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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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July 1998

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Memorable Walking by Brian Hart.

Long distance walks through mountain country, treks in the Himalayas, trips in the Andes - **all** these are the stuff of travellers' tales and make fascinating reading. I suppose I've done my share of overseas trekking in the last decade, but some of the episodes which remain strongest in my mind are on the bizarre, rather than the intrepid, side.

Who, for instance, could forget the Bulgarian plate breaker, the hit and run driver in Lourdes or the lost passport at Madrid airport? A few years ago, I'd decided to take a walking trip in Bulgaria. It was shortly after the collapse of the Communist regime and the Bulgarians were expecting that capitalism would make them all rich and famous, or at least relaxed and comfortable. Needless to say, the reality was somewhat different.

Our Bulgarian guide - I was walking in the Balkan Range with seven or eight English - was proud of his country and keen to show off its efficiency and sophistication. occasional failures in schedule, meal or transport arrangements caused him deep pain, but perhaps his greatest humiliation was the Bulgarian plate breaking incident.

The group had crossed the Balkan Range, its main peaks up to 10,000 feet, and had reached a ski resort where we were to have a much anticipated lunch.

We arrived at noon and ordered soup as a first course. At 1.20pm we were still waiting, as were a number restless and increasingly disgruntled Bulgarians, most of whom had been in the restaurant before we arrived. A waitress eventually brought a few plates soup and returned to the kitchen to get more. As I reappeared, a very angry Bulgarian, incensed at seeing foreigners served and Bulgarians ignored, rushed up and threw her tray against the ceiling, showering everyone with broken plates and lukewarm soup. Rushing out, he paused only to grab the corner of our tablecloth, dragging plates, bowls of flowers and other odds and ends to the floor. After this bravura performance he was flung to the

floor by the management, taken away and given a rather heavy sentence and fine.

I found it all immensely entertaining, but it didn't do much for the image of new Bulgaria. The country, I hasten to add, has some great walking areas in beautiful forest country.

On another trip, travelling through walking areas around the Mediterranean, the group of which I was part hired a bus in Italy and drove through France to Madrid in Spain. At one point we were near Lourdes and decided to call in at the famous shrine. Near the centre of town, however, our bus sideswiped and tore the side out of a parked Mercedes sedan. Our Italian driver leapt out of the bus to seek the owner, so we thought, of the Mercedes.

Instead, he retrieved our bumper bar, torn off in the collision, jumped back in the bus and drove at high speed out of Lourdes. It was truly a miracle we weren't arrested.

I've always enjoyed walking in Spain and can recommend the Sierra Nevada and the mountain villages behind Granada. Although it's easy walking, I've had a few close calls there. But perhaps the most exciting moment in Spain came at the airport in Madrid. Having arrived early and secured my boarding pass on a UK plane, I settled down with a newspaper looking, I hoped, like a cool and well prepared traveller. It was only when the initial boarding instructions came over the intercom that I discovered I had lost my passport. With 20 minutes to departure time, I headed back to the airline counter. The sympathetic attendant said she would do everything she could to help, picked up the telephone and said, "Take Mr Hart's luggage off the plane".

"No, no", I said. "I have to get to the UK today. Hold everything and I'll see if I can find it around the airport". Seventeen minutes to departure as I headed to the currency exchange, forcing aside a queue of indignant Spaniards. No luck - 14 minutes to go. On to the coffee shop - no luck, 12 minutes to go. To the newsagent, same story - 11 minutes to go. Then to the information and lost property

office - blank looks; nine minutes to go. They suggested the central police office, 200 metres away, and I headed off at an extremely brisk pace to find a Spanish policeman slowly tapping out a One-finger message on a teleprinter. No one interrupts the laborious activities of Spanish officialdom, but eventually he stopped his slow motion tappings walked over and handed me a passport. Mine! It had been picked up and handed in.

