



THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER is a monthly bulletin of matters of interest to members of The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc
PO Box 431 Milsons Point 1565.
To advertise in this magazine, please contact the Business Manager.

Editor: Ray Hookway
Telephone 9411 1873
Email rraymond@ozemail.com.au

Business Manager: Gretel Woodward
Telephone 9587 8912
Production Manager: Frances Holland
Printers: Kenn Clacher, Barrie Murdoch, Margaret Niven, Les Powell, Tom Wenman,

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

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JUNE 2000

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DEATH OF RON KNIGHTLEY

Members will be saddened to learn that Ron Knightley, a long term member of the SBW who was made an honorary member at the April 2000 general meeting, died on Tuesday May 15th.

Several club members were able to join the large gathering at his memorial service at the Revesby Congregational church, on Friday May 18th.

I am sure that I speak for his many fellow walkers when I extend our condolences to Dorothy and all of the family. *Ray Hookway*

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VALE RON KNIGHTLEY

by Stuart Brooks, May 2000

Ron's first bushwalk was completed on a pushbike.

In 1941, he started University as an engineering cadet of the PMG (now Telstra) along with Bill Carter. At Uni I met Ron and Bill and we three were soon off for weekends camping and surfing at Burning Palms. For Easter 1941, we decided to walk from Katoomba to Tarana via Jenolan Caves. At High School in Adelaide Ron's passion had been gymnastics. He was strong and fit but he was worried that the constant pounding on the bare boards in the gym had weakened his feet and that a long walk was beyond him but there was no way that he was going to miss out on this outing, he decided that he would ride his bike and meet the others at The Caves.

Jenolan to Tarana is along a country road, albeit a very pretty one, so the scheme was devised that one would ride the bike for a mile, leave it by the side of the road and walk on. When the two walkers came across the bike, one would ride it on for a mile, and repeat the exercise, so that at the end of three miles they should all be together again. This worked very well and Ron found to his surprise that walking along the road for a couple of miles at a steady clip presented no

problem.

Soon after this he joined the Sydney Bushwalkers and started to do more and more walking, to tread all those valleys and mountains he had seen from vantage spots like Echo Point, and had longed to visit. The three planned a walk for the next Easter to the Shoalhaven area near Tallong. Maps were very sketchy and there was not much information available. The walk was a circle from Long Point, down the River, up onto the plateau on the other side, across the plateau and Tim's Gully back to the River and downstream to Long Point. It was a fascinating area, rich in geology, a classic example of 'river capture' and many places to explore. It was decided that they would spend future walks finding out more about it. Ron was a keen photographer and kept a meticulous record of details of each photo. From these he was able to make a sketch map of where they had walked with a lot of details of interest to walkers. He suggested that they should expand this sketch into a more detailed map, so a week's 'holiday' was planned riding on bikes around to all the vantage points from Badgerys to Bungonia, taking compass bearings of all of the features and doing further exploratory walks where no details were available at that time.

From all the data collected during that week, Ron was able to produce 'The Map' a fine example of his penmanship and attention to detail. (*The map was featured in 'Fitzroy Falls and Beyond'*) About this time Ron took up skiing. A garage owner in Riley St Sydney who was a keen skier, had set up a long slope, covered in coir matting, in the loft of his workshops and ran skiing classes on Friday nights. In the winter, he hired the disused town hall at Kiandra and ran a ski lodge, with the help of a couple of local identities, George Day and Jimmy Patterson (Australian downhill champ at the time). Each day would start with a tramp out to Mt Selwyn where lessons would begin. There were no tows or lifts and one long downhill slope, so learning to ski involved a lot of effort. The next step was to Alpine Hut

(since burnt down) in the middle of the Brassy Mountains. Still no tows, but a lot of wonderful cross country tours at hand.

"This slide is a bit blurry and the big black mark at the top is my thumb on the lens, but I had to include it as it really shows what it was all like." Heard that before at a long, tedious slide show? Not with Ron, you wouldn't. He presented a number of slide shows at a variety of places and spent a lot of time beforehand selecting the slides he would show and preparing what he would say. Anyone who has had the pleasure of attending such an evening will know that Ron had the gift of presentation and delivery. Each slide was perfect, the commentary succinct and pithy, and most of all he knew how much material was enough for the evening, (a rare gift).

After Uni Ron went to work at the PMG, based in Sydney, planning telephone networks in the country areas of New South Wales. He had some great experiences like a week in a pub in Broken Hill with a mob of shearers who had landed in town with their cheques burning a hole in their pocket. Not a lot of sleep in the pub that week, and probably not too much 'Country Planning' either. Ron's urge to travel caused him to leave the PMG to serve stints as a cook on Macquarie Island and as a Quality Control Engineer at Lake Pukaki, NZ where a large concrete dam was being built. Ron made good use of his time there and was able to join up with local skiers, walkers and climbers to explore the wonderful alps of the South Island. It was here that he wrote to Dorothy inviting her to come over and join him as his wife. To his great relief, she agreed. Returning to Sydney Ron took up a job with the Overseas Telecommunications Commission and the newly-weds set up home at Wahroonga, neighbours of their great SBW friends, the Harveys. There were some hearty SBW reunions at their houses over the years that many bushies will remember fondly.

