

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



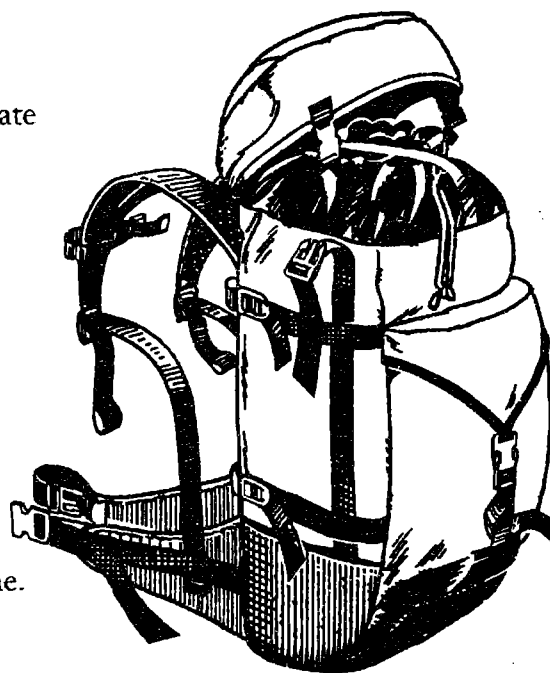
OCTOBER 2001



Print Post Approved PP 235723/01270

TRIASSIC DAY PACK

Amongst the vast array of day packs that decorate the shelves of outdoor shops, it's difficult to pick something with the right features, what with 101 different types of nylon, all sorts of different canvases, airflow systems, expanding pockets and neon colours. So it's nice to know that if you're the type of person that wants simple robust functionality that reflects years of local bushwalking experience with solid locally made material then the BLUE MOUNTAINS TRIASSIC could be your best companion for many years to come.



Pack Review

by David Noble

It's good to see a pack made in the Blue Mountains for use in the Blue Mountains. The "Triassic" features two shoulder strap sizes so that the pack can be properly hip loaded, sitting down comfortably in the lumbar region of the back. This is sometimes difficult especially if you are a taller person. The harness system also includes a thick waist belt and chest strap enabling a tight fit which is great when climbing over rocks.

The volume is large enough to allow a 50m rope and wetsuit to easily fit in and the top is made larger so that your stuff slides in and out with ease. The pack has a large front pocket for those essential items such as a torch, and a top pocket for the map and camera. The pack is large enough to be used as a weekend pack when no ropes etc. are needed. This can keep the bulk down and stop you from packing too much on those weekend bushwalks.

The "Triassic" is made from durable 12oz canvas which can withstand the abuse given to it in canyons and when walking through scrub. All the seams are double stitched and sealed to prevent failure. It is also very water proof, on a recent trip down "Hole In The Wall" canyon, no water entered the main compartment despite a number of lengthy swims.

The pack is bush green in colour making the walker almost invisible in the bush. This is handy for sneaking up on wildlife with a camera or just blending in to the wilderness as you walk along. Good for those who like to keep the visual impact minimal too.

A quality Blue Mountains pack for our tough conditions, the "Triassic" carries a lifetime guarantee on workmanship and materials.

Overall an excellent pack for either short or tall with the 2 shoulder strap options. And great for canyons or short weekend trips.

NB: David Noble is a keen canyoner and bushwalker. He is also the discoverer of the rare Wollemi Pine (WOLLEMIA NOBILIS) found in 1994.

- ▲ Australian 12oz canvas
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- ▲ Side compression straps for minimising volume
- ▲ Storm throat to keep out the rain
- ▲ Hard wearing Cordura base
- ▲ Price \$159.00

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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 welcome.

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Membership Secretary: Barry Wallace
New Members Secretary: Kay Chan
Conservation Secretary: David Trinder
Magazine Editor: Bill Holland
Committee Member: Pam Morrison
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Jim Callaway Tom Wenman
Wilf Hilder, Geoff Bradley

OCTOBER 2001

Issue No. 803

INDEX:

2. A Note from the Editor
2. President's Report
3. September General Meeting
Barry Wallace
4. The Club Questionnaire
Pam Morrison
5. Letter to the Editor *Andy Macqueen*
6. Conservation Report *Davis Trinder*
7. Book Review *Owen Marks*
- 8,9. Protecting Australia's Wild Places
Kate Fitzherbert
9. Visiting Chile or Argentina?
Gerry Leitner
10. Bathurst to Blayney and Back by Bike
Barbara Bruce
- 12,13. Odin's Last Rune
Almis Simankevicius
13. Walks and Activity Planning Night
Don Brooks
14. Cinch Creek *Mike Perryman*
15. My Ettrema Experiences
Maurice Smith
16. New Members Page
The Prospective Membership Process
Kay Chan
17. Activities Page
18. Social notes

ADVERTISERS:

Alpsport	Front cover
Eastwood Camping	11
Paddy Pallin	Back cover
Wilderness Transit	7
Willis's Walkabouts	5

A Note From The Editor:

As we head into the Federal Election on 10 November it is worth noting the policies of our political parties towards the protection of our environment and the preservation of wilderness and natural heritage areas. We should to bring to their attention our concerns about the environment perhaps by the odd phone call or letter. After all, this would be consistent with our Club's Objects are the words, *"to establish a definite regard for the welfare and preservation of wildlife and the natural beauty of this country ... to help others appreciate these natural gifts"*

In this vein, this issue of your magazine includes articles dealing with conservation, natural heritage and a glimpse back to the late 1950's when much of our walking environment was to a large extent untested and unspoilt. Editor.

On Monday, 1 October Morie Ward died after a long battle with cancer. The Thursday before he died, Morie prepared the message below. Morie's funeral was on Friday 5 October. Many of his friends and fellow walkers from SBW were there to say farewell.

A Message from Morie Ward

I would like to let my many friends and fellow walkers in the Sydney Bush Walkers know that I am no longer well enough to join you "on the track".

I really appreciate my many years walking with the club and have wonderful memories of all the shared experiences and close friendships I have made, as well as being thankful for all your support and good wishes during my illness.

President's Report

With great regret I report that our popular SBW leader Morie Ward passed away on Monday 1 October. Our sincere sympathy goes to his widow Jenny and family. Morie's outstanding leadership will be sadly missed.

The SBW Members Survey (proposed by

Roger Treagus) has had an overwhelming response. The task of processing the Survey Forms was undertaken by Pam Morrison, assisted by her daughter Adele, who prepared a comprehensive report for our club. A special thank to you both for a great job well done. It is now up to the committee to give careful consideration to the thought provoking results and your suggestions for improvements. Part 1 of Pam's summary of the Members survey is in this magazine.

Dot Butler, a National Bushwalking Treasure, celebrated her 90th Birthday last month. Dot as "Queen Mother of SBW" has been a bushwalking icon for decades. A fine article on Dot is featured in our September magazine. Hearty congratulations Dorothy.