Heading back at a run to the boarding area, I unfortunately met a crowd of excited Spaniards one of whom managed to place an airport trolley in my path. Over I went, describing a spectacular arc and skidding about 10 metres along a polished marble floor. Detaching myself with difficulty from apologetic Spaniards, I made the airport counter with three minutes to go. Through the entry gates at high speed - two minutes to go - and down the long airline tunnel leading to the plane. With one minute to go, I found I had run down the wrong tunnel.

Back up, past amazed gate officials and

through the aircraft door 15 seconds before they closed it!

Another chestnut pulled out of the fire, I thought triumphantly. My satisfaction at retrieving the passport was somewhat diminished when I arrived in the UK and left a rather good jumper and a bottle of excellent Spanish peach liqueur on a seat in the London Tube. Still, no one's perfect.

I'll be going to India early next year to spend some time walking around the old Raj hill stations at Ootacamund, Simla and Darjeeling. I've thought of behaving like a pukka sahib, but I suppose the real thing will be more as described by bushwalker Jim Vatilotis.

Seemingly the magnet for persistent Indian hustlers/beggars/touts, he was at one point confronted by a ragged person wishing to sell him a pair of shoelaces. No, said Jim, I already have shoelaces. He then looked down and found his shoelaces, intact a few minutes before, had been neatly severed, apparently by a razor blade. He wearily bought the new laces.

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June 1998 General Meeting by Barry Wallace.

There were around 15 members present when Tony Holgate, as chair in Eddy's absence interstate on business, called for order and began the meeting at somewhere near 2017 hours. It may have been a reaction to last month of course, but there were apologies for Patrick and Greta James, off in the wilds of South East Asia, Eddy Giacomel, off in the wilds of somewhere interstate, Peter Dalton, Wilf Hilder and Gretel Woodward, John Poleson, and Fran Holland. New member Danielle Van der Meer was welcomed in the usual way.

The minutes of the June general meeting were read and received with no matters arising.

Correspondence included a letter to the NSW premier opposing the Earth Sanctuaries lease proposal for Canyon Colliery, a rather defensive letter from the Commonwealth Department of Defence generally indicating that the proposed sell off of public lands under their control was at the behest of the Federal Government, from the NSW NPWS regarding the establishment of a committee for the new millennium, a statement on heritage protection from the Commonwealth government, and from Robert Hill, the Commonwealth minister responsible for the environment, regarding proposed changes to the Commonwealth's environmental protection legislation. The phrase "ecologically sustainable development" lingers in the mind for some reason.

The treasurer's report, in absence of the treasurer, indicated that we received income of \$3,506, spent \$2,068 and closed with \$13,841.

The walks reports, under the baton of Bill Capon, began at the weekend of 16, 17 May, with Wilf Hilder postponing whichever stage of the Great Illawarra Walk was due that weekend. Nancye Alderson's historical walk from Linden to Woodford on the Saturday went, with a party of four and an extensive report. Lynne Yeaman's walk from Govetts Leap to Junction Rock and return is generally believed to have gone but there were no details available to the meeting. Frank

Grennan had 12 on his Katoomba to Leura walk on the Sunday.

Ian Rannard's mid week walk from Wondabyne to Woy Woy on the Tuesday went, with a party of six.

The weekend of 22, 23, 24 May saw Bill Holland and the party of 5 on his Meryla Pass walk displaying initiative and camping high when they lost track of the track. Ken Smith reported good weather and walk for the three who attended his Saturday morning start trip from Lawson to Faulconbridge. Tom Wenman's walk out from Govett's Leap suffered from the displacement of the leader to Wales, and a lack of starters, so was cancelled. Tom claims the Welsh coast is pleasant enough, but quite different. Errol Sheedy led a party of 23 on his Cronulla to Sutherland walk on the Sunday in pleasant conditions and at the right tides. It was still a full day however, and they came out at 1750 in the dark. Sandy Johnson had 12 on his graded easy walk out from Medlow Bath the same day.

