

**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:**  
Jim Callaway, Ian Wolfe, Stephen Ellis

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The Sydney Bushwalker magazine is  
printed on recycled paper

## THE JUNE GENERAL MEETING.

*reported by Barry Wallace*

The meeting began at around 2007 with the president as chairman and some 18 or so members present. There were apologies for Fran Holland

The minutes of the previous general meeting were read and received. Matters arising saw passage of a motion that we write to Confederation expressing our opposition to the proposal to appoint a paid office assistant on the grounds that it (a) dilutes the voluntary ethic on which Confederation is founded, (b) introduces the complications of an employee contract and administration and (c) adds substantially to the cost of Confederation to member bodies. (That's old speak for stakeholders.)

Correspondence included a letter from Roger Treagus suggesting items for inclusion in the ongoing review of club functions, a letter from Eddy Giacomel requesting directions for the set up and operation of the club's website, and from Ray Hookway advising us of the passing of Ron Knightley. The request that we donate to the Cancer Council rather than send floral tributes was acceded to, and a motion passed that we forward a donation. The Australian taxation office has issued the club an ABN. Outgoing correspondence included three letters to Confederation and letters to our new members.

The treasurer's report indicated that we began the period with a balance of \$11,460 received income of \$4,999, paid out \$2,543 and concluded with a balance of \$13,917.

The walks reports were presented by Carol Lubbers, beginning with the extended mid week walk from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> May, based at Lorraine Bloomfield's place at Leura. There were around eight attendees who went on a number of delightful day walks on the

delightful days. There was also a one day mid week walk on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May under the baton of Ian Rannard but no details were available to the meeting.

Tony Manes' walk in Morton National Park over the weekend of 13, 14 May attracted some 8 starters in windy but otherwise pleasant conditions. The experience was degraded somewhat by the apparently unsupervised depositing by others of a party of around 100 teenagers at Coyoyo Creek camping area. Jim Rivers' test walk up Capertee Creek had a party of 14 but did not go to program due to the unprepared state of one of the starters. There were no details for Peter Miller's Saturday tour of the heads off Victoria Falls Road or Patrick James' Sunday tour of the dams in The Royal but we were assured the Sunday walk did go.

Nigel Weaver's Sunday walk from Cowan to Brooklyn had 15 starters and went well as far as I could tell from the report that Carol read softly to the meeting.

Bill Holland cancelled his mid week walk scheduled for Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May due to his being laid low with flu.

The Carol Lubbers' walk scheduled for 19, 20, 21 May did not go. There was no report for Phil Newman's Saturday walk in Blue Mountains N.P. Linda Mallet had a party of 10 plus one late joiner along the way on her walk out from Katoomba. The weather was fine and the trip was described as brisk. There was no report for Gail Crichton's walk out from Wentworth Falls but Frank Grennan's walk out to Mount Solitary went as planned in lovely weather.

The weekend of 26, 27, 28 May saw no report for Jan Pieters' Ettrema walk but Wilf Hilder had a party of 5 out on his walk from Wentworth Falls to Katoomba in windy and cold conditions with a light snowfall on the Sunday afternoon. Roger Treagus reversed the route of his Sunday Ku-Ring-Gai Chase N.P. walk for the party of 14 after checking for webbed feet and consulting the tide

tables. The day was cold but otherwise all went well. There was no report for Brian Holden's walk out from Stanwell Park.

The mid-week walk, a recircumnavigation (sic) of Port Jackson, went on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> June with Wilf Hilder as leader and a party of 5. Conditions were generally pleasant, with Wilf describing the lunch stop as idyllic. Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June saw Zol Bodlay conducting a party of 13 on his Marra-Marra National Park trip in good weather with views. Eddy Giacomel led a party of 15 on his Sunday walk out from Mountain Lagoon. They enjoyed the walk so much they arrived back at the cars after dark.

Queens Birthday Weekend saw a return of overnight walks to the program with Tony Manes leading the 11 starters on his trip out from Kanangra Walls in cool conditions. Oliver Crawford had 9 on his Gardens of Stone walk. They encountered mainly cold but fine conditions with showers late on the Monday. Paul McCann cancelled his scheduled walk in Guy Fawkes National Park. Of the day walks Ken Cheng rerouted his Saturday Ku-Ring-Gai Chase walk to avoid recently burnt areas for the party of 13. Greg Bray led the 12 starters on his Sunday walk to Bluegum Forest at a good pace, ending the trip with a roast dinner at the Ivanhoe Pub at Blackheath. Ian Rannard was out there on the Monday, conducting his Lidcombe to Tempe walk with a party of 12 and enjoying a tour of Rookwood cemetery along the way. Eddy Giacomel transferred his Dhahrug National Park navigational exercise day trip to another area, but no details were available to the meeting other than an assurance that the walk went.