"The times they are a changing" sang Bob Dylan years ago. Among the recent changes to SBW is the Leader's Walks Report Form, new to SBW but long established in other clubs. Part of a leader's "Duty of Care" is the briefing of his or her party on the aspects of the walk and compiling a list of participants and their contact phone numbers for emergencies. For legal and insurance requirements you need to do this anyway. The easiest way to compile a list of participants and their phone numbers is to use George Mawer's Walks Leader's Report form and get all the participants to fill it in. From 1 July 2001 leaders now need to get all visitors to fill in the Insurance company's disclaimer form to protect you and your club from Public Liability claim. When the walk is finished jot down any significant details and post it directly to George Mawer. This is to help George prepare SBW walks statistics for the club's benefit. Leaders please do the right thing for your club and yourself.

The Great River Walk Steering Committee has publicly praised the support of SBW and the dedication of Roger Treagus and myself in leading the two routes for the Great River Walk along the Wollondilly, Nepean and Hawkesbury Rivers. It is nice to get favourable publicity for bushwalking and especially for our club. Well done SBW supporters of the Great River Walks.

The September General Meeting

Barry Wallace

The meeting was called to order at around 2007 with 12 members present. The president appeared unconcerned with the question of a quorum; press ganged Pam Morrison as secretary, and called for apologies. These there were for Bill and Fran Holland and Judy O'Connor.

The minutes of the previous general meeting were read and accepted as a true and correct record with no matters arising.

Correspondence included a report from Natural Areas Limited indicating that there are accumulated deferred land rates on the property totaling around \$30,000. Expenditure on professional bushcare appears to have not yielded significant results. A Voluntary Conservation Agreement is under consideration for the property. Correspondence from ORCA Queensland seems to indicate that Queensland bushwalkers have rejected moves toward a National register of activity leaders. There are indications of upcoming amendments to NPWS land management regulations that could further restrict outdoor activities on lands under their control.

No treasurer's report was available to the meeting.

Confederation report indicated that a single sheet consent form for risk taking activities in areas under NPWS control is on the way. Confederation's 70th anniversary is this year.

Conservation report revealed that in NSW the EPA and NPWS acts conflict on the matter of mining activities in such a way as to provide little control over the activity.

A brief outline of the results of the recent membership survey was presented to the meeting. A similar report has appeared in last month's magazine and more detailed information is planned for a future issue.

The first weekend covered by the walks reports was the weekend of 10, 11, 12 August with Maureen Carter leading a party of 6 on her Saturday walk out from Helensburgh. The trip was described as a wonderful walk in glorious sunshine. Charlie Montross was also out there on the Saturday, leading the 4 starters on his

Katoomba to Wentworth Falls walk in cool conditions. Jim Callaway had 10 starters on his Cronulla to Heathcote walk enjoying spring wildflowers and just a little scrub. Nigel Weaver also had 10 walkers for his Loftus to Bundeena trip on what was described as a glorious day.

Saturday 19 August saw Anne McGuire with 13 walkers and a fine but windy day for her walk out from Blackheath.

Bill Capon led a party of 12 on his walk in Morton National Park over the weekend of 24, 25, 26 August. There was some murmuring about overcrowded campsites and just a touch of bad weather at the finish.

On 1st September Tony Crichton's six-foot track in a day went well, with good weather and 21 starters, of whom at least 19 finished. Tom Wenman was also out and about the weekend, leading his Cowan to Brooklyn walk. Conditions were sunny, with wildflowers along the way and cappuccino at Brooklyn.

Wilf's Great River Walk - Nepean Loop over the weekend of 8, 9 September went, though not exactly to program, with a single starter who used a bicycle. Bob Smythe had a party of 9 walkers out on his Sunday walk out from Leura.

Leigh McClintoch was welcomed into membership of the club. The meeting then passed a vote of acclamation in celebration of Dot's birthday.

There was no general business. Announcements brought more sad news with the passing away of Jean Moppett.

The meeting closed at around 2115.

*** News Item ***

Better Guides for Bushwalkers

Bushwalkers should be safer on the nation's walking tracks with the release of new standards for the classification and signage of routes. Tracks will have a grading and be clearly described to help people understand how strenuous a walk is and give an indication of the skills required to complete it.

Sydney Morning Herald 22/9/01

The Club Questionnaire (Part 1)

by Pam Morrison.

In July this year a 2 page survey was sent out to all members with the club magazine. We have had an excellent response rate of approximately 50% which allows us to interpret the results as reasonably representative of club members (number surveys returned = 231).

Summary of key findings:

The first outcome is that the club is not represented by "one" type of person who all want to go on "x" level walks. The membership is very diverse. Some members want more exploratory, challenging, overnight (or longer) walks, some are happy with the current offering of walks, while others want options of more day walks. While there is general satisfaction with the club, there is also considerable belief that the club could offer activities that differ from the current offerings.

The **profile** of very active walkers, in terms of age, gender & years of club membership, is very similar to infrequent walkers. About 50% of respondents went on 4 or more walks in the past 12 months, but this is not carried across to overnight walks. 54% over respondents went on no overnight walks in the past 12 months, however there is an active group (13% of respondents) who went on 4 or more overnight walks.

There is a generally held belief by members that the **Walks Program** can be improved. Only 32% of respondents think it is good the way it is. The diversity of club membership is highlighted in the changes that are desired. There is demand for more mid-week walks (18%), more medium walks (18%), more 2-3 days walks (17%), more easy walks (15%) and more hard walks (9%).

There is not a great interest shown in the **General Meetings** or **Social Program** with less than 20% saying they regularly attend. The most common reasons given for lack of attendance is "don't have time" and "not interested as joined the club to walk".

The **newsletter** is seen as a good communication tool with 95.5% of respondents reading it regularly. However, a significant number of members (57%) would like to see the content improved, giving suggestions to include more "short articles on recent/upcoming walks with photos" and "tips/advice/recipes/1st aid".

(1) Profile of the respondents

The **age** of respondents range from 26 to 91, with a mean age of 55. 11.4% are in the 20-40 age group, 62.8% in the 41-60 age group and the remaining 25.8% over 60. The average number **years of membership** is 14 years. While there are significant numbers of long-standing members it is encouraging to see that 32% of respondents have been members for 5 or less years. There is a strong trend for members to belong to other walking clubs, with 44% saying they do.

How active are the members? From the question "How many walks have you been on with SBW in the past 12 months?" we see that while there is a considerable proportion of non-walkers (22%) there is also an active group (47%) who went on 4 or more walks in the past 12 months. This level of activity is not mirrored in the number of overnight walks in the past 12 months. There is a very large group which is inactive (54.4% went on no overnights), and at the other end there is a smaller group (13% of respondents) of active overnight walkers who went on 4 or more overnights in the past 12 months.