There was no report for Carol Lubbers' walk in the Gardens of Stone area over the weekend of 29, 30, 31 May and Allan Donnelley's Faulconbridge to Lawson weekend walk did not go. Brian Hart had four on his Saturday walk(s) in the Dapto region but there was no report for Dick Weston's Narrow Neck walk that day. Maureen Carter's Sunday walk from Waterfall to Otford had 15 starters and 17 finishers. For some reason, the enterprise involved 45 telephone calls in the days leading up to the walk. Telstra will be pleased!

Bill Holland had eight on his Dharug National Park walk on the Tuesday. Persistent drizzle led to a choice of the top track as the preferred route.

Queens Birthday Weekend saw fine, cool weather. Spiro's Mount Colong walk had a party of 7 treading the well worn route in brisk fashion and Ian Rannard reported lovely beaches for the 12 who went on his Central Coast walk. Rik King rearranged his Widdin Valley walk somewhat after the party took 5 hours to cover 3 kilometres on one of the stages, resulting in an earlier than programmed end to the trip. Tony Holgate led an off

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program walk in the same area with a party of 14 and some route changes. This seemed to be the fashion for the weekend, with even Jim Calloway's Waterfall to Otford walk on the Sunday with a party of 10, reported as not to program for some reason. Not only that it ended the walks reports for the month.

Confederation report covered the presentation of the new budget, a Tracks and Access report, announcement of the coming Ball and a mention that the latest edition of the Budddawangs sketch map includes extensive track notes.

Confederation report saw election of Bill Holland as delegate to the NPWS "Visions for the New Millennium" workshop and symposium to be held over the coming months. We have received a copy of a NPWS survey report on vertebrates of the Kangaroo Valley. This will be passed to the ever-hungry maws of the editor, so watch that magazine. Bill is working on our response to the NPWS plan of management for the Blue Mountains National Park. The main emphasis of the plan appears to be the commercialisation of the park assets to raise revenue. A seminar on "Wilderness and Wild Rivers" is to be held on 18th September

General business saw an appeal for an archivist with knowledge of preservation and archiving techniques to improve and control the club's archival materials. Any volunteers out there?

Announcements came and went and the meeting closed at 2112.

From the Walks Secretary.

Thanks to the scores of members who have contributed to the Winter Walks Program. Thanks also to Tony Marshall who provided ideas and advice and who was responsible for finally putting it all together. We have, for most weeks, followed the successful pattern of recent programs of having three day trips and one mid-week walk. There are as usual for winter, plenty of ski trips to choose from. Lets hope snow conditions are suitable.

In general overnight walks have not been as popular as day walks. This is a pity, especially in a clut with 7

a tradition such as ours. In an effort to appeal to a greater cross section and number of people:

- most walks are in the easy/medium or medium categories,
- several start within 2 hours of Strathfield; you can go out and camp on Friday night or on Saturday morning, and
- we've included some bloody good walks for those who are looking for something different, or a challenge, or a wilderness experience.

Anyone, and this includes new and prospective members, who wants more information about a trip could phone the leader, preferably well in advance of the walk to find out what is involved and whether the trip is for you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

1. Kath Gero's RNP walk, programmed for 28 June, has been postponed till 30 August.
2. Wilf Hiler's extended Goulburn to Canberra trip has been postponed till spring, with details in the next program.
3. Don Brooks is putting on a walk, or rather two day walks, at Kanagra on 7th and 8th of November. He plans to arrange comfortable cabin accommodation at Oberon on the Saturday night. He would like to hear from interested walkers as early as possible as accommodation needs to be arranged well in advanced. See below.
4. Don't forget the Six Foot Track walk on 5 September: details page 10 of the Winter program.
5. The K to K is not dead. The 10th Annual 50 km walk from Kanagra to Katoomba is scheduled for 19 September 1998. This walk is a bit harder than the Six Foot Track walk but you'll be fit by then. Wayne Steel is in charge; full details in the Winter program.
6. Deadline for the Spring Walks Program is 24 July, just about the time you read this.

