

**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.

**Editor:** Patrick James

5/2 Hardie Street Neutral Bay 2089

Telephone 9904 1515

**Business Manager:** Elizabeth Miller

1 The Babette, Castlecrag, 2068

Telephone 9958 7838

**Production Manager:** Frances Holland

**Printers:** Kenn Clacher, Tom Wenman,  
Barrie Murdoch, Margaret Niven  
& Les Powell

**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.

**President:** Eddy Giacomel

**Vice-President:** Tony Holgate

**Public Officer:** Fran Holland

**Treasurer:** Greta James

**Secretary:** Don Wills

**Walks Secretary:** Bill Capon

**Social Secretary:** Peter Dalton

**Membership Secretary:** Barry Wallace

**New Members Secretary:**

Jennifer Giacomel

**Conservation Secretary:** Bill Holland

**Magazine Editor:** Patrick James

**Committee Members:**

Elwyn Morris & Louise Verdon

**Delegates to Confederation:**

Jim Callaway & Ken Smith

## June 1998

### In This Issue, No. 763:

- P 2** Mittagong to Katoomba *by Fazely Read.*
- P 5** Club Time: *by Eddy Giacomel.*
- P 7** SBW Clubnight Reports *by Elwyn Morris*  
Club Coolana
- P 8** The Eighty Ninth Federal Crime  
*by Valerie Joy*
- P 10** The May 1998 General Meeting  
*by Barry Wallace.*
- P 11** The Grand Traverse *by Frank Davis.*
- P 13** Skinny Dipping *by George Mawer.*
- P 14** A Camp on the Colo *by Tom Wenman.*
- Footnotes

### Advertisers

- P 6** Alpsports
- P 9** Eastwood Camping Centre
- P 8** U Relax 4 We'll Drive
- P 12** Willis's Walkabouts

**Back Cover** Paddy Pallin

## Mittagong to Katoomba

by Fazeley Read

Rain attended our departure from Sydney Central Station, on the Saturday May 2 midday train to Mittagong. It rained all the way there, setting the pattern for the next three days, but it was a good thing we did not know that at the time. 'To travel hopefully' we certainly did. David had arranged for a most obliging Mittagong motellier to meet us at the station and drive us along the Wombeyan Caves Road. He took us right to Five Hundred Acre Flat, at the confluence of the Wollondilly River and Murruin Creek, saving us a five kilometre walk in the approaching darkness. Our eight day packs contained lunches and snacks for personal consumption, three kilograms of group food, plus the usual paraphernalia for autumn walking in the Blue Mountains. My five millimetre thick foam roll drew derisive comments from the thermarest set but I maintained that, with a clear conscience, you can sleep on anything. Besides, it weighs only 90g, as compared with 500g or so of the average thermarest and it's excellent for fanning a reluctant fire to life. We toasted our release from city life and the prospect of a good walk with a cup or two of cask white, standing (less contact with the rain) around the fire, then, to bed.

Next morning set the pattern for the following eight, with Spiro rising predawn to light the fire and to cook two eight pint billies of porridge, which were followed by a billy of sweet, milky, Greek coffee. What a lovely way to start the day. David would discuss the route for the day and the party was usually on the way by 8:00 a.m.

The heavy rain of the previous day showed no signs of easing, as we made our way up the scenic Murruin Creek, slipping on wet rocks and disturbing a black wild pig. Turning north out of the creek, we ascended Bindook Mountain to Bindook Station, a vast lush green oasis in the middle of spectacular mountain country. On requesting permission of Val Lang to camp on her property, she very

generously produced the key to a substantial six bed slab hut, about 300m down the hill from the homestead, and invited us to use it. We needed little persuasion and were very grateful. Val was ecstatic about the rain, as, with her brother, she had just sown large crops of oats. She was also pleased that her six tanks and sixteen dams, which 'had substained her property during the drought, were being replenished, and we were pleased that our suffering was for the greater good of the country.

Dinner each evening was a four course affair, and what people could do with dried food would make the host of 'Consuming Passions' proud. The meal always began with hot rum and grape fruit juice, followed by soup of the day, the main course, stewed fruit and custard and a cup of tea. Tonight's main course was Chris and Craig's Cous Cous Supreme. This, we enjoyed, sitting on an assortment of aged couches and armchairs around an open fire, which was bedecked with our wet socks.

An easy road walk on Monday morning took us to the aircraft beacon transmitter at Nyanga Mountain. From there, we headed towards Mt Colong. Visibility was poor and navigation in that scrubby ridge country became confused, but Dave Kelly's Global Positioning Satellite Receiver directed us to the right ridge. (And I'm just getting the hang of a compass!) While scooping water for lunch from a tributary of the Jooriland River, we discovered numerous Aboriginal sharpening grooves in the rocks. It made me think about the lives this area had once supported, and I felt sad that those people had been forced to leave their homeland.

