



THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



DECEMBER 2002



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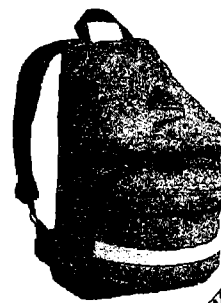
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DECEMBER 2002

Issue No. 817

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER is the monthly bulletin of matters of interest to members of

The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc

PO Box 431 Milsons Point 1565.

Editor: Bill Holland
 Production Manager: Frances Holland
 Printers: Kenn Clacher, Barrie Murdoch,
 Tom Wenman Don Brooks Margaret Niven

Highlights From The Social Programme:

December:

Wed 18th Club Christmas party (from 7 pm)

January:

Wed 8th Club Evening Picnic (from 6pm)
 Balmoral Beach.

Some Rather Unusual Activities:

December:

Tue 31st New Years Eve Walk (8-30pm)
 reaching Bradleys Head for midnight
 fire works

January:

Tue 14th Evening Walk (6pm)
 Bondi to Coogee and return
 24th - 27th Triathlon weekend at Coolana
 Day 1: Cycling riverside back country
 roads
 Day 2: Kayaking down the river
 Day 3: Walking and relaxing

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Sorry ! Wrong Number !

The 2003 Membership List will be issued early next year. Have you checked the current list to ensure your address and phone number is correct. See the notice on Page 8.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Sydney Bush Walkers

This year we celebrate our 75th anniversary. The Club's main activity is bushwalking, but it has grown to include other activities such as li-loing, cycling and social events.

Our meetings are held every third Wednesday evening at 8 pm at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli (near Milsons Point Railway Station).

Visitors and prospective members are welcome.

General Enquiries: Phone 0500 500 729

SBW Website www.sbw.org.au

Office Bearers

President:	Rosemary MacDougal
Vice-President:	Wilf Hilder
Public Officer:	Maurice Smith
Treasurer:	Maurice Smith
Secretary:	Leigh Mc Clintock
Walks Secretary:	Carol Lubbers
Social Secretary:	Vicki Garamy
Membership Secretary:	Pam Morrison
New Members Secretary:	Heike Krausse
Conservation Secretary:	David Trinder
Magazine Editor:	Bill Holland
Committee Member:	Eddy Giacomel
" "	Barry Wallace

Delegates to Confederation:

Jim Callaway -- vacant --

Contact The Committee:

Members are welcome to contact the following officers with questions on Club management and other matters.

President: Rosemary MacDougal
9428 5668 (h) rmacdougal@bigpond.com

Treasurer: Maurice Smith
9878 2958 (h) or mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au

Members Secretary: Pam Morrison
0418 463 923 or at pamm@unsw.edu.au
(particularly if you have not received your magazine or walks program)

Vice President: Wilf Hilder 9587 8912

New Members Secretary: Heike Krausse
0412 808 248 for enquiries about joining and prospective membership enquiries

Presidents Report:

As a result of the decision of the October General meeting to alter the Constitution to remove the obligation to have monthly meetings, we have been discussing our new requirements with the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre. The Committee is concerned that in the future we may have a requirement for the use of the rooms for more than the monthly meeting and social evening. Years ago it had taken some time to find this location with its main feature being close to public transport, storage and kitchen facilities.

I shall report progress but for the time being we are keeping the space on a monthly basis.

With regard to travel costs that might be shared by car passengers, there are many ways that this might be calculated. The Committee thinks that a simple formula is to apply a rate of 10cents per kilometre for the trip divided between the number of people including the driver in the car. I stress that this is not obligatory but it is an easy method.

Some of our members participate in BWRS activities involved in bush rescues. They are trained especially for that task. Two such persons are committee members, being Pam Morrison and Carol Lubbers. Recently, Pam was called out on the rescue to the Hole in the Wall search. It is a tremendous to see our members contributing beyond our club's activities to the larger bushwalking community.

Trusting that you all have a joyous, safe and merry Christmas and New Year. Heaps of thanks to the Committee members who have been very supportive and to the army of helpers working behind the scene to keep our club thriving and prosperous
Rosemary MacDougal

Grace Rigg

We have to report that Grace Rigg passed away On 2nd November aged 75 years. Older members will remember Grace as an active walker with SBW.

Attention All Leaders - The Autumn Walks Programme Closes On 17th January

Editor's Note:

As this magazine goes to print most of NSW is suffering from a prolonged drought and extreme fire danger. Nearly all of our national parks and wilderness areas are closed and our walking opportunities are severely limited.

In this context I sometimes hear of bushwalkers (hopefully not SBW) walking in areas during periods of total fire bans. This is very risky and very foolish. If a club is involved it could place the insurance cover at risk.

NPWS staff and police are busy on fire prevention and would not be readily available should rescue or emergency exit be required.

I also hear of stoves being used during total fire ban periods. Please refer to the notice that has appeared in recent issues (page 16 this time) which clearly states that all fires and stoves are banned during total fire ban periods.

With current restrictions on walking it seems the coming holiday period will see many of us confined to home and family.

It's also a time to do some reading and this magazine offers a little extra light relief. Two back page jokes instead of one and a humorous poem about a careless camper.

Contrasting with our hot dry weather is a tale of walking in the Grampians, where rain and storms failed to deter some SBW members from thoroughly enjoying their extended walk.

And we have three "Letters to the Editor" including critical comment on the anonymity of our correspondent Clio.

There are the regular reports and other items to help you pass your non-walking Christmas hours, to stir your blood and perhaps encourage you to walk again when the parks are open and weather a little less severe.

I wish all of you a merry Christmas and a new year full of opportunities, good health and happiness.

Bill Holland

Contact The Editor:

Copy for publishing in the SBW magazine should be received by the Editor by the end of the first week of each month. Letters stating your viewpoint on matters of interest are most welcome.

Please send your submission in by mail (preferably typed), on floppy disc, by fax or by email addressed to The Editor

Telephone: 9484 6636
Email: billholl@hotmail.net.au
Fax: 9980 5476 (phone 9484 6636 first)

Social Notes:

November In Review:

Our slide night on 20th Nov had a bumpy start. The projector equipment was locked in the manager's office and the caretaker had to force the lock open.

Eventually we started and David Trinder presented photos of his SBW walk earlier this year in New Zealand of the Milford Track & Cascade Saddle.

Wayne Steele, a man of our times, presented his photos on his laptop on 27th Nov. A party of five completed a 10 day exploratory walk of the Prince Regent River area in the Kimberleys. Keep an eye out on the programme as he will be making annual SBW trips in into the Kimberleys.

Please note that the club rooms will be closed on Wednesday evenings other than where noted below.

December:

Wed 18th SBW Christmas Party (7.00 pm)

Catch up with friends, make new ones.
Please bring a plate of food to share.
The club will supply beverages.

January:

Wed 8th Club Evening Picnic (from 6 pm)

Held at southern end of Balmoral Beach from 6pm. BYO food and drinks. Fish and chips available nearby.

Introduction to SBW (8 pm)

The new members team will introduce prospective members to the club and a short slide/photo presentation shown.

Wed 15th Committee Meeting (7 pm)

All members are welcome to attend. As we no longer have monthly general meetings this will be your opportunity to participate in club management and place questions before the Committee

Walks Planning Night (8 pm)

Bring along your ideas, maps etc. This evening is for leaders and members to meet and plan their walks, exchange ideas, tips and join in the planning discussions. Bring along your ideas, maps etc. This evening is for leaders to plan their walks.

Any suggestions, ideas or questions about the social programme should be directed to the Social Secretary: Vicki Garamy 9349 2905.



