



# THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



FEBRUARY 2003



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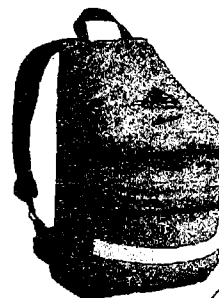
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# FEBRUARY 2003

## Issue No. 819

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

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2003**



The Club's Notice of Meeting, Annual Report and List of Members for 2003 has been mailed this week to members' addresses. This report shows how your Club has been managed during the past year.

A new Management Committee will be elected, so come along, cast a vote and let us know what you want for the coming year.

**See you on the 12<sup>th</sup> March !**



**The Autumn 2003 Walks Programme is mailed with this magazine !**



**For the latest news on social happenings turn to Page 18,**

**Have you caught up with the latest gear ?**  
 Alex from Alpsport will be giving a presentation of bushwalking gear at the clubrooms on **March 19th**. Great opportunity to check. Special prices and discounts

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### The Sydney Bush Walkers

Our Club was formed in 1927 for the purpose of bringing bushwalkers together; enabling them to appreciate the great outdoors; establishing a regard for conservation and promoting social activities.

The Club's main activity is bushwalking but includes other activities such as cycling, canoeing and social events.

Our Walks Programme (published quarterly) features day walks on most Saturdays and Sundays, some mid week walks and overnight weekend walks. Extended walks are organised in areas such as Lamington, Snowy Mountains etc as well as interstate.

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](http://www.sbw.org.au)

### Office Bearers

<b>President:</b>	Rosemary MacDougal
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Wilf Hilder
<b>Public Officer:</b>	Maurice Smith
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Maurice Smith
<b>Secretary:</b>	Leigh Mc Clintock
<b>Walks Secretary:</b>	Carol Lubbers
<b>Social Secretary:</b>	Vicki Garamy
<b>Membership Secretary:</b>	Pam Morrison
<b>New Members Secretary:</b>	Heike Krausse
<b>Conservation Secretary:</b>	David Trinder
<b>Magazine Editor:</b>	Bill Holland
<b>Committee Member:</b>	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](mailto:rmacdougal@bigpond.com)

**Treasurer:** Maurice Smith

9878 2958 (h) or [mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au](mailto:mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au)

**Members Secretary:** Pam Morrison

0418 463 923 or at [pamm@unsw.edu.au](mailto: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

### President's Report:

We have received a notice from the Valuer General valuing Coolana at \$275,000, which is an increase of \$81,000 since the last valuation in June 1999. Patrick James prepared an objection, which the Committee approved, and it has been sent in. The new valuation also raised an issue about possible land tax (the threshold is \$261,000) but because we are sporting body we are exempt.

In January we had requests for donations from ACF (Australian Conservation Foundation) and TEC (Total Environment Centre). The committee felt that ACF's objectives which relate to saving forests was more aligned to our objectives of bushwalking than the TEC which has broader interests extending to cities and buildings. Accordingly, the Committee approved a donation of \$200 to the ACF.

The walks planning night in January was not as well attended as we had hoped. The purpose of the night is to encourage new leaders to become involved and share knowledge about walks we have been on so that other leaders may also lead them. There will be another in the middle of the year so keep an eye out for in the social program.

The Committee asked David Trinder if he could do some research about the requirements if any for limits on groups walking in National Parks and Wilderness areas. I think he found the whole exercise frustrating, as he was unable to get any straight answers about National Parks but did confirm that the party limit in Wilderness areas is 8. The general feeling we get is that there should only be 20 in a National Park.

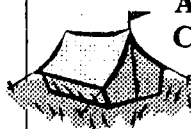
*Rosemary MacDougal*

Sadly, we report that **Kathleen McInnes** died on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January. Kath was a long serving member of SBW having joined the club in 1955.

A gathering of her friends was held at Mrs Macquaries Chair on Saturday morning 1<sup>st</sup> February to celebrate her life and share fond memories.

