



**THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER** is a monthly bulletin of matters of interest to members of The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc  
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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.

**SBW WEBSITE=** [www.sbw.org.au](http://www.sbw.org.au)

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**Delegates to Confederation:**  
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# MAY 2000

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The Sydney Bushwalker magazine is printed on recycled paper

## ✉ A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

A number of club members have asked me what policies I hope to implement during my term as President.

This is a reasonable question. Earlier this year the outgoing committee agreed with me that a review committee should examine every aspect of the club's operations. As this task was passed to the new committee I have decided that it would be better if the review could be expedited by the new committee as time is short as next year's committee will be busy planning the major event for the celebration of our 75<sup>th</sup> year in 2002.

My major objective/goal is that this important review and its resulting recommendations be completed and implemented by the end of this year. This tight timeframe is practical but will keep our committee busy. To review our club's operations we need as many new ideas as we can muster so that we can examine all these ideas and try out the best of them.

Where will these ideas come from? From all of our members I hope, plus a few good ideas from other bushwalking clubs. So if you have a good idea to improve the way our club operates, be it for membership, walks or social activities, please contact me or any other committee member to discuss it and to bring it to the attention of our committee. We need your ideas now so please share them.

I am also keen to dispel any perception that our committee is a group that operates in secret. The committee decisions need to be widely disseminated to all of our members with plenty of feedback in return.

Naturally as a team leader I am doing my best to encourage the team spirit in our committee so that we can serve the club to the best of our ability.

**Wilf Hilder**

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## SBW MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN A SUCCESSFUL SEARCH FOR LOST WALKERS

SBW club members Tony Manes, Peter Miller & David Trinder participated in the recent successful search for four missing teenagers in the Morton National Park.

Tony, who was in the group of five that found the lost party in a cave at the eastern end of Sturgess Mountain, has promised to write up the search in a magazine article.

The club committee wish to improve club participation in future searches and I have included a form to be completed by members who are able to assist.

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## ANOTHER APOLOGY

Acting on information from a normally reliable source I offered congratulations to club member Reg Alder in the April mag on his being made an honorary member of the NPA.

*It seems that I was only fourteen years out of date.*

Sorry Reg but again congratulations. Ed

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## MAGAZINE DEADLINES

Copy for publishing in the SBW magazine should be received by me by the second Monday of each month.

The deadline for last-minute urgent items is the second Wednesday of each month as the magazine is usually printed on the following Thursday.

Copy can be lodged by email, typed or on a 3½" PC floppy using any common word processing program. Ed.

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## THE APRIL 2000 GENERAL MEETING

*reported by Barry Wallace*

There were around 24 members present at 2002 when the new president called the meeting to order from the chair and began proceedings. But what's this, chairs in a crescent close to the official tables? Is this change for the sake of change, or a new broom? Only time will tell. There was an apology for Margery White, a new member unable to attend.

Due to certain administrative difficulties the minutes of the previous general meeting were not available for ratification.

The president then briefed the meeting on matters covered at the recent committee meeting. Vacancies outstanding from the election of club officers at the AGM were reviewed and two positions filled unopposed. Judy O'Connor has taken the position of secretary and Gretel Woodward will become magazine business manager. We still lack one delegate to Confederation.

New members Jovanha Ajanovic, Robin Barker, Leah Bloomfield, Pam Morrison, Eilish O'Rourke and Margery White were called for welcome to the club. Margery had sent an apology and there was one no-show but otherwise all were welcomed in the usual way.

Correspondence saw a letter from Robin Plumb regarding the bicentennial walkway and various commercial entreaties. The outgoing mail saw letters to our new members and a response to a request from Nancye Alderson. The club has acceded to a request from NPA for the use of the clubs print projector for a function they will hold.

The treasurer's report revealed that we began the period with a balance of \$3,267, received income of \$3,097, disbursed \$1,133 and closed with \$5,231.

Carol Lubbers presented the walks reports

for the previous month commencing with the weekend of 10, 11, 12 March. The weather in Sydney was wet Friday night and not much better on the Saturday. Morrie Ward cancelled his Kanangra Walls area walk but the reunion went ahead in fine weather at Coolana. Tony Manes led 7 people on his Yalwal trip in hot conditions on the Saturday. They indulged in a spot of swimming along the way and ate well. Zol Bodlay postponed his Saturday walk in Marra Marra National Park but Ralph Penglis had a party of 16 out on an easy day in lovely conditions for his Rose Bay to South Head walk on the Sunday.

Ian Rannard led a midweek walk on the Tuesday from Brooklyn to Wondabyne with a party of 7 in warm conditions.