The conservation report indicated that the conservation secretary has sent letters to Senators Hill and Bolkus regarding the 2% target for renewable energy and the proposal to include forest biomass as part of the renewables' calculation. We have also written to Bob Carr, the NSW Premier regarding the decision to not harvest reserved forestry areas for charcoal to smelt

Silica. Bill Holland will be away overseas for the next 3 months so Kris Stephenson has agreed to stand in for him during this time.

The confederation report also brought news that affiliation fees for the present year have been set. There was also a mention of road closures in the Wollemi area.

There was no General Business and the meeting closed at around 2124.

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### A REQUEST FOR BLUE MOUNTAINS WALKING INFORMATION

Les Ormrod of the Adelaide Bushwalking club is planning to lead a walk in January 2001 from Barrallier to Katoomba and is seeking advice regarding his planned route and in particular the availability of water at that time.

Les' email address is:

[lesormrod@primus.com.au](mailto:lesormrod@primus.com.au)

### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION DUE

There are still a few members who are not financial. If you are in doubt look at your magazine label. This may be your last magazine.

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

### THANKS FROM MORIE WARD

Morie Ward, who is currently recuperating after serious surgery, wishes to thank all of those many people who sent him cards and letters whilst he was ill.

Morie says that he was overwhelmed by the mail he received and that he thanks all of those who wrote.

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## SBW AUGUST SOCIAL PROGRAM

*Refer to the Walks program for full details*

- Wed 2nd      7 pm Committee meeting  
               7.30pm Navigation training  
                                  with Ian Rannard at  
                                  the clubroom
- Wed 9<sup>th</sup>      8pm General meeting and  
                                  Walks Report
- Wed 16<sup>th</sup>      6.30pm Pre-meeting  
                                  dinner at Blues Point  
                                  Café  
                          8pm Slides.  
                                  Western Arthurs &  
                                  Frenchmans Cap  
                                  by David Trinder
- Wed 23<sup>rd</sup> #### 8pm Climbing the Bridge  
                                  Talk by Paul Cave  
                                  CEO of 'Bridgeclimb'
- #### Replaces the club Auction which has been  
                          transferred to September 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Wed 30<sup>th</sup>      8pm Slides & Talk  
                                  Early Bushwalking in  
                                  SBW and CMW  
                                  by Colin Watson.

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## AUGUST CONFEDERATION ACTIVITIES \*\*

- August Date TBA Lake Macquarie Rogaine
- August 15<sup>th</sup>      Confederation meeting. ①  
                          Ashfield RSL 7.30pm
- August 20<sup>th</sup>      Confederation AGM  
                          See details below
- September 10<sup>th</sup>      ACT Cyclegain 6hr
- September 19<sup>th</sup>      Confederation meeting  
                          Ashfield RSL 7.30pm

① The Confederation AGM will be held on  
 Saturday August 19<sup>th</sup> 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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\*\* Full information on Confederation  
 activities can be obtained from their  
 Website at: [www.bushwalking.org.au](http://www.bushwalking.org.au)

## FREE BRIDGE CLIMB

A free 'Bridgeclimb' pass worth over \$100 will be given as a lucky door prize by Mr Paul Cave, CEO of 'Bridgeclimb', at his presentation regarding the history and operation of Bridgeclimb, at the club on Wednesday August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

\*\*\*This talk replaces the programmed club auction which has been transferred to Wednesday September 20<sup>th</sup>.

## CAR BREAK-INS AT PIERCES PASS

Club members are advised that *all* of the cars of people on a recent NPA walk were broken into. The cars were parked in the lower car park at Pierces Pass.

## CHANGE TO MT YENGO NP WALK

Peter Miller advises that the dates for his Mt Yengo walk programmed for July 8-9 have been changed to the weekend of July 26-27.

Phone Peter for details on 9875 3008.

## TO WHISTLE OR TO SHOUT?

### S&R techniques

Tony Manes in his June article on the recent Budawang S&R incident commented that the whistle played an important part in that rescue because of the "constant drone of search planes and choppers." masking other forms of attracting attention.

In the June issue of the Canberra Bushwalking Club's newsletter IT the President reports on tests carried out by Victorian Bushwalker Bill Stoate. Bill found that in medium forest, a woman's cooe carried approximately 750 metres, a man's cooe 500 metres, a metal pea whistle 350 metres and a plastic whistle 250 metres.