Continuing as an active walker and club member Ron eventually became, deservedly, President, and a good President he was,

managing meetings with a firm hand though that ever-ready quip was always lurking just below the surface. Christmas holidays were spent with the family, now including Stephen and Sharon, in their caravan at Merry Beach, where a large group of SBW types gathered each year. Aided and abetted by one Mal McGregor, Ron took up fishing, with his usual zeal. His enthusiasm in hooking into 'a big one' was legendary and the pride he took in preparing his catch for the pan earned him the title of the 'best damned filletter in Merry'.

Ron carried on with his many adventures in the bush, on foot and in the van, well into his sixties, his passion for all things outdoors unabated.

The SBW has lost a great stalwart. He will be much missed by his many friends and his loving family, now extended by three grandchildren, Troy, Yasmin and Reece.

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GPS SELECTIVE AVAILABILITY SWITCHED OFF

At Midnight on May 1st the Selective Availability (S/A) feature of the US Global Positioning Satellite System, which introduced a variable error into the information obtained from the satellite by unauthorized users, was switched off.

This has resulted in an improvement in accuracy of the navigation information by up to a factor of 10.

The GPS information received by all users is now reported to be more accurate than the accuracy standard for US Geological Survey topographic maps.

Plans are in hand to launch up to 18 more satellites and to broadcast new signals to compensate for transmission errors introduced by the Ionosphere and Troposphere.

THE MAY 2000 GENERAL MEETING.

reported by Barry Wallace

Things were looking a touch lean as meeting time rolled around, what with barely enough members to make a quorum and no sign of a President or Vice President. By 2015 all present had decided to make shift, so your scribe stood in as chairman and a careful count revealed at least 15 members present. As is the way of these things the number grew as time went by. There were apologies for Bill and Fran Holland and for Wilf Hilder.

The minutes of the previous general meeting were read, corrected in some respects, and received. There were no matters arising.

Correspondence brought a letter of thanks from Peter Caldwell, letters out to our new members and a letter from the conservation secretary congratulating the NSW Premier on the government's decision to not proceed with logging of forest areas for charcoal production.

A review of our financial status was next, with the treasurer indicating that we began the period with a balance of \$5,232, earned income of \$7,005, spent \$776 and closed with \$11,436.

Carol Lubbers presented the walks reports, commencing at the weekend of 14, 15, 16 April with Tony Manes' walk out to Mount Talaterang proving a test for some of the prospectives among the party of 10. Conditions were fine and cool on the Saturday but the rains came on Sunday afternoon. The name for Patrick James' Parramatta Hydrological History walk took longer than the report. There was none. David Robinson had 16 on his Sunday test walk from Bundeena to Waterfall and Geoff Dowsett had 18 starters on his Berowra Waters trip the same day.

There was no report for Tony Holgate's Easter walk in Guy Fawkes National Park but Bill Capon reported 18 on his Blue Breaks trip. Ian Rannard had 17 starters in

generally good weather with some frosts for his Kosciusko area walk. Paul McCann's trip to Wild Rivers National Park attracted 5 walkers in pleasant conditions. Errol Sheedy's Sunday walk in the Royal brought forth a glorious autumn day.

The menu was limited to day walks for the weekend of 29, 30 April. There was no report for Rosemary McDougal's Saturday walk in the Watagan State Forest but John Poleson had a party of 6 out on his Waterfall to Heathcote walk that day.

Kenn Clacher deferred his 5, 6, 7 May abseiling trip in the Wollemi National Park. Maureen Carter had 8 on her Glenbrook Gorge walk on the Sunday. Jim Calloway was so disgusted at the lack of starters for his Waterfall to Heathcote trip. He went swimming instead. Michael Bickley had 18 on what was described as an OK walk for his trip from Berowra to Hornsby on the Benowie Track.

Lorraine Bloomfield's late autumn at Leura trip was still in progress so no report was available. Nor was there a report for Ian

Rannard's Mittagong mid week walk. All of which ended the walks reports for the month.

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

Confederation report indicated that the vexed question of approvals for activities carried out inside National Parks has been resurrected.

Nothing that could reasonably claim the name came up during general business so we move through the announcements and closed the meeting at 2049.

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION DUE

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

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BUDAWANGS RESCUE

by Tony Manes

The search for four teenagers, Chris, Karen, Alison and Steven began after their planned four day walk through Morton National Park (MNP) from Nerriga to Yadboro Flat went wrong. Chris was going for his Queen's Scout Medal, which required him to navigate unaided through unfamiliar terrain using the skills he had attained during his scouting career.

My input started at approx. 9.30 p.m. on Tuesday 2nd May when I received a call from SBW Search & Rescue (*Wilderness Rescue????*) to find out if I was available for the search in MNP. I said yes and confirmation came at 11.30 pm. with David Trinder saying "be ready for pick up at 3.00 am".

