and thoughts about it. Our next campsite was much more congenial, by a

delightful rocky creek with a substantial flow of water. An absolute delight of pools and cascades and waterfalls as we found on exploring it. Two days we camped here, exploring the area and carrying out some reconnaissance for our continued journey. Some wild life included a possible Papuan Frogmouth, some tortoises, a wallaby or two, and a charming yellow tree snake, which was most unconcerned by our presence. There were many orchids which gratified Morie's heart no end, and many birds which Kerry enjoyed spotting, as well as Hoop Pine, a feature of the area, Umbrella and Pandanus trees, Bottle Brush and a host of other rainforest and tropical trees. Had we thought we were in a hitherto untrod area this was sadly, but interestingly denied by an iron wheelbarrow wheel found by Kerrie in the vicinity of the camp.

The push north east continued after this pleasant interlude, but another two days of base camping followed whilst we again explored the area and our onward path. This time we were camped by a pleasant and placid creek shaded by paper barks, our tents disposed in open grassland shaded by casuarina and small gums. On our arrival Michele had had an encounter with a snake, our second that day, mine had occurred earlier causing me to indulge in some nimble footwork albeit with my still heavy pack. Owen however had caused the greatest stir that afternoon when his carefree rendition of 'The Teddy Bears Picnic' was interrupted by a wild shout and a remarkable turn of speed, uphill with pack, in rather too close company with a nasty large black pig. Piggy fortunately went his own way with much relief to all. Our exploration up the creek enabled us to establish with some approximation, our position, as following Rosemary's initiative, she, Michele and Morie were able to climb a small hill with some rocks on top which provided a view to the east. Really however it was Peter's day when he grasped without noticing a Green Tree Python tightly coiled around a sapling. We were overjoyed at his discovery, and the somewhat placid but alert creature allowed us all to photograph it without stirring.

Thus far the days had been pleasantly warm, about 24 degrees but the evenings developed a cool wind which encouraged a splendid campfire each night, whose warmth we enjoyed, together with a gentle fragrance from some of the wood which we

were burning.

We continued our north easterly walk after these two days, into the heart of the range which we were exploring, and into the next creek system. The relatively easy days which we had pursued thus far however, were about to come to an end. It was on this day, our sixth that we sighted and eventually climbed most of the way up 'Hill 824', passing through some rather pleasant rainforest, much drier than that found in the cool temperate areas in NSW. In fact we rather anticipated our arrival at this hill, climbing what turned out to be two subsidiary hills, the second of which gave us splendid views to the west, all the way to the gulf, but which also revealed the true 'Hill 824' still a little to our north. The ascent of 'The Hill' proved a somewhat difficult slow and tiring task. Forcing our way through the notorious vine thickets, took us so long and was so tiring that we gave it best on the final saddle. Time it was to look for a campsite and find water. This too proved a frustrating task as we plunged through the thick scrub on the plateau. Eventually we found a patch of rainforest and were pleased to find a creek, just flowing with water, where we joined a local group of garrulous frogs for the night. I should explain that 'Hill 824' was significant rather as an indicator of where we were rather than an objective in its own right. Our objective was the old disused Leo Creek Gold mine, there to explore the vicinity and the eastern escarpment, which is very rugged and scenic.

The next day our push north east was continued, and we had high hopes of encountering and following the old 4WD track to the mine. Despite a long and tiring day however it was not to be, and we camped that night on a classic tropical rainforest creek, complete with leeches, and some light rain. We were almost it seemed, prisoners of the forest, enveloped by its tall palm and large leafed trees, and tangle of ferns and vines.

A subdued and gloomy dawn slowly heralded the new day. We felt sure we would find the track today but some time before noon, as neither it nor recognisable feature had been seen Morie decided that as we were unfamiliar with the country and uncertain quite how long it would take us to get off the escarpment, the 1:100,000 map showed some fearsome territory, we should begin our withdrawal. Reluctantly therefore we changed the

direction of our march to north west. The map reading continued to be very difficult as we tried to identify the numerous Hoop Pine crowned ridges and rivers which we encountered. That night we camped on a hill in sight of the western plain, but it was still a long way off, and we still had to find a relatively agreeable descent to it. Had any previous traveller shared this view we wondered?

All next day we pressed north west alongside a ridge, pushing through scrub with 'wait a while' and other vine. At one point, Geoff, confident that the valley was broadening out and that river flats beckoned, led a welcome plunge down to the river, but we were greeted by enormous boulders and about a 100ft cliff, all of which indicated that we were not where we had hoped we were. A tiring and hot climb back up the ridge followed, and then from a vantage point we saw what we believed would be the ridge to enable us to descend to the plain.