In another bush rescue incident described in the same magazine, mention was made of a party member using his shiny aluminium space blanket to attract the attention of the rescue helicopter that was having locating difficulties because of the weather and the scrub. Keith Maxwell always carries an old CD. The centre hole makes sighting easy.

## A JOURNEY IN TIME. DOG SLEDDING IN THE ARCTIC. FROM THE REAR OF THE LINE.

by **Bob Stewart**

*(This trip was advertised by Willis in the June 1999 magazine.Ed)*

Wooooooooooooo! Thwack!

Wooooooooooooo! Thwack! Thwack!

I knew it must be late because they were feeding the dogs. The sound of an axe carving up a frozen seal among 35 howling dogs is unforgettable. Figure...2 seals a day for 10 days or 20 seals going and say 6 returning.... Maybe the dogs don't work a couple of days so maybe a total of 20 seals are enough. Thwack! The logistics are boggling, hauling, staging them by skidoo and burying them in the snow for the return trip. Dead seals everywhere! Thwack!

I really wanted to get up and out of my bag. (I really needed to get up) but it was cosy in the tent and outside it wouldn't get up to 15 degrees below ZERO until the sun came over the mountains in a couple of hours. Oh well gotta go. Out of the bag into my 5 layers (2 thermal, 2 Polartec and a Down jacket) and out into the morning. Wooooooooooooo! Thwack! The dogs were either happy to see the seal or me chunks?

The four of us along with the two Inuit guides had travelled by dog sled for the last 9 days and today we would complete our 200 km journey from Broughton Island to Pangnirtung on Baffin Island. Our passage through the Auwetalk National Park had been not only a trip through the arctic but also a trip through time back to the age of exploration. This could be Perry or Mossman. We could have found Franklin!

By the time I got back to the tent, Russell was up and cooking. Russell Willis of Willis' Walkabout had arranged the trip and volunteered to do the cooking (he must have eaten my food before). I sawed out some snow to melt for coffee and crawled back into the tent. The sea ice we were sleeping on was cold (and noisy with cracking and popping all night) even through the sleeping

mats but the tent was definitely warmer than outside (not a high threshold).

After breakfast we got into drag! Caribou parka, polar bear pants and seal skin booties. Wow...they smell like wet cowhide and shed hair all the time. Not good gear when you are working but warm when you are riding and today we had clear ice to Pangnirtung. Plus these costumes were necessary to make a good impression when we pulled in...Pangnirtung doesn't have dogs!

Our one-month adventure had begun with a week on the Great Slave Lake near Yellowknife in Canada's Northwest Territories. We had learned how to freeze in our tents, on snowshoes, in sleeping bags and in the loo. Freezing is easy when its 30 below ZERO with a 20 kph wind (The national weather broadcast intones "frostbite may occur in 30 seconds")

In addition to learning how to freeze we had had several nights with beautiful northern lights like giant green curtains hanging in the sky. As they pass over you can actually look up through them. Wow. We would see them again in the pass but as slashes, lighting the mountains from behind. We kept busy during our try-out session. We snow shoed around the islands. We went for a ski-do trip. We built a snow cave and Russell slept in it. This week of try-out proved invaluable in deciding the gear and systems that worked and those that didn't.

Our flight from Yellowknife landed in Iqaluit on the 13 March 2000. It may not be the end of the earth ...but you can see that from here. Iqaluit sits just below the Arctic Circle on Frobisher Bay. The bay is frozen most of the year when the community is reliant on air transport. On April 1, 1999, Iqaluit became the capital of Canada's newest territory called Nunivut. This led to an increase in population from 3500 to "over 4000". Obviously a boom! We fine-tuned our equipment and our guide Stevie flew in from Broughton Island to see if we really were crazy.

On 17 March 2000 we left Iqualuit flying north in a twin Beech to Broughton Island. A fairly recent community of 400 in the Arctic Circle, made up of several really small communities brought together when the now abandoned DEW line station was built during the cold war. After a night at the local hotel we began our adventure riding out of town on two sleds dressed in drag. Our first day was a short 4 hours trip. But oh oh it was cold. Our first night was on the sea ice. Stevie showed us how to set up our doubled walled tent and to build a "snow wall" on the windward side. This wall was built by cutting snow blocks like those used in an igloo and each night's construction was a source of continuing entertainment. We usually spent an hour or more constructing it only to have it fall down (Stevie & Johnny would then take 15 minutes to cut blocks and build a new one). Our next 9 days fell into a pattern of arising about 7, fixing breakfast etc. until about 9 taking down the camp and packing the gear on the sleds, harnessing the dogs and leaving at about 10. Most days were a mosaic of riding, pushing, pulling, walking, and running, with a usual late stop and set up of say 6 to 7 in the evening. (By a quirk of Canadian administration idiocy the sun during this time of year came up at 4 and sets at 3.)