At about 2.30pm we arrived on top and decided to camp, instead of continuing to the Mootik Wall in the hope of finding a cave. Colong, in such murky conditions, has a special atmosphere, almost a ghostliness. Damp coldness encouraged the speedy lighting of a fire for our preprandial drink, and the collection of water from the now plentiful spring which has not flowed for years. Bill prepared our main course this night, a tasty

dish made from a secret recipe passed down through generations of Caskeys. On Mount Colong is an impressive circular stone cairn, about four metres high and three metres in diameter, built by a surveying party in 1894. (Kowmung River, Jim Barrett 1993)

The following morning, Tuesday, we had planned to walk high along the Mootik Wall to Yerranderie Peak and down through the old silver mining town of Yerranderie, but increasing rain made the road the only option. Discussion ensued as to whether we should spend a night at Yerranderie or head for a rock overhang. David had the casting vote. Desperate times call for desperate decisions. He settled for Yerranderie, and so it was that we spent from midday till the next morning at the restored 1907 two storey Yerranderie Post Office, now used as a residence and a thirty bed guest house by the owner of Yerranderie village, Val Lhuede. Never was \$36 better spent. The rain continued incessantly throughout the day and night.

Tonight's repast was cooked by Spiro - brown rice and black eyed beans with a medley of exotic spices from the Middle East. This was elegantly served on china plates from the guest house collection, as we sat at a beautifully polished wooden table. Evening saw the arrival of nine Wollondilly Shire Council workers whose task was to widen the road. They were bulky blokes who carried in endless supplies of beer and food, enough for their stay of one month. In comparison with their solid forms, our men looked almost delicate in their close fitting thermals. You could understand that the road workers may have thought that our party was from the cast of Salome. They invited us to join them in a game of Euchre but we preferred to sit in front of the fire and singe our socks.

So wretched was the weather that none of us could have guessed, when we went to bed that night, that what lay in store were four fantastic days of glorious sunshine. That sunshine would also bring out a profusion of beautiful fungi, the like of which I cannot recall seeing before. Gone was the rain, and the following

morning it was with a sense of exhilaration that we set off for Lacy's Gap. There are many kangaroos in the area and according to Jim Barrett's 'Yerranderie, Story of a Ghost Town', it is not uncommon for pilots to have to 'buzz' the tiny airstrip to clear it of kangaroos before landing.

We walked north along Lacy's Tableland and dropped down a challenging ridge to Bull Island Creek for lunch. Until now, our lunch times had been too wet to light fires. We would huddle under two dripping fly sheets and wash food down with a cup of cold water, but today, it was hot cup o'soups, teas or coffees. Things were looking up. Also, conditions looked good for a high camp on Axehead Mountain, but, as the saying goes, 'he who would have omelette must crack eggs' - it was a long slow climb to the summit, up steep slopes made slippery by wet ash from the last bush fires. We proceeded west through Green Wattle Gap and on to the AxeHead. Along the tops, the clear air enabled us to enjoy the extensive views. Surely this must be one of the best walking areas in Australia. Tricky rock climbing was required from time to time - nothing to the longer limbed but for me it was, "Put your right foot here, now put your left foot where your right foot is," (how?). Without such blow by blow directions about where to put what, I would still be up there. The intention was to camp on the northern edge of the escarpment to take full advantage of the view, but the capricious wind had other plans for us, forcing a removal of tents and the lighting of another fire in a more sheltered location nearby. There was no difficulty collecting water. It was just a matter of dropping down the nearest gully, fifty metres or so, and filling a dozen four litre wine skins. Tonight's main course was David's Chili Con Carne, which we ate while looking at a 180° view of ridges and ranges, the lights of Medlow Bath and the rising moon.

"Plates for Porridge," boomed Spiro in basso profundo. I had just awoken, in my secluded little overhang! Where would we have been without Spiro, who stirred us into action early each morning? After breakfast we descended the Axehead, walked a short distance along Butcher's Creek (named after a cattle duffer who built a stockyard there) and up on to the Scott's Main Range road. Four kilometres on, we left the road and took a clearly defined steep, open ridge which eventually brought us to the confluence of Flower Garden Creek and the Kowmung River. I couldn't believe my eyes. Prior to Easter, the Kowmung was a sad series of pools laced together by thin, sluggish streams. Could I have dreamt that it had been so bad, I wondered, as I looked at it now, muddied and rushing by with all the importance of a major river. Total immersions were made by a hardy few in the interests of cleanliness. I will not dwell on the pitiful gasps, bravely muffled. After the usual wood gathering and fire lighting, Dave and Judy cooked that old favourite of the Royal Family, lentils and Chinese mushrooms.

On Friday morning we waterproofed packs in readiness for a possible deep crossing, and walked down stream. No difficulty was experienced, and we soon arrived at Gingra Creek which was flowing strongly. Five hundred metres along the Gingra we turned north up the steep Stockyard Spur to Compagnoni Pass and on to Tiwilla Plateau. The abrasive scrub on top was extensive and punishing. It scratched like cats' claws, but there was no alternative. It was 'trust and obey, there's no other way' as we followed David. Painful progress was eventually rewarded with a stunning view of Sydney, a hundred kilometres or so to the east! The wind must have cleared away the normal smog, and there it was, shimmering white, our Promised Land, where we would find fresh food and clean clothes. Encroaching darkness made Dex Creek, beyond the summit of Mount Cloudmaker, a more attractive option than floundering around in that scrub, looking for the elusive Hundred Man Cave.

'In Stygian cave forlorn' wrote Milton. There was no cave at Dex Creek but it was certainly Stygian and forlorn. The damp coldness penetrated layers of clothing and we sought comfort around a smoky fire, shivering in unison. David's thermometer showed three degrees but the biting wind increased the chill factor. There was no sign of global warming at Dex Creek! Did piping hot food ever taste better? This time it was Chris and Craig's 'Pastiche de Veg. with Creamy Cheese and Herb Sauce' (not one lump!) followed by Compote de Stewed Fruit and Custard.