(2) Profile of Walkers

This section answers the questions, *Who walks?* and *Are there any significant differences between active / non-active walkers in terms of their age, years membership with the club, or gender.*

The general conclusion is that if we look only at active walkers, that is, members who went on at least 1 walk in the past 12 months, then there is no significant relationship between age, gender, and years membership with the number of walks / overnights participated in.

CONTINUED NEXT MONTH.



Letter To The Editor

Wild Magazine (number 82) has published an article by an anonymous author who was one of a party of three who illegally and blatantly tracked down and visited the Wollemi Pines - photos and all.

The article entitled 'The Quest' concerns a 'clandestine mission', and is described as 'the story of how three persistent bushwalkers assembled the clues and dared to seek the forbidden Holy Grail of Australian bushwalking - the elusive refuge of the Wollemi Pine'.

It is bad enough that some selfish people should attempt such a venture - most of us probably know or suspect that such things have been occurring.

However, the publication of the article by Wild, in such outrageous journalistic manner, without even a balancing article about why one should not visit the Pine, surely destroys any claim the magazine might have had to being environmentally responsible and green. Many misguided readers will no doubt be

moved to take up the challenge to pay the Pines a visit themselves.

It seems that the article tries to excuse the visit by sort of implying that because the pines are now being commercially propagated, there is no need for preservation of the original stand. From a strict botanical point of view this may or may not be the case - that's up to the experts - but in any case such an attitude is surely abhorrent.

If you feel strongly about this, I urge you to write to Wild as soon as possible. Write to Wild Publications Pty Ltd, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181. Fax 03 9826 3787.

Andy Macqueen



Bush Music Weekend

At Coolana October 27th, 28th

Music around the campfire

Baroalba – Hill 420 Circle

This walk takes place in the most ruggedly spectacular landscape which is open to the public in Kakadu.

March 17-30 2002

The area includes such an incredible wealth of Aboriginal art and occupation sites that walking parties are restricted to a maximum of seven people. Part of the walk takes you through one of the few places of the Kakadu never disturbed by buffalo. **The best time to visit** this area is during or immediately after the green season when every creek is flowing and the waterholes are all full.

The trip includes a climb to the top of Hill 420, the highest point on the entire Arnhem escarpment.

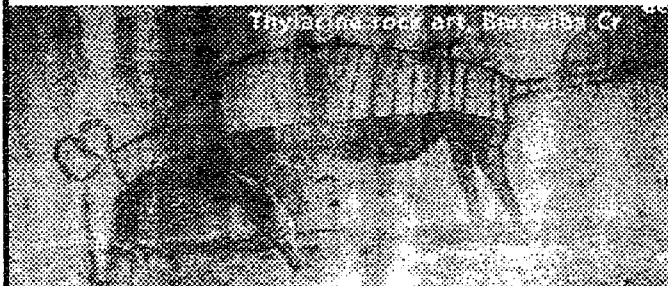
The views are magnificent.

Worried about the Wet? This area has more rock shelters than any similar sized area in Kakadu.

Our first booking arrived in May. We can only take five more plus the guide.

Get in soon!

Want more information? Go to our website, click on the tour list, then click on the trip and find a special feature!



www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au



Willis's Walkabouts 12 Carrington St Millner NT 0810 Email: walkabout@ais.net.au

Phone: (08) 8985 2134

Fax: (08) 8985 2355

CONSERVATION REPORT

by David Trinder

Threat to the Six Foot Track

On the 1st September twenty two club members walked the 45 kilometre Six Foot Track from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves. It has long been a yearly event on our program and a favorite walking area for us. Many other walkers do the track, usually as an overnight trip, in two or three days. In late summer every year long distance runners run The Six Foot Marathon, if you can't finish in seven hours, forget it. Our club does other walks on various parts of the Six Foot Track.

The Jenolan caves were discovered in 1838, travel for the public was difficult, even after the western railway was built, it took 24 hours using a train to Tarana and horse and buggy to the caves. In 1884 the premier of New South Wales the Hon Alexander Stuart ordered that a search be undertaken to find a horse track from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves. The track was subsequently built and travellers could then travel to the caves from Katoomba in 8 hours by horse (faster than the Sydney Bushwalkers). Later the road from Mt Victoria was built, cars became more popular in the 1930's and use of the track declined. Since 1985 the historic track has been re-marked by the Orange lands office, stiles were constructed and signposts erected so the track could be used by walkers.

The Sydney Morning Herald recently reported that an offer had been accepted on the sale of 16.2 hectares of land that straddles the Six Foot Track in the Megalong Valley. The sale amount is \$125,000. The Colong Foundation is concerned that it will lead to the development of rural residences, the construction of a sealed road to serve them and restrictions on the use of the area. The foundation wants the land to be bought by the Catchment Authority or the National Parks and Wildlife Service as a step towards incorporation into the Blue Mountains National Park. The Minister, Mr. Debus, is anxious to preserve the track for walkers and

he has ordered a review of land holdings in the surrounding area.

The track is one of a few Australian heritage walks. It passes through a diverse range of climate, geology, aspect and vegetation types, is used by walkers, runners and campers and offers a unique and exciting challenge to novice overnight bushwalkers. If the track is turned into a road it will no longer be of value to walkers and campers. In addition the uncontrolled spread of cattle and weeds pose a threat to the ecological integrity of the area.

Acquisition of the threatened areas and effective management of the track is needed to retain the areas natural beauty and ensure that it is be preserved as a walking track for our children, grand children and other people who might want to use the area in the future.

David Trinder



* From the Web *

The End of Adventure?

News Groups and emails have been targeted this month with a rather hysterical message about NPWS regulations restricting activities in certain National Parks and having the power to enforce fines if people are apprehended with so called restricted items in a restricted area. An extract from this message quotes the regulation.

"A person must not in a park carry, possess or use any equipment that is required for abseiling, base jumping, bungee jumping, rock climbing, caving, parachuting, white water boating, paragliding, parasailing or hang gliding. " Maximum Penalty: 30 Penalty Units (this currently equates to \$3,300)"

and concludes by saying " if the new Regulations pass through the Parliament unchanged, and are enacted as legislation, National Parks and Wildlife Service officers will be, technically, empowered to impose penalties on people merely for possessing a single piece of equipment deemed to be required for a large range of 'offending' activities."

What do you think?



BOOK REVIEW

Oden's Last Rune. *

Almis Simankevicius, fellow SBW member, has written another poetical book. This time, of a walk across the entire width of Northern England, and is an interesting compote of Viking history, Norse mythology, and English history, in more or less equal parts and all garnished with pleasant asides.

You may remember that his last travel book was across Spain following the old Pilgrim's Way to Santiago de Compostella. This is entirely different in style and for the retired walker like myself, it is a good and varied read, which should be enjoyed by all. And a wonderful first chapter for a walking book.