If you've forgotten to fax in that walk you were going to put on, please do it now.

Thanks. Bill Capon, Walks Secretary.
telephone: 02 9398 7820, fax: 02 9314 5791

see Claytons Weekend at KANANGRA page 11

CLUBNIGHT REPORTS by

Elwyn Morris

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING Two of the club's most experienced cross-country skiers and tourers, Ian Wolfe and Kenn Clacher, gave us a well-attended, illustrated talk on June 17. They first tormented us with slides of deep, dry snow, cloudless, windless skies and comfortable lodges and campspots in the American Sierra Nevada. Ian showed how holes were dug for the tents, which used skis as tent-poles. Belongings were stowed on snow-shelves, while suspended from the ski roof-beam was a billy with a stove attached, to save it from being kicked over on the floor.

Then to our much tougher, ever-changing conditions in the NSW and Victorian Alps, where many would rather camp than stay in the old, un-insulated, rat-infested stockmen's huts which still looked picturesque in the slides. We also saw fine scenes of our best Alpine scenery under snow, where on one tour the group took turns pulling a sled.

Ian kept hauling bits of equipment out of a nigh-bottomless rucksack - an aluminium spade, snow-saw, spare ski-tip, anti-freeze and wax, safety bindings for hills, extensive first-aid kit and the usual clothing and camp gear. He uses \$70 bivvy boots in the evening but said that dry socks inside plastic breadbags inside wet boots worked as well. He reminded us never to leave boots outside the tent or they'd be too frozen to get on next day!

MIDWINTER FEAST A convivial, cosy atmosphere prevailed at the June 24 feast held in the warm downstairs Trelawney Room from 6.30 pm on a cold night. Some members we hadn't seen for a while turned up, with some prospectives and those regulars who weren't away on trips.

FUTURE CLUBNIGHTS - All 8 for 8.15pm. **K to K.** Jan Mohandas, Morie Ward and Eddy Giacomel will make a presentation on the Kanangra to Katoomba routes, scenery and gear on July 15. The pre-meeting Indian dinner will be at the Maharaja Palace from 6 PM - book with Maureen Carter on 9773 4367.

CAMP COOKING CONTEST Bring your favourite recipe and a stove to compete for the vote of club tasters: July 22. Drinks provided.

CLUB AUCTION Donated, good gear (no junk) will be auctioned by Patrick James in support of Coolana. Your chance for a bargain! Be early to inspect the merchandise.

Change for August 19:- **THE KOKODA TRACK instead of the SOUTH POLE.** Instead of a video of an unsupported expedition to the South Pole, Morie Ward will present slides of his recent walk with other Club members along the famous Kokoda Track in New Guinea - unsupported by 'fuzzy wuzzy angels'. Few have seen the Kokoda Track in recent years, while the Antarctic is getting familiar by now from many fine slide shows and professional documentaries.

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Vale Gordon Ballard

by Barbara Boman.

I first met Gordon about 50 years ago as a fellow member of the Sydney Bush Walkers and enjoyed his company on many walks in the 1940s and 1950s.

He introduced me to canoeing with the River Canoe Club with whom we canoed the Warragamba, Wollondilly, Nepean, Grose, Fish, Kangaroo, Shoalhaven and Williams Rivers. All before dams and what fun we had.

Gordon always looked after everybody's welfare as well as the organisation of all our trips as only he could do. His priority was always the welfare of his mates. His films of our trips are held at the State Library in their archives. Gordon made a pioneering journey down the Snowy River together with Hughie Bignold, John Ekins, Jack Kennedy (decd.), George King and Stan Shenstone all of the River Canoe Club. Of late he had been working untiringly towards getting more water released into the Snowy River before privatisation of the Snowy River Scheme. This had been documented on TV recently, and had shown some of Gordon's archival film of the previous glory of this river. Gordon died on 29 March 1998 and will be sadly missed. He leaves behind his wife Fae. I am not sure of his age but I think he was 76 years.