On the seventh morning, Saturday, we descended Strongleg Ridge to Konangaroo Clearing on the Cox River, to relax in a sun soaked lunch spot, rich with the sound of bellbirds. But such pleasure does not come cheaply. It was quite a push up the 800 metres of Yellow Pup Ridge and around to Splendour Rock. Splendour Rock has a plaque which commemorates bushwalkers who were killed in World War II and the log book recorded the dawn Anzac Service held there recently. From Splendour Rock we could see Mt Jellore near Mittagong, approximately 60 kilometres south as the crow flies but our route had taken us about 110 kilometres, with much up and down in between. Camp was made on Mount Merrimerrigal.

Macbeth met the witches on the blasted heath. Guess who we met on Merrimerrigal? Wayne Steele! He emerged from the darkness, just as we started our soup. Wayne had set out from Carlon's Farm at 3.30pm in the hope of finding us, and carried a two litre cask of red wine, some stuffed olives, Japanese rice wafers and two packets of Tim Tams. What a man! Table manners went out the window as we jostled for Wendy's delicious Shepherd's Pie, such was our need for hot food. There was a magnificent full moon that night, and next morning, Sunday, the tents were covered with a thin layer of ice. Razors rasped over stubbled faces in preparation for an anticipated return to civilization later in the day, and after breakfast we were on the move again for the last time, taking the usual route along Mt

Warrigal, up Taro's Ladders and along the lengthy Narrow Neck fire road. Gradually there were cars, houses, roads, people, shops, traffic lights, noise - the whole catastrophe, and it seemed that we had been away for much longer than eight days.

I look back on a walk, rich with incidents, laughter and the great feeling of companionship that built each day. I'm sure I speak for all when I thank David for his initiative, his careful organisation prior to the walk and for his leadership, right to Katoomba Station.

**Who:** Christine Austin, Craig Austin, Bill Caskey, Spiro Haginakitas, Judy Kelly, Dave Kelly, Wendy Lippiatt, Fazeley Read, David Rostron (leader).

**When:** May 2 to May 11 1998

**Where:** 1:25 000 CMA maps Barrallier, Bindook, Yerranderie, Kanangra, Jenolan, Jamison.

## CLUB TIME - MONTHLY DINNERS AND GENERAL MEETINGS - YOUR FEEDBACK

by Eddy Giacomel

Whilst meeting friends on bushwalks may keep friendships alive, making and keeping the club a good club involves meeting others on a regular basis and having **informal** time to develop and deepen friendships and to plan walks and other activities.

This article is to explain a couple of changes to the Social Program and to invite your comments and suggestions. With the May magazine, you would have received the Walks and Social Program for winter. We now have a different organiser each month for the monthly dinner. This is hoped to ensure that the dinners proceed even if the Social Secretary is not available. By rostering the dinners, more people become involved in running the club and we get different "flavours" every month. Last year, probably due to the lack of a Social Secretary for part of the year, the dinners fell by the wayside.

This is hoped to make them a regular event on the social calendar.

The second change has been to shorten General Meetings (ie the meeting on the second Wednesday of the month). Attendances last year made it clear the popularity of General Meetings was in decline. General Meetings should remain, so that members can be aware of what is involved in running the club and can raise matters that concern them. However, General Meetings can be shorter than they have been. I was pleased with the April and May shorter General Meetings, where instead of dispersing immediately after the meeting, members were seen discussing issues related to the club, planning walks (with maps!) or just talking to each other. The time after General Meetings should be a regular time in the club's monthly calendar for members to get together informally. I believe that the club can benefit much more from this informal time than from longer General Meetings which have low attendances.

However, it remains your club. Plans and schemes will fail if they are not in line with opinions within the club. Hence your feedback. I would appreciate your comments on the above and suggestions about what else could be done to improve the quality of club time. Even if you agree with what is happening, let me know - its good to know that you agree with what is happening. If you don't agree or have other suggestions or know what worked well in the past - again *let me know*. Alternatively, write an article for the magazine. You don't have to be a long standing member of the club - we also need to know what newer members of the club think. This is not a critical issue, the club is not about to die. However, the better we make club time, the better a club we make.

Eddy Giacomel

Phone & fax 9144 5095,  
internet giacomel@tpgi.com.au,  
post 17 Putarri Ave St Ives 2075  
or approach me at the club.