The real stars of the book are the quaint names of the villages and towns through which he and his partner Carol pass. They meander through the Lake Country and the Yorkshire Moors, and come across unusual memorials, dolmens of strange form, simple rustics with Range Rovers, churches ancient and modern and the everlasting pubs with endless cider on tap after a day's walk.

The book covers a walk of 190 miles over the hills and dales of England from St Bees to Robin Hood's Bay, with stays at Bed and Breakfasts every night. Their 18-day walk must have been tiring at times, as they once slept through a church tower chiming the quarter hour. As usual for walkers in this part of the world, the whole aim in life seems to be getting to a warm, dry bed at the end of every day. Now that would be nice walking around the west coast of Tasmania, wouldn't it? It seems he and Carol both have a weakness for large hearty breakfasts and dinners to match. Their hosts never fail, although they give wide berth to B& Bs run by bachelors!

The book has maps, some photographs, has practical advice, A Recommended Reading, a Chronological list of Dates and

Events and even some pictures of some Runes which are mentioned in the book, from which I recognized only one, the thorn, it being used in the Icelandic alphabet to this very day and pronounced "th" as in think or thorn.

Almis quotes from many sources, including Icelandic Sagas to the Saxon Chronicles. His knowledge is wide and varied.

And I hope another book is on the way.

Owen Marks

** Copies of Oden's Last Rune will be available during the presentation at the Club Rooms on Wednesday November 21 for \$20, or from Almis Simankevicius at Goodwalking Books P.O. Box 1112 North Sydney for \$24 including postage.*

NSW WILDERNESS TRANSIT

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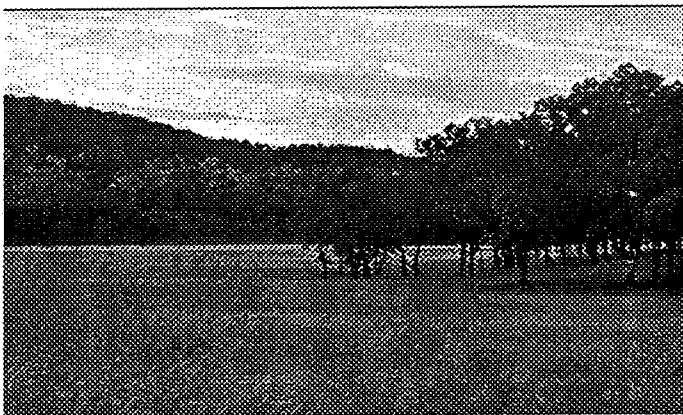
Australian Bush Heritage Fund - Protecting Australia's Wild Places.

By Kate Fitzherbert

We have driven through mile after mile of bleak landscape. Only vast tracts of introduced bufflegrass can be seen, where once the rich, diverse Brigalow woodlands supported an abundance of wildlife and varied vegetation communities. Many of the animals, birds and plants which once inhabited this country are now threatened.

As we pass, huge bulldozers are working again, this time using blade ploughs to slice off below ground, the roots of the regrowth that is trying to recolonise the plains. Smouldering windrows form great black scars across the landscape.

This is central Queensland, where the heart of tree-clearing mania still beats with passion and where much of Australia's land clearing – about 560,000 hectares annually – occurs. Brigalow (*Acacia harpophylla*) communities have just been listed as threatened under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, such has been the effectiveness of this clearing regime. And while our governments play political point-scoring games over State versus Federal responsibility, marked by cries for compensation and accusations of farmer-bashing, the destruction goes on.



Our arrival at our destination, Carnarvon Station Reserve, is a relief not only for the eyes but also for the heart. Here in the midst of this destruction is 59,000 hectares of outstanding country; a beautiful remnant that has just been protected forever by people like you and me. The Australian Bush Heritage Fund, a non-profit organisation based in Tasmania, is channelling the rising community concern about the degradation of our environment and the

growing list of threatened species, into direct and positive action. It is using our donations, support from Trusts and Foundations, and contributions from the National Reserve System Program, a division of the Natural Heritage Trust, to buy outstanding pieces of intact habitat and manage and protect them in perpetuity. It is comforting to know that if governments can't or won't ensure that Australia's unique environment is adequately protected in reserves, then there is an organisation that is working resolutely to this end.

The Australian Bush Heritage Fund was formed in 1990, when now Senator Bob Brown, used his US Goldman Environment Prize as a deposit on two forested properties in Tasmania which were destined to be woodchipped. Through his initiative and enthusiasm the ABHF was formed and, in addition to paying off these first two properties, Bush Heritage has developed into the national, independent, "go-ahead" organisation that it is today, with 13 reserves and a growing and committed supporter base.



Bush Heritage now manages for conservation three properties in New South Wales, four in Queensland, five in Tasmania including Erith Island in Bass Strait and one in Western Australia.

These properties protect a wide array of ecosystems, and provide a safe haven for numerous species of birds, animals and plants, many of which are threatened. The search for new properties goes on continually.

The community plays a vital role in the management of Bush Heritage reserves. Each reserve has a committed and active group of people termed Conservation Partners. These people, supported by the staff and some contractors, work to control weeds, erosion and feral animals as well as maintaining fencing and any infrastructure. With larger properties such as Carnarvon Station Reserve, Volunteer Rangers give up a month or more of their time to work on specific conservation projects on the reserve.

Bush Heritage's ability to continue this work depends on us, the community. With each new reserve comes more responsibility and greater conservation effort. Donations, bequests, or offers of high conservation value land are means by which each of us can support Bush Heritage and be part of the purchase and protection of Australia's dwindling wild places. All donations over \$2 are tax-deductible.

Carnarvon Station Reserve, the latest and largest of the areas protected by Bush Heritage, is also the most diverse. As we set up camp, the setting sun turns the abundant Bluegrass downs to gold, and we can be glad that these, and the 16 other threatened regional ecosystems on the property, now have some measure of protection.

If you would like to be a part of protecting Australia's wonderful natural heritage and acquiring new conservation reserves, please contact Australian Bush Heritage Fund on Freecall 1800 677 101, email to info@bushheritage.asn.au or check the website www.bushheritage.org

Photos used in the above article were by Wayne Lawler/Scopix

□ □ □ □

Visiting Chile or Argentina?

Gerry Leitner

Gerry, a Club member is a travel writer with extensive knowledge of South America. He would welcome a call from you if you are planning a trip down South America way.

I am in the process of updating "Travel Companion Chile and Easter Island" 2nd edition - again a huge undertaking by the way. It appears that some members are contemplating to visit this continent and I could provide some guidance when, where and how.

I have spent many years in South America - and of necessity because I write travel guide books on "exotic" destinations I have prime contacts in nearly every South American country who supply me with constant updates; I am also perusing regularly the major newspapers.

This information is made available to interested club members but requests for information have to be sent by email: travel@compassnet.com.au.

Many would-be travelers are a bit apprehensive traveling to non-English speaking countries. Both Chile and Argentina (yes Argentina!) are very anglophil countries. In any case my information also indicates "English speaking".