Over the weekend of 17, 18, 19 March Bill Capon was scheduled to lead a walk out from Glen Davis. There was a general belief that the walk went, but no details were available at the meeting. Chris Dowling led the party of 11 on his Saturday walk from Springwood to Glenbrook in warm to hot conditions, which may have accounted for the number of swims along the way. Zol Bodlay's deferred Marra Marra National Park trip was scheduled for this Saturday but there was no report available to the meeting. Wilf Hilder reported 6 starters and some "deep wading" on his Sunday walk in Ku-Ring-Gai Chase. There were no details for Patrick James' Sunday walk from Cowan to Brooklyn via the dams, and Ron Watters' Macquarie Pass walk that day did not go. Anne Maguire had a party of 12 out on a sunny Sunday for her Fortress Canyon walk.

The weather gods did not smile on the holding of *two* midweek walks that week. Bill Holland's Tuesday walk in the Heathcote area was washed out and Wilf's equinox walk on the Thursday saw some rain but no starters. Wilf went ahead anyway and did the walk solo to show the feasibility of such a venture.

Wayne Steele cancelled his walk over the

weekend of 24, 25, 26 March and Tony Holgate cancelled his Sunday leadership training walk. Craig Austin was carrying an injury by the time his Sunday walk on the Colo River came around so he cancelled the trip. Errol Sheedy carried the flag for the weekend by leading a party of 16 on his Heathcote to Sutherland walk through The Royal on the Sunday.

Bill Holland led 7 starters on his midweek walk to Little Bluegum on the Tuesday in warm conditions.

The weekend of 31 March, 1, 2 April saw a "no report" for Jan Pieters walk in Murrumbidgee National Park. Bill Holland led a party of four on his Saturday start walk to Diggers Flat near Yalwal. Conditions were reported as warm. Maureen Carter deferred her Sunday walk in The Royal to the following weekend. Roger Treagus described his Sunday trip in the Barren Grounds as long suffering what with the profusion of leeches and the weather closing in as they approached the view. They truncated the suffering and the walk somewhat and came out after around 6 kilometres and an undisclosed number of leeches. Peter Miller's Coba Ridge walk on the Sunday attracted a party of 15 in overcast and at times misty conditions with some rain. They reported white flowers.

Wilf Hilder's midweek walk was a segment of the circumnavigation (counter clockwise that is) of Port Jackson. There were six starters, navigation described as interesting, and they caught the 1600 bus.

Bill Hope postponed his walk on the Nattai over the weekend of 8, 9 April. Phil Newman reported great weather and walk for the 6 who attended his Megalong Valley via the Six-Foot-Track and Black Jerrys Ridge over the same weekend. Ken Cheng led a party of 12 on his Saturday walk from Berowra to Hornsby in cloudy and humid conditions. Nigel Weaver led a party of 13 on a beautiful day for his Hawkesbury River

from Wondabyne trip on the Sunday in conditions described as beautiful. Wilf Hilder led a party of five on what he described as a good day's suffering for his Sunday walk in the Illawarra State Recreation Area to close the walks reports for the month.

There was no conservation secretary present so we skipped the conservation report for this month.

Confederation report included a mention of some of the problems inherent in the construction of the Parramatta to St Leonards rail link, a mention that the Confederation AGM is scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> August and a request for volunteers to assist in clearing an access track to Bonnum Pic. Confederation is seeking the services of an office assistant.

General business and the announcements came and went with some discussion of a safety related walking incident but no active motions before the meeting.

The meeting closed at 2128.

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### MAGAZINES AVAILABLE IN CLUB

Every month the club sends a copy of the SBW Bushwalker to several walking clubs and receives from them a copy of their magazine.

These magazines will be placed on the table in the clubrooms on the night of the following general meeting for general perusal.

If any club member would like to take any of the magazines would they please do so at the end of the meeting so that maximum opportunity is given to all attendees to read them.

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### GPS FOLLOW UP

Further to the article on the Global Positioning Satellite system in the November 99 Sydney Bushwalker, people considering buying a GPS unit would be well advised to read the May issue of Choice magazine where six current low priced units are compared.

## TONGARIRO TRAMPING

by Frank Rigby

Years ago I wrote a story about why I didn't go bushwalking (sorry, tramping) in New Zealand, citing the atrocious climate, sandflies, keas, raging torrents of glacier milk and so forth. I retract everything because I have experienced heat, deserts, dry river beds, dusty tracks, and birdless, sandfly-free terrain! In New Zealand? Yes. In the Southern Alps? No way. The secret is out. Ever heard of Tongariro National Park, roughly in the middle of the North Island?