A quick stop at a service station in Nowra for breakfast and 5.35 am saw us at Ulladulla Police Station for our 0600 hrs briefing. There were approx. 60 people more than expected which threw the organization into temporary chaos. All volunteers were then asked to get to Yadboro Flat for breakfast (supplied by the local Lions Club) and there the remaining 60 volunteers who had not been allotted a search party or area, were assigned into groups and allocated a search area based on their intended duration of stay.

The Search and Rescue base camp was the usual circus with each government department and our Wilderness Rescue group setting up their own "big top" and trying to control what was going on.

The main topics of conversation were, in order:

1. Where do we go now?
2. Let's have breakfast while we wait.
It looks great; eggs, bacon, sausages and tomato, and it's hot too.
3. Don't sit or stand in one place too long because the leeches are out in force.
4. Quick, let's get out of here, the TV crews have arrived and are starting to film.

After much running around by the organizers they managed to organize a group

and a search area for everyone there. David Trinder and Peter Miller were allocated to local search parties covering the area between Mt. Owen, the "Castle" and the Yadboro River. Each group consisted of Police, Bushfire, SES, VRA and volunteer (bushwalkers) personnel. These were mostly day trips, which finally got away at approx. 10.00am. I was allocated to an overnight group of local Shoalhaven Bushwalkers assigned to search from "The Vines" via Styles Creek, Holland Gorge and the Clyde River to Yadboro Flat. This was a little depressing due to the fact that other searchers and helicopters had searched this area twice before. On the other hand the SES Radio operator assigned to our group just happened to be a member of the Shoalhaven Bush Walking Club enabling us to move more quickly through the bush.

We were finally given a driver and a Bushfire Brigade 'Troopy' to transport us to 'The Vines'. It was a long and uncomfortable trip. Our driver had not been given the keys to all the locked gates, which made the bolt cutters, found behind the drivers seat, a very handy tool, on a number of occasions.

1.00pm and we finally arrived at our destination. "Let's have lunch" was the call as we set up the Wilderness Rescue radio to find out if there had been any success as yet.

As the drizzle fell from the sky, the call came back, "wait an hour before you start because we have an unconfirmed contact with the lost party". "Great! Let's have lunch in peace. Damn! Those leeches are a nuisance aren't they? Listen! That sounds like motorbikes, yes, it is. It's the police on trail bikes". They had come in the same way as us and locked all the gates behind them. Our driver is not happy, he is going to have to cut all those padlocks off again on his own, to get back out. Cutting the locks off, first time round was hard enough. One person manipulating the lock inside the protective steel box and a second person manipulating the bolt cutters until both people could apply pressure to the bolt cutter handles; made more difficult by its close proximity to the muddy ground.

At approx. 2.00 pm. confirmation came via our radio that we were to go ahead as planned. The unconfirmed sighting turned out to be a group of four bushwalkers. (*Including an SBW member. Ed.*) We made Search & Rescue aware that because of our late start, we were going to be unable to complete our search in the allocated two days, (which was now less than a day and a half). We were going to require more supplies (due to the fact that not everyone was prepared for more than two days out). I had enough food for four days so by sharing we were not going to starve, so off we went. Constant light drizzle made walking quite pleasant and the leeches very happy.

We arrived at Styles Creek at approx. 3.30 pm. and were met by a navy helicopter which supplied us with flight rations as extra food if we needed it. Curiosity got the better of one of the team, who immediately opened one of the packets to find what it contained. Sugar coated sweets! What else would you expect? They also informed us that another search party had communications with an unidentified woman in the Holland Gorge area. They were on a ridge between Mt. Cole and Bibbenluke. Things were starting to look better for us; it looked like the lost group was in our search area.

Time was running out, so we decided to head out to the end of the clearing on the edge of Holland Gorge where we would make our last attempt for the day to contact the lost party before retiring to the camp cave on Mt. Houghton. We arrived at the edge of Holland Gorge at approx. 4.30 p.m. blowing our whistle along the way. "Alright, one last blow. Make it a good one, in the direction of the gorge." "Stop!" "Listen!" "Is that someone whistling in reply?" "Up there!" "No! Over there!"

Well, we finally worked out which direction it was coming from and I could see through the treetops, a faint flicker of flame from a fire and above that the arm of a person waving. We asked the person to identify him/herself and his/her companions. Sure

enough, it was them, the four lost teenagers. You could hear the happiness in their voices. I told them to stay where they were and I would come up to them. They were in an overhang on the southern edge of Mt. Sturgiss, approx. 500 metres from us (as the crow flies). I asked the SES radio operator to set up the radio and contact Base Camp to let them know the situation, while I and another party member went to check out their condition.

When we finally got to the lost party, everyone was pleased to see us and they were all in good health. I called out to our radio operator to confirm to base that all were well and to get a chopper in quick before dark. The chopper must have been in the vicinity because we hadn't even finished packing up before the first of two choppers arrived. It took us all about another half-hour to get back to the clearing where it had landed. By this time a second larger chopper had also landed but its pilot was getting very restless because of fading light and falling cloud levels. Just as we arrived at the edge of the clearing the larger of the choppers started to take off. Obviously the pilot wasn't going to take any chances. Lucky for us the smaller chopper had to wait for the other to clear the area, which gave us a little extra time to make ourselves visible to the crew.