Forgotten Something? Leaders - don't forget to send in your Walk Report forms

Letters To The Editor



Kosciuszko Is A National Park

The purpose of creating national parks is to protect the natural environment.

As the National Parks and Wildlife Service states in its Perisher Range plan 'the overriding objective is to protect the fragile and unique natural environment.'

It is entirely appropriate that skiers and walkers should enjoy the State's only alpine area, provided damage to the park is minimised.

Already much of the park is devoted to urban development. The recently approved Perisher Resort Plan provides for 1320 more beds along with facilities for shopping, recreation and entertainment. These provisions are not essential for the enjoyment of the park. Looking to the future such development may be expanded to counter contracting tourism as the skiing season shortens due to global warming.

Peter Prineas, the Nature Conservation Council representative on the Kosciuszko National Park Community Forum, reports that at the meeting of 17th-18th October the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs opposed the rehabilitation of the summit road to a walking track, supported a new resort in the park and supported the renewal of the Charlottes Pass Village lease. These decisions to allow further development in the park, already the most abused park in the State, are contra to the Confederation's previous policy.

Rob Pallin, chairman of the Nature Conservation Council, in a letter to the National Parks Association, describes the policy of the NCC, which represents over a hundred conservation organisations, including the Colong Foundation and the NPA, as follows:

1. Rehabilitation of the summit road to a single width walking track
2. No new resorts in the park.
3. Charlottes Pass Village not to be renewed when it expires in 2015.
4. Early removal of feral horses from the park using ethical and efficient methods such as aerial and ground shooting and trapping

I hope the SBW will strongly support this policy.

Alec Colley



RIP The Sociable Walker ?

What a sad commentary on the capability of the club's 'Committee of Management' to reduce the social meetings by some 75%. It seems to me a very negative action.

One is entitled to wonder what other negative measures it has in mind, or is it just anti-social ?

Tom Wenman.



Nice work, Reg Alder ! for having a

shot at Clio (November issue) who certainly was off the mark in his/her comments about television, telephones and car ownership in 1927.

Actually, it is high time that Clio came out of the closet. We ordinary mortals with ordinary names dare you to expose yourself! For many years now your articles have appeared in *The Sydney Bushwalker* and Editor after Editor has protected your anonymity. Dammit, we can't engage with you directly but only through the pages of our magazine. Is that fair?

One has to admire, however, the tremendous amount of painstaking research that Clio must undertake to write his/her admittedly interesting pieces about the early bushwalking movement. This shows the person possesses great perseverance and analytical ability. Only one thing is lacking - his / her credentials, the inevitable consequence of anonymity.

I'm not so sure that Clio is an SBW member because he/ she seems to stand at arm's length from the club in his/her writing. I concede, though, that Clio would probably have a fairly long association with bushwalking and I suspect has access to a wealth of archival material.

The ball, Clio, is now in your court,

Frank Rigby

WANTED - a secure empty room or garage in which to store a small amount of furniture for approximately three months February to April, preferably in the Hurlstone Park area. If anyone has or knows of anyone who can help *with* the above please contact

Dot Stitt on 9719 1092 (H) or 9299 1403 (B).

Water Is Very Important !

Please remember that walking in summer requires ample intake of water. In these drought conditions good quality water may be very scarce. Average consumption on day walk is between 3 - 4 litres. Much more if you are carrying a heavy week-end pack!



Management Of Cycling In National Parks

Alex Colley

There is no restriction of access to national parks, which are served by over 2000 km. of park roads. When the Outdoor Recreation Party and its supporters claim access they mean off-road access, or in other words, anything rather than walk. They are being joined by increasing numbers of mountain bike riders.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is conducting a Trial Cycling Management Plan in the northern part of the Royal National Park. In its report on the Plan the Service states that mountain biking has, in the last seven years, placed heavy demands on National Parks to provide access (which of course means off-road access). The report states that there is substantial evidence of increased track erosion and cases of conflict between walkers and riders.

Numerous walkers have expressed concern for their safety when encountering riders on walking tracks. There is considerable demand by trail bike riders for track which is inaccessible to four wheel vehicles. This has led to habitat fragmentation and environmental degradation. "Adventure" cyclists seek out single lane walking trails, which are the most susceptible to environmental damage, and steep downhill sections and rocky outcrops.

The purpose of national parks is nature conservation. Any vehicular access beyond the park roads will be environmentally damaging. However the Service seeks not to prohibit such access, but to regulate it. This is to be done by a system of signs prohibiting cycling on most single track walking tracks. It is expected that this will reduce illegal riding on walking tracks by 80%.

Riding on walking tracks is prohibited under the park Plan Of Management. The solution to access by cyclists therefore appears to be the use of management trails. Such trails must however be of suitable width and visibility to reduce potential conflict issues, be of suitable surface condition to be able to sustain heavy use, be of not above a grade of 1:20, not be popular with walkers and not traverse an area where threatened or endangered species have been recorded. It is a fair bet that few tracks which comply with these conditions exist in the hilly sandstone terrain of the Royal National Park. Signs will denote closed tracks, walkers' tracks and cycling tracks. Cyclists are required to give way to walkers, avoid making new trails or moving bush rock and logs, not to cut native vegetation, and to keep off tracks after heavy rainfall.

Although NPWS guidelines prohibit vehicles in wilderness areas, the use of trails may be approved by the Regional Manager.

If they are to enjoy "solitude and self reliant" recreation, as prescribed in the Wilderness Act, bushwalkers will have to resist the pressure of four wheel drivers, horse riders, mountain bike riders, low flying aircraft, mountain highway advocates and all others opposed to wilderness preservation. There is adequate scope for these activities in the 94% of NSW outside national parks.

Canyoning Trips

Members may be aware that certain types of activities that were included on the SBW's Walks Programme are no longer on the programme because they are no longer covered by insurance.

Members who wish to be advised of and participate in private canyoning trips, which will not be recognised as SBW activities, should contact Kenn Clacher on 9954 9708 or at kenn@pacific.net.au

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The November 2002 General Meeting.

Barry Wallace

The President was away so it was Wilf who called the 10 or so members to order and began proceeding at around 2003. This number rose to 14 as the meeting went along but at no time was a quorum present. We received apologies for Fran Holland, Rosemary, Jim Callaway, Lorraine Bloomfield, Carol Lubbers, and Gerry Leitner.

After a somewhat concerning suggestion that a precis be read the minutes were read in full and accepted as a true record. In matters arising we were reassured to learn that the problem with the Commonwealth Bank and our cheque signatories has at last been resolved.

New member Maryanne Watt was welcomed to the club.

The Treasurers report indicated that we received income of \$3,454, of which around \$3,000 was 75th anniversary income, expended \$7,239 and closed with a balance of \$4,734.

Our Confederation report dwelt at some length on a reported dispute between Wilf and delegates from other conservation bodies relating to Kosciuszko National Park. A definition of the exact nature of this dispute proved elusive. Further information is being sought, so watch that space.

Your scribe presented the walks reports in Carols absence, so if the notes in this area can be detected to be more scratchy than usual that could be the reason. We began at the weekend of 12, 13 October with Maurice leading a party of 6 on his Morton National Park attempt to find Yoedler Pass from the bottom trip. Low water levels in the creeks meant dry feet, but there was no pass, so they went up on to Colley Plateau instead. There was no report for Arthur Anderson's Saturday walk out from Green Gully but Wilf had a party of 23 on his Great River Walk stage 5 on the Sunday.