Victory Cruises, a cruise ship operator in Puerto Williams, Magellanic Region conducts tours amongst the glaciers in the Beagle Canal and to Cape Horn; skipper is a native English speaker and many crew members are bi-lingual; Captain Ben Garrett Pearson also brings out a monthly news letter in English: www.victory-cruises.com

Another example of a tour operator in Chile's lakes region is Campo Aventura south of Puerto Montt. They conduct tours and have outback accommodation for hikers in the Cochamó valley on the scenic Reloncaví Sound; all guides are bilingual. Web site: www.campo-aventura.com

Besides Chile and Argentina I can also provide information on Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru and Ecuador, countries I have intensely traveled in.

I also should like to mention that my "Travel Companion Argentina", published in December is not marketed in Australia but can be obtained either as a paperback or E-book from Hunter Publishing, USA: www.hunterpublishing.com or from www.amazon.com.

I hope this will help some of our members intending to travel in South America.

Bathurst to Blayney and Back by Bike Barbara Bruce

Riders: Barbara Bruce, Brian Holden, Bill and Fran Holland, Jan Mohandas, Margaret Sheens, Tom Wenman

Support: Judy and Colin Barnes Lorraine Bloomfield, George Mawer, Robyn O'Bryan



The ride was programmed from Georges Plains to Blayney via Newbridge, returning by a different route, for the weekend of 25-26 August 2001

Most participants arrived at "Shelysse", Robyn's farm, Friday night, at the very beginning of a marvellously social weekend.

For various reasons though, we did not leave "Shelysse" until 10.15 am Saturday, but the day was perfect – sunny and warmish for a late winter's day. So we meandered along a tarred road, passing various farmhouses flanked with rolling hills, largely denuded of trees and therefore affording views way into the distance in all directions.

After an hour and a half we reached Newbridge "Historic Town" – lazily quiet, neat and picturesque and exhibiting remnants of greater activity in years past. Not long after us the support group arrived bringing our lunch, so we rode over the hill in the direction of Blayney to a peaceful spot on the Upper Georges Plains Creek.

Lunch over, the cycling group split into two, one lot opting to do an extra circuit to double their mileage and the other proceeding to Blayney via the shorter route but with a head wind. Statuesque on the crest of a distant hill a wind farm waved its arms.

All along the route Lorraine & George parked their vehicle at strategic points, thus ensuring that everyone was proceeding satisfactorily and knew when to take turns in direction – just like on the "Big Bike Rides". Robyn proceeded to Colin and Judy's at Blayney with our change of clothes and other gear – again, just like on the Big Rides.

At Judy and Colin's home the catching up and socialising started in earnest, with the

late winter sun streaming through the big windows into their woodfire heated living/dining area. Thus passed another night spent in the comfort of the home of friends.

Next morning we were away at 9am, returning first to Newbridge but on a gravel road rather than the tarred route of the previous day. This road presented several pleasant surprises, including a small herd of cattle being shepherded along the road towards us. We were pressed to the fences so they could pass, until a pair of clever cattle dogs made them move aside. Not long after this we achieved Newbridge for the second time and a short way out of town we found a pleasant spot to have hot morning tea and fruit cake supplied by the Support group. This would have been quite enjoyable, except for the final and determined arrival of rain, which had been a possibility all morning. A hasty retreat therefore, with Brian and Fran electing to finish the remainder of the distance in the comfort of a car. Wish I had! The rest of us mounted our bikes for the last leg, to be rained on steadily for most of the way and copping distant lightning and thunder as we neared "Shelysse" again. All the local farmers were definitely jumping with joy though.

Once you are surrounded with the warmth of a fire on your outside and a good hot cuppa inside, you quickly forget.

A barbeque lunch took place under cover while the rain continued down. Nevertheless, it marked the end of a truly enjoyable weekend, which had been a pleasant mix of exercise and relaxation.

Thanks again to hosts for their warm hospitality

As a postscript, I would like to add that I took a few days' leave around this cycle trip, during which I was glad to catch up with friends and members who now reside in the country: Rosemary Butler at Little Hartley and Wendy Arnott (and husband, Chris) at Mudgee.

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ODIN'S LAST RUNE

Blisters, Battles and Beliefs on the Coast to Coast Walk

The ancient land of Albion was once the domain of the Celts and Picts. Later invaders; the Romans, Anglo-Saxons, Vikings and Normans marched across its dense yet yielding landscape, contributing to a rich and varied story.

There's probably no more enjoyable way to learn about English history, geography, folklore and its people, than to embark on the Coast to Coast Walk.

It was with these pleasures in mind that we set forth to cross the Sceptred Isle, and followed the path laid down by the great fell walker – Alfred Wainwright.

In his classic guidebook – A Coast to Coast Walk, Wainwright explained that he had written his guide to,

“Devise a pleasant enough route for the longer distance walker to traverse this latitude of England and see the marvellous sights whilst enjoying the physical activity entailed in doing so.”

The Coast to Coast Walk is well known to walkers world-wide. They are the ones who have tramped the 190 miles from St Bees on the Irish Sea, crossed the Lake District, traversed the Yorkshire Dales and tramped the North York Moors, to finally arrive, tired, yet accomplished, at the quaint village of Robin Hood's Bay perched on the cliffs overlooking the North Sea.

Early spring seemed the best time of the year to walk the route since it would still be slightly chilly with fewer fellow walkers, making accommodation easier to find. Also, spring was the season of renewal after the harsh winter months, so walking across a terrain of emergent growth and catching glimpses of the animal kingdom returning from its annual hibernation was an attractive proposition.

Everything we had heard or read about the Coast to Coast Walk strongly suggested a rain-soaked journey with all the challenges of miserable weather and soggy paths, so we made sure to include good wet weather gear and stout walking boots in our kit.

Starting from the interesting village of St Bees on a sunny morning, we dipped our boots into the Irish Sea and then walked along the clifftops of the headland. The

screeching of sea birds as they wheeled around in the sunny skies entranced us. The track soon turned inland towards the east.

The weather held, and after two days of walking we arrived at the hamlet of Ennerdale Bridge where we stayed in a Bed and Breakfast owned by Carole and Geoff, a couple who had walked the Coast to Coast path years before. The B&Bs suited us down to the ground, their fine English breakfasts satisfying kings and walkers.

Leaving Ennerdale Bridge we entered the marvellous landscape known as the Lake District or Lakeland. This ancient terrain of fells (hills) and lakes had held a mystical fascination for writers and poets throughout the centuries and contained many surprises and challenges. Primroses grew in a sheltered niche between two large rocks. The primrose was the prima rosa – the first rose, which heralded spring. We perspired on the long climb to Hay Stacks, a jumble of rocks situated high on the fells that Wainwright had loved. That night we slept in a cottage in the tiny village of Stonethwaite. The cottage had thick walls, uneven floors and low beamed ceilings – it was like a gingerbread house in a fairy tale. All that was missing were the elves.