The youngsters were rushed into the waiting chopper and the crew said there's room for one more. My group was aware that I had only had two hours sleep the previous night so they said, "You go", so I grabbed my pack and jumped in.

The pilot then tried in vain to take off. He barely made it off the ground. "Throw the packs out!" came the command from the pilot. "Let me out!" I said, not wanting to be separated from my pack. I had no choice in the matter. Time was of the essence. The side door opened and out went all 5 packs. What a horrible feeling. I don't know how the kids felt at that time but I felt terrible. Everything I had was in my pack. We were left in the clothes we were wearing soaking

wet and covered with leeches. Needless to say there was a lot of fun over the next half hour with leeches crawling all over the inside of this chopper full of people. The paramedic put on his rubber gloves and tried to keep the girls quiet by picking the leeches off and putting them somewhere (?).

The Navy guys were great, considering visibility was down to about ten metres when we took off. They flew us to Nowra (HMAS Albatross) air base where we were met by an ambulance, which took us to the naval hospital. On arrival we were given hot food, drinks, shower and navy overalls.

The News film crews in the meantime were being kicked off the base and trying to negotiate an interview. Eventually the police gave in, with the permission of the kids, to a short interview and film footage while leaving the hospital. We were then transferred to Ulladulla Police station by police car where the kids were again interviewed by all the necessary people and allowed to see their parents for the first time in over a week.

The Ulladulla Police and Search & Rescue treated us well with more food, drink and protected us from the media. Thanks to the Navy guys, we got our packs back the next day, along with all the other searchers that were flown in the previous day. It was a great effort by a lot of people working as a team that ended with a good result.

A lot of people question the usefulness of all of the different groups involved. I believe that they all have a role to play. We don't always know what the situation is going to be, so we need to have everyone available, at call, for whatever reason they are needed. My thanks go out to all those involved in the search and all those who helped support those people. Hopefully we can forget the inefficiencies and try to make the next search even better. After all, the main aim is to save lives, and you can't put a price on life.

Conclusion: The teenagers did as well as their knowledge permitted. The weather was against them from the start, with low cloud, fog and unfamiliar country.


2000

A Green Year

The three months from February through June were the wettest on record in both the Centre and the Kimberley.

The Red Centre is now the Green Centre. Every waterhole is full but many will disappear when the hot weather returns at the end of the year. If you want to see some of the best scenery that the Centre

has to offer without having to carry lots of water, this is the year to come.

The late wet season in the Kimberley means that the water in August will be flowing as well as it normally does in June. Our late season trips will be the best they've ever been.

Ask for our brochure and see what we can offer you.

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Their maps were useless at the start due to recent subdivision of local farms and no road signage. They had all the right gear and maps, food for extra days (thanks to one team member's paranoia about getting lost). They made many good decisions, some not so good, and they made the best of each other's company to keep morale high. Eventually they accepted that they were lost; made camp in a high location; made a signal fire and shared their food. They stayed in this location, conserving energy and maintaining safety. **AND** most importantly, they had a whistle, which may have saved their lives, because without it, we may never have heard them over the constant drone of search planes and choppers. ①

Hopefully the lessons these teenagers learnt on this trip, won't stop them from pursuing their love of the bush. Maybe this incident can help others to understand that if you don't have the knowledge; go with someone who does, or join a Bushwalking club.

One thing I would personally like to see changed is that organisers of such trips/tests; make it compulsory to have at least one experienced person with knowledge of the intended area included in each party for safety reasons. They don't have to lead the trip, but be present in case they are required.

① *A small mirror to attract attention could also be added to your emergency first aid kit. Ed*

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SEARCH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Any SBW club member who would like to participate in any future Confederation Wilderness Rescue searches, and who did not fill in and submit the questionnaire included as an insert in the May Bushwalker, can add his/her name to the club S&R search volunteer list by contacting our current S&R contact David Trinder on 9868 7932.

Adding your name to the list only indicates that you **may** be available for a search.

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TRAGEDY IN THE MOUNTAINS

The four tragic deaths in the mountains over Queen's birthday holiday weekend highlight the potential risks involved in our recreational activities.

Our sympathies go out to all concerned but particularly to the families and associates of the two members of the Newcastle University Mountaineering club who lost their live abseiling on Carra Beanga Falls at Kanangra.

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SOCIAL JOTTINGS.

WEDDING OF FUSAE FUJINO

Congratulations are extended to Club Member Fusae Fujino (Dargan) who married Roy Hall aboard the Sydney Ferry 'African Queen' on May 13th.

Several SBW members were amongst the guests at the happy occasion.

GRACE NOBLE IS 90 YEARS YOUNG

Congratulations also to Grace Noble who turned 90 on June 6th.

We hope that you had a happy day with your family and friends, Grace.

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OVERSEAS TRAVELLERS

SBW members are inveterate travellers and currently many are overseas or about to go.

Fran and Bill Holland leave on June 22nd for an extended European/UK trip where they hope to catch up with 1 expatriate members Bob Stewart and Roger Browne.