This adventure was really about three things the dogs, the wilderness, and the Inuit.

The Dogs: Technically they are not "huskies" but registered as a unique breed, "Eskimo dogs". They are somewhat smaller than the Malamute and Siberian dogs and are built for stamina. They are working dogs and there is no "nice doggy" style of friendship. Next to being fed they love to pull and set up a glorious commotion as they are hitched up (We learned quickly to be ready to "roll" when the last dog is harnessed because there is no waiting). The Inuit use a fan hitch with each dog individually hitched to the pull point.

They pull in utter chaos. First by walking back and forth at each stop, they weave the fan of leads into an eight-foot macramé. The harnesses slip, some dogs have the lead running over their backs, some off the side, some between their legs. Animals get their legs caught and hop until free. The macramé ultimately gets so long that it presses against the rear dogs and they hobble. Dogs who stop to relive themselves get rudely jerked off there.... feet. Occasionally they stop to fight. On ice they are pathetic slipping, sliding, laying down, yelping, being pulled upside down by the others. Occasionally on ice the sled will slide past the dogs and pull them yelping behind. But above all, they just keep pulling... on the ice, over pressure ridges, over rocks, on gravel bars with no snow...

The Inuit drivers practice benign neglect. They rarely untangle the animals; they will occasionally run along side and "throw" a hobbled dog out of the hobble. The whip is used to get attention and rarely used on a dog. As nearly as I can tell there are five commands Pull, Left, Right, Stop and OH DAMN... all of which appear to me to be largely ignored. But through everything they pull. On one occasion on ice a dog got "sucked up under the sled"! Stop? Not on your life! With much yelping the dog got out and kept running.

And their reward when they are too old to pull – they get shot and the owner wears their fur on his parka! Stevie had a dog that had pulled for an unheard of 12 years (usually 4 or 5 years is the maximum). This was the dog's last year and Stevie's wife was already planning a parka with the dog's fur around the hood.

The Wilderness: White – silent – cold – remote – empty. A few animals in addition to the dead seals. A fox, a ptarmigan a raven ... maybe if we were lucky we would have seen a Caribou and if unlucky a Polar bear. (The park loos are fitted with door bars inside

which you use to lock the door before you relax. The log books in the emergency huts record some day long incarcerations as a bear roamed around outside.)

The scenery is Wagnerian .... literally. The pass has been scoured by glaciers leaving stark peaks such as "Thor" and the famous flat top climbing spire "Asgood". (Both Norse Gods). Glaciers flow down to the valley and hang off the valley walls. Frozen waterfalls hanging from the valley walls are awesome, underfoot they are hell. At each waterfall the dogs are unhitched and the sleds are laboriously lowered down with ropes.

Warmth is the prime directive – don't get cold...because there is little opportunity to restore heat. If you are cold riding, get off and run along side. If you are cold sleeping, get dressed. If you are cold standing around, put on more layers. The corollary is don't get wet. When you work take it off ...take it all off and when you stop put it back on ...all of it.

And you really have to learn. How to cut snow blocks and build wind shelters (We tried an igloo one day... it was a good effort but we calculated it would have had to be 50 feet tall to finally close). How to bail off an overturning sled. How to hop off, run and hops back on. How to set up and break down camp on the snow and on the ice.

The Inuit: How in the world humans can adapt to this lonely stark, threatening landscape is beyond me. I have only the highest respect for the skills these men show day after day. Of course their knowledge of the dogs is intimate and you see each has a different style with the dogs. Stevie was the "the lead dog" and he got strong aggressive pulling from his team but with lots of stops, starts, shouts, kicks etc. Johnny was " the team leader" who only whispered to the dogs occasionally and maybe they were not so fast but they just kept going.

Self-reliance and initiative were the watchwords whether it was building a snow barrier or enticing the dogs up a wall of Till. ②

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(Get a can of sardines and poke a hole in it then walk up the Till dripping the oil into the snow.... The dogs will be disappointed after they have pulled the sled up the hill looking for the dead fish. Another technique is to bring a dog in heat and force it to run ahead of the team, since the lead dog is usually the "Alpha male" you really get a ride). Even though their tools are modern - Skidoos, Kerosene heaters, cotton wall tents - they are completely self-sufficient

- One night they disassembled a Skidoo engine and took it inside and rebuilt it so that the seal meat could be staged the next day

- The 18-foot sleds, which consist of two runners held together by slats lashed between them, were virtually rebuilt during the trip.