**macpac**  
**microlight**

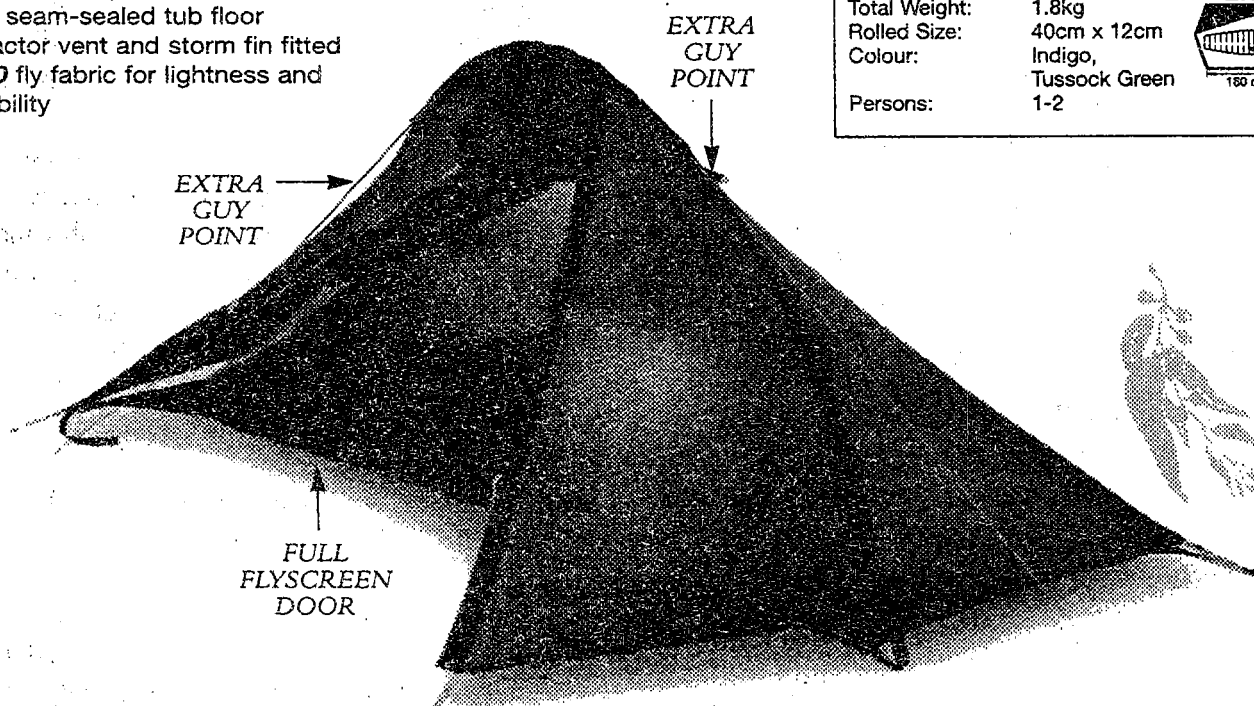
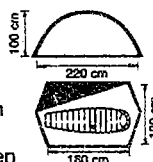
## **modified for Australian Bushwalkers by Australian Bushwalkers**

### Features

- A roomy one-person tent, but a snug fit for two
- Macpac's unique Multi-Pitch®
- Fully seam-sealed tub floor
- Extractor vent and storm fin fitted
- **UV40** fly fabric for lightness and durability

### Specifications

Floor Area:	2.0m <sup>2</sup>
Vestibule::	0.8m <sup>2</sup>
In Use Weight:	1.6kg
Total Weight:	1.8kg
Rolled Size:	40cm x 12cm
Colour:	Indigo, Tussock Green
Persons:	1-2



Club members have asked for their favourite bushwalking tent to be **modified** in two very specific ways to better suit their particular needs.

*Firstly* a full size flyscreen for maximum ventilation and

*Secondly* two extra guy points on the pole itself for use in more extreme conditions.

There are only a limited number of these special **Microlights** being produced.

So come into Alpsport soon and see one for yourself.

**ONLY AVAILABLE AT  
ALPSPORT**



1045 VICTORIA ROAD, WEST RYDE 2114  
PH: 9858 5844

## SBW CLUBNIGHT REPORTS

by Elwyn Morris

### AROUND, OVER AND INTO THE CREVASSE

Who but Kenn Clacher would have enough presence of mind to photograph the 20m sides of a crevasse he'd just skied into off a 30 degree icy slope, while waiting 25 minutes on a 2m wide snow bridge with another 30m drop below? This was just one of the dramatic slides presented by Kenn Clacher and Louise Verdon in their May 20 talk on ski mountaineering the Haute Route in the French and Swiss Alps in April last year. We also saw slides of their two expert British guides lowering the rescue rope and the arrival of a Swiss doctor in Gucci boots hanging below a helicopter, and heard the diagnosis of five broken ribs and a sore shoulder that 'didn't matter'. Louise showed us the equipment - wide, heavy skis, ski boots with adjustable heels, crampons, ice axe, day pack, and mentioned the compulsory avalanche transmitter for being found if buried under snow. Her biggest adrenalin rush was skiing down a steep slope round metre-high icy moguls and over a small crevasse at the bottom; the biggest drawback was feeling microwaved in the heat and glare at up to 3,300 m, but she can't wait to get back. While all started at an Argenteuil hotel, some stayed at the comfortable St Bernard Monastery and did day trips, while others did the high route from Verbier to Zermatt, staying at stone 'gites' (hostels providing meals), and abseiling down icy 50 degree slopes with skis on their backs amid spectacular rocks and peaks. The group included another five SBW members - Ian Wolfe, David Rostron, Ray Kidd, Libby Harrington and Bill Caskey, and a Nordic Ski Club member.

### WONDERFUL WORMS

Fascinating slides of colourful worms, leeches and other unrelated groups of invertebrates unique to our bush and coasts were presented on May 27 by the Australian Museum's marine 'worm-lady', Dr Pat Hutchings. The pretty, little-known 'velvet worms' with feet

and varied patterns found in rainforests spit glue onto their prey and suck out their innards. In spite of protesting cries of 'What about the itch?', Pat declared leeches harmless; they only suck blood to breed. She stressed that the health of the environment, soil and cuddlier vertebrates depended on the invertebrates at the bottom of the food chain. Her 30 years of study enabled her to field a variety of questions. She invited us to leave at the Museum for her anything we would like identified, and reminded us always to turn back any log or rock we turn over, as most invertebrates otherwise die.