Brian Hart is off to the UK via the Argentine in late June. Christine and George Floyd are somewhere in South America or the USA. Tom Wenman is seeking higher hills and deeper gorges cycling somewhere in France. Could it be the cold weather or fear of the GST?

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WALKING IN THE SCOTTISH GRAMPIANS

Cairngorm Mountains

Day trip to Ben Macdui- July 97

by Ian Wolfe & Louise Verdon

We had missed out on being able to climb Ben Nevis because of bad weather and instead we had followed the "Whisky Trail" through such places as Glenfidich amongst others. As such our legs were beginning to twitch and a serious "stretch" was called for. Thus we selected the walk to Ben Macdui which at 4,300 ft is the second highest mountain in the UK. This involved a round trip of 22 miles over 10hrs and an ascent of 3,200 ft - the tiger in us went "mewah".

From Braemar it is a short drive to the Linn of Dee through a very broad valley which teems with deer. Never having seen more than four deer together it was somewhat different to see a herd of a hundred or more.

After parking the car we walked through the light forests to connect with the road to Derry Lodge. This is a mountain safety hut at the junction of two valleys in a forest with high trees and little understorey. Here we observed the lads of the mountain rescue squad playing volley ball. Thereafter we took the western arm, Glen Luibeg, and walked up through terrain very reminiscent of the Kossie region beside a bubbling Burn for a few kms. This was very pleasant walking on a formed track with the mountains rising around us.

Then it was upwards via a ridge called the Sron Riach which initially climbs steadily upwards before narrowing somewhat with high cliffs on one side down to a hanging tarn which was bright green in colour. As the weather was clear and sunny, with a slight cooling breeze we walked very happily along the route.

The summit itself is a large stony plateau which has a number of waist high square stone shelters near the summit. However, the views are extensive in all directions with Ben Nevis being visible some 54 miles away. We soaked this up over lunch as about 40 other walkers arrived from different directions to

also share this beautiful day in the mountains.

The way home was via a separate path which took us along some broad rocky ridgelines and past Loch Etchachan which at 3,059ft is the largest body of water in the UK over 3,000 ft (however it is in fact ice up to 7ft thick for 7 months of the year). This terrain in fine winter weather is a XC skier's delight however the Scottish winter weather is even more changeable than our alpine weather.

Thence down a lovely long valley in the afternoon light and back into the old forests of Scots Pine through a park like section for a number of kilometres (very reminiscent of the Wall of Jerusalem in Tassie). In winter it would be a wonderful descending traverse where you skis would run free. The road bash at the end of the trip was foreshortened by a friendly Ranger giving us a lift and entertaining us with his passionate recitation of the virtues of the Park. To be sure we slept well that night with our legs gently throbbing after climbing our second Munro.

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THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER ON THE WEB

The SBW committee has frequently discussed the possibility of making the Sydney Bushwalker and other club publications available on its website.

One proposal has been made that members with email access would be advised when the magazine (or any other club publication) was available for reading or downloading.

People who took advantage of this facility would be able to build up an electronic library of magazines with all of the 'sort and seek' capabilities that their word processing program permitted.

Their annual subscription could also possibly be reduced.

The proposal would slightly reduce the work load of voluntary printers and collators and the cost of postage, but there are certain club publications such as the membership list

which should not have general public access which would still require mail delivery.

To enable the feasibility of this proposal to be assessed it is necessary to know how many members have email access and how many members would use the facility. Would interested members please fill in the questionnaire included in this magazine and return it to the editor ASAP.

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EXHIBITION OF RARE MAPS AT THE STATE LIBRARY

Jim Percy advises that *"Anyone with an interest in historic maps (and doesn't every bushwalker have a set of them?), should rush along to the State Library before July 16th and see this exhibition"*.

Titled: **CRUX: RARE MAPS FROM THE STATE LIBRARY OF NSW**, The exhibition displays maps from the 16th 17th 18th and early 19th centuries including: A 'Modern' World Map, Venice, 1511 by Bernard Sylvanus who was the first to print maps in two colours – (maps were first printed in 1470!) - to copies of a 'General Chart of Terra Australis', dated 1798, 1803 and 1814, by Matthew Flinders. (*Flinders died in 1814 on the day that his book 'A Voyage to Terra Australis' was published. He circumnavigated Australia and produced an accurate map. His constant reference to this country as Australia led to the adoption of that name.*Ed)

With a total of 85 maps, many of them works of art, this exhibition is recommended as well worth a visit.

Also in the same area of the library is the exhibition: **TRAVELLER'S TALES - Journeys through the State Library Collections** – Which will interest travellers especially those who have travelled by ship. This second exhibition may close a week earlier than the 'CRUX'.

AND as an added incentive: Both exhibitions are **FREE**.