They call it the Tongariro Northern Circuit and bill it as one of New Zealand's 'Great Walks'. The 48 kilometre circuit is a circumnavigation of the near-perfect cone of Mt Ngauruhoe, the volcano which was, fortunately, not in eruption mode at the time of our visit. Most walkers complete the circuit in a leisurely four days, using three of the four huts around the track. The landscape is essentially volcanic, barren and stark but includes some stunning landforms. Joan and I arrived at the starting point,

Whakapapa Village (you get used to these Maori names), in typically discouraging weather – low scudding clouds, frequent showers and zero visibility. We had not as yet learned the local practice of completely ignoring weather forecasts (further rain) so as we retreated to the dry semi-luxury of the Skotel (ski motel?) Resort, I wondered if we would still be there in four days time. I could hardly believe it when the next morning dawned fine and clear and there were the mountains after all, just waiting to be noticed. The day soon became hot, the track was dusty dry and the treeless heathland afforded no shade. But just look at this shrub with its profusion of pretty lilac flowers, it dominates everything else so what can it be? Alas, we learn it is Scottish heather, introduced about ninety years ago for grouse hunting (the grouse never arrived) and since has become a prolific pest. It's the same the whole world over, ain't it all a bloody shame?

Despite the three mountains Ruapehu, Ngauruhoe and Tongariro vying for attention, I have to say that the first day's walk to Mangatepopo Hut verged on boring.

**"A wonderland of rugged mountains..."**

# Nowhere is a place

If you believe Bruce Chatwyn and Paul Theroux, Patagonia is that place. Willis's Walkabouts has been taking people bushwalking in Patagonia since 1990. We are the only company described as "highly recommended" in the current edition of the Lonely Planet guide *Trekking in the Patagonian Andes*. One of our clients described our trips as follows.

*"The Patagonian Andes are a wonderland of rugged mountains with granite spires, snow covered mountains, glaciers, beech forests, fields of daisies, waterfalls and more. The opportunity for some terrific trekking shouldn't be missed. The aim for budget travelling with some comfort in mind makes the trip affordable but not too rough."* (Helen O'Callaghan, Hobart)

**Ask for our  
Patagonia trip  
notes.**



**...with granite spires"**

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However, the following day more than compensated; it was spectacular! This section is known as the Tongariro Crossing and can be done as a 7-8 hour day walk; and indeed it is, with a vengeance! Emerging from the hut on another glorious morning we were amazed to see hordes of walkers already on the track. Lightly loaded, many looked like candidates for hypothermia if the weather suddenly changed for the worst. We learned that every fine day in the season five tourist coaches disgorge their loads at a nearby road head and swallow them up again (assuming the walkers make it) at the next exit from the circuit. These people come from all over the world and included a party of brightly-garbed Japanese women complete with both Kiwi and Japanese guides. International mass tourism marches on, even on foot!

The track climbs steadily upwards past the Soda Springs to the Mangatepopo Saddle and across the flat floor of the South Crater. Some young energetic folk have peeled off the main track to tackle the steep rubble-strewn slopes of Mt Ngauruhoe (2,281 metres). Look, you can just make out the tiny white specks on the rim of the summit crater; now is not a good time for an eruption. The oldies like us have enough on their hands in climbing up, up, up to the Red Crater at 1,886 metres, the loftiest point on the Northern Circuit route.

What a place! You can't take it all in at once even though the wind wants to blow you to Kingdom Come. The views are spectacular to every horizon (yes, that is the pyramid of Mt Taranaki (Egmont) 140 kilometres to the west), vapour curls up from hot cracks in the earth and a foul odour of sulphurous gases assaults the nose. But it is the far side of the crater which rivets one's attention for the strange formations with their vivid green and red colouring seem to belong to another world, the nether world; one is reminded that there are ominous and powerful forces somewhere down below. Prosaically, the Dept. of Conservation leaflet describes the formations as 'a dyke, an old magma feeding pipe to the vent of the volcano'. Any the wiser? No? Well, you will simply have to go there and see for yourself.

Now it's slipping and sliding down a steep slope of scoria to the Emerald Lakes, said to fill old explosion pits. We have lunch as we

gaze into the, yes, you guessed it, emerald-coloured water which is for looking at, not for swimming in. Here we branch off from the Tongariro Crossing and farewell the day-tripping multitudes as we make for Oturere Hut. 'The track weaves through an endless variety of unusual jagged lava forms from early eruptions from Red Crater which filled Oturere valley, a magical place to visit, especially on a misty day', says our leaflet. Well said, and a magical place to, visit at any time, in fact so fascinating that we return for more photography the following morning.