### AND YET TO COME

Somewhat tamer than ski mountaineering the Haute Route but still very interesting **CROSS COUNTRY SKIING** in our Snowies will be presented by Kenn Clacher and Ian Wolfe on June 17, to be followed by a brief talk on the forthcoming Six Foot Track by Tony Crichton. From 6pm there's a pre-meeting dinner at the Thai Connection, Fitzroy Street.

**MID-WINTER FEAST** from 6.30 PM on June 24 - bring a plate; the club will provide wine and drinks.

### CLUB COOLANA

Soon we will have a new barbeque at Coolana. Watch this space for details as they unfold. The mowing, weeding, burning, clearing, and planting continues. Joan has all manner of plans for weed control. The river flats of Coolana look beautiful and are a delightful place to camp on.

Our supply of gardening tool still is rather skimpy and we could use any number of cast-offs. With the return of the rain the burning-off season has been opened and the fallen timber can be burnt and the land cleared. All are welcome to the Coolana maintenance weekends: for details see the Walks Program.

For Coolana details contact Coolana's Chief Green Thumb: Joan Rigby (02) 6247 2035.



## THE EIGHTY NINTH

### FEDERAL CRIME\* by Valerie Joy

No, it was not acts of conspiracy, illegal imports or plots of piracy on the high seas, but intrepid bushwalkers passing close enough to see the faded Federal Government warnings "Keep out". These were close by the Holsworthy Army training reserve on the Georges River. I had never walked in this area before, between Minto and Leumeah stations in the Boronia Reserve, but liked the part along the river especially, recently swollen by the past month's rain.

On May 9, ten of us, led by Wilf Hilder on a gorgeous autumn day, just cool and snappy enough to put a bit of zing into our stride enjoyed many other local highlights, explored by our fearless leader over several decades.

Recent additions in the area were two Buddhist establishments. We were spoiled at the first with hot drink hospitality and flushing toilets, so much so, that as our pace slacked at the end of the walk, thoughts turned to a possible afternoon tea at an ornate temple. Alas, too late for that, we still marvelled at the temples, the newly landscaped gardens which were inhabited by many large ground dwelling black choughs. A new kind of bird life for me, apparently common in Victoria but looking very safe even from the resident pussy cats.

On owning up to our SBW Editor that I have not been greatly exercised in doing a great many walks, due to countless other activities, I was asked what were the notable things I learned from this one.

One was the comfort walkers allow themselves in day walks, never seen during the rigours of an Easter or other extended walk. During all the stops, out came the thermos flasks, filled with soup, tea, coffee etc. Lunches were most attractive salad rolls, full of beetroot, tomato that made my ryvitas look pretty dry. I also admired the "D" rings forged into day packs to carry house keys. The most welcome item was some fishing wire Geoff carried, which made a great repair on the sole

of one of my boots, which disengaged itself and would have otherwise been a great nuisance flapping along the track.

The 18 km passed very easily, with no great challenges and got us back to the station before dark. A clean up Australia project is my only recommendation for this very pretty area, which would be lovely to visit in the spring, with gymea lilies, waratahs and even some early boronia and egg & bacon flowers out now. Summer would be even better, if the rain keeps up as the pools along the river were large, deep and inviting, with some good falls and circular spas in the rock formations. Thanks Wilf and the others for a good day.

The party: Laurie Bore, John Coulson, Brian Hart, Wilf Hilder (leader), Patrick James, Valerie Joy, Geoff McIntosh, Linda Mallet, Gretel Woodward and John ?.  
\* a reference to Section 89 of the Commonwealth Crimes Act.

### "U RELAX 4 WE'LL DRIVE"

Experience Tropical North Queensland as you wish, the choice is yours. We specialise in customised tours for small special interest parties

# Trek in pristine rainforests or rugged sandstone country.

# See the Daintree and Bloomfield regions plus quaint Cooktown (while it still is!)

# Visit remote aboriginal areas, meet the locals and learn about their culture.

# Experience the Gulf Savannah Region - an exciting area seldom visited.

# Adventure to central and far western Queensland - the real outback.

# Visit the Reef - dive or snorkel.

# Trek, cycle, balloon, kayak, canoe, snorkel, dive, sail, birdwatch or just relax.

# 2 bedroom self contained unit available in Cairns at very reasonable rates.

# All tours in luxury, air conditioned 8 seater 4 wheel drive fully guided.

Contact John Hogan (S.B.W. member) on (07) 4054 3313 or 015 066 870 to plan your "adventures in paradise".



Eastwood Camping Centre is a  
privately owned business, established in 1970  
by Nancy and Jack Fox.

After 28 years experience we can confidently offer the best  
service in Sydney at the lowest prices.

We carry the most extensive of camping gear  
& accessories in Sydney, specialising in:

≈ tents

≈ backpacks

≈ sleeping bags

≈ rock climbing & abseiling gear

≈ walking boots

≈ gas equipment (lights, stoves, spares)

For further enquiries and expert advice  
give us a call and talk to our fulltime staff:



Paul Lidgard  
Toby Watson  
Margaret Fox

Brett Murphy  
Matt de Belin  
Nancy Fox

**eastwood  
camping  
centre**

**Phone: 02 9858 3833**

**3 Trelawney Street, Eastwood**

**Equipping you to enjoy the  
Australian and World environment.**

## The May 1998 General Meeting

by Barry Wallace.