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SBW JULY SOCIAL PROGRAM

Refer to Walks program for full details

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------|---|
| Wed 5 th | 7 pm | Committee meeting |
| | 7.30pm | How to pack for an over night walk. |
| Wed 12 th | 8pm | General meeting |
| Wed 19 th | 8pm | MID WINTER FEAST at club rooms. |
| | | Bring a plate of food. Also showing will be a Video "A Singular Woman" featuring Marie Byles and starring Dot Butler. |
| Wed 26 th | 8pm | Santiago de Compostela: The Pilgrim Trail. Slides and talk by Almis Simankevicius |

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JUNE-JULY CONFEDERATION ACTIVITIES

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

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**Full information on Confederation activities can be obtained from their Website at: www.bushwalking.org.au

① The Confederation AGM will be held on Saturday August 19th at 4.00pm at the Audley Conference Centre (The old Dance Hall) Royal National Park. The AGM will be followed at 6pm by a BYO barbeque.

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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.

So what is really new? Look down the list of special features. We've brought into play unique ideas we've been carrying around for some time. They solve outstanding problems, ones you will quickly recognise from your own mountain and wilderness travels.

Come and see the NEW RIVER and get an expert fitting at:

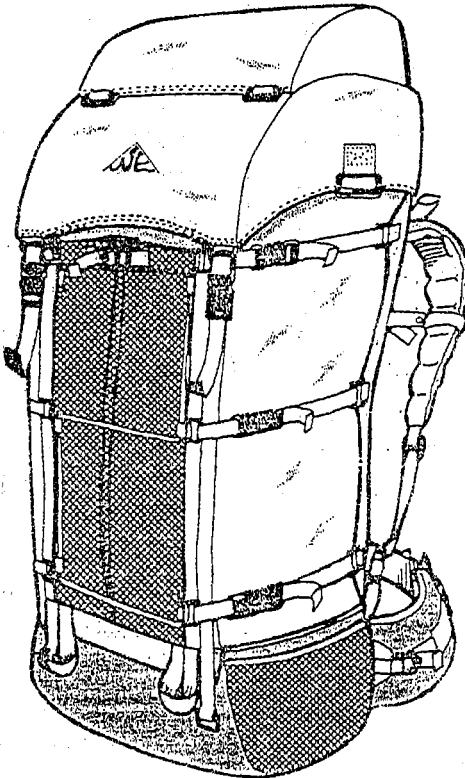
**Eastwood
Camping
Centre**

3 Trelawney Street
Eastwood

Telephone: 9858 3833



NEW RIVER
An expedition-capacity pack available in the full range of WE sizes and harness configurations.



Features:

Detachable top cover teams with the hip-harness waist-strap to carry it as a comfortable twin-compartment bum-bag.

Main canvas bag extends to a dry-bag type roll top with two compression straps over. You can swim and raft with this pack, or use it in bivies.

Leave the top cover and base behind for absolute lightweight.

Separate zip access into the expanding interior space of the top cover.

Readily accessible flat pocket for laminated maps (comes with a thin PE cutting-board insert)

Canvas back-pocket modules available.

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

Quick-release or standard side compression straps, all removable. Position the buckles where you wish.

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.

THE CROSSING

by Dick Whittington **

The cab driver was a local man, he had seen enough snow and ice for a lifetime, but he waited and watched while we organised our gear. Perhaps he was curious as to why three city slickers should wish to be dumped at Kiandra, with the prospect of a three day crossing to Thredbo before them. It was the early 80s and little remained of Kiandra. The Kiandra Chalet had completed its transition from resort to pub and finally to DMR depot, and Yans store was looking totally derelict. It was difficult to imagine a community of several thousand gold miners and a main street full of hotels and stores with everyone going about their business on Butterpat Skis.

The cover in Pollocks Gully at this early hour was hard ice so it was difficult to obtain the level ground above the township. The next few kilometres confirmed however, if there were any doubt, the merit of our being here, as the sun warmed us and lit the surrounding hills. Any feeling of euphoria though was diminished as we were confronted with the rutted, difficult snow of the descent to Four Mile Creek. A short stop at Four Mile preceded more good skiing as we traversed the open flat country before Mt. Tabletop which was passed to the east. After the descent to Temperance Creek, Arsenic ridge was traversed in good style until the tricky decent to Brooks Hut. Brooks Hut is highly regarded by ski tourers, but today we would only stop for lunch. The view from the hut of Happy Jacks Plain suggested minimal snow cover, but a long snow lead was found to stretch almost to the footbridge across the Happy Jacks River. The footbridge will clearly not last for ever, and when it is gone we will be able to enjoy a more total wilderness experience as we wade knee deep through this snow melt river. At the SMA road we encountered another group who seemed surprised at our progress. They were planning to take a full week for their crossing and carried large

packs. Their pack weights were in the 50-60lb range which was about twice my own load. Fast and light or slow and heavy, both modes have their merit.

After negotiating the ridge to the west of McGregors Creek it then became necessary to locate Tibeaud Hut. Much discussion and a little navigation followed, but happily the hut appeared before us in due course. Tibeaud (or Mackeys) is a gem of a hut with two rooms and a verandah. Its setting is splendid and its ambience is enhanced by its great distance from civilisation. We had the hut to ourselves that night.