CLUB COOLANA.

A new steel barbeque near the hut at Coolana is now in place. No doubt it has been used already. The maintenance program of mowing, weeding, burning, clearing, and planting continues. Natural regeneration of trees has continued (as opposed to our planting of tube stock, etc.) and we look forward to a bumper crop of native trees. 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. 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. If you wish you can contact one of the Coolana team to either join or lead a maintenance weekend.

At Coolana there's plenty of parking, a shed to sleep in if you don't want to use a tent, a fire or barbeque to cook on and other people to talk to at meal times and around the fire at night. Really an easy bushwalk with a purpose.

The work can be as hard or as easy as you wish, and includes: spot weeding around trees, nettles to be chopped or sprayed, mowing to inhibit weed growth and promote grass growth, trimming of trees and other fallen timber, burning of fallen timber, work with bush saws and rakes, some chain saw work. Of course the burning-off stops at the end of the burning-off season.

For Coolana details contact Coolana's Chief Green Thumb: Joan Rigby (02) 6247 2035 or any member of the Coolana Committee.

Don Brooks	9807 1657 (home)
Frances Holland	9484 6636 (home)
Patrick James	9904 1515 (home)
Peter Rossel	9924 2085 (home)

Weekend Maintenance Schedule

18 July	Gemma Gagne
1 Aug	Helen & George Gray
15 Aug	Spiro Hajinakitas
22 Aug	
29 Aug	Patrick James
1 Sep	end of burning-off season
5 Sep	
12 Sep	Gemma Gagne
19 Sep	Helen & George Gray
26 Sep	
3 Oct	(long weekend) Joan Rigby
10 Oct	
11 Oct	
17 Oct	
24 Oct	
31 Oct	
7 Nov	
14 Nov	
21 Nov	
28 Nov	

Incident and Injury on the Shoalhaven. by Ian Rannard

This is an account of a walk on and near the Shoalhaven River in Morton NP during the 1998 Easter holiday weekend. The walk was in the Walks Programme as going to Byadbo but because of a shortage of cars and the drought, the leader changed areas.

Our new walk was to start at Long Point, go down the river to Canoe Flat, climb out of the river west to Iron Pot Clearings, cross the plateau to Tolwong Creek mine site, inspect the Blockup, then finish via Mt. Ayre at the Lookdown at Bungonia.

The walk proved to be a memorable experience because of both the good things (the scenery, the camp sites, companionship) and the bad things that happened (injury, illness, benighted in a canyon, a rolling boulder, etc.).

Our first incident was the process of getting a train on Good Friday morning from Central to Macarthur station, from where a hired bus was to take us to Long Point. A heavy downpour of rain had caused a landslip at Turella. Trains were cancelled or re-routed. At Central, train times were given out and then changed every few minutes. In the general confusion 6 of us took a train from Platform 22 and 7 took a train from Platform 19. By some quirk in the system both trains arrived at Campbelltown at the same time but were terminated there with no connecting service to Macarthur for possibly 30 minutes. It was now 9.30am. Thirteen of us were on Campbelltown Station, 4 at Macarthur, and 4 others in a car on their way to Long point. To cut a long story short we were eventually united, and a pleasant, if damp, afternoon was spent walking down to the Shoalhaven. Camp was made among some casuarinas on a beautiful sandy ledge high above a large pool in the river, east of Rainbow Ridge.