### Annual Reunion and Family Celebration at Coolana

Don't forget! Join us around the campfire at Coolana and be part of the fun on 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> March.



### Elections To SBW Committee:

The 75th Annual General Meeting of SBW will be held on **Wednesday March 12<sup>th</sup> 2003**. All positions become vacant. Some of the current office bearers will stand for re-election, some do not wish to continue – at least not in their present position. Why not nominate? This could be your opportunity to take an active part in management of the Club.

SBW is a large club – we have nearly 500 members and approximately 100 or so prospective members. There are 15 positions on the Committee and approximately 20 (+helpers) in other positions and sub-committees. This means that a significant administration task falls upon the shoulders of a small number of our membership. We invite you to join us: whether you are young or old, new or experienced. We welcome a diversity of skills.

The Committee positions involve attendance at Committee Meetings on the first Wednesday of most months; the other positions usually entail a working role outside of our meetings.

Here is a summary of the Committee, Other Office Bearers and Sub-Committee positions.

#### Committee:

President  
Vice President  
Public Officer (currently combined with Treasurer)  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Walks Secretary  
Social Secretary  
Membership Secretary  
New Members Secretary  
Conservation Secretary  
Magazine Editor  
General Committee Member (2)  
Confederation Delegates (2)

#### Other Office Bearers:

Confederation Delegates – Non-Committee (2)  
Magazine Production Manager  
Printers  
Business Manager  
SBW Webmaster  
Archivist  
Hon Solicitor  
Hon Auditor

#### Sub Committees:

Coolana Maintenance Committee  
Website and Telephone Contacts  
Constitution Review Committee

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### Editor's Note:

I write this as the weather warms up again and the recent small amount of rain that refreshed the garden becomes insignificant in the face of the continuing drought.

Many of our walking areas remain out of bounds and now Kosciuszko National Park and Namadji have been added to the list. The fires have destroyed a number of the Snowy huts and a report on this appears in this month's magazine.

Canberra suffered terribly with over five hundred houses destroyed. Fortunately none of our members were included in those who suffered loss - see report "Canberra Catastrophe" on Pages 8 and 9.

This month's magazine has several articles dealing with the fires and their effect. The Kosciuszko National Park also features in our Conservation Report as members are asked whether the Club should support other conservation groups in their recommendations to the KNP Community Forum, as distinct from the Confederation Of Bushwalking Clubs which has a contrasting viewpoint.

Barry Wallace resumes his reporting with a "Summary of Walks Report", this time covering two months. Barry's comments are based on the reports submitted by leaders whereas previously he reported on walks and other matters discussed at the monthly general meetings.

Letters to the Editor includes another letter from Clio in search for the truth about the 1920's; a reply to the letter last month which supported mountain trail bikes in national parks; Alex Colley report on his visit to Tasmania and a new member relates her experience walking in Kosciuszko as the fires were starting.

Please keep these letters coming in as they give us a personal perspective on matters affecting us all.

*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](mailto:billholl@hotmail.net.au)  
Fax: 9980 5476 (phone 9484 6636 first)



## Letters to the Editor:

### Reply from Clio

One of my reasons for originally challenging Patrick James' article, and others, was the misinformation about "few cars" in 1927.

Even the President of NSW's first 'bush' walking club, William Mogford Hamlet was disparaging about motor vehicles in 1906.

The *Official Year Book of NSW* (1927-28) records that in 1921 there were 28,665 motor vehicles and 11,291 motor cycles in private ownership (excluding public vehicles and lorries). By 1927 these figures had increased four-fold.

Frank Rigby would have you believe that there were hardly any road accidents. In 1921 there were 36 fatalities attributed to motor vehicles in the Metropolitan Traffic District. By 1927 there were 157 metropolitan and 112 rural fatalities.

Nationally you had eight times more chance of dying in a motor accident than being a victim of homicide.

Facts are stubborn things

All praise to Patrick, and the other correspondents, for presenting the reader with a view of the past. They, and I, could be guilty of what Dr Johnson called moral truth - when you tell a thing sincerely and precisely as it appears to you. If I thought so, though I could have been mistaken.