- Even the act of getting the load on the sled right each day was like watching a craftsman at his art.

And so our adventure back in time came to an end as we rode silently into Pangnirtung and to the crowd that had turned out to see the dog sleds from Broughton.

I guess that we have come pretty far in our modern world and who would give up the benefits of modern medicine and coffee? It does set you thinking however, about real happiness when you meet people who are content to make a good life in inhospitable conditions and isolation. They rely on themselves and on their families. Their pleasures seem simple - ice fishing, berry gathering in the fall, dog sledding. Their economies rely heavily on their own provision of hunted game, art and community support.

The cynics of course would point out that the Canadian taxpayer pays lots of subsidies to keep air transport going and electricity and water flowing. They would also point out that crime and domestic problems are not unlike the rest of Canada. That young people are restless. And I guess it is far from an ideal existence ... But wow, talk about

carving your life out for your self ... it is spectacular.

Well that's how it looks from the end of the line running after a dog sled in the Arctic.

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① DEW = Distant Early Warning Radar system installed by the USA to warn of impending Soviet attacks.

② Till = Unstratified glacial drift, consisting of clay, sand, gravel and boulders intermingled.

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## A REQUEST FOR COOLANA PHOTOS

Joan Rigby is making a photographic record of the bush restoration work at Coolana and is seeking the loan or donation of earlier photographs of the area particularly photos of:

1. The banks and the river before the dam was constructed.
2. The river flats 1970-1990 (with or without users)
3. The original hut. (destroyed in the fire)
4. The bushland before and after the bush fire
5. Reunion Campfires in the 80's before we abandoned the flats.

Joan will have copies made of the prints or slides and will return the originals promptly. Joan can be contacted on (02) 6247 2035 and her address is in the membership list.

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### PACK FOR SALE MACPAC 'RAVINE' PACK

The pack is in as-new condition and is less than three years old.

Contact: Fazeley Read on 9909 3671 for details.



## CONSERVATION MATTERS - JUNE 2000

*reported by Bill Holland*

Media releases in May from the Hon Bob Debus, State Minister for the Environment, gave some details regarding next year's budget for the NPWS in which funding will be available for improvements to a number of parks and reserves in NSW.

Members will be interested to learn that Sydney Region's parks, ie. Blue Mountains, Royal and Botany Bay have each received grants of \$500,000. For the Blue Mountains the money will be spent on lookouts over the Jamison and Grose Valleys. The coastal track in the Royal NP will be upgraded with safety fencing and track work will be carried out in Botany Bay NP. A bit further away, but also of interest, is the planned \$5 million to be spent on pest control in southern NSW. A new walking track is to be established on the western side of Lake Macquarie.

Elsewhere in the NPWS budget, allowances were made for \$16.8 million to be spent on acquisitions (additions to existing parks and reserves). The NPWS has prepared a short list of possible sites and negotiations are proceeding.

Substantial funds (\$36.6 million) were made available to the EPA to improve the health and sustainability of NSW waterways. The planned transfer of Sydney Catchment Authority lands to NPWS has commenced with a Special Areas Land Review underway.

The NPWS have also advised of the closure in May of some vehicle tracks in the declared Wollemi Wilderness area.

### **On the Newnes Plateau:**

1. Deanes lookout north of Galah Mountain turnoff.
2. Deanes siding track
3. Breakfast Creek canyon access track
4. Waratah Ridge (Hole in the Wall canyon access)
5. Mt. Budgery track

### **North of Mt Tootie:**

1. Bowen Hill fire trail

### **2. Darcy Range fire trail**

Gates will be installed and the tracks will be allowed to regenerate to walking track standard.

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## SOCIAL NOTES

What people will do to avoid magazine collating -

Bill and Fran Holland are somewhere in Europe and now I hear that Lorraine Bloomfield has caught the travel bug again and is off to Vietnam.

Have a good and safe trip Bill Fran and Lorraine.

## NEXT MONTH

### **Less than cool**

*by Dick Whittington*

### **The Lakes District and Conniston Fells**

*by Ian Wolfe and Louise Verdon*

## FUTURE ARTICLES

### **Easter 2000**

*by Morag Ryder*

### **Easter 1938**

*by Jean Ashdown*

### **Easter 2000**

### **Memories of the Blue Breaks**

*by Christine Austin*

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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.