The following weekend, 18, 19, 20 October was the weekend of the 75th anniversary celebrations at Coolana. This will have been reported in detail already. There were some programmed walks that weekend as well, but Neil Hickson's trip out from Batsh Camp was cancelled. Tony Manes had the party of 11 on his Buddawangs walk out under a total fire ban. Conditions were reported as extremely dry with both the Clyde and Yadboro Rivers a series of pools. A dust storm on Saturday evening produced poor visibility, but the worst had passed by Sunday and conditions were fine for the climb of The Castle and a return to the cars before dark.

The weekend of 26, 27 October had a large number of walks programmed but the attrition rate due to park closures and fire bans was high. Frank Grennan cancelled his introduction to overnight camping trip in Wollemi National Park and Tony

Holgate did the same for his Saturday walk in Erskine Creek. No report was available to the meeting for Michael Bickley's Saturday walk out to Bobbin Head. This is unusual, but given the problems of reporting in this case perhaps understandable. Roger Treagus deferred his Sunday Great River walk stage 14 to another day, but Tony Manes had a party of 8 on his Bundeena to Otford the long way walk that same day. Ron Watters was also out that Sunday with a party of 5 on his trip to Russells Needle on the Nattai. Conditions were warm and the walk was described as good.

It was warm again on Thursday the 31st when Wilf led a party of 6 on his Sydney Spider Web No. 2 walk from Artarmon to Circular Quay.

Rosemary MacDougal cancelled her Buddawangs walk over the weekend of 2, 3 November and Tony Marshal and Bill Capon postponed their extended walk in Barallier's footsteps which was due to start that weekend. Zol Bodlay's Saturday walk in Marra-Marra was also cancelled. Wilf's Great River walk stage T went, led by Roger Treagus who adapted it somewhat by using canoes on the Nepean River. The party logged around 27 km by the time it was all over. Jim Callaway cancelled his Sunday trip from Bundeena to Otford as did Pam Morrison her walk from Victoria Falls to Evans Lookout.

The weekend of 9, 10 November followed the established pattern with Carole Beale's canceling her Bundeena to Otford in two days trip and Peter Miller canceling his Saturday map and compass instructional in Popran National Park. It was the same story with Anne Maguire's Sunday trip out from Mount Hay road. No details were available to the meeting for Phil Newman's walk out from Mount Kuringai. It did, however serve to bring to a close the walks reports for the month.

Correspondence came next. One letter served to reveal at least some of the elements in contention between Wilf and others on the KNP consultative process. Items mentioned were road restrictions between Charlottes Pass and the summit car park, proposals for the end of lease at Charlottes Pass village and the matter of feral horses. No doubt there is more to be learned. We also received a letter from A.C.F soliciting donations to oppose plans for a radioactive waste repository. This will be placed before members for individual consideration through the magazine. There was an extended debate regarding club management and the committee structure and operation.

Announcement came and went and the meeting closed at around 2146.

Coolana Report:*Don Finch*

The Coolana Road Gang set down for the weekend of the 75th reunion was a bit of a non-event.

No roadwork was done (*due to the very hot conditions*) however other work was, including but not limited to weed control, track marking and repair and dead tree cutting and stacking. The walking tracks were cleared of branches and other impediments with particular attention given to the eye threatening macro zamia fronds through the palm forest. Saturday morning was given over to improving facilities and a general clean up of the tool shed. The water supply pipeline fault took several people several hours of effort to find and rectify, a tree root had expanded until finally

crimping the line closed. Thanks to all those attending

During November we have received acknowledgements for the grant applications sent in to the Sydney Catchment Authority. A Landcare survey for the DLWC was received filled out and returned. Unfortunately Gretel and Wilf's Landcare maintenance weekend on the 9/10 November had to be cancelled due to lack of transport.

Please note there will be a Landcare/maintenance weekend at Coolana on the 22/23 February leader Don Finch 9452 3749.

Experience Coolana at Christmas/New Year

No matter how bad the fire season and how long the drought continues, Coolana will continue to provide a green and very pleasant camping location. Come and enjoy the quiet peaceful bushland setting. The river level may be lower than normal but it is still very deep so care should be exercised when swimming and children should be closely supervised.



If you visit the North only once in your life...

Make it May!

it's magical

May is when the nights turn cool and the last rains finish.

Water is everywhere.

The waterfalls for which the Top End is famous look like they do in the tourist brochures. In a few months they will have begun to disappear. Many 4WD tracks remain closed so you can enjoy places like Jim Jim Falls without the day tourists who arrive in June.

Places which become too dry to visit later in the year are still accessible.

Our May trips all run at a leisurely pace so you can enjoy the best that Nature has to offer at this time of year. Book now and get a 20% discount.

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

Phone: 08 8985 2134

Fax: 08 8985 2355

Treasurer's Report - November**Bank Account Movement:****Opening Balance - 1st November** \$5,501**Income received:**

Subscriptions	40
Interest	80

Total Income 120**Expenses paid:**

Coolana rates	296
KNC rental	460
Magazine postage etc	673
75 th Anniversary	147
Walks Sec expenses	31
Cancer Council	50
Secretary's expenses	78
Other	67

Total Payments 1,802**Closing Balance 30th November** \$3,819*Maurice Smith***Have You Changed Your Address?**

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

Members: Pam Morrison

Prospectives: Heike Krausse

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

The 2003 Membership List

The new membership list will be finalised at the end of December. Please advise any changes to your personal details and contact numbers. The advice should be in writing addressed to

*Pam Morrison - Members Secretary**The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc**PO Box 431 Milsons Point 1565***The Bunyip and the Whistling Kettle***By John Manifold.*

I know a most superior camper
Whose methods were absurdly wrong,
He did not live on tea and damper
But took a little stove along.

And every place he came to settle
He spread his gadgets saving toil,
He even had a whistling kettle
To warn him on the boil.

Beneath the waratahs and wattles
Boronia and coolibah,
He scattered paper, cans and bottles,
And parked his nasty little car.

He spread his junk but did not plunder,
Hoping to stay the weekend long;
He watched the bloodshot sun go under
Across the silent billabong.

He ate canned food without demurring,
He put the kettle on for tea.
He did not see the water stirring
Far out beside a sunken tree.

Then, for the day had made him swelter
And night was hot and tense to spring,
He donned a bathing suit in shelter,
And left the firelight's friendly ring.

He felt the water kiss and tingle.
He heard the silence - none too soon.
A ripple broke against the shingle,
And dark with blood it met the moon.

Abandoned in the hush, the kettle
Screamed as it guessed its master's plight,
And loud it screamed, the lifeless metal,
Far into the malicious night.

Fire Bans and Park Closures

A **Park Fire Ban** is in force for all parks and reserves within the NPWS Central Directorate. This includes parks and reserves in an area from Mudgee and Gulgong in the north-west to Oberon in the south-west to Wollongong in the south-east and to Newcastle and Maitland in the north-east. This park fire ban will remain in place across Central Directorate for the duration of the current fire emergency.

Park Closures At current date (8th December) nearly all parks and wilderness areas are closed. This is a period of extreme bushfire danger and NPWS have advised that closures will remain in force until further notice. Even if rain should fall many areas may remain closed for prolonged periods. Where bushfires have occurred the burnt areas will need time to recover and there may be danger from fire weakened trees.

Detailed park closure information was contained in the November magazine information and was extracted from the NPWS web site as at 9th November. These closures are still current at 8th December. The status of all parks and reserves can change and new closures announced. Please check www.npws.nsw.gov.au/news/firenews.html



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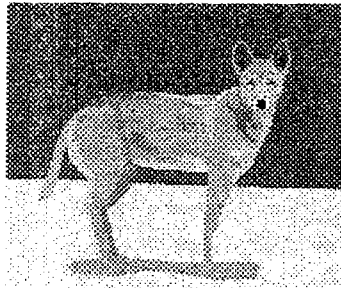
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BOOK REVIEW

Alex Colley

Living With The Dingo by Adam O'Neill

It is a long time since I have heard that haunting aria of wild places - the howl of the dingo.