Saturday dawned cloudy, cool and dry. We continued downstream enjoying alternating

sections of sandy beaches, rock hopping and grassy ledges. By morning tea our second incident was developing. Pat reported that the place where she broke her leg last year was swollen, red and painful. We decided to stop at Badgery's Crossing from where she could walk out to the train at Tallong. Well, we walked right past the pool and beach at Badgery's despite realising in retrospect we had paused there to chat to a fisherman. It took an hour for some of us to re-trace our steps and then say goodbye to Pat and Gretel as they set off up the steep track to Badgery's LO and the train home.

About noon our third incident occurred when a sudden painful shout announced that Jo had twisted her ankle. We were now a few hundred metres from Canoe Flat, our second campsite. Saturday afternoon was spent at this delightful spot. Some of us lazed about, a group explored the rocky creekbed of Billy Bulloo's Canyon, and Jo worked on her ankle.

Sunday's misty dawn brought our fourth incident. Jenny was sick - unable to keep solids or liquids down. After some discussion we decided that Jenny would stay with the main group and that Jo and Ron would walk back to Badgery's LO, or better, the car at Long Point LO. So we said goodbye to them and climbed the steep spur north-west out of the river from its junction with Iron Pot Creek. It was while we were negotiating a way through the cliff lines at the top of the spur that our fifth incident happened.

We were being very careful not to dislodge rocks onto anybody below by moving in groups of three, and only after the group ahead had cleared the route. But while we were climbing up a steep gully between the first and second cliff lines, somehow a boulder approx 70cm x 30cm was dislodged. It rolled end-over-end at great speed down towards Margaret. It missed her by about a metre.

The top of the spur was an interesting place - a rocky knoll with a shallow open saddle leading to the plateau. from the knoll. We admired the view across to Billy Bulloo's

Crown and Canyon. After morning tea was taken we set out, heading west for Tolwong Creek and another campsite on the river. By now a support group of Margaret, Glad and Don had formed around Jenny, feeding her selected sweets and drinks only to see them mostly regurgitated soon after. With directions given by a farm worker from Tolwong farm we worked our way via farm roads and open forest across the plateau, until late in the afternoon we stood at the top of a steep spur looking down into Tolwong Creek. It was here that the sixth incident of the trip began.

The map showed a foot track down the nose of the spur, past the mine site, and along the creek to the river. A track "cut and benched suitable for a laden packhorse" we were told. Few traces of this track remain and in failing light at the end of a long day we zig-zagged down the precipitously-steep nose of the spur, accompanied by Wilf's "110% certainty" we were on the track, to place ourselves neatly in a rocky canyon between sets of impassable falls, about 200m height above and one kilometre distance from the river. Here among the boulders, and for some, in a mine tunnel, we spent the night.

It is remarkable how a group of walkers can, in a few minutes, transform an unpromising location into a place that feels relatively secure and homely. In this instance hollows in the creekbed were cleared of loose rocks, ledges discovered and spread with groundsheets, and the floor of a mine tunnel smoothed over. Soon the glow of a fire lit up the rocky walls on either side of us and torches flashed as routes were established from the fire through the boulders to where a sleeping bag or Thermarest was laid out. A difficulty was to find a place to go to the loo.

Our seventh incident happened here when Sev took sick and brought up his dinner in several vomiting bouts during the night.

Monday morning was cool and cloudy. We climbed out of the canyon at 6.30am determined to be on the river by 8am. But we couldn't find a way down over the cliffs. The

place was steep and dangerous. So we climbed back up the spur gaining about 300m height with the intention of getting onto Sivewright Spur, a known route to the river, immediately to our north. This led to our eighth incident when I overshot and led the group onto the spur north of Sivewright. After a half hours recce and refusing to accept Wilf's "cast iron guarantee" about another spur, we got onto Sivewright Spur, and the river about 11am.

The rest of the trip was uneventful. We changed our plans and left the river using the Trestle Track. Anne and Frank stayed on the river intending to walk back to their car at Long Point. With the help of a lift from some friendly walkers who had 2 4WD's in the Trestle Track carpark, we soon had our hired bus brought back from Bungonia SRA and by 2.45pm we were heading back to Macarthur Station. A final incident associated with the trip was when the bus driver, on his way to collect us, was fined \$112 for using a mobile phone while driving.