## Walking in the Lakes District

### The Great Gable- July 97

by Ian Wolfe & Louise Verdon

In the Lakes District one can find the full range of accommodation from 5 star Stately Country Houses, through Bed & Breakfasts to, in our case, a farm camping ground. This involves the farmer mowing a flat paddock beside a stream, installing a toilet, putting out a sign and then opening the gate. He then returns at dusk or dawn to collect £5 per car/tent and engage in some pleasant chat. When the weather is fine this provides a very cheap, relaxing and pleasant way of being accommodated (we found that we could handle a Bed & Breakfast breakfast only twice per week before exploding from over feeding).

Anyway, the Farmer told us about this walk so I looked it up in Buttle's "The 12 Best Walks in the Lakes District" and it looked most appropriate (distance of 8 miles, ascent of 3,000 ft, duration of 6 hrs). The day being clear we set off from the Hamlet of Seatoller and walked up the road to the Farmstead of Seathwaite. Here we walked through the quaint stone buildings and crossed a foot bridge to the foot of the Sour Milk Gill (=creek). Despite its unappetizing name the water was quite pleasant. We climbed the track to appreciate the small waterfall as the Gill spilled from the Gillercomb (comb=a small hanging valley).

Here we had a nice view back down to the Farm and across the valley. From here the track climbed gently up the side of the Comb to a saddle between the Base Brown and the Green Gable. A short steep climb brings you to the summit of the Green Gable and allows you to appreciate the Great Gable at close range and Scafell Pike further on. From here you "yo yo" down to the saddle and then up to the summit of the Great Gable.

Finding a lunch spot is a problem as in every direction there is a splendid view and it took

us some time to settle on a view of Scafell Pike and the associated hill massif. Walking in England is very pleasant but you do have to get used to a few things. Firstly they lease out the National Parks for sheep grazing so there are the little black balls everywhere. Secondly the RAF pilots love flying their Tornado and Jaguar jet fighters through these hills (it is a trifle disconcerting to look down into one of the cockpits as they hurtle through the passes!). Finally the English walk with their dogs. Now the dogs love it and when you are on a summit the arrival of other walkers is heralded by the prior arrival of their dogs who greet you enthusiastically.

After having our faces thoroughly licked we descended 700 feet steeply down a rocky ridge to attain a track in a saddle which rejoices in the name of "Moses' Trod". Thence followed a very nice sidle around to the headwaters of the River Liza as immortalised by Ennerdale. Enroute we were accosted by two English ladies who were sans husbands. These stalwarts having abandoned their partners to climb another hill 3 hrs ago with the promise that "we shall meet you in the saddle in an hour", hmm. A quick consultation revealed that the English Ladies were exactly where they thought they were, and should be, but that their husbands had climbed the wrong peak, double hmm! So we had some palaver and ended up with the English Ladies for company back to the where they had left their car (the husbands were left to the mercy of the fell hounds!).

The route to the Ladies' car was a lovely contour around the side of Brandreth and Grey Knotts with extended views down the valleys to the various lakes below. This ended in the remnants of a mining light rail which we followed to Honister Pass. Thereafter it was down via the old road through the open glades and then through the forest back to Seatoller. Here we found a very nice tea house for scones, jam and cream. Suitably fortified we strolled back to

# 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.

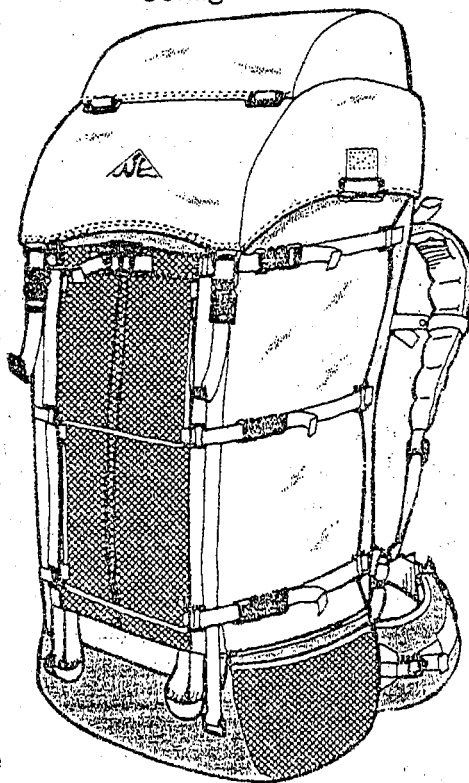
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Detachable top cover teams with the hip-harness waist-strap to carry it as a comfortable twin-compartment bum-bag.