Adam O'Neill, a professional eradicator of feral

animals and a talented observer, is well qualified to explain why this is so. I doubt whether any amount of scientific research could improve his thesis. He writes that "For the last 200 years the dingo has been, and probably still is, the most persecuted animal in the history of Australia. By 1863 there was scarcely a dingo left south of the Murrumbidgee. In the 1930s the price of a dingo's head was 2 pounds. An 8000 kilometre fence has been erected to contain them."

For some thousands of years before European occupation the dingo was the top predator. Like other native animals adjusted to our climatic extremes, it bred slowly. And it did not over exploit its food source - mostly other animals. It has long been regarded as a pest and its elimination fostered by the payment of bounties.

O'Neill provides convincing proof that today the main reason for the demise of the dingo is aerial baiting. The purpose of the baiting is to kill foxes, cats, wild dogs and dingos. Foxes are becoming wary of baits and cats prefer the prey they kill themselves. The dingos are the main sufferers. When they are eliminated, foxes and cats, which did not have to cope with droughts and floods in their native environment, soon breed up and occupy the areas devoid of dingos.

A convincing example of this was researched by Professor John Pettigrew (Dot Butler's son-in-law). On Davenport Downs station, in central Queensland.

Dingoes were not a problem because the station was used for fattening, not breeding, and supported one of the last remaining habitats of the bilby. When the dingos were destroyed by bounty seekers, cats proliferated and the bilbys were rapidly disappearing.

The problem in saving the dingo is how to protect live stock from the attacks of dog packs composed of feral domestic dogs, half bred dingoes and perhaps pure breds. If the feral dogs and dingo crosses were eliminated perhaps the

remainder could be preserved, but no means of doing this have been devised. Some dogs can be shot, others bated on the borders of national parks. Other measures are the erection of electric fences to keep the feral animals out or to prevent them from getting in. In their natural state dingos form packs dominated by a leading dog, but once the structure is broken they are dispersed and no longer resist the intrusion of feral dogs. In the days before feral dogs were common I worked on a station in a dingo infested area 23 miles from Walcha. Knowing that sheep breeding was impossible we ran only wethers and not one was taken. Perhaps the dingos preferred their native prey.

The legal status of dingos is that they are a pest under the Rural Lands Protection Act, but an endangered species which the National Parks and Wildlife Service seeks to preserve if possible. Research in the northern parks indicates that there are some pure bred dingos, many three quarter breeds and a few half breeds. Perhaps if the parks were fenced in the pure breeds would increase, but this would be prohibitively expensive. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is researching this problem and might come up with a solution.

*Published by Envirobook, 107 pages rrp 18.95
Available post free from the Colong Foundation,
level 2, 362 Kent. St., Sydney*

Weekend Walking Gear for Hire

The club now has a small pool of weekend walking equipment available for hire. The rates for weekly hire are:

Weekend pack: \$15

Sleeping bag: \$15

(For hygiene reasons you must provide and use your own sleeping bag liner)

Sleeping mat: \$5

Ground sheet: \$2

Tent: \$20

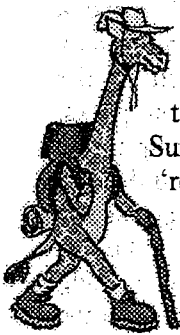
Complete kit \$50

All items will require an equivalent cash deposit, refundable on return of the equipment. Geoff McIntosh has volunteered to act as Gear Custodian and would be hirers should telephone Geoff on 9419 4619. Please be aware that our pool is presently still small, so give plenty of notice.

THE WALKS PAGES

Kanangra Boyd NP 5th - 7th Oct

Leader: Stephen Adams (party of 5)



Batsch Camp Very dry conditions, all performed to satisfaction, and even seemed to enjoy themselves at times.

Sunday night camp on top of a dead roo in Billy's Creek. Swimming in the Kowmung was a delight in the hot weather, climbing large, steep mountains in the heat was somewhat less so.

A number of bushfires were raging, but we saw no evidence of this. Joalah Mountain and Christies Creek were reported to be on fire.

Barrington Tops NP 5th - 7th Oct

Leader: David Trinder (party of 5)

First day, Saturday 5th, we walked to campsite at Big Hole, 900m rise, at 1500m altitude. Very cold but we all slept well, some of us didn't even hear a violent thunderstorm during the night.

Second day, we walked over Aeroplane Hill to Junction Pools and explored the Barrington River then walked 8km north to Polblue and Little Murray then back to Big Hole via Watergauge track.

Third day, returned to cars by 1 pm.

Good group, beautiful place, good weather.

Rhodes - Parramatta River Sun 5th Oct

Leader: Nancy Alderson (party of 9)

Weather good, party enjoying sight of Parramatta River on foreshores of Brays Bay, Yaralla Bay and Cabarita. The FJ Walker Estate was new to the group and they felt it was a unique property modelled on the English homes of the aristocracy. A trip on the punt to Putney was a pleasant experience for the bushwalkers.

Morton NP 18th - 20th Oct

Leader: Tony Manes (party of 11)

Extremely dry conditions, total fire ban requiring carry extra water. Clyde & Yabbaro Rivers not flowing, only pools remaining. Dust storm on Saturday night made visibility poor but Sunday was fine. Water found at Niebling Pass and Natural Arch but only pools - not flowing. Everyone climbed the Castle successfully. Returned to cars before dark.

Nattai NP Sun 27th Oct

Leader: Ron Watters (party of 5)

Some unexpected problems resulted in a later start at 9.05. Wildlife: 1.5 metre black snake, a koala just 5 metres away from us at top of causeway ridge walking around unconcernedly on the ground and then posing in the fork of a tree a few metres above ground, 4 lyrebirds, 3 water dragons and a snakeskin from a large brown snake.

Tough scramble to top of Russell's Needle. Country showing severe effects of fire, lots of loose rocks and leaf litter resulting in slippery conditions. Late afternoon tall gums and lovely ferny flats. Navigational challenges arising from a premature exit from Jellore Creek collectively solved. Moonlight exit across plateau arriving 20.15.

Pleasant Chinese dinner in Mittagong. Good group - a good day out. Koala the highlight.

Royal NP Sun 17th Nov

Leader: Errol Sheedy (party of 9)

Bundeena & return

We observed the red algal bloom on the ocean, in most parts. The colour had gone darker than for the previous week. Some slight damage to leader's navigational reputation when he had to skirt around some serious needle-bush, hakea, growth at the back of the Marley sand dunes.

Stanwell Park Sat 23rd Nov:

Leader: Maureen Carter (party of 15)

Wodi Wodi Track

Assembled at 7.45 at Stanwell Park Railway Station in wonderful pouring rain. The track is indistinct in places since the fires last Christmas but Ian Hill was a great help in locating elusive track markers. We ate morning tea with a view under an overhang and ascended to the escarpment track which we followed until we looked down on Scarborough. We travelled through rain forest, palm jungle, open eucalypt and sedge country seeing some unusual flowering grasses and *lobelia dentata* which Zol pointed out.

We lunched with a chill wind on a rocky outcrop then retraced our steps; descended the Wodi Wodi Track; walked across Stanwell Park beach and enjoyed afternoon tea at the cafe behind the beach.

It was a thrill to walk in the rain at last and to see two lyrebirds cavorting and shaking their wet feathers.

Leaders - Please check on park closures and fire bans before commencing your walk !