The meeting was already underway when your scribe, fresh from confronting the local parking problems, arrived at 2004. There were around 20 members present at the time but we missed the apologies. The minutes of the April general meeting were read and received with no matters arising. There was no correspondence.

The treasurer was able to borrow a copy of her report from the secretary and regale us with tales of monetary splendour. We started with \$6,327, received income of \$7,410 and closed with \$13,498 in the kitty.

At first touch Bill Capon was told he had only 30 minutes to present the walks reports. Like most strictures, this rapidly became irrelevant as reports came and went.

The reports began at the Easter weekend with the walks secretary's own walk out from Kanangra going, under the leadership of Tony Marshall. Ian Rannard totally rearranged his programmed Byadbo Wilderness trip to go to the Shoalhaven River due to anticipated problems with water in the Snowy Mountains. They also elected to use public transport to start and finish the trip but this seems to have led to some problems. Tony Holgate reported 13 and some rain on Thursday evening for his Budawang's Traverse trip. Other Than Thursday, the weather was fine but rather windy. They also encountered some problems in Angel Creek. There were no details for Ken Cheng's Lower Blue Mountains walk on the Saturday. Jim Calloway reported 10 on an enjoyable walk for his Sunday walk from Bundeena to Otford.

The weekend of 18, 19 April saw Wilf Hilder with 11 on his Great Illawarra Walk stages 15 and 16 enjoying a good weekend. Don Brooks reported a great day for the nine starters who turned up for his Bungonia SRA walk on the Saturday. Linda Mallett had sunny conditions for the 12 on her Saturday walk in Sydney Harbour National Park. The six who went on Ron Watters' Saturday walk out to Russells Needle became so absorbed in the intricacies of the route they stayed out overnight. The decision to remain overnight was taken on safety grounds in view of the precipitous nature of the remaining route which would have had to be traversed in darkness. Everyone came out unscathed on the sunny Sunday morning. Lucy Moore's Sunday walk out from Springwood had 12 starters and Dick Weston's trip out from Govetts Leap the same day had five.

Ian Rannard led a party of 12 on his mid week walk through beautiful autumn colours on the Tuesday.

Anzac weekend saw Ken Smith leading a party of two on his Leura to Lawson weekend walk through superb

weather and scenery. There was no report for Ken Cheng's Saturday walk out from Blackheath but Wilf reported good weather and a party of nine on his walk from Macquarie Fields to Lumeah. Sunday saw Errol Sheedy with a party of 12 sturdy walkers on his Waterfall to Heathcote walk in fine autumnal weather. Sturdy indeed, two of them went swimming at Boobera Pool and reported the water temperature as pleasant. Alan Mewett reported 18 and a lovely walk for his trip from Wondabyne to Woy Woy the same day.

There was no report for Kris Stephenson's Saturday walk out from Evans lookout on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May. Anne McGuire reported a good walk for the party of 14 who endured some drizzle on her trip out from Glenbrook on the Sunday. Bill Hope reported a party of seven and some rain on his walk out from Neates Glen the same day.

The report for Ian Rannard's walk around the cemetery at Rookwood on the Tuesday brought out the worst of the jokers. There were three on the walk and some rain.

Peter Kaye cancelled his walk on the Goulburn River scheduled for 8, 9 May, but Oliver Crawford reported 14 starters and good weather for his trip in the Gardens of Stone National Park that weekend. Alan Donnelley's Springwood to Glenbrook walk on the Saturday had a party of 9 enjoying good weather and Wilf Hilder reported visits to several Buddhist temples for the 10 on his Minto to Lumeah walk. The Sunday walk that weekend fell to George Mawer's training weekend out from Glenbrook with a party of four.

Curiously enough, Bill Holland reported his mid week walk from St Ives to Lindfield as excellent with a party of nine. This ended the walks reports for the month.

Conservation report indicated that the National Parks and Wildlife Service Draft Tourism Strategy and Blue Mountains National Park plan of management are under review.

Confederation report expressed concern at the move to pass the Canyon Colliery leasehold area over to private ownership for use as a combined tourist wildlife and heritage area. There was an uncharitable view that this process was designed, in part, to remove the need to remediate the Colliery area, by making of it a tourist theme area showing how these things used to end up in the bad old days. Confederation will write opposing on principle the alienation of leasehold areas to private ownership. (Should set them up well with John Howard and the National Party.) Confederation has provided a donation to assist in representation of conservation views at the commission of inquiry into the proposal to greatly expand bed numbers in the Perisher Valley ski resort area. Last heard of it was Peter Prineas versus five lawyers. NPA have received a letter of rebuke from a Peter Stephens of NPWS over their programming of "trackless walks" in the Royal.

There was no general business, so after announcements the meeting closed at 2044.

## THE GRAND TRAVERSE by

Frank Davis

Greenstone Valley - Routeburn Walk

Day 1 From Queenstown a coach takes us alongside Lake Wakatipu to Glenorchy. A water taxi which fell off every crest into every trough of every wave, took us across the wind whipped lake to the mouth of the Greenstone River. A mini bus that had seemingly, not for some time, been burdened with a registration label delivered us to the track head. The time was 10.30 am.

The track, through beech forest, follows the Greenstone River, described in the track notes as 'wide and slow moving and dark green in colour'. It is certainly wide but after the recent rains it is not slow and there is enough broken, white water to reduce the colour to a light green.

So high is the water level that some low sections of the track close to the river are inundated. Grassy flats, clear of the river, appear dry but only because the tussock grass stands above the often ankle deep water.