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.

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



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our farm camp quite satisfied with our efforts over the course of the day.

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## **The Bushwalker and the Bike**

*by Dick Whittington \*\**

The walks program has always included alternative trips. Most commonly these have been abseil, lilo, canoe or cross-country skiing trips. Occasionally a bike trip is listed. Bike trips were undertaken in years gone by on what by today's standards would be considered most unsuitable equipment, machines weighing up to 20kg with no gears and smallish tyres. During the 1960s, crossings of the Wollommi from Rylestone to the Putty Road were accomplished on such machines in a normal weekend. Imagine therefore what can be achieved on a modern mountain bike weighing less than 12 kgs, with 27 gears, full suspension and brakes with awesome stopping power. Such a bike will cost about \$2000, but an excellent 'hardtail' (no rear suspension) with aluminium frame can be obtained for a little over \$1200. The hardtail has the advantage that it can be fitted with a rack, strong enough to carry food and gear for a few days.

Why go on a bike? There are many bushwalkers who have walked out along Narrowneck so many times that they now prefer not to. To these I would say try it on a bike just for fun, travel light and don't be too cautious. You may have time to do Mt Hay in the afternoon. There are probably many places you have seen on the map and been curious about, but have been deterred by the long fire trail access. Negotiate these fire trails on a bike, lock it up, and then start your walk. There are several points along the Colo that can be accessed in this way from the Putty Road. Close to home the Canoelands ridge in the Marramarra National Park, out towards Gentlemans Halt is an excellent ride, and in my opinion the best

short ride of all is the loop from Wiseman's Ferry along The Old Great North Rd. and back via the power line road. Many consider the Oaks fire trail from Woodford to Glenbrook to be the best day ride. This requires that you take your bike on the train, and a testament to the popularity of this ride is the virtual take-over of certain trains by bikers. Perhaps it is the exploitation of the altitude difference between Woodford and Glenbrook that is the attraction. For myself, I prefer to include the Andersons fire trail, from Wentworth Falls as a precursor. This makes the total distance 61kms and provides a big climb out of Bedford Creek, which may not appeal to all. Time for this ride is about 6 hours including lunch.

Off road cycle touring is the ultimate bike experience. It is however difficult to find anything that will stretch to more than 3 days. I believe that the best long trips are to be found in the northern Kosciuszko National Park, the Brindabellas and Barrington tops. There is also an excellent ride from Dead Horse Gap near Thredbo, south to the Tin Mine Huts and Cowambat Flat and on to Native Dog Flat in Victoria. Side trips can be made on foot to the Pilot and into the Cobberas. To complete this ride one would normally return from Native Dog Flat to Jindabyne via the Buchan Way. A much shorter alternative is to return from Cowambat Flat the same way that you went. When assessing the time needed for a ride, I would suggest an average speed of 10 kph might be assumed for a reasonably fit rider on a typical fire trail.

Most people would be reluctant to spend \$1200 on a first bike. To those I would suggest a bottom end model from a bike shop (not department store). You might then cross the Wollommi in two days in far greater style and comfort than those 1960s protagonists, and after all, you might not wish to walk across on those fire trails anyway.

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## WATER PURIFICATION

by *Sev Sternhell*

We have all become aware that water may be unsafe to drink not only in Third World countries, but also in many areas of Australia. While I do not consider myself an expert, I have had a lot of (sometimes bitter) experience with water purification and you might find my remarks helpful.

There are four common methods of getting rid of pathogens, i.e., bacteria, viruses, parasites and protozoa (e.g. *Giardia*) from water, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. Pathogens represent by far the major hazard, but it must be kept in mind that no common treatment will rid water of non-living pollutants, such as insecticides, heavy metal ions or oil.

Boiling is the traditional method of killing pathogens and provided that one boils water long enough it is quite efficacious, but obviously not very convenient or indeed always feasible. The most often recommended time is 5 minutes (obviously more at elevated altitudes), but 10 minutes is also quoted. However CDC (the prestigious Centre for Disease Control in USA) recommends 1 minute at sea level and 3 minutes at elevations above 2,000 metres.

Filtering through portable commercially available devices is believed to be reliable, provided that one buys filters specifically designed for removing pathogens and maintains them properly. However, in my experience these devices are not always convenient to use and the inconvenience increases under tough conditions. Filtering is not my choice.