I was not quite prepared for the terrain on the third day. I never could have imagined that New Zealand could possess the equivalent of Australia's Sturt's Stony Desert, even if only in miniature. But apparently a rain shadow and extensive eruption debris have combined to create the Rangipo Desert. This benign landscape of gravel and lava supports no more than a few scattered clumps of magical place heath; of any form of animal, bird or insect life there is no sign. We walked for two hours across this wasteland under a blazing sun, eventually to reach a valley that seemed totally out of place, for here was a flowing stream and a beech forest. To move from a hot desert into a cool green forest in a few steps seemed like a miracle – it's one of my treasured memories of the Northern Circuit.

Wailiolionu Hut was full of interesting people from everywhere, from Israel, Holland, Germany, Britain, Canada, the U.S., Aussie and Kiwiland. The gas cookers and table space were 'taxed to the limit' but trampers/ bushwalkers/ backpackers are usually a great bunch with lots of stories to tell, so it's worth the slumming. Day 4 brought a change in the weather (but you must be truly thankful for three fine days in a row) and on the final leg back to Whakapapa rain and cold winds set in from the west, forcing us into parkas and overpants for the first time. Once again the volcanoes had disappeared but this time we knew they were only in hiding. It didn't seem to matter now for we had come, seen and all but conquered.

The date of our walk March 9-12 2000.

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**SBW JUNE SOCIAL PROGRAM**

- June 7<sup>th</sup> 7pm Committee meeting  
 June 14<sup>th</sup> 8pm General meeting  
 June 21<sup>st</sup> 6.30pm Pre-meeting dinner at the  
 Kirribilli Hotel Bistro.  
 8pm Canoes and Kayaks.  
*Ron Murray.* Canoe  
 & Camping supplies  
 June 28<sup>th</sup> 8pm The Mountains of Pakistan.  
 slides. *Pam Irvine.*

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**JUNE-JULY CONFEDERATION  
ACTIVITIES**

- June. Date TBA Paddy Pallin Rogaine at  
 Capertee.  
 June 20<sup>th</sup> Confederation meeting.  
 Ashfield RSL 7.30pm  
 July 1-2<sup>nd</sup> Bushwalker Wilderness Rescue \*\*  
 Nav.Shield  
 July 15-16<sup>th</sup> Aust. championship Rogaine  
 at Scone  
 July 18<sup>th</sup> Confederation meeting Ashfield  
 RSL 7.30pm

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\*\* Full details of confederation activities  
 including the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue  
 group and news of upcoming events such as S&R  
 training exercises is available on the  
 Confederation website at:

[WWW.bushwalking.org.au](http://WWW.bushwalking.org.au)

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**NEW CLUB MEMBERS**

The following people were admitted to the  
 club at the March and April meetings.

Ms. Susan Clift	Bundeena.	9527 6806
Ms. Jacqueline Pearse	Neutral Bay	9909 8805
Ms. Leah Bloomfield	Newtown	9550 4346
Ms. Margery White	Turramurra	9144 2961
Ms. Robin Barker	Queens Park	9387 7406
Dr. Pam Morrison	Maroubra	9349 1522
Ms. Eilish O'Rourke	Glebe	9660 0771
Ms. Jovanha Ajanovic	Sylvania Heights	9522 4937

Members are requested to make them  
 welcome at the clubrooms and on walks.

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**St JOHNS AMBULANCE FIRST AID  
COURSE**

Confederation is running a St Johns Senior  
 first aid certificate course over May 27-28.  
 The cost is \$75-00 and a non-refundable  
 deposit of \$20-00 is required.  
 If you are interested send the deposit ASAP  
 with your details to:

**Secretary**  
**Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue**  
**PO Box 22**  
**Canterbury 2193**

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 to plan your:

**"Adventure in Paradise"**

**NEXT MONTH**

**The Crossing** by Dick Whittington  
**Walking in the Grampians (Scottish)**  
 by Ian Wolfe & Louise Verdon  
**The Great South West Walk**  
 by Frank Davis

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## BATS AND BAT PEOPLE

by Christine Austin

Craig, Noni and I attended this course in March at the Barren Grounds Bird Observatory Field Studies Centre. It was co-ordinated by Nancy Pallin (Ku-ring-gai Bat Conservation Society and wife of S.B.W. member Rob Pallin) and Margaret Turton (bat researcher). Many of you would know the Barren Grounds, located on the Illawarra Plateau, about two hours' drive south of Sydney.

A delicious meal, organised by Raoul the warden, was served on our arrival on Friday night. It was eaten in the Lodge, where most of our party also slept for two nights.

Then it was outside into a perfect evening, Orion and other constellations clearly visible, to watch the construction of a harp trap for catching microbats. When erected this trap resembles the parallel strings of a harp and the fine nylon strings do not damage the little microbat. It lies snugly in the bottom folds of the trap until released. On Friday evening four harp traps were placed across known bat corridors.