The following day we met an Englishwoman and her son on the track and shared interesting conversations with them. The track from Stonethwaite to Grasmere entailed crossing wild mountains and unkempt valleys. We walked along marvellous ridges named Greenup Edge, Gibson Knott and Helm Crag eventually descending to the village of Grasmere.

Here, we visited Dove Cottage, once the home of the famous English poet, William Wordsworth.

The next day we laboured up to Grisedale Tarn, the starting point for the track to the top of Helvellyn, England's most climbed mountain. The steepness and length of climb

Odin's Last Rune: (continued)

dissuaded us from attempting it ourselves, so instead, we enjoyed watching the stick-like figures of distant walkers as they toiled up the massive slope. We made our way down along Grisedale Valley and were grateful that the sun had remained our fair companion through Lakeland.

Grisdale Valley had a delightfully pastoral feel to it with sheep munching grass alongside their newly born lambs while birds twittered in the clean crisp air. The sheep were the hardy Herdwicks, bred from the original Viking flocks.

That evening in Patterdale we celebrated with our English companions who had climbed Helvellyn. We ate and drank the good produce of the land. Steak and ale pies, a feast of Cumberland sausages and the ever-reliable Ploughman's Lunch, all washed down with pints of sparkling cider and local ales.

The sun accompanied us for the next few days as we crossed Lakeland. From Patterdale there was a stiff walk up to Kidsty Pike, the highest peak on our journey. The clouds rolled in and a bitter wind blew. We stopped to add another layer of clothes as insulation against the cold. Having reached the summit, we appreciated the 360-degree views. Suddenly the clouds rushed onto the Pike and all visibility was lost. Scrambling to our feet we hastily found the track that led us down to Haweswater Reservoir.

(to be continued next issue)

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'Sydney Bushwalker' Collating

Members are invited to assist with the collating of the November magazine and Summer Walks Program at the Holland's home at Westleigh on Thursday 15th November from 6pm. Contact Fran Holland beforehand for details on 9484 6636.

Walks and Activity Planning Night:

The purpose of the evening was twofold:

- to inform and encourage new leaders to place walks on the Summer Programme and
- provide information and suggest an appropriate approach to leading walks in new areas.

There were 35 members present nearly all of whom joined in the discussion.

We opened with about 45 minutes of very constructive explanations and comments regarding exploratory and pre-walking preparation. The "buddy" system was explained in which new leaders are accompanied by an experienced person for guidance and advice. (see Maureen Carter's article in March 2001 magazine)

Three lists were prepared showing those who:

1. would like to lead walks
2. prepared to "buddy" new leaders
3. prepared to do "exploratory" walks

The meeting was then adjourned for some wine, tea/coffee and biscuits during which informal groups gathered around the "programme table" to discuss possible walks and interesting areas. Discussions were still underway at 10 pm by which time the room had to be closed and members dispersed.

Although only a few walks were entered on the draft programme I am sure that Carol Lubbers (Walks Secretary) will find more walks and renewed enthusiasm amongst our walks leaders. Already, two brand new leaders have emerged and will add their walks to the Summer Programme.

Don Brooks

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Have You Changed Your Address ?

If you have changed your address or phone number recently please advise:

Members: Barry Wallace

Prospectives: Kay Chan

The advice should be in writing directed to the Clubs postal address. This will ensure that our records show your current address and prevent delay in receiving the magazine each month.

WALKING IN ETTREMA

Here we commence some articles on the Ettrema area in the Morton National Park. First of all a "flashback" to an article from the September 1959 magazine "Cinch Creek". Then on the next page an article by Maurice Smith walking in the same area 40 years later. Next month we will go back to 1952 for a story by Wal Roots of the early exploration by the "Old Buffers" (first printed June 1952):

Cinch Creek *

Mike Perryman (1959)

As was arranged before we left Yalwal, our expedition split into more mobile groups to explore the area of the Ettrema Rim. Our group of 8 moved south to the watershed of Monkey and Cinch Creeks. Originally we had hoped to move south along the plateau to the Sassafras Road but as time had run into late Saturday, we decided on a descent of Cinch Creek.

Cinch and Monkey Creeks had been traversed by a party in Easter 1958 from Bunbundah (sic) Creek up the falls of Monkey Creek on to the plateau and Manning Saddle, then into the watershed of Cinch Creek and then down its large falls to Ettrema Gorge below Point Possibility. A small amount of rope work had been done climbing up Monkey Creek but Cinch was an easy conquest.

With this fact in mind our party sidled into the upper reaches of Cinch to find a camping cave for the night. Our arrival was heralded by the local lyre birds; several nests were seen and many cries were heard during the day.

Over night the white ants did some plotting and by morning departure the group again split. Some not keen on creek high jinks decided to cross on to the isolated plateau to the west of Cinch and gaze into the depths of Ettrema about 1,500 ft below. Four of us (Lindsey, Gwen, Snow and myself) pressed on downstream. After one hour of real creek hopping we came to a picturesque fall of 45 ft. The face was scarred by broken ledges dipping right (high) to left and the way down appeared tricky. The actual descent is just the reverse. Using the natural dip of the ledges and the seat of your pants you slide under the face of the fall all the time remembering the old fable "he who hesitates gets thoroughly drenched".

The last drop to the creek floor was about 20 ft along similar ledges. The face also presents several other easy descent routes.

The creek now approached the rim of the plateau and its narrowness became less pronounced. When the rim was reached a magnificent sight was before us. Across the valley, Point Possibility stood up above us, the right hand walls of the plateau rose up to 300 ft

above us, at our feet a magnificent fall of over 100 ft cascaded straight down into a deep green pool below. Truly a time and place for a rest, and as the walls protected us from the wind, a sunbake. (Putt's mob climbing up Point Possibility were suffering the cooling effects of a 25 mph July westerly.)

Again it seemed we were to be thwarted but fortunately to our right a long scree slope clothed in brambles afforded an easy and simple descent to the creek again. The pool below was circled by Lilli Pilli's in full crop and haloed by a full rainbow.

For the next mile, the creek wound its tortuous way through numerous small falls, block ups, water races, rapids and cascades, each flowed one upon the other until by 10.45 we passed the entrance of Dog Ledge Creek and then turned right into Gympie Creek and began to climb back to Dog Ledge Pass. We did not know this creek was named Gympie until we had progressed up for some distance (20 yards) then Powie! We were surrounded by Gympie trees [also known as stinging trees, Ed]. Not having gloves or "longuns" we looked favourably at the bramble covered ridge and finally reached the cliff line much later than we hoped.

Luckily, Putt had waited for us and hauled our packs up to Dog Ledge Pass or else four bods would still be wedged in this crevasse. It is truly a wonderful find and can only be seen to be believed as it simply overcomes a 45 ft (plus) cliff drop.

After a spot of scran we made haste for Yalwal.