But what if that 'truth' is misleading or coloured by time? Should it go unchallenged? Attacking the author (or the messenger) is, I believe, unproductive. Put 'truth' to the test.

I consider there are several factual inaccuracies in Patrick James' article. (I am also in strong disagreement with one of Alex Colley's statements in his history of conservation). Should I rubbish the article (and thereby discredit the contributor) or do I present my point of view (hopefully supported with some facts)?

Every truth has two sides; it is as well to look at both, before we commit ourselves to either.

*Clio*

### Mountain Bikes in National Parks

Richard Winthorpe's letter in support of mountain trail bikes (MTB) in national parks ends with a statement "...then we can hardly be surprised if some riders defect to the Outdoor Recreation Party".

This is the party whose representative, Malcolm Jones, was recently brought before the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) for various alleged offences (findings yet to be handed down).

Amongst other contentious environmental issues the Outdoor Recreation Party (ORP) supports the use of 4WD in national parks. Is this what our Club would wish to support?

As to the compatibility of mountain trail bikes (MTB), Richard Winthorpe does not give me any comfort by saying that bikes won't cause any "extra damage" to tracks that is not already caused by Land Cruisers driven by Park Rangers. This is hardly an argument to allow more MTB's in our parks. We have to accept that Ranger's use vehicles in parks for various reasons relating to the nature of their work, but MTB riders are recreational, thus not essential, and therefore their damage to trails can and should be minimised, not increased.

Bushwalkers have been one of the least destructive groups of people to enjoy national parks. In presenting an argument for use of mountain trail bikes, Richard Winthorpe's petulant reference to the Outdoor Recreation Party does his argument no good; especially amongst an audience of SBW members whose reverence of the bush needs no explanation.

*Linda Wilhelm*

### S.B.W. Veterans In Tasmania

On December 23rd Shirley Dean took me to Tasmania to see Dot Butler, who lives with Rona on the slopes of Mount Wellington. I doubt whether I would have found my way out of Sydney Airport without Shirley's guidance.

I was surprised and delighted to find Dot waiting for me at the airport. Rona drove us to her lovely house with its outer walls of natural, unhewn stone, internal wall of rough hewn sandstone and views over Hobart below to the Derwent River and the islands beyond. Dot is much the same as she was at the end of 2001, still deficient in memory and slowed down by arthritis, but speaking as well as ever, able to enjoy reading - particularly the SBW Magazine - and always cheerful.

Rona took me to visit Charles and Anne Culberg, who live at Bellerive, across the Derwent, which they overlook. Although Charles has knee trouble he can get about and drive his car. Both are around 90 and are happy in their self planned house, which occupies most of their block, leaving a manageable amount of garden. I was also taken to see Ken and Merle Iredale at Kingston just out of Hobart. Their house is in a sheltered position surrounded by trees. Ken walks regularly with the Hobart Bushwalkers. I was also pleased to meet again Peggy Putt, leader of the four Green members of

the Tasmanian Parliament, who was a member of the party led by Don Finch and Barrie Wallace on a MacDonald Ranges walk which Dot and I enjoyed.

I didn't see Honorary Member Heather White, who lives in northern Tasmania but is considering a move to the south.

*Alex Colley*

#### Letter From Marianne

Geoff and I spent 4 days doing Bumberry Ck and Tuross Gorge. This is quite a classic (but relatively unknown) trip. It is quite hard. Involves lots of rock hopping, getting around water falls by either scrambling around very steep slopes, abseiling, (or water jump in one case) and some compulsory swims. The Tuross section is quite different to Bumberry Ck in that the rocks become very large granite boulders and route finding can be an interesting challenge. Apart from one really delightful campsite just up from the junction of the Creek and Tuross River campsites can be a problem. Small groups with small tents/flys are the best. However it is a beautiful unspoilt area and there are a couple of spots that are quite special. You would really enjoy it except that some of the compulsory swims can be fairly cold.