We still had to get to it however. Morie mapped out a strategy and with high hopes we headed steeply down to a dry rocky creek and then up to the ridge. Eventually we gained the top, although as the ridge was about two kilometers wide at that point our location except at the very edge was a little confusing. Time was pressing however and we hurriedly sought a campsite and water. This was fortunately soon located, and a resident pig retired to places unknown. Rosemary suggested a climb to a suitable location to view the way down, and a number of us climbed up to a vantage point. Owen sighted a significant waterfall marked on the map, and with this reference point we were at last, with some reasonable accuracy, able to establish our position.

The next day we fairly easily descended to the plain and some time after a swim and a pleasantly long lunch on the shady bank of Peach Creek, we located the known section of the elusive 4WD track. An excellent camp was established in a sandy part of the creek close to an fine pool, and that night we dined on jungle perch mostly caught by Owen, and Ted entertained us to some Milton somewhere along the way.

The next day we made our way around the base of the escarpment to Horne creek where another pleasant campsite was established by a five star pool. No fishing though, too shallow. Some

exploratory walking the next day followed to find the junction of the Horne and Peach creeks, which was mainly interesting for the birds which we saw including Red Shouldered Parrots, Palm Cockatoos and Rainbow Bee-eaters as well as a magnificent wild black stallion.

Saturday morning saw us marching along the main road through Cape York, to the obvious curiosity of passing 4WD travellers, to Coen Aerodrome where we spread some damp gear out to dry and some of us took advantage of the facilities to have a shower under the garden hose on the lawn outside the waiting room.

A somewhat turbulent start to the flight back to Coen in the Cessna 400, as the plane climbed up over the range, and we said goodbye to our intimate friend below us, with all the memories of a superb and unforgettable trip.

Members of the party were, Peter Kaye, Ted Kelly, Owen Kimberly, Rosemary McDougal, Geoff McIntosh, Kerrie Norris, Michele Powell, Tom Wenman, with Morie Ward as leader.

FOOTNOTES by Patrick James

And a Big Happy Birthday to two happy vegemites who have celebrated significant birthdays since the last issue; stand up and take a bow: **Don Matthews** and **Frank Rigby**.

This month sees the finish of two stories started last month. Does Peter Freeman get to the top of Kilimanjaro? Does he get down? Read the concluding part of this epic journey in the steps of C. Gable and E. Gardner. La portion deuxième of David Rostron's Haute Route - Haute Cuisine stops the guesses and reveals who ate what for dinner, ribs were not on the menu.

This month the start of a two part story, Sandy Larson and his 21 speed bike go on holidays together to New Zealand, peddling his speed machine (pushing dope) on his Kahurangi Kapers. This month also by bike a report how Almis and Carol consume their way from (battered) Scone to Sydney. The group of SBWs who went walking in FNQ have returned whole, hale and hearty: SBW 1, crocodiles 0. Tom Wenman's story tells it all.

General meeting reports for June and July brings us up to date with Club official reporting.

Bookings for the 70th Anniversary dinner have started to roll in, slowly. We have a large dining room which needs to be filled with happy members, ex-members and interested parties, people from the present, the past and the long, long ago. You may need to pass on the message. Keep in mind the other 70th Anniversary celebrations: The Reunion at Coolana, the barbeque/picnic at Manly Dam, the nostalgia evening at the clubrooms, and the latest news the Past Presidential Picnic (and photo opportunity) at Quarantine Reserve, Abbotsford on Saturday 18 October, see page 3 for details.

The Coolana Reunion is for all. If the Reunion was called a Reunion/Union it would be clear that it was for people who had been before plus people attending for their first time. If you know of people who need transport to these once in seventy year events contact the Committee.

For the nostalgia evening at the clubrooms besides some formal exhibits there will be plenty of room for one and all to display items of nostalgic interest. Such things as your first pair of volleys or shorts that you can still fit into. Photos are a good idea, what you could do is put together a photo album of **your** time with SBW, showing you, and you, and also other people. Don't worry if you think your photos might be a bit boring, they may be but so will a lot of other people's photos, so we'll all be bored together. But seriously folks, the nostalgia evening is to remember people and events together and the good times that were had. The photos and bits and pieces are merely the aide-mémoire for those times and places.

The Committee is pleased to welcome the following NEW MEMBERS to the Club. Please update your membership list.

Ms Marcia Corderoy, 50 Ainsworth St., Lilyfield 2040; 9560 0105 H, 9810 2469 W

Mr Peter Cunningham, 22 Elliot St., Beacon Hill 2100; 9939 7427 H, 9459 2200 W

Mr Leigh Delbridge, 102/21 Elamang Ave.

Kirribilli 2065; 9929 5681 H, 9926 7014 W

Ms Jitka Kopriva, 20/1 Owen Jones Row, Menai 2234; 9541 1264 H, 9718 1441 W.