Commercial additives, such as "Puritabs" are widely used and convenient. They are believed to work by producing a small concentration of chlorine or iodine. However not all of them kill all pathogens and I have been informed that they tend to spare protozoa, which while least common of water-borne pathogens, are also the most dangerous. Before purchasing commercial water-purifying pills, check out their range of killing power. They usually come with

instructions (concentration and time) but all make water taste awful.

Iodine is just another substance which can be used to sterilize water and has the advantage that it is reputed to be lethal to protozoa as well as bacteria and viruses. Iodine may be added as a few drops of "tincture of iodine", which is the traditional name given to a solution of iodine in alcohol, to your water bottle and waiting for it to act. The advantage of this method is that tincture of iodine is readily available from pharmacies. The disadvantage is that you must carry an inconvenient glass dropper bottle. My personal choice is the "iodine kit" which is prepared in the following manner. Place a few crystals of iodine (no more than a few milligrams) in a small (say 50 ml) plastic screw-top container and fill with water, which will, on shaking, become a pale brown saturated aqueous iodine solution. A few drops of this can be used to sterilize the water in your water bottle and by keeping your little iodine kit filled up with water you will get a reliable source of saturated aqueous iodine for a very long time from a small amount of iodine crystals. You should make sure that no iodine crystals find their way into your water bottle as iodine is poisonous in high concentrations. However, in practice this does not appear to be a problem as iodine crystals are very heavy and sink to the bottom of your kit.

How much of this saturated iodine solution should be used per litre of water? You actually have three variables: the amount added, the time allowed and the temperature. Clearly, higher concentrations will sterilize water faster and lower temperatures will call for longer times. I typically choose about 10 drops of saturated iodine solution per litre of water, which is a lowish dose and therefore I allow about 1 hour before drinking. This procedure reduces the unpleasant taste, which I consider the main disadvantage of using iodine. However, a recent report shows that "commercial iodine tablets" are ineffective against *Cryptosporidium* oocysts while reasonably effective against *Giardia* cysts. As the active agent in any "iodine

tablet" is presumably molecular iodine itself, this indicates caution in relying on iodine kits.

A piece of chemistry: if you add cordials or Vit. C (reducing agents) to water which you are trying to sterilize with chlorine or iodine (oxidizing agents) you will destroy the effectiveness of chlorine or iodine by reducing them to harmless negative chloride or iodide ions. Weirdly, it has been reported that cordials alone appear to reduce bacterial counts of water by some unknown mechanism. I would not recommend relying on this.

Another piece of chemistry: chlorine and iodine react with water to give a number of chemical species that are in equilibrium. Because the position of such equilibria (i.e., the relative concentrations of the various species) depend on the pH (acidity/alkalinity) of water, this produces another variable with alkaline waters being harder to purify. All you can do is to allow more time for the sterilizing agent to act if you believe water to be alkaline (high pH).

In sum: boil if you can, otherwise take your pick. I shall continue with my iodine kit.

I am grateful to Patrick James who suggested that I write this article and provided some important data.

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### THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER ON THE WEB QUESTIONNAIRE

Have you returned the questionnaire, regarding placement of the Sydney Bushwalker and other club documents on our Website, that was enclosed in the June Sydney Bushwalker?

If you did not receive a questionnaire please advise me and I will forward one.

The questionnaire can be sent to you via email and can be returned the same way.

### JOTTINGS FROM OTHER MAGAZINES

"...we were glad that we were carrying scrambling ropes for the ascent, particularly for the one member of the party not wearing Dunlop Volley OCs!"

*An interesting comment on walking shoes from the 'Canberra Bushwalker'.*

*Many older SBW members would agree. Ed*

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### WHO WAS THE MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER?

The man from Snowy River is a very popular poem to bushwalkers and is often quoted (or misquoted) around the campfire.

Many names of good horsemen have been floated as 'The Man' but well known bushman Harry Hill, recipient of an OAM in the June Queen's Birthday honours list, says that he has the answer. A Goobragandra friend Cecil Piper, heard his father, Israel, who was a friend of Patterson, ask him outright in early 1914: "Who is the Man Banjo?"

"Your guess is as good as mine, Israel." was the reply.

*from the winter KHA Newsletter*

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### CLUB ACTIVITY

There has been much discussion in the SBW regarding attendance at meetings and on walks.

This is a recurring theme in most clubs and currently other clubs are going through a similar phase.

The Hobart walking club with a membership of 1000 is currently lucky to get 35 members at its monthly meetings and is cancelling a July social function because of poor attendance at the May and June functions.

The Club is also considering reducing the frequency of meetings.

What do the French say?

Déjà Vu.

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