In the morning we enjoyed the pristine snow that is to be expected in this remote area. Spencers Peak was passed to the west and soon we were amongst the large snowgums that are to be found near Cesjacks hut. Whilst pausing at the hut a lone skier approached in grand style. I recognised him as the almost legendary Norwegian skier Kora Grundsumn. After a brief exchange of pleasantries Kora took off towards Jagungal, literally dancing through the trees on very difficult snow. Consideration was now given to an ascent of Jagungal but the easier option of McAllisters saddle prevailed. This had the advantage of allowing an extended lunch break near Valentines River, which was spent relaxing in the sun on a large flat boulder. The weather and the snow remained good as we crossed the Kerries and descended to Whites River Hut, the objective for our second night.

Whites River Hut is a splendid place to be in wild weather, but the increasing wind did not bode well for a traverse of the main range. In the morning, as we crossed the Rolling Ground, I heard a string of expletives, some of which I had heard before when my companion fell through the ice into Lake Albina (but that's another story). On enquiring as to the reason for this outburst, I was advised that a sleeping mat had become detached and was last seen heading towards the Munyang River. Retrieval of the mat was time consuming but it still seemed possible

to complete the trip as planned. The strong wind and ice encountered near the summit of Mt. Tate encouraged us to seek lower ground. After descending Pounds Creek it was then just a long slog across to Thredbo. Thredbo was a culture shock after three days in the back country, and whilst my descent of Crackenback was fun, I nevertheless found myself reflecting upon the difference between the silent desolation of Kiandra with its ghosts of McAllister, Hughs and Tom Yan, and the frenetic activity that now surrounded me. I vowed that next time I would go the other way and keep the best till last.

**** A Nom de plume.**

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✉ GET AWAY FROM THE OLYMPICS -

An invitation from Ute Foster.

Having been encouraged to take leave from work during the Sydney Olympic Games, I've decided to do it "in style" and use the time for bushwalking further afield than I usually go.

If you are equally keen to get far away from the big hullabaloo and hype and the traffic congestion and especially television, then you might like to get in touch with me to discuss plans.

I've already contacted Willis's Walkabout and obtained information and notes about two trips:

1. Kakadu Sept 17 to 30, and
 2. Macdonnell Ranges Sept 17 to 30
- but I would be happy to look at other suggestions.

Please ring me at home (9907 2646)
or at work (9351 7464)
or email ufoster@library.usyd.edu.au ASAP

Ute Foster

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THE GREAT SOUTH WEST WALK.

by Frank Davis

It may be Australia's best kept secret.

Fronting the Southern Ocean, Portland, Victoria's first permanent settlement, marks the start and finish of The Great South West Walk.

This 250 kilometre loop boasts a variety of scenery probably unmatched by any other Australian trek. Sure, other walks may have vistas of heath land or forest or mountain or river or rugged coast. This one has them all.

From Portland the track passes many coastal historic features before heading inland at Henty Bay to turn west through farmland then north to Cubby's Camp. A short distance from camp a wandering Don Brooks discovered a pair of romantically inclined Brown snakes. Some exciting moments were spent photographing this spectacle.

Next comes the Cobboboonee State Forest, a poorly drained area of extensive swamp land. The forest contains Messmate (*E. obliqua*), Brown Stringybark (*E. baxteri*), and Swamp Gum (*E. ovata*). Cut Out Camp is reached via Ralph's Bridge, an impressive and lengthy structure built by members of The Friends of the Great South West Walk. Just 13.5 km this day brings us into camp early, leaving ample time for some to tackle the Hodgett's Grove track through the natural fern gully of Surry River Gorge. A couple of koalas were spotted on this excursion.

Day 3 takes us on past Cobboboonee Camp to Fitzroy Camp. The forests here have suffered from an extended dry spell and the colours have been somewhat flat. Now, the change at Cobboboonee, from sandy, dune soil to the richer basaltic soils originating from Mount Deception to the north has revitalised the forest. We now see Blackwood (*Acacia melanoxylon*), a highly prized furniture timber. Manna Gums are present but koalas remain elusive.

The track swings west from Fitzroy Camp towards the Glenelg River. Back into poorer sandy soils once more the Brown Stringybark replaces the Messmate as the dominant species.

Lunch is taken at The Inkpot, a large pool of water, stained black by decaying vegetable

matter. The depression, resulting from a collapsed cave or from water dissolving the underlying limestone is some 10 metres deep.

The valley of Moleside Creek leads us to camp and the Glenelg River. After four days of slightly desiccated forests the first glimpse of the river sends the spirit soaring.

The Glenelg, rising in the Grampians, winds its way over 400 kilometres to the Southern Ocean at Nelson. Over eons of time the river has cut deeply into fossiliferous limestone deposited millions of years ago, leaving vertical, yellow-orange cliff faces of the gorge that cradles this majestic stream.

At last, the Canadian canoe atop Gordon's Toyota all this time makes sense. Some of the group grabbed the opportunity to explore this broad, meandering waterway. Two chose the wet option and proceeded by canoe the next two days.

For three days the track followed the river, approaching at the low, landing sites, retreating as the high cliffs at the outside bends dictated.

Patterson's Canoe Camp, with its 1834 'heritage' boatshed, magnificent River Red Gums and 'feral' Walnut tree - complete with Walnuts marked the culmination of a memorable three days.