The Grampians North To South - October 2002

by Wombat

Starters: David Rostron (leader), Rosemary MacDougall, Spiro Hajinakitas, Helen Gray, Bill Caskey, Peter Love, Bob Duncan.

Our aim was to traverse the Grampian range from its northern to southern end. The leader had planned to make this a Presidential walk, but in the event, although three members, David Rostron, Bill Caskey, and Peter Love, were of near-presidential quality, only three fully-certified current-or-ex presidents, Rosemary MacDougall, Spiro Hajinakitas, and Helen Gray, were recruited. Prior to the walk, the Parks authority warned that the Grampians were in drought, and that water was likely to found only in a few widely separated rainwater tanks.

But, suppressing the fear of death through dehydration, we arrived at Sydney airport in time to catch the 6.30am plane, only to find half the party asleep on benches; they had not been told that the original earlier flight had been cancelled. And although the situation improved as the trip progressed, at the outset we had trouble communicating with Bill because of our poor grasp of rhyming slang. On arrival in Melbourne, we boarded a mini-bus that drove us to a car park at the northern end of the Grampians. Here, though most of us had been travelling since 4am, the leader ordered us to immediately shoulder our packs and climb Hollow Mountain.

Comprised as they are of hard, almost vertical, quartzite rock, the Grampians are a rock-climbers paradise. But luckily, about a quarter of the way up, we found a ledge where we could hide our packs, and complete the climb light footed. The mountain has remarkable clefts and tors, and near its top are the large lid-like slabs, and caverns, that give it its name. The top and the adjacent Mt. Staplyton were alive with rock-climbers and abseilers. Mt Staplyton was our destination for the day, so we descended to the ledge, picked up our packs, and attempted to traverse around to it, only to be stopped by the first of the deep clefts that separate the twin mountains.

So we descended to the plain, and walked around to the base of Staplyton via fire-trails and bush. Here, knowing David's fondness of sleeping on rocky, waterless, windswept mountain tops, we dropped our packs before climbing. Helen and Spiro were even more cunning; they stayed behind to 'look after the packs'. The climb was exciting, and the view from the top spectacular; the Grampian mountains rise abruptly, 1000 metres above flat farmland.

But then disaster struck; only 20m below the rocky summit, was a shelf with grass and shrubbery, rock pools, a tame wallaby, and a cave. Arguing against a high camp now became impossible, so we descended to the mountain base, collected Spiro, Helen, packs, and fire-wood, and then climbed back up to the camping cave. We grudgingly admitted that the cave had its good points, including a spectacular view vertically down to flat farmland below. At dusk, while the chef was cooking the evening meal, a violent thunderstorm moved in from the west. Now the cave seemed even better; in this weather it was certainly more secure than a tent.

After dinner, the wind, rain, cloud, and mist cleared to reveal stars above and scattered farm-lights below. So we chose our sleeping spots. David, Peter, and Bill slept at the back of the cave: secure, but claustrophobic and dusty. Spiro slept in a cosy alcove on the northern side of the cave mouth, Bob and Helen slept outside the cave-mouth where they could gaze at the stars, and Rosemary, concerned by the possibility of the cave echoing and amplifying the snores of its occupants, erected her mini-tent on a small vegetated shelf south of the cave. To her, the wallaby's company afforded the best chance of an undisturbed night.

Shortly after midnight, as the cave reverberated with happy snores, I was woken by rain on my face. I lifted my head to survey the situation, and immediately a gale blew the pile of loose clothes, I had been using as a pillow, into space. Hurriedly, both Helen and I grabbed our ground sheets and belongings (or in my case what was left of them) and threw them to the back of the cave. A large billy landed on Bill's head, to be followed by Helen; I had quickly taken the only vacant spot at the back of the cave, so Helen had to sleep on top of him. [Later, we learnt that the same gale had blown Rosemary's tent away, she was found in the morning sleeping in the foetal position under a tiny overhang.]

But by 3 am, mesmerised by the raging storm, I was once again asleep, only to be then re-woken by a distressed cry from the depth of the storm. I tried to find my torch, but in the chaos that was impossible; all I could do was 'Day-oh' in the hope that this would lead the benighted stranger to the comparative shelter of the cave. After a while a black bedraggled figure appeared at the cave mouth; it was Spiro. Succumbing to a nature call, he had gone a short distance outside the cave, only to have a

particularly violent gust blow him over, and blow off his underpants, and in his attempt to chase them, he had got onto the wrong ledge, and was unable to find his way back to the cave.

We arose next morning (Sunday) to weather, which although drizzly, was a vast improvement over the previous night. To our relief, we found all the lost items caught in bushes on the little shelf where Rosemary had slept; it was indeed fortunate that the wind had blown towards, rather than away from, the cliff face. All the lost items, that is, except Spiro's underpants. And being light-weight fanatics, none of the other men could offer him a spare pair. But fortunately, one of the ladies was able to help.

The early rising to catch the Saturday plane, and the sleeplessness of the subsequent night reduced the author to a zombie. Consequently he can remember little of Sunday's walk except that (he thinks) it rained intermittently, and we walked south along tops, then down Golton Gorge, where we had lunch, till we met the lowland Halls Gap road, which we followed south to a commercial recreation area called 'Roses'. After that we walked a short distance up mud-hut creek to a clearing, where we made camp. Towards sunset, the rain became heavy, and that night, only the loan of a groundsheet by kind Spiro saved the author from drowning.

The third day was Monday. After communal breakfast porridge, we continued along the track beside mud-hut creek, climbed the steep track beside the beautiful Beehive Falls, and then pushed on south and up across the high rugged plateau through mist, wind and rain. There we met a retreating school group; they had slept on the plateau, fully exposed to the howling wind and torrential rain. Many had extra gear in gar-bags hanging from their already overweight packs, and many looked utterly exhausted. Yet their teacher said they were going on an abseiling course that afternoon!

We kept walking south until we came to the rocky crest of the plateau near a landmark called the arch. Here were, not only arches, but many caves and rock-walls, but search as we did, we found nowhere sheltered enough for camping.

So, the hope of a high Staplyton-like cave ever-strong in our leader's heart, we detoured back north with our packs to Briggs Bluff on the precipitous northern edge of the plateau. Here the plateau drops vertically 400 m to a valley below. The view was spectacular and the wind furious; only our heavy packs prevented us from becoming air-borne. Fortunately it blew towards the plateau, but even so, the cautious kept well back, and even the reckless

approached the edge on all fours. This wind pattern seems characteristic of the Grampians; the wind blows up the valleys, and on coming to their end, blasts vertically up the escarpments.

There being no caves, we returned to the vague vicinity of the arch, and there found a sheltered copse of trees beside mud-hut creek (the creek which flows over Beehive Falls). We dropped our packs, made camp, and had lunch in the pouring rain beneath Spiro's large fly (Spiro, not only cooks, but carries gear for the whole party.)

After that we dozed off, until Rosemary, conscience driven, convinced us that there was just enough daylight left for us to climb Mt. Difficult (808m) and return before sunset. The mist swirled and the rain poured, but we sloshed south before stopping at the foot of the final climb, and admitting that we could barely see our feet, and that on the top of Mt Difficult, in permanent cloud, we would be lucky to see our noses. So we turned back; the track was now even more awash; every runnel had become a torrent, and mud-hut creek beside our campsite was almost too wide to jump. The chefs cooked the evening meal, which we ate sheltered from the rain under Spiro's fly before retiring to our tents.