Six thirty was the nominated time next morning for trap inspections - early to avoid the bats becoming hot as the day progressed. However, the day was cloudy so heat didn't present a problem for our twelve little friends who were soon bagged and hanging securely in the field studies centre.

After breakfast, but before examining the microbats, we were introduced to a very active and inquisitive thirteen year old grey headed flying fox called Nell, having a short visit from her home in the Lane Cove National Park. Megabats, of whom Nell is one, differ from microbats in that they rely on sight (their night vision is twenty times better than ours) and smell to navigate and feed. Microbats use echolocation. We were to learn more of this interesting phenomenon during the weekend when a bat detector was

used to listen to their calls. These calls are high frequency sound waves that are outside our hearing range (which is about 15hz to 18khz).

With Nell returned to her cage, it was time to examine the microbats. Each exquisite little creature was carefully removed from its bag. Nancy, Margaret, John and Raoul were the only handlers as they had been vaccinated against Australian Bat Lyssavirus. If bitten, there was a remote chance of infection. Although the incidence of the virus in bats is low, people are advised not to handle them, because the virus will be lethal if an infected bite or scratch is not treated. Moreover, I did not want to risk my clumsy fingers on such tiny creatures.

It appeared that identifying microbats was even more difficult than classifying plants. Using our key and hand lenses the first little fellow (yes fellow!)

- a. had a forearm 29 mm.
- b. had an enclosed tail
- c. had a pendulous penis
- d. weighed 4.5 grams

He turned out to be a Southern Forest Bat (*Vespadalus regulus*)

Bushwalkers and bats have much in common. Firstly, flying-foxes are major pollinators, increasing the growth and diversity of the forests in which we love to walk. Secondly, we inhabit the same environment. Take, for instance, the Lesser Long-eared Bat (*Nyctinomus geoffroyi*). He does indeed have long ears - 17 to 26 mm. In Australia he is ubiquitous, except for a narrow coastal strip in Queensland. So whether you are walking in Central Australia, Tasmania or the Snowy Mountains, he is there, possibly sheltering under that peeling tree bark near where your tent is pitched. He is an interesting fellow in that he can orientate without using echolocation in familiar territory and switch off echolocation when approaching fluttering insects, catching them by passive listening.

# Problems solved

This is the new backpack from WE. The NEW RIVER. As you would expect, it is unmistakably Wilderness Equipment. Every detail has had to earn its keep in a development process spanning 20 years. If the picture could be turned around you'd be looking at the most comfortable and durable harness system there is. Which, of course, is a good reason not to make more than one or two subtle changes.

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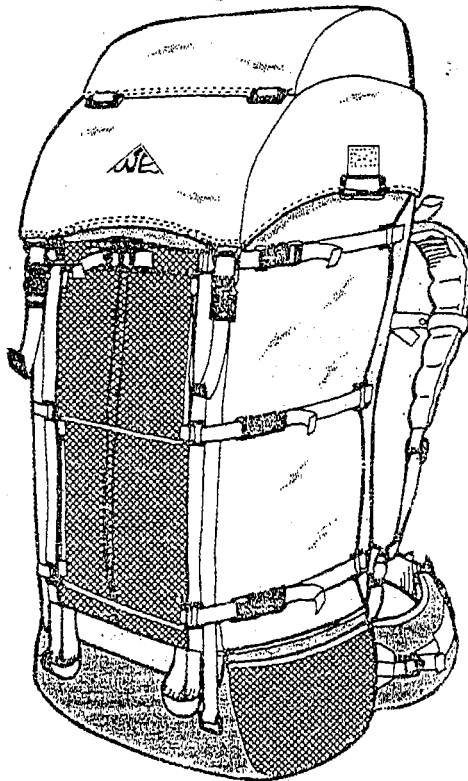
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Nothing but canvas fabric in the seams of the bag. No webbing, no touch-tape, no leakage pathways and simply zero stress points.

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We've gone back to a simple touch-tape strap closure on the hip-harness. Unbreakable, durable and absolutely zero creep.

Subtle shoulder harness suspension. Soaks up the phase difference between hip and shoulder dynamics, tunable to the pack weight.

Close fitting, removable base reinforcing attaching front and back. Leakage pathways in the main-bag seams eliminated; easy repair.

When bushwalking there is only one bat that we might hear. This is the white striped mastiff bat (*Nyctinimus australis*). This microbat has low frequency echolocation calls that are within limits of most people's hearing. It inhabits many different environments but is absent from the tropics.