My thanks to all members of the party for their assistance in dealing with each "incident", their patience, and their good humour throughout the walk. In a perverse sort of way I enjoyed the experience.

The Walkers: Pat Bickley, Christine Floyd, George Floyd, Frank Grennan, Brian Hart, Wilf Hilder, Ron Howlett, Valerie Joy, Anne Maguire, Peter Mitchell, Jenny Paton, Glad Rannard, Ian Rannard (leader), Jo Robertson, Peter Rossel, Margaret Sheens, Sev Sternhell, Allan Wells, Dick Weston, Don Wills, and Gretel Woodward. Easter 1998.

POSITION VACANT. The position of Club archivist is still open. The job of archiving is not so bleak as I so incorrectly painted last month. Ian Debert the immediate past archivist and Ainslie Morris who preceded Ian did a wonderful job in collecting and sorting the records from 1927. All the new archivist has to do is continue the good work. A couple of members have expressed interest and have had a good look at the job. But don't despair if you are interested in the job it's still open, so talk to Eddy or any committee member.

Alas The Poor Kowmung.

by Tom Wenman

A suitable walk at a suitable time of the year, I thought, and having not been on this stretch of the river for some time, I wished to renew my acquaintance with it as well as perhaps show those who had not seen it before, some of its beauty. Added to which, the delightful Gingra Creek would provide further enhancement to the weekend.

The Kanangra - Boyd plateau was cool and wet on Saturday morning, but as we progressed along the Gingra range it became warmer. I was interested to see the Gingra range as I had heard that during the summer there had been a fire along it. Some way along the ridge it became evident that there had been a fire, but it seemed to have been of low intensity - not that there is much to burn anyway - and the tree tops were untouched.

Further along and subsequently on Hughes Ridge there were patches where the fire had been more severe, but these seemed to be the exception rather than the rule. Here and there were areas completely free of any fire damage.

The day became warmer as we proceeded along and down the ridges, and so did we. Never mind, I assured everyone, once we get down to the Kowmung there will be plenty of cool pools to swim in and an excess of water to drink. From a vantage point where the ridge turns sharp left, going down, one can look down on the river and admire it. Sure enough, there it was, although there seemed a certain, well, sort of oddness to the water. Never the less, down we hurried in pleasant anticipation.

On arrival on the river banks what a sad and depressing sight met our eyes. The river consisted of a couple of stagnant discoloured pools, with merely the faintest trickle of water flowing over some muddy stones. We crossed the river hardly even getting the soles of our boots wet. I decided to head downstream to where, I believe is one of the most beautiful pools on the river. It was scarcely recognisable as such, but there was water flowing into it, and out of it, and therefore swimming was just possible. Here we

collected some of water from the meagre flow to boil for lunch.

And so we continued along the river's depressing course passing only stagnant discoloured pools with occasionally some small flow. The presence of cattle was noted, and some wild ducks. No further swimming pools were encountered, and all the river crossings were made with quite dry boots.

Eventually we arrived at Sandy Creek to camp for the night. Here there was again just a trickle of water, and a little way downstream a small pool in which it was possible to just submerge oneself, and wash off some of the grime of the day.

The next day the remainder of the river presented the same dismal spectre. Gingra Creek was not flowing at its junction with the Kowmung, nor had we expected it otherwise, but I was interested how far up we would have to go before we found water.

This we did rather sooner than I had thought, about a third to one half the way up to the foot of Crafts Ridge. Just pools of course, but clean ones. Quite an improvement. The creek however had obviously not flowed above ground for some considerable time as there was a luxurious growth of weeds all over the creek bed. Further up and just before our exit point, something of the nature of creek as it 'normally' is, existed. Here we were able to indulge in a swim and gather fresh water without the need to boil it.