After the Tuross we (more I) decided that we would spend a few days on the Main Range. Had a interesting time. 2 nights in the saddle between Twynham and Watson's Crags and 1 night in a delightful campsite just below Muellers Peak. On the 2nd morning we had the thunderstorms which set off all the current fires. I was glad that we had higher peaks around us. There were a few thunderclaps that were right overhead. Could feel the vibrations through the ground. After it has passed I poked my nose out the tent door and saw the smoke of a small fire toward Jagungal and more widespread smoke back towards Geehi.

For the rest of the day it was pretty settled with a few light planes and helicopters just looking like they were sightseeing. That night the southerly wind decided we needed a bit more excitement. It blew a freezing gale. We had our older tent and also had not pitched it perfectly so we ended up spending half the night taking turns to sit up against one the poles to support it. We had every item of clothing on (Geoff counted 7 layers) and the water bottles froze in the tent.

By the mid morning it had all settled and was a beautiful day except that the winds had fanned the fires and there was a lot more smoke and airborne activity involved in checking and fighting fires.

We then moved camp to our Townsend location. A peaceful night and next morning was delightful but could see smoke in the valleys. We packed up and then toddled up to the top of Townsend taking our time to investigate the flowers (counted 40 different ones that day) and by the time we got there the view had gone - smoke having risen almost to the tops of the peaks.

After lunch we walked back taking a short? cut from Muellers Pass across to the road. As soon as we hit the main "Circuit" we realised that the park was probably closed because there were no day trippers on the circuit. Lots of Sky Cranes going backwards and forwards. A ranger checked that we were going out as we walked down the road. Maybe we could have had a helicopter evacuation if we had stayed a bit longer!

*Marianne Watt*

*Marianne is a member of SBW now living in Melbourne. The above is an extract from a letter she wrote to Maurice Smith. .... Ed*

#### **Reminder!**

**The Autumn Walks Programme is enclosed with this magazine**

## **NSW WILDERNESS TRANSIT**

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## Conservation Report - Kosciuszko National Park

### Your Opinions Please!

*David Trinder*

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is reviewing the Plan of Management for the Kosciuszko National Park. It is to be completed next year. An independent scientific group has been set up to provide advice in various disciplines and a Community Forum comprising 21 representatives of various interest groups has been established to assist the NPWS in defining the management vision.

Alex Colley, a past long term Conservation Secretary of SBW has written to us in his capacity as Honorary Secretary of the Colong Foundation requesting the policy of SBW on various matters in this regard. Our Past President, Wilf Hilder, a member of the Community Forum representing the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs has also written an article on the subject for the magazine. (*in next month*)

We have been asked to give an opinion on three questions. The Committee would like members' opinions to help it form a policy.

1. That the road between the Charlotte Pass gate and Rawsons Pass near the summit of Mount Kosciuszko should be partly re-vegetated to become a walking track one vehicle wide so that NPWS vehicles and emergency vehicles can use it.

The road has been closed to public traffic for many years. I have walked it many times and find that it is narrow and believe that if it were reduced it would be unsafe for essential vehicles. It is a scar on that magnificent landscape and the park would benefit if it were completely re-vegetated, you can see it from kilometres away, but making it narrower would not make it less of a scar.

2. That no new resorts should be allowed in the park. The Colong Foundation believes that the Plan of Management should stop any future resorts. Do we support that?

3. The Charlotte Pass Village lease expires in 2015 and there is no option to renew. Should it be renewed or not?

The arguments in favour of renewal are:

The village is a small, unique snow covered resort in winter with a community atmosphere. Capacity will not be increased, and future improvements will involve environmental performance. The Kosciuszko Chalet was built in 1939 and has heritage value. There was considerable investment in new buildings up to twenty years ago, the cost of removal and rehabilitation will be considerable as will the public reaction. It has higher altitude than Perisher Valley but not by much. Perisher Village

is 1720 metres and Charlotte Pass Village is 1760. The state Government has recently approved a large extension to the Perisher village with high rise buildings covering 60% of the existing car park and that will accommodate additional shops and 1300 beds.