Our first overnight is at Steele Creek Lodge. We have climbed from 310 to 497 metres and covered 16 kilometres.

Day 2 begins with the crossing of Steele Creek on a long swingbridge. It is still raining and tracks are wet although streams are lower and calmer.

The track continues along the Greenstone crossing a huge rockslide and through a knee deep backwater of the river. Winding in and out of the forest and onto sodden river flats it reaches the Moss Gardens. This is an area exceedingly lush in moss and lichens, the ground spongy in half metre blankets of King Moss, Lacy Fern Moss and lichens. Tree trunks and boughs are festooned with silky strands of moss and yellow/green lichens.

The afternoon sees clearing weather with snow capped mountain peaks becoming visible. McKellar Lodge is reached, the rain

has stopped and there are brief glimpses of sunlight. We have climbed to 683 metres and covered 15km.

Day 3 is a designated rest day at McKellar Lodge. A steep climb through beech forest to Hill 1538 was the morning 'rest'. The track passes through an area of exposed black stones which are low grade 'Greenstone' then proceeds above the tree line to give excellent views of the Greenstone and Eglinton valleys. Unfortunately at the first lookout the cloud was so dense the walk was aborted and we returned to the lodge. We took some solace in a short walk to see an un-named waterfall.

Day 4 The shoreline of Lake McKellar is followed to the northern end then the track continues on to the Greenstone Saddle where water flows west to Lake Howden and east to Lake McKellar.

Lake Howden marks the junction of the Greenstone and Routeburn Tracks. This was our chance to ascend Key Summit at 919 metres. Key Summit is an alpine swamp and bog region where a vast variety of plants thrive, including sundews, bog pine and stunted, gnarled beech, estimated to be up to 500 years old. Its elevation affords magnificent views of the Darran Mountains and the Hollyford Valley.

The track then climbs gently to Earland Falls and Sunny Creek and follows mountain bluffs before reaching The Orchard, a clump of large pale green leaved Mountain Ribbonwood trees. A steep rocky descent then leads to Lake Mackenzie.

Day 5 opens fine and mild. Before shouldering backpack I walk to the shore of the lake to photograph the mountain peaks reflected in the smooth surface.

The 'flood detour' track loops around the end of the lake, zig-zags to above the tree line then sidles across the Hollyford Face in a traverse which occupies about 2 1/2 hours.

Track Notes advise: 'Here the track is exposed to the elements and no time should be wasted in inclement weather'. Today the weather is perfect, across the Hollyford Valley the snow crowned peaks of the Darran Mountains stand poised above a cloud layer and glisten in the clear alpine air. It would be easy to dawdle along this exposed track today.

Lunch is taken at Harris Saddle. A steep zig-zag climb, rough rock scramble and stamping through snow drifts to the top of Conical Hill (1515 metres) is rewarded with splendid views in all directions. The track descends into the Harris Basin, past Lake Harris then on to Routeburn Falls Lodge and another night of comfort.

Day 6 Last photos of Routeburn Falls before taking the well graded track to Routeburn Flats. The track follows the river into the gorge, passing beside a tangle of huge piled up boulders named 'The Sump', through which the river thunders.

We lunched at Forge Flat, once a staging area for pack horses, a majestic sunlit bend in the river in which we lingered so long we then had to 'step out' to catch the bus.

Glimpses of the gorge wall were revealed through the trees but it was only after crossing the river and reaching Routeburn Road End that a clear view of the gorge was possible.

In nine days of trekking there were only two fine days. You can't have rainforest without rain and you can't have waterfalls without water. Every step, every drop of water, every hailstone and every snowflake had been more than compensated for by the scenery.

When clouds touch mountain peaks and rivers run to the sea it is a beginning, not an end.

Frank Davis, April 1998

# Arctic Adventure

March-April 1999:

Only 4 places left. Get in now or you could miss the chance of a lifetime.

4 weeks above the 60<sup>th</sup> parallel in Canada's Northwest Territories

● 10 days across Baffin Island by Inuit dog sled

- Great views of the aurora.
- Temperatures well below Australia's record low of -23° C.
- Local bed & breakfast accommodation while you acclimatise.
- A week in the wilderness outside Yellowknife. Total cost about \$7500. Ask for our trip notes.

Too cold and costly? Ask for the brochure describing our many northern Australian bushwalking holidays!



Willis's Walkabouts 12 Carrington St Milliner NT 0810

Phone: (08) 8985 2134

Fax: (08) 8985 2355

## SKINNY-DIPPING: why you should always wear your sunnies. by George Mawer.

The results of a small survey show that most readers thought the April magazine was very good. Most said it was a professional looking publication with good layout. Some people especially liked the last page being left blank for making notes (or other purposes). There were comments from some that that fellow James is heavily relied upon for most of the copy but he varies his style a lot so his stuff is usually informative and often entertaining and most said they look forward to reading his contributions. It was noted also that the other chap Wallace always produces a page or two for every magazine and of course there are the advertisers who manage to fill a few pages each month. It was recommended that these people be congratulated and encouraged to keep up their good work.

I think that the rest of us can sit back and leave any remaining work to those other energetic persons "Someone Else" and his good lady "Somebody". I haven't met either of these worthy people yet but I believe they are very willing workers and can be relied upon to do any task. I often hear club members assure all and sundry (within earshot) that Someone or Somebody Else can do this or arrange that or fill a vacant position on the committee or whatever.