Party Times:

Yalwal to Bundundah Creek	2 1/2 hours
(via Danjera Gap)	
Bundundah Creek to Dog Ledge Pass	1 1/2 "
Monkey Creek to Cinch Creek	8 "

The challenge is still there! It's a mighty piece of rugged country; go and have a look

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* (reprinted from September 1959 magazine)

My Ettrema Experiences

Maurice Smith

My first experience in the Ettrema wilderness was back in late 1992 when I was a raw and inexperienced prospective member. This was my weekend test walk needed to enable me to progress to full membership. The Ettrema wilderness is part of Morton National Park, which is inland on Nowra, south of Wollongong on the south coast. The leader of that trip was Les Powell and my experience was such that at the time I considered it one of the toughest walks that I had ever done. The weather leading up to that trip was quite wet so that the creek was quite high and running very fast. As a consequence we were forced to take a high detour along the creek bank because of the creek height. This in turn meant we didn't make much progress along the creek and we found ourselves a camp site not long before an hour-long thunderstorm dampened our spirits. However, despite the storm several members stood by the fire and kept it going.

Some years later, after a lot more SBW walking experience I got to wondering whether the Ettrema walk that I had done as a prospective member was as difficult as I remembered. So to find out I put the same walk on the program as an exploratory (for me) walk. Lo and behold, several club members were fearless enough to come along with me. Now with the benefit of hindsight I realise that it was on that walk that I came to fall in love with the area.

As I write this article I look back on that walk and realise that the weather on that walk, in fact, was quite typical of Morton National Park. After this first walk in the Ettrema as a leader I have lead quite a number of walks in the same general area and I've gradually explored the Ettrema wilderness. I still have quite a bit more of the wilderness to explore. I'm also happy to re-walk the area.

Access to the area for weekend walks from the western side is considerably easier than from the east. However, in the next year or three (might be a bit too optimistic here) I'm quite likely to program some exploratory walks to check out the eastern side of the area.

The reasons I love the area can be summarised in a few words: rugged, remote, spectacular, wonderful swimming spots, superb camp sites, rock hopping, superb side creeks, history, wilderness, topography, flora, challenging.

I thoroughly enjoy taking club members with me into the area and the great times we have together. In the upcoming spring program I have two weekend walks on the program. The second, in mid November is an indulgence for me. It is a repeat of my very first walk that I undertook as a leader in that area. Also the water in the creek should be comfortable enough for swimming too.

The reprint of the Ettrema articles from the 1959 magazine gives you an interesting perspective on the history of walking in the area. SBW members pioneered this area for walking. Many significant features on the Touga map which covers a significant part of the wilderness resonate with convict-era themes. Next time you see our President, Wilf Hilder, ask him about the history of the naming of the features!

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* * * News Item * * *

\$60,000 awarded after cliff fall

A man who was injured while walking on a cliff face was awarded \$68,000 yesterday after a court at North Bondi found Waverley Council should have erected a sign to warn him of the danger. Mr Micheal Cheowiry 23 of Mount Druitt was climbing at Ben Buckler Point in 1996 when he slipped and fell, requiring surgery. Justice Phillip Bell found Mr Cheowiry would not have ventured onto the cliff if there has been a fence or warning.

Sydney Morning Herald 22/9/01

Contributed by Alex Colley with the comment, "The NPWS must either fence off or put notices on all cliffs or pay compensation to those who fall off"

NEW MEMBERS PAGE:

Visitors and prospective members are welcome to attend our meetings, held at the clubrooms every Wednesday at 8pm. Visitors wishing to enquire about membership should attend our New Members Information Night on the first Wednesday of every month, excepting January.

Welcome:

We would like to welcome the following New Members to SBW: Marcel Batten, Alexandra Brook, Paul Chamberlain, Robyn Fleming, Leonie Hesketh, Rebecca Hukster, Bradley Lamerton, Doug Murray, Kevin O'Dea, Derek Rossel, Pascaline Sala, Cameron Simpkins, Marina Stewart

Congratulations:

We would also like to congratulate the following people on their acceptance to full membership. Blanaid Branigan, Peter Cochrane, Vivien Dunne, and Richard Walker

Club Training Nights: Wed 14th Nov: "Basic Bush Navigation" Training in map reading and compass use with practical exercises to follow.

Coolana Training Weekend:

The Prospectives Training Weekend is on next weekend **October 27th, 28th** and what a weekend it will be! Not only training activities but a Bush Music Celebration as well. For this occasion we will be combining the two activities for a great campfire and music event. Your chance to see some extant bushwalkers in their natural habitat. Contact: Patrick James 9904 1515. **Book now, don't wait, the best places go first!**

The Prospective Membership Process

Forum held 19 September 2001 by Kay Chan
We were advised, from the data collected thus far, that members of less than five years standing undertake the majority of their walking in the club. It was therefore important to maintain a steady influx of new members and not be so discouraging. One view was that our low conversion rate was pretty good considering the diverse reasons for joining the club. Another view was that we should be more selective in attracting new members ie

quality not quantity. We should be clear about our objectives as a club and convey this accurately to prospective members.

If societal norms applied, today's walkers would not have the natural fitness levels of previous generations and would require more time to achieve a level of fitness for club walking. An opposing view was that the shorter six-month limit to attain membership focussed prospective members on achieving this goal. Another was that since existing members were not required to maintain club "standards", this rendered the criteria for new members meaningless and should therefore be dispensed with.

There was significant comment from newer members on the disparaging attitudes of older members towards prospective members and that this was very unwelcoming. For some this had been cause to reconsider joining.

It was suggested that our members could do more to promote the confidence of prospective members and encourage them to full membership and even leadership. (Remember! Our newer members are the most active!) A register of members willing to be mentors was one suggestion. More instruction, particularly in navigational skills was another. Several newer members, including some with considerable outdoors experience, commended the bushcraft weekends at the club's property "Coolana" as beneficial, in both a practical and social sense. Leaders could vet prospective members more carefully so that they do not "bite off more than they can chew". Leaders could also take more initiative in welcoming prospective members on walks, introducing them to other members. We could take more interest too, find out what they're expecting from the club and exchange views in this regard.

To make new members feel more welcome at the clubrooms it was suggested that we re-introduce members with a "greeters" role at social nights.

It was considered important to encourage new members into overnight walking, an activity on the wane when compared with 1970's. The suggestion of a gear pool for overnight walking received support in this regard and also in respect to prospective members meeting the membership criteria.

It seems that many of us have forgotten what it was like to be "new". We were reminded! As with the previous forum on leadership, both common and opposing views were expressed. Most encouraging, however, was the number of suggestions put forward to address the concerns raised.

ACTIVITIES PAGE:

Recommended Walks For New Members:

Full details of the following activities can be found in the Spring Walks Programme

Easy Day Walks:

Sat 10th Nov: Blue Mountains NP 6km
Lilo trip on Erskine Creek. Idyllic scenery on a glorious sunny day.