Next day we walked to Hirth's Landing, hitched a ride on the Nelson Endeavour downstream to Nelson, the halfway point of the walk. A delectable dinner of Jewfish and a mountain of chips was a celebratory feast after a week of camp fare.

The second week began with a marked change in terrain, from the benign forest and placid river to the ever breaking waves of the Southern Ocean and the endless beach of Discovery Bay with its immense arc of sand stretching into the dim distance.

Left foot, right foot - the temptation is to count the steps to the far, unseen end of the bay. To do so would be to court insanity. To resist the temptation you wrench your gaze from the foot prints ahead - look towards the vegetated frontal dunes - towards the advancing waves arriving from an ocean uncluttered by land - photograph people - photograph Shipwreck Rocks.

Don't count the foot prints - don't count the prints.

Six kilometres on rocky outcrops named for local pioneers McEachern and Noble provide a welcome respite from the sand and reveal Pipi, Turban and Whelk shells in Aboriginal middens.

Beyond Noble's Rocks an inland track through Coastal Wattle, Tea-tree and She-oaks reaches and skirts Mombeong Lake and on to the campsite. A swim in the clear, fresh water is most acceptable after 23 kilometres of beach, rock and sand dunes.

Next morning a blanketing mist has rolled in from the Southern Ocean - Don's tent, less than 30 metres distant, is not visible.

A short inland track returns us to the beach and it's beachwalking for 15 kilometres to the access track to Swan Lake Camp. Sadly, Swan Lake is devoid of swans - and water.

Track notes for the next day read: "The beach alternative on this section is NOT EASY GOING. The sand is soft and the beach slopes seaward, making comfortable walking difficult".

The inland track passes between extensive dunes and a pine plantation, then into Mount Richmond National Park.

Mount Richmond is a volcanic tuff cone some 2 million years old, now covered by windblown coastal sands. The park contains a rich diversity of flora including gums, wattles, banksias and hakeas.

Tarragal Camp is reached soon after leaving the Park. This inland retreat from Discovery Bay adds a day to the walk but has the advantage of including Mount Richmond, a morning- tea break at Bridgewater Lakes and an early arrival at The Springs Camp next day.

This allowed time to visit the cliff-base spring, via the ramp built by hand in 1920 to give cattle access to the water. We walked on along the cliff base to Green Pool where breaking waves top the protecting, black-rock rampart to become a waterfall of white foam flowing into the sheltered pool.

The track from The Springs hugs the cliff edge, past Blowholes (now collapsed), Petrified Forest, the Australian Fur Seal colony

near Cape Bridgewater and around to the Cape Bridgewater Kiosk - yes, it IS on the map. Here a steak sandwich contains so much it is speared with a skewer to hold it together. It is so good that care must be taken to avoid eating the skewer.

After the wrench of leaving steak sandwich and cappuccino we tackled the sand of Bridgewater Bay, then a low, rocky headland sent us inland to Trewalla Camp.

Then we were back on the sand to the end of the bay where a short climb leads to sandstone ledges on Cape Nelson headland and eventually to the Lighthouse. We are welcomed with a sausage sizzle, compliments of the new lessee.

We reach Mallee Camp - named for the rare Soap Mallee

(*E. diversifolia*), this area is thought to be the eastern extremity of its range.

From here it is a stroll into Portland, but still the walk has surprises - the Enchanted Forest, an old land slip covered with dense, almost tropical vegetation including extremely tall *Melaleuca* - Yellow Rock - Crayfish Bay.

The walk draws to a close - past the Smelter Nature Walk, the Gannet rookery, Bill's Walk, enough canons to excite Capt. Kidd and some wonderful, early, stone buildings - the history of Portland.

As impressive as the walk is, it is outweighed by the audacity of the concept and the construction.

The sheer volume of works: bridges, boardwalks, stairs, platforms, built and maintained by volunteers must be seen to be believed.

Erosion control works alone must run to thousands of hours. They are innovative and they are working - they are bringing vegetation back to grazing-ravaged limestone.

Gordon Page was walk leader. He has obviously spent an incredible amount of time working on the track, such is his knowledge of all of its 250 kilometres. The group owe him a very special thanks.

Undoubtedly there must be many other volunteers, but of course for our walking group the most visible were -

Friends of The Great South West Walk.

I think that should read -

Great Friends of the South West Walk.

Walk information is available from:

Portland Visitor Information Centre

P.O. Box 245 Portland 3305 Vic.

A broadsheet map (\$1.00)

A detailed strip map book (\$3.50)

And from:

Friends of the Great South West Walk

The Secretary

P.O. Box 192

Portland 3305 Vic.

NEXT MONTH

Across Baffin Island by Dog Sled

by Bob Stewart

The Lakes District. The Great Gable.

by Ian Wolfe & Louise Verdon

The Bushwalker and the Bike.

by Dick Whittington.

FUTURE ARTICLES

Less than cool.

by Dick Whittington

The Lakes District and Conniston Fells

by Ian Wolfe and Louise Verdon

Easter 2000

by Morag Ryder

Easter 1938

by Jean Ashdown

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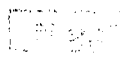
Further articles on walks, recipes suitable for walking and camping and other items of interest to walkers are always welcome.

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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