This somewhat restored our spirits, but the memory of the Kowmung lingers and I just wish to see it and Gingra Creek again with that life and spirit which clean and clear flowing water brings to these valleys.

CLAYTONS WEEKEND at KANANGRA
Weekend walk on 7 and 8 Nov. 1998, with accommodation in on-site vans at Oberon and two separate day walks at Kanangra. Day 1, 13 Km Craft Walls area. Day 2, 9 Km in the Cottage Rock area. Limit 16, and as accommodation has to be booked, early expression of interest would be appreciated. Contact the leader, Don (Milo) Brooks on 9807 1657 before 9.30 PM.

Book Review *Looking Back: from Seven to Seventy* written by Frank

Rigby, published by Frank Rigby, 77 Creswell St., Campbell 2612.

This small, slim book holds a collection of stories or essays spanning the life of the author. The first story touches on the highlights and problems of a seven year old Frank Rigby at school in Queensland. The last story is from this year when Frank turned seventy. The stories range across many topics and highlight a particular age of the author. As I read the stories, which all ended with Frank's age at the time, I wondered what I was or will be doing at the same age. Frank's style is light and informative. Each story is complete in itself. As suggested by the author, the stories need not be read in chronological order. I did read them in the order as written, but that's just me.

This book of stories is something to have. A book to keep and re-read every so often, perhaps on a particular birthday to compare Frank's story with your own. Possibly the book will prompt others to write their own book. At \$10, which includes packing and postage direct from the author, this book is an ideal gift to yourself or to someone else.

DEAR EDITOR, ensconced on high
Please tell me do, please tell me why
if I should turn to pen and ink
describing what I do or think
I should be told to wait in line
- no comfort this, no anodyne-
While flippy floppies, by the score
hog all the limelight, what a bore.

Could you be short of copy then
to so disdain a quill or pen.
Is this a misprint* or a joke?
Please tell me soon before I croak.
Now superseded, as I ween
by soulless phosphorescent screen.
A scarce resource to fade away
A scribbler who has lost his day.

FREDDO, Frog Hollow, 23 June 1998

* Instructions for authors and contributors.

The Sydney Bushwalker, May 1998, page 14.

DEAR FREDDO, wet and cold
are you green frog or hoary toad?
Or are you confectionery sweet,
a chocolate frog so nice to eat.
No matter what, I know you well
with your watery, whinging tale to tell.
Be not afraid of techniques new,
they are not limited to just a few.
However if modern methods you cannot take,
then I suggest; jump in the lake!

YOUR EDITOR.

Mon cher Fredo,

Recette des Cuisse de Grenouille.

Prendre des cuisse de grenouille fraîches ou
decongelees: faire fondre 50g de beurre, faire
frir, bien rôties les cuisse de grenouille et
ajouter en fin de cuisson un machis d'ail et de
persil, salez en poivrez. **Bon appétit.**

FOOTNOTES by Patrick James

Last month the magazine was put to bed early
(that's editorial speak for being finalised) so
that the treasurer and the editor could go on
holidays together. This month the magazine is
staying up late in order to be finish before the
printers start jumping up and down. All this
typing takes its toll of time. We did go on
holidays, no not to Hawaii, but to Vietnam. A
terrific place for a holiday about which one or
both of us will write soon.

The team from the Kokada track (or trail)
returned to Australia happy and satisfied with
having completed their task, and with just a
touch of foot troubles.

Lost and then found, by Gemma on Wilf
Hilder's walk to Woodhill mountain, one
Swiss army knife. Talk to Gemma, show the
matching Swiss army spoon and Swiss army
fork and the AWOL knife will be returned.

July was good for celebrations with Canada,
the US of A, France and Belgium all taking a
day out of the month. "Instructions for
Authors and Contributors" published in the
May magazine remains as written
notwithstanding Fredo's comments.