After lunch Nancy gave an interesting talk on flying-foxes, explaining their huge importance as forest pollinators and the impact on them of habitat loss. Later we drove to Jamberoo valley to wait for dusk when the flying-foxes would leave the forest. We ate Raoul's homemade cake and Nancy identified some rainforest species whilst waiting for the magic moment. Off they flew in a beautiful display of large black wings! Saturday finished with the release of the twelve microbats who had patiently waited out the day.

On Sunday the trap inspection revealed fewer bats than the previous day probably due to rain drops on the harp traps making them easier for the bats to locate. These were examined and classified. Then Margaret demonstrated how the echolocation calls had been recorded, the signals appearing on her laptop computer. The patterns are unique to each species.

As the course was concluding, Craig and I walked the Griffith trail prior to returning home. The highlight was seeing a green ground parrot skimming along the track before us.

The Barren Grounds Bird Observatory has a number of very interesting courses available. Call the wardens on (02 42360195) if you wish to attend. I would recommend a visit as a fascinating and different weekend, of great appeal to all ages. It's a good break from the kitchen too – the cooking was delicious.

#### **Bibliography**

Friends of Bats Newsletter. Issue 56, March 2000

Australian Bats. by Sue Churchill

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## **WESTERN TASMANIA THE STORY OF A STONE**

by David Trinder

I have in my hand a small white stone that I brought back from the west of Tasmania. Its history is complex and interesting.

About one billion years ago, a period shrouded in mystery, sandy sediments eroded from igneous mountains forming deposits of white silica rich sedimentary sandstone in shallow seas. The land had subsided because it was on a fault line. At this time Tasmania was linked to the Australian mainland, the Antarctic continent and several other continents that formed Gondwanaland.

My stone has no fossils. The only life forms at this time were algae and bacteria that lived in the sea, thus escaping the intense cosmic radiation that bombarded the Earth's surface. The brown dolomite rocks of other parts of Tasmania are evidence of algae. Sedimentation occurred for a quarter of a billion years and built up to a depth of six kilometres. It was interrupted by movements and collisions of continental plates that compressed and folded the sediment layer, dramatically altering the landscape and forming mountain ranges and a jumble of confused landforms above and below the surface. The pressure and heat generated by this event was so severe that the chemistry of the sedimentary rock altered. The quartz grains in my stone were fused together forming quartzite metamorphic rock to such an extent that a fracture in the stone would break through the old grains instead of around them and if it were polished it would present a smooth white surface.

By 200 million years ago an ice age had come and gone and the atmosphere and seas had been oxygenated. The flora was similar world wide. It was dominated by conifers and ferns. The fauna was primitive and

consisted of amphibious animals such as lung fish, and also insects and reptiles lived on the vegetated plains.

By 100 million years ago my stone was surrounded by the southern Gondwanan vegetation, conifers including Huon Pine, flowering plants including myrtle, tree ferns, cycads and mosses. This vegetation was inhabited by reptiles including dinosaurs, birds, insects and primitive mammals. The seas supported a wide variety of shellfish, starfish, sharks, other fish and large marine reptiles.

At 2.5 million years ago the continent of Australia including Tasmania was formed and the planet entered a period of temperature fluctuations. A drop in temperature of the earth's surface of 6 degrees was enough to cause an ice age. The last of many ice ages started 30,000 years ago and finished with the melting of the last glaciers 12,000 years ago. Large amounts of snow blew onto the mountain ranges from the Southern Ocean causing an enormous build-up of glacial ice and the weight of the glacier gouged the ranges changing their shape radically. The higher, harder rocks were left and the slopes on both sides were scooped out leaving lakes surrounded by steep cliff faces and jagged razorback ridges. Frenchmans Cap with my stone at its top was left high above the surrounding land and the debris formed the surrounding plains including the Loddon Plains. The Western Arthurs was eroded to form the most dramatic land forms in the area. So intense was the glaciation that the ridges were cut back to narrow serrated divides with steep peaks, vertical walls and needles, Mt Hesperus, Mt Hayes, the Capella Crag and Mt Orion are examples. In the bottom of the valleys deep black lakes were formed, Lake Oberon, Lake Cygnus and twenty eight others. The debris was dumped on the western side forming lateral moraines, two of these, Moraine A and Moraine K, are now used by bushwalkers for access.

The abundance of ice around the planet caused sea levels to drop by 120 metres. At such a time 31,000 years ago when the Tasmanian peninsula was joined to the mainland by the Bassian Plains people crossed over and inhabited the land as hunter gatherers. Some of them occupied caves near glaciated mountains, thus making them the southern most ice age Homo sapiens during the last ice age. All areas of the South West were visited at some time by these people before the arrival of Europeans.