Sun 11th Nov: Royal NP 13km
Waterfall - Karloo Pool - Engadine

Sat 24th Nov: The Spit to Manly
Walk to Manly and return by bus. Suit parents with children

Day Test Walks:

Sun 18th Nov: Wollemi NP 18 km
Glen Davis Trig and return. Excellent views some rock scrambling

Sat 24th Nov: Blue Mtns NP 20km
Carlons - Mt Debert - Dunphy's Pass
Lots of variety and some climbing.

Weekend Test Walks:

2nd - 3rd Nov: Blue Mtns
Lawson - Wentworth Creek
50% off-track with steep descent and creek crossings
9th - 11th Nov: Kanangra
Kanangra Tops - Christy's Creek - Colboyd Range. Some rock scrambling and wet feet.



17th - 18th Nov: Morton NP Ettrema
Bullfrog Creek - Ettrema Creek Myall Creek
Superb creek walking with rockhopping and swimming opportunities

PLEASE SEND IN YOUR REPORTS OF INTERESTING WALKS!

Advice of short notice walks and changes to programmed walks may also be lodged but require approval (refer Walks Secretary) before publication.

Advance Notice - December 21st - 26th.

Victorian Alps - Bogong Alpine National Park
Want to escape at Christmas?

We shall enjoy superb alpine scenery, ascend Victoria's highest mountain (Mt. Bogong), many steep ascents and descents, historic huts to be visited all on tracks. Party limit of 8.

Leader: Stephen Adams Tel: 0414642154

e-mail wazark@pocketmail.com.au.

Contact leader early to avoid disappointment

Black Booyongs & Brush Box

There is some risk that this may appear to be a solicited testimonial, but 'The Editor' did lead a great outing to Lamington National Park (17th - 24th September)

We walked beside buttressed booyongs, giant vines and walking stick palms on manicured tracks. This allowed us the freedom to view clumps of orchids and epiphytes that festooned the upper branches of splendid red cedars.

Ancient antarctic beech have weathered aeons of soil erosion to stand, poised metres atop wharf-pile-thick roots. These enormous trees are survivors from a much colder period and it is incongruous that they now share this sub-tropical rainforest with brush box of gargantuan girth.

Tracks lead past tumbling cascades and waterfalls to lookouts with panoramic views of near and distant mountain ranges.

For a change of pace we walked past Morans Falls through eucalypts to Castle Crag, a magical eerie perched high above the Albert River.

It is rumoured that some members of the party indulged at O'Reilly's Bistro, and the afternoon happy hour - well that's a whole other story.

Thanks Bill for a terrific trip, I had a great time.

Frank Davis

Cycling:

Sun 25th Nov:

Ride around Botany Bay to Kurnell - explore the Botany Bay National Park.



Advance Notice - 27th Sept-27th Oct 2002

Walking in California - The John Muir Trail

We shall walk 350 kms through the glorious High Sierras wilderness, including an ascent of Mt. Whitney, the highest mountain in the Continental United States. Quite simply the walk of a lifetime! Contact me early as there is a party limit of 8.

Leader: Stephen Adams tel:0414642154 e-mail wazark@pocketmail.com.au

SOCIAL NOTES AND OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Recent Happenings:

My apologies that the slide presentation of the South American Trip was not ready on time. I am now assured that they are ready but will have to be shown on two nights as there are too many for one night.

The evening "From Prospective to President" was well attended. Eight or nine members were asked to speak on different aspects with general discussion following each speaker. Thanks to all those who participated with a special thanks to the very new members and prospective members who joined in.

By the time this goes to print the "Walks and Activity Planning" night will have been held. This activity will happen each quarter so come along and help our Club become even better.

Coming Events:

I have not been able to contact a speaker for "The Wollemi Pine" evening. However, Peter Cochrane has kindly offered us a "Show and Tell" on the newest technology with pictures and computers.

A reminder - on the 31st October we have Dr Kate Fitzherbert to talk to us about the aims and objectives of "Bush Heritage" and to show pictures of special areas now being preserved.

Social Programme - November:

- Wed. 7th **Committee Meeting** (6.30 pm)
Introduction to SBW (8.00pm)
 New Prospective members meet the New Members team over tea and biscuits
- Wed. 14th **General Meeting**
Prospective Training
 "Basic Bush Navigation"
- Wed. 21st **English Coast to Coast Walk**
 Slides and Talk by Almis Simankevicius
- Wed. 28th **"Show and Tell"**
 newest technology with pictures and computers.
- Sat/Sun **Members Slides of Past Snowy mountains and Christmas Walks**



Bush Music Weekend at Coolana

A reminder that the Bush Music Weekend is on at Coolana this coming weekend 27th, 28th October. No booking is necessary - but if you want more information, just phone

Patrick James 9904 1515

If you have any questions about this programme, or suggestions for future programmes please contact the Social Secretary Gemma Gagne 9923 1468.



Magazine Deadlines

Copy for publishing in the SBW magazine should be received by the editor by the end of the first week of each month.

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

Contact The Editor:

All articles submitted will be considered for publication. Please send your submission in by mail (preferably typed), on floppy disc, email billholl@hotmail.net.au or by fax on 9980 5476.

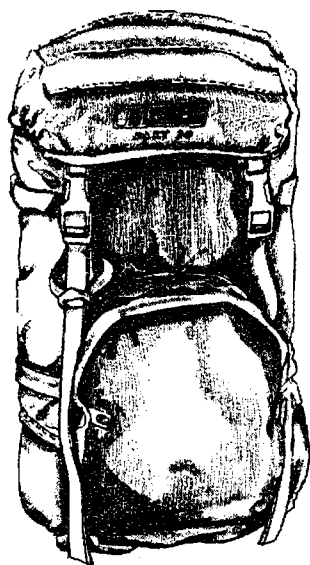
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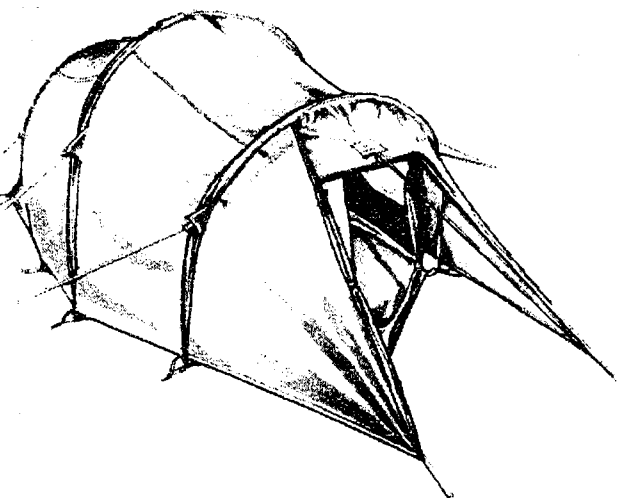
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