Tuesday (day 4) dawned fine. The day's plan was to walk south, basically along the range top, though this would initially involve crossing some deep creeks. So we set off south along the start of the Mt Difficult track, and then turned left to follow a creek cascading southeast down steep quartzite slabs. When dry, quartzite gives excellent grip, but now, after days of rain, it was treacherously slippery. We slipped and slithered precariously, but eventually decided to retreat north to our campsite of two nights ago, and then road-bash south along the plains.

As we retreated past the deep pool at the base of Beehive Falls, Rosemary dropped behind for a private swim. Shortly afterwards we passed a group of teenage schoolboys on the way to view the falls, and presumably Rosemary.

We reached Sunday's campsite at about midday, festooned every bush and tree with our soggy gear in the hope that it would dry in the sun, and then had lunch. The now giggling schoolboys passed us on their way back from Beehive Falls, and in an angry lecture to them and us, their teacher used our untidy lunch site as an example of how not to make camp.

After lunch we set off south on the 13km road bash to a Pine Forest tourist campsite. This was well appointed, but we, being nature-lovers, camped in the old forest. There were no

eucalypts, only almost unburnable soggy decayed pinewood, but the chefs prepared a delicious meal.

Next morning (day 5, Wed) we headed west and climbed 1500' up a steep track to regain the top of the range. Both the climb and the view from the top were breath-taking. Then we walked south along the range, reaching Boroka Lookout at about midday, where we had lunch on an over-hanging rock ledge with wonderful views over the Halls Gap (Fyans River) valley below. Now began a steep, but at first well-graded, track down to the valley, and the tourist town of Halls Gap. Towards its end, the track crossed a number of side gullies and became a roller-coaster, and then it crossed a bitumen road. Here Helen had an experience that adversely affected her for the rest of the trip. Before reaching the public road she prudently went behind a bush and answered a call of nature. But on arising, she beheld a girl cyclist on the other side of the bush arising simultaneously. Startled, she fled without picking up her belt. The next day she returned but was unable to find the belt, and had consequently to walk much of the rest of the trip with her hands in her pockets. After crossing the road the track followed down the gorge and pools of Stony Creek to the township of Halls Gap.

This was our night of luxury; a motel, showers, clean clothes, wine, a sumptuous kangaroo steak meal, and finally the ultimate luxury of a soft bed. Well that is, the ultimate luxury for everyone except Rosemary. On the previous four nights she had carefully erected her tent beyond sound range of snoring bushwalkers, but now, because the motel disallowed tents on the lawn, she had to share a motel room with two others. An executive council decided that one should be Helen, and that the other, because of his remarkably soft and musical snoring, should be me. In addition, Peter gave her earplugs, and a sleeping pill.

Halls Gap is the launching point for the section of the Grampians known as Wonderland. And a wonderland it truly is. Next morning (day 6, Thurs) we set off up Stony Creek, past the Venus Baths, and the Elephant Hide rock-face, and into Wonderland. Helen, Rosemary, and I were wonderfully refreshed after sleeping on soft beds, but strangely David, Peter, Bill, and Spiro, who had slept in the other room, seemed completely bedraggled. The route to the Pinnacle, the summit of Wonderland, is a series of scrambles, via waterfalls, ladders, rocky ledges, and clefts, with names such as

Cool Chamber, Echo Cave, and Silent Street. And at the very top is The Pinnacle itself with 360° views. And close by is the 'nerve test', an arch of rocks which looks like a decayed human spine with the vertebrae about to fall apart. David and Peter risked their lives crossing this so that the rest of us could take photos.

A little farther on we lunched, and snoozed in the sun. Both Helen and I had taken instant soups for lunch, and on this, as on other fire-less occasions, we learnt that soup-mix and cold water make a nutritious, albeit chewy, meal.

After lunch we continued along the track to the Rosea car park. From there we walked down the bitumen, past the aptly named 'Mushroom Rock', and in less than an hour reached Rosea campground. It had no water tank, but a side-track down Dairy Creek towards Delley's Dell led to a deep ferny rain-forested gully with fresh creek water. We filled our wine-sacks and carried them back to a bush camp, close to, but away from, the tourist camp.

Next morning (day 7, Fri.) we began climbing the track to the 1009m Mt. Rosea. Near its top, the track skirted the cliff edge, yielding views of the Halls Gap (Fyans River) valley, and the sadly depleted Lake Bellfield. Once again the wind was ferocious, but once again, it tried to blow us onto the ridge top, rather than over the precipice. The track wound on, up steps, between gendarmes, and over clefts, with names such as 'Grand Stairway', 'Gate of the East Wind', and 'Eagle Point', and at one point crossed a man-made bridge spanning a particularly deep wide cleft. After finding a sheltered spot for morning nibbles and a sunbake, we continued south and descended to a forest where we had lunch. The descent continued, until just prior to reaching Borough Camp and the bitumen road in the valley floor, we made camp in the forest. This had been our only sunny, almost hot, day, but now another weather front arrived. All night long the trees above us banged and crashed together.

Mt William, at 1167 m the highest point of the Grampians, was to be the highlight of the next day (day 8, Sat.). But first we had to cross Fyans River, which by means of stout vaulting sticks, and leaps between boulders, was just possible dry-shod. Spiro's stick broke, enabling him to give us an estimate of the water temperature. After crossing we followed the bank upstream for a short distance, and then cut across to the bitumen road. Now, after walking south a little, we had a choice: Peter and Rosemary took a foot-track to the top of the mountain, while the rest of us made the 12km

trek to the summit by road. And even on the road there was a division; David and Bill raced ahead, whereas Helen, Spiro, and I dawdled, sniffed the flowers, photographed the spectacular saw-toothed Serra range across the valley, and reached the summit an hour after the others. The weather had now returned to normal: high wind with intermittent rain squalls, and at the top it was an absolute gale. For the first time Bill felt the necessity of putting on his gaudy striped long-johns. But we found a sheltered spot and lunched.

After lunch we walked south along the range top along a rough stony track which led first across the tops, then dropped into boundary gap, then steeply up to another top, and finally down to the shallow, swampy, wind-swept upper valley of First Wannon Creek, on the flank of Major Mitchell Plateau. This was a compulsory camp-site, but only because the country ahead was worse. A freezing wind blasted through the gap, there was no shelter, and almost no fire-wood. Because it was so bare, the Parks Authorities had built a formal privy, but this was a privy in name only; it had no roof and only two walls, and gave privacy from neither the prevailing gale nor others coming to use it. Incredibly, despite the freezing wind and threat of snow, David and Spiro decided to sleep outside their tents, predictably to be driven in at about 2300. For me, it was the coldest, windiest, wettest, uncomfortablest night of the trip.

The next morning (day 9, Sun.) the weather was no better. It must have been cold, because though the route began with a long energetic climb up onto Major Mitchell Plateau, everyone stayed fully rugged up. And at morning tea, Spiro couldn't get his honey to flow out of its plastic bottle, and had instead to cut the bottle open with a knife.

The track at first climbed steeply and then went along the precipitous eastern edge of the escarpment. But because of the dense mist, only the leader, who had studied maps and photographs before leaving Sydney, was aware of this. Then the track turned southwest across a mixture of swampy flats with boardwalks and rocky quartzite scrambles.

On reaching the southwest spur of the plateau, the track descended steeply and rockily down, and eventually we were below the mist and the worst of the cold. Now we once again had glorious views of the saw-toothed Serra range to the west, and we stopped for nibbles and to partially strip off. After nibbles we continued southward and downward, passed

through a wet rain-forest, and at last reached a wide saddle with trees and other vegetation remarkably similar to that of the Snowy Mountains. Here we had a long lunch and were entertained by an outpouring of jokes from Peter. A long undulating spur then took us down to the vicinity of Jimmy's Camp.