White man arrived in the south west in about 1830 and the Aboriginal tribes suffered severely at their hands resulting in the elimination of full blood Aborigines. Today's descendants of the first Tasmanians attach special significance to the ice age caves in the south west.

In February this year an SBW party of six visited the Western Arthurs and Frenchmans Cap. We travelled via Moraine A to Mt Hesperus and along the jagged tops past the Capella Crag, Mt Hayes, Mt Orion and camped at Lakes Oberon and Cygnus. We also walked to Frenchmans Cap via the sodden Loddon Plains and Lake Vera to the top of the white quartzite peak of Frenchmans Cap. In the Western Arthurs and at Frenchmans Cap we saw complex foldings of sediments that had been turned vertical or overturned. We saw the colourful vegetation with coloured spring growth and flowers from a wide variety of vegetation, we saw the results of glacial periods, the ancient marine species in lakes, the endemic Tasmanian birds and animals and the fickle western Tasmanian weather that blows in with the roaring forties from the Southern Ocean. We enjoyed this spectacular country that was formed by a billion years of events.

The party was Rosemary MacDougall, Margaret Sheens, Jitka Kopriwa, Owen Kimberley, Jan Mohandas and myself.

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## KILIMANJARO AND THE COCA-COLA ROUTE

A personal view 'From The End of the Line'

by Bob Stewart

1,2,3,4...25. Oh, oh, oh it's cold.  
1,2,3,4...25. I said I'd crawl if I had to.  
1,2,3,4...25. Oh God, please don't make me  
crawl. 1,2,3,4...25. Frost everywhere ...I  
must look like Mossman. 1,2,3,4...25!  
Thirsty, really thirsty.... Water frozen.  
1,2,3,4...25. Tired, Tired... Oh please don't  
make me crawl! 1,2,3,4...25. I can see  
someone in the fog 1,2,3,4...25 Guide  
carrying another one down! 1,2,3,4...25.  
No way I could look that bad ...could I?  
1,2,3,4...25. Can't breath...No damn air.  
1,2,3,4...25. Can't see, fog  
everywhere...what crater? 1,2,3,4...25. Oh  
Please, please don't make me crawl  
1,2,3...25.

At 10:00 on August 14, I collapsed against my guide (who thought it was a victory hug) on the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro at 19 300ft (5896m). Uhuru Peak had taken me 10 hours and for the last four hours I had forced myself to walk 25 paces followed by 25 gulps of air. I still had to descend 1293 m. to Kibo hut, pack up my gear and walk 11 more kilometres to Horombo hut. Why was I here and why had I just done this to myself? Because it was there? Was it worth it? Beauty? Personal challenge? Well why?

I hit the wall at about 5:00 on the road to Horombo. I was walking alone at the end of the line. The other team members who had summited in 6 and 8 hours were 2 to 4 hours ahead and those who had gone only to the rim - Gillman's point - were in Horombo before I started. I sat down and looked around the barren "Saddle" (The large plain at about 4 400m. from which the crater juts). It would have been beautiful in the evening light if the rain would just stop. I had my bag and my tarp and maybe I could rack among the rocks for one night.

Davie our Tanzanian Head Guide appeared from the direction of Horombo and asked how I was doing? My Swahili couldn't really do justice to the question, but I really hated to let him down by being the only hiker to freeze to death on the road to Horombo! How embarrassing for him as a professional guide! He took my pack and helped me to my feet and we struggled on to the Hut

I awoke after 12 hours sleep at 7:00 am to the smell of hot Tom Yam soup... For a moment I thought maybe I had died in the night but was confused to find I had gone to heaven. Allen, the team leader administered the healing broth with words of praise for yesterday's climb. (He and 3 others of our 11- member team had made the summit and five had made Gillman's. We only had one with the courage to turn back when his health was endangered) Allen was anxious that I get up for the victory breakfast. He was cooking!

My daughter Liz and I were members of the "Singapore Adventurers Club" Kilimanjaro Team. Even though the guides arrange the food and do the cooking, the Singaporeans *always* bring their own stocks. We were going to finish the soup, canned pork, homemade sambal, rice, peanuts, dried prawns, ginger, ----- along with our staple peanut butter, eggs, chicken, oranges etc. I hadn't eaten before crashing some 12 hours before and boy was this victory breakfast gooooooooooooood.

Well what was left? We had about 20k to walk, but even in the rain the excellent paths made it easy going. I had to stop at Mandara Hut and get a picture of me drinking a Coca-Cola. (Not as an act of American cultural imperialism but because the route is also called "The Coca-Cola Route"). I was stopped by many of those moving up for a summit attempt and by about noon was beginning to feel like a hero... (although I am not sure I care for the recurrent comment that, "If you can make it I sure can").