They do so much for us that we should do something for them in recognition of their services to our club. Perhaps they could be made honorary life members. I know they can be relied upon to put walks on the program. I mostly leave that to Someone Else and I would always prefer that Somebody Else write up the walks report.

But what has gone wrong? Perhaps they are being overworked with all the things we, and others in the community expect of them and now don't have enough time to produce copy for our magazine. From what Patrick says, he simply is getting nothing from Someone Else (but occasionally gets a bit from Somebody Else).

The sorry truth is that neither Someone Else nor Somebody Else can be relied upon any more and if the magazine is to continue to be produced more of us will all have to make a conscious effort and regularly submit a few articles. Perhaps you could even write something yourself. Yes you - the person reading this right now. I'll bet you have a few stories you could tell that would make our hair curl. Or if you are a pot stirrer by nature you might like to start something controversial that would get people passionate enough to argue with you in print. Or you could just write a page of rubbish like this one. Almost anything falls under the heading of 'matters of interest' see page one - "The Sydney Bushwalker is ..."

If you can't dredge up enough to quite fill your page, supply a picture that can be pasted onto the page. For example - It's better if the picture is appropriate to your story but if you can't find anything suitable - just something to fill up the space.

If you haven't written anything for publication before, don't worry for a moment that what you write won't be good enough. It probably will be, and anyway, that's for the editor to decide. One way to get going is simply to start writing your story - poem - article etc. and don't read it or correct a thing until you've got it all onto the paper (or word processor). Then and only then, go back over it and knock it into shape.

Give plenty of thought to an introduction - an opening sentence or two to lead the reader into the story. For example "Peter was still about three metres from the bottom when I dislodged the rock" - and a close that doesn't leave your story up in the air - for example "and with a roar the chopper took off and quickly disappeared into the distance".

Leave it for a day then re-read and fine-tune it and send it to the editor before you change your mind. Writing can be fun. ? Good luck.

Please note that Ms Somebody Else is a charming lady and a gifted writer. My relationship with her is platonic and totally in the interest of this magazine.  
Editor

## A Camp On The Colo

by Tom Wenman

Scrub! I hate it. Never have liked it, and I do not foresee any change in my attitude. However, it is sometimes a necessary evil which has to be, rather literally, gone through in order to reach a desirable goal. So it is that after a somewhat scrubby ridge followed by a steep and scrubby descent and a somewhat scrubby creek, well in places anyway, that we arrive at the part of Angorawa creek which I consider worthwhile, some large rocky slabs, and some superb clear rock pools. Finally we arrive at its junction with the Colo, and one of the best campsites on that river.

At this point there is a large wide bend in the Colo, which supplies, naturally enough, a large expanse of water in which to swim. In the evening the magnificent tall cliffs surrounding this spot turn from golden ochre and brown, reflecting the dying rays of the sun, to a dark moonlight backdrop. Overhead the canopy of a deep blue velvet sky wherein a thousand diamonds sparkle. The river noisily rushes over rapids and our fire on the sandbank flickers and occasionally roars as the wind gusts and then dies. We sit and talk and sometimes sing and joke as we cook our meals on the fire, and then relax and talk of all those things of which bushwalkers talk, and then one by one retire to our sleeping locations. Mine is in the open under the shelter of a small casuarina, it keeps the dew off and yet its pine needled branches allow one to look up to the sky. From time to time during the night I awake and open my eyes to see this superb cover overhead.

Morning, and gradually a clear blue summer sky is revealed. "It's going to be a hot one today", someone remarks and we begin our walk up Angorawa Creek in the shade of towering cliffs. Sometime later, in mid-morning, we indulge in the luxury of a swim in one of its large deep rock pools. It's our right and privilege, but to earn the right and privilege it is necessary to get there, and therein lies the delight and reward of bushwalking.

We leave the creek by a ridge which those of us who have been there before, assure the remainder is much less scrubby than that by which we descended. Alas for our reputations, time has provided some good strong growth and our predictions are false. Nevertheless a splendid view is to be had from the top, and we enjoy it, before plunging once more into the scrub, and thence to the cars.

## FOOTNOTES by Patrick James

This issue is a little early so that I can have a bit of a holiday. No the Committee is not sending me to Hawaii again, but more of that next month.

The big news this month is the wedding of Michele Powel and Owen Kimberley. In beautiful air conditioned comfort, overlooking the blue and tranquil water of the South Pacific Ocean, bright and early on the last day in May (a gloriously sunny Sunday) Michele and Owen exchanged wedding vows before by a happy throng of family and friends.

The happy couple plan to spend their honeymoon in PNG. Not just an ordinary honeymoon but one walking the Kokada trail, and in case they might get lost or lonely or bored by themselves they're taking eight others with them. What a good idea, have a honeymoon and take your friends along. The tradition of bushwalkers marrying bushwalkers lives on. Congratulations and best wishes **Michele and Owen** from your friends at SBW and from the management and staff of *The Sydney Bushwalker*.

*To all whom it may concern* a happy Italian National Day (2 June) and a happy Portugal National Day (10 June). The 22<sup>nd</sup> of month, perhaps on the day you receive the Magazine is Winter Solstice, the shortest day of the year. Now the days start getting longer and a bit warmer. Another thing to look forward to is the start of the financial year, and yes its tax time again. The Mid-Winter Feast is on 24 June, see the note on page whatever of this issue.