This was the moment some of us had been dreading: the end of the trip. But we made camp, and dutifully washed our feet, and combed our hair, in preparation for the bus trip back to Melbourne next day, and the return to routine life. Thank you David for nine days of hellish heaven.

Notice - Camp Fires and Stoves

All members are advised to check the restrictions on lighting fires in intended camping areas. Be aware that high to extreme bush fire danger currently applies throughout much of NSW. This means



that fires in the open are restricted and may only be used under certain conditions eg. a camp fire for cooking purposes.

However, most national parks, reserves and forest areas around Sydney have Local Fire Bans which mean no fires of any nature are permitted.

Total Fire Bans may be declared on days of extreme fire danger and fires in the open, including cooking and camp fires, are totally prohibited for the period of the ban.

Lighting any fire in the open on a day of "Total Fire Ban" may lead to a fine of \$5,000 and six months imprisonment.

This applies to any naked flame including camp fires and camping stoves.

*** Advice To Leaders ***

Many of Sydney's National Parks are closed due to drought and fire restrictions.

All leaders are advised to check on park closures before leading parties in national parks. Failure to keep to park regulations could place the insurance cover for their walk at risk and lead to personal liability. The latest advice on park closures may be found at the NPWS website:

www.npws.nsw.gov.au/news/firenews_closures
or by phoning 9542 0648.

Bungleboorieboori Creek Callout - 25th/26th November*John Tonitto*

The Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) was activated just after lunch (12.30pm) on 25th November 2002, by Lithgow VRA. Three canyoners on a day trip were overdue, and concerns were raised as to their experiences in the Bungleboori canyon system. We were required to meet at the end of the Waratah Ridge Fire Road between 5pm - 6pm for deployment into the field. En route, we were further advised to meet at Lithgow VRA HQ for a 5am start the following day.

The 5am start at Lithgow Police included other services from Portland, Lithgow & Bathurst SES, Lithgow VRA, Blue Mountains Guides and BWRS. It was clear that this search would be difficult with poor intelligence being available as to what canyons if any this group had attempted. There was general agreement that Hole in the Wall canyon may have been the logical choice attempted. The Police had charged Lithgow VRA with the organisation of the search and they, in turn, were happy for BWRS and the guides to prepare the tasking and group allocation.

Base site was established at the end of Waratah Ridge Fire Road. The BWRS base tent was the only covered structure on site and the focal point for all the groups including providing shade from extreme weather conditions and using parts of it as the mess tent. A total of seven parties were tasked five canyons (Bubble Bath, Hole in the Wall, Banks, Bungleboori Upstream, Bungleboori Downstream) and two general ridge areas. Each party had a police officer, at least one to two BWRS members, with the Blue Mountains Guides being spread through the canyon teams. Police officers in the canyon teams were not equipped for the conditions and returned to base as each team descended into the gorge.

BWRS was also advising of possible exit areas that were then searched extensively by trail bike groups. Additional SES personnel were used to search fire roads to the north with concentration around Deep Pass. Lithgow VRA additionally provided food and snack to the command personnel and day teams. The SES provided water and drinks.

Many scenarios were played out as the day wore on, with a faint hope when footprints were discovered in Bubble Bath Canyon. One print was a definite show size of at least 11. Police were able to ascertain that at least one member of the party had a show size of 10 ½ or more. All efforts were made to follow these prints down stream to establish if they had continued further down Bungleboori or in fact headed west into the southern arm of Bungleboori Creek.

Police were so encouraged by this find that Polair was called in to assist in searching the gorge further down stream. Polair located the missing party at approximately 2pm. Upon a rescue helicopter being despatched it was discovered that one member of the party was deceased. BWRS was immediately informed that the scene was a crime scene and that all our records were required that day at the completion of the search.

It was interesting to note how many phone calls were made to try to have our search teams extracted from the field by helicopters. One moment it was positive, then not so. After several services had declined to do the extraction, it was clear that the field teams were to stay overnight or face a long walk out. All teams elected to walk out. As the last team left the field, base finally closed down just after 10.15 pm.

Communications was a problem with the Police SAT phones being inconsistent. The BWRS HF system worked well from the gorge most of the time with relays assisting when the signal was unreadable. Without them it is conceivable that the footprints clue would not have been known or acted on until the following day.

This search could prove to be a significant turning point for BWRS. Significant contacts and friendships were formed from the District Commanders down to local police and VRA squads. Additionally, all services and volunteers worked harmoniously together and were eager to assist when tasked.

BWRS members involved: Paul Campbell-Allen, Ian Cross, Mark Dabbs (SBW) Kevin Dawson, Glenn Horrocks, Kevin Lloyd, Ryan Lovatt, Keith Maxwell, Tristain Mercer, Pam Morrison (SBW) Dirk Stoffels, John Tonitto.

SBW members should note that all canyons in the Blue Mountains and Wollemi areas remain closed until further notice. Please check with NPWS before commencing your walk.

OF INTEREST TO NEW MEMBERS

Hello from Heike,

Water, water nowhere and not a drop to drink... well this summer all the drinkable water you'll be seeing out on a walk is likely to be that which you're toting in your backpack.

Now in this wee article I'm going to be a true bossy Leo and a sourpuss of one at that. I get thoroughly grizzly with those who venture out on a walk unprepared in the H₂O department, and I have to say it is frequently those who have been members for some time and, who through experience, know better.

Various explanations are given but I believe there are absolutely *no* excuses. If you venture out for the average day-walk with less than 2 litres you are negligent to your own safety and ultimately to that of the group (and it can be argued with validity that even 2L is insufficient).

Water is vital to survival, it is with air our very basic need.

OK, there can always be the odd accident, lids that the seals eventually fail, holes pierced into bags unwittingly that mean valuable water and carry device is lost. However the patency of your water carrying device is one of the most critical pre-walk checks you can do.

The best leader in the world cannot guarantee that the "perennial" soak-that-never-dries-up will be there or adequate for the size of the group on next visit, nor can they guarantee that a wallaby hasn't bounced in headfirst and gone to the happy hopping ground in the sky leaving bodily bilge fouling the only water supply.

Nor can they guarantee the E.T.A at a refill waterhole. If the party is slowed up by size of group, lack of fitness, scrub-bashing, mistake in direction, injury, heat of the day or dehydration and heat exhaustion your supply you had thought only needed to last for 2 hours now needs to last 8, or even overnight.

Water is heavy and you cannot expect "Oh someone will have some spare if need be....". Responsible walkers *will* carry some extra to their need simply for the contingency of being caught with no refill supply when expected, or hotter temperatures than expected, or having to clean hands to dress a wound, or any of the other possibilities listed above. But sheer weight of water means contingency supplies are not generous.

Thirst is not an indicator of need, as we get older our thirst sensation diminishes, evaporation can be very rapid and you can be unaware that you have "sweated" large volumes.

We need on average a minimum 1.7L of water daily, this is for a non-active, cool conditions day. I reckon most Australians are chronically dehydrated. On a hot, active day up to 15L can be required, depending on individual circumstances. To carry <2L of water for any day walk let alone a summer one is simply foolish yet I've seen it on many a walk.

When you dehydrate you are not "toughening" up your system. You are depleting plasma volume. You are thickening up your blood, making it less fluid for effective transmission of nutrients and oxygen to your cells (think muscle fatigue). You are altering the balance of electrolytes (loss of salts, think cramps).

As you heat up blood is directed away from vital organs (think heart, lungs etc) to the periphery (skin, to help you cool). You go into a form of shock this is heat exhaustion. Symptoms are: Hot, headache (dehydration), fatigue (lack of blood to muscle), rapid breathing, shortness of breath, rapid and weak pulse (lack of blood and sufficient oxygen to heart and lungs). Skin is pale, cool and clammy, if it is dry and flushed and pulse slowed you are now in really big trouble and have heat-stroke, this you can die from and people do.