The rosy glasses were beginning to work!

- It really had been beautiful the lower rain forest, the low blooming scrub above the timber line, the towering crater on clear mornings, the Mawenzie peaks on our acclimatization day trek, even the quiet of the fog.

-It really had been a challenge at 56 to prove that I could still do it... plan it, gear up, stay comfortable, stay healthy, hike it, climb it. Many of those we met hadn't gone all the way. In fact some had been wheeled down more dead than alive.

- It really had been worth it especially the camaraderie with the Singapore team, with the guides and porters and the other climbers we met on the way.

And what did I do right? Read about and talked to successful and unsuccessful climbers (wish I had seen An earlier series published in the SBW Bushwalker) Climbed with a good team. Ended up with good guides and porters.

Took Diamox. Acclimatized by climbing Mt. Kenya first (*published in April mag. Ed.*).

Acclimatized one day on Kilimanjaro before summitting. Packed extra water and stayed hydrated. Stayed warm and dry.

And what don't I still know? Well I wonder? I wonder if I would have had the courage to turn back if I had been sick. I met some that did and they were sad at not having "made it". I saw some that didn't turn back and they were being wheeled out or lying by the road with eyes bulging. I hope I would do the right thing!!!!

And what would I do differently ... well I would seriously consider psychoanalysis for wanting to do it in the first place.

That's how it looks from the end of the line

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## ODE TO A CROOK LEG

by Greta James

It all started with a seemingly innocuous leech bite on my ankle. I've had a few in my time – leech bites, I mean, silly. Like the Ian Rannard walk in the Wattigans where they formed a solid mass on my sand shoe whenever I stopped. But this time the offender was a solitary representative of the breed. Returning home, I applied my usual remedy of lashings of Tea Tree Oil (externally) for several days and it seemed to have settled down and to be healing nicely. Then, two weeks later, my ankle started to feel a bit sore. But it was Sunday night and I had to get up at 5:30am the next morning to fly to Melbourne for the day, so there was no time to fuss and the pain was certainly not bad enough to go to the doctor.

I did a bit of shopping in Melbourne during my lunchtime on Monday but cut it a bit short as the ankle was feeling sore and, by 4pm when I got to the airport to return home, it was decidedly worse. Never mind, it only hurt badly for the first few minutes of each stroll.

When I arrived home and had a look at the offending limb, the region above the ankle was a fierce red colour. Clearly it needed some sort of attention. So off I went to the medical clinic up the street as my GP's practice was now closed for the day. The doctor at the clinic took one look at it and rapidly diagnosed cellulitis, a form of bacterial infection. So onto antibiotics with strict instructions to keep the leg up and to not go to work for two days. He also took on a stern demeanour and checked my lower leg for signs of blood clots. Oh joy!! I was also instructed to return the following evening if the red crossed the thin, blue line that he drew on my leg. (Now all I needed to be truly patriotic was a white patch somewhere on the leg.)

By late afternoon, Tuesday, the leg was marginally worse. Patrick was away on a field trip so I caught a taxi to my GP's practice and saw one of the other doctors as

mine was not on duty. A change in antibiotics and home again.

It was much the same story on Wednesday except that the leg got even worse and the thin, blue line had been thoroughly breeched by lunchtime. Patrick had returned the previous evening, so off we went to see my regular GP who then said "Do not pass GO. Go directly to hospital." Which is just what we did. In hospital, they put me on intravenous antibiotics which finally did the trick although I remained in hospital for four days and was given strict instructions to stay at home and keep off the leg for the following week because, if I don't, it would likely flare up again and I'd be back in hospital. The specialist who looked after me said no long (meaning more than a few minutes) walks for a month. Sigh.

Apparently the chances of catching cellulitis from a leech bite are not very high. I have certainly had many, many leech bites and never experienced anything like this. Apparently cellulitis is quite serious and associated with a significant chance of blood clots. If nothing else, I'll have been off work for almost two weeks. If there is any moral to this story, then it is to go and see your doctor immediately if you suspect cellulitis.

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### \*\*\*ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION\*\*\* NOW DUE

The SBW annual subscriptions for the year 2000 were set by the Annual General Meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup> as:

Single Membership	= \$37
Household membership	= \$61
Non Active Membership	= \$13
Non Active + Magazine	= \$26
Magazine only	= \$13

Subscriptions can be forwarded by cheque to the treasurer at our Milsons Point box number together with the completed form enclosed in the March magazine.

Prompt payment will help reduce the treasurer's workload, ensure that you are covered by club insurance and that you receive the magazine and walks programs.

The membership secretary would also welcome notification, on the above form, of any changes to your address and/or phone number.