To treat heat exhaustion. STOP. Rest, in coolest place possible. Take off unnecessary clothes, give water to drink, damp down body with any spare water and fan gently if skin hot, dry to touch.

Prevention is better still. TAKE MORE WATER!!! Rest more frequently, find cool areas on hotter days, wear loose clothes, not too many and preferably of light coloured natural fibres. And always wear a hat. (This we are good at!!).

Happy holiday walking ~ If you can get it!!

Heike Krauss

Please welcome on your next walk:

Andy Anderson

Therese Linton.

Candace Parks

Rebecca Robinson

Patricia Tierney

Coolana Training Weekend:

The next new members training weekend will be held on 22nd, 23rd February at Coolana on the beautiful Kangaroo River.

This weekend offers an opportunity to gain practical experience in navigation, first aid and bush craft. See the Summer Walks programme for more details and contact numbers.



Mid - Week Walking Group:

There is a group of members with time available to participate in midweek activities. If you have time during the week or can take leave from work please join us. New leaders welcome to add to the activities.

A regular newsletter provides details of short notice activities and the Walks Programmes gives details of scheduled midweek walks. Phone 9484 6636 for more information and to be added to our Mid-Week Walkers mailing list.

Possible future activities are:

- Extended walks at a leisurely pace covering a normal weekend walk in 3 instead of 2 days
- 3 to 4 day cottage hire at a beach or mountain location
- Boat hire on Myall Lakes or on the Hawkesbury.
- Lord Howe, Norfolk or Pacific Island trip

Contact Bill Holland 9484 6636

billholl@hotmail.net.au

Mid-Week Day Walks

Frid 27th December: Sydney Harbour foreshores. Milsons point Berry island Tambourine Bay Hunters Hill. Urban bushland walk.

Tues 31st December: New Years Eve Walk Balmoral to Bradleys Head arriving near midnight to see spectacular fireworks.

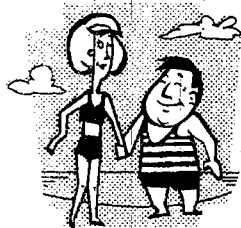
Wed 1st January: Kuringai Chase NP

Short 10km walk from Bobbin Head then day out boating and aquatic activities

Christmas/New Year At Coolana

Join us at the Club's property in the beautiful Kangaroo Valley for relaxing days. Your choice of easy walks, quiet reading, swimming and canoeing.

Now For Some Light Relief !



Vacation:

Billy and Lester were talking one afternoon when Billy told Lester, "Ya know, I reckon I'm about ready for a vacation. Only this year I'm gonna do it a little different. The last few years, I took your suggestions as to where to go.

Three years ago you said to go to Hawaii. I went to Hawaii and Marie got pregnant. Then two years ago, you told me to go to the Bahamas, and Marie got pregnant again.

Last year you suggested Tahiti and damned if Marie didn't get pregnant again." Lester asks Billy, "So, what you gonna do this year that's different?" Billy says, "This year, I'm takin' Marie with me !"



Be Yourself !

A man was complaining, "Oh Lord, please have mercy on me, I work so hard, meanwhile my wife stays at home.

I would give anything if you would grant me one wish 'switch me into my wife' she's got it easy at home. I want to teach her a lesson of how tough a man's life is."

As God was listening he felt sorry for this soul and granted his wish.

Next morning the 'new woman' wakes up at dawn, makes lunch boxes, prepares breakfast, wakes up the kids for school, puts a load of clothes in the washer, takes the meat out of the freezer, drives the kids to school, on his way back stops at the petrol station, cashes a cheque, pays the electricity and phone bills, picks up some clothes from the cleaners, quickly goes to the market. It was 1:00 o'clock already, he made the beds, took the clothes out of the washer and put another load in, vacuumed the house, made some rice, went to pick up the kids from school and then had an argument with the kids.

As soon as he got home he fed the kids, washed the dirty dishes, hung the damp clothes he had washed on the chairs because it was raining outside.

He helped the kids with their homework, watched some TV while he ironed some clothes, prepared dinner, he gave the kids a bath and put them to sleep.

At 9:00 p.m. he was so tired and he went to bed. Of course there was some more duties and somehow he managed to get them done and finally fell asleep.

The next morning he prays to God once again, "Oh Lord, what was I thinking when I asked you to grant my wish, I can't take it anymore. I beg you please switch me back to myself, please oh please."

Then he heard God's voice speaking to him, saying, "Dear son, of course I'll switch you back into yourself but there's one minor detail, you will have to wait nine months because last night you got pregnant."

First Aid Certificates for Leaders:



To encourage our walks leaders to get their St John's First Aid Certificate, the Committee has offered to subsidise current Walks Leaders for half the cost of gaining an accredited Senior First Aid Certificate up to \$50

and if combined with an accredited Remote Area First Aid, up to \$80.

“We have to use with skill what simple equipment we can
carry on our backs to achieve shelter,
prepare food and have a night's rest”

If you really want to get the best
out of what you carry with you,

Paddy Pallin, 1900-1991

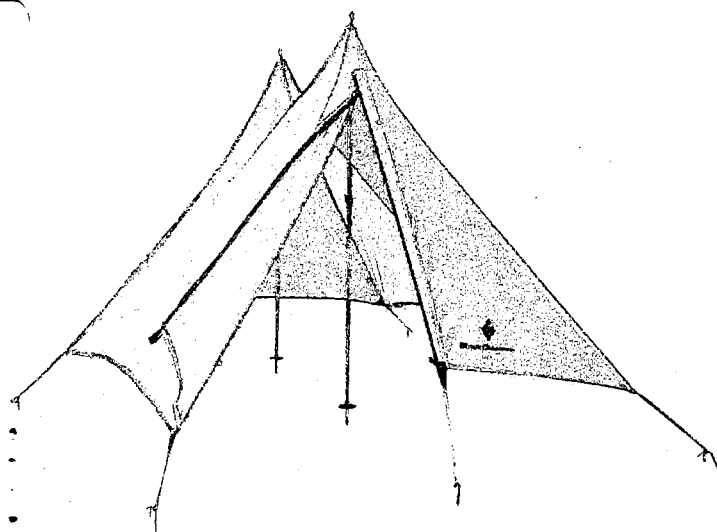
then move up to **Black Diamond**, exclusive to **Paddy Pallin**.



Black Diamond Moonlight Headtorch: Constantly frustrated with replacing your torch battery? Then the Moonlight is for you. With 4 ultra bright, energy efficient LED bulbs, it provides 70 hours of constant light. It weighs a mere 90g (without batteries) so you'll hardly know you're carrying it. Ideal for night walking, cooking and reading.



Black Diamond Contour Trekking Pole: Trekking poles don't just improve your balance and reduce the strain on your lower limbs; they help re-distribute the load to your upper limbs as well, meaning you can keep going for longer. The Contour, featured, is ideal for comfort over long periods of walking with an ergonomic 15 degree correction angle in the upper shaft and soft dual density hand grip. It also features a unique NEW adjustment system, making these the most easily adjusted poles on the market.



Black Diamond Betamid Tent: When you want to go ultra-light or you need extra storage space, the Betamid has you covered. This compact, floorless tent will go anywhere and pitches using a pair of trekking poles! Weighing in at a fraction over 1kg, it sleeps two and stands strong against the elements. (Optional, detachable tub floor is also available.)

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Mail order: 1800 805 398

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