### The arguments against renewal are:

The resort is closer to the main range, environmental impact and footprint on the park are more significant. The Chalet would be retained for low level visitor use. The sewer system failed in 2001 and the village was closed down. There is speculation that sabotage may have been committed.

The Sydney Bush Walkers has provided a strong environmental influence over a long period of time. Please send opinions by post to the club or by email to [dftrinder@ozemail.com.au](mailto:dftrinder@ozemail.com.au).

### **Plan Of Management Review: Wilf Hilder**

A Community Forum was set up last year by the NPWS to revise and redraft the Kosciuszko Plan Of Management (1982 as amended). The Community Forum is comprised of 21 members representing all the major stakeholders and user groups with an interest in KNP and ranged from alpine resort representatives to environmentalists. In practice the Community Forum is an NPWS Advisory Committee charged with the re-writing/re-drafting the KNP Plan Of Management.

So far six very busy meetings of the Community Forum have been held (in 2002) at various centres adjacent to the park. Confederation has been represented at all meetings and I am grateful to Alex Tucker who took my place at the last meeting of the Forum. Both the Victorian and South Australian Federations of Bushwalkers have asked me also to represent them. Bicycle NSW has also asked me to represent them as they do not agree with the Mountain Bike Association's policies. In accepting this honour I stressed that bushwalking was my main concern.

An 8 page draft report has been issued by the Community Forum, which outlines the outcomes and unresolved issues for the 6 meetings held so far. The report is available on the internet at

<http://www.npws.nsw.gov.au/parks/south/kosciuszko/pomProgress%20report.html>

The draft report is open for public comment until 3 March, 2003.

There are naturally a number of very contentious issues concerning KNP for discussion by the Community Forum. The uncompromising



position by the environmental representatives on the Forum has been a major factor in the significant number of unresolved issues. Every member of the Forum had to sign a declaration that they would not adopt a fixed position on any issue, but would only decide after the debate on the subject matter. This should prevent any group from having a secret website with a fixed agenda on KNP issues. The environmental representatives on the Forum have a case to answer,

The Independent Scientific Committee who are reporting on scientific issues concerning KNP for The new Kosciuszko Plan of Management have issued an Interim Report of over 400 pages. The ISG report is also available on the internet at

[http://www.npws.nsw.gov.au/parks/south/kosciuszko/pom/interim report.html](http://www.npws.nsw.gov.au/parks/south/kosciuszko/pom/interim%20report.html).

This interim report is also open for public comment until 3 March, 2003.

#### Committee's Recommendation On Reimbursement Of Travel Costs:

The club encourages car sharing as an environmentally friendly and a good way to meet other club members. The Committee thinks that a simple formula for reimbursement of car costs should apply and recommends 10 cents per kilometre shared by all the occupants in the vehicle including the driver.

However, individual drivers may suggest any amount they choose and this should be discussed with the passengers at the commencement of the trip

#### Insurance Inquiries:

The NSW Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs arranges our insurance and has asked that we appoint someone as the contact person for inquiries relating to our policies and any claims. The Committee has decided that all such inquiries should go to the SBW Secretary. Please note that any claims must reach Confederation within 30 days of any accident and the Secretary can assist in that process.

#### 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.



#### Treasurer's Report for January.

<u>Bank Account Opening Balance</u>	3,892
Advertising Debtors	630
Interest	98
Subscriptions	<u>15</u>
<u>Total Receipts</u>	743
Magazine production	402
Magazine supplies	86
Walks Program	78
Social Expenses	270
Coolana DLWC licence	77
Internet fee	264
ACF Donation	<u>200</u>

Total Payments 1,377

Closing Balance \$3,258

We have started the new financial year with a quiet month apart from all the formalities of the preparation of the annual accounts which will be formally presented at the March 2003 Annual General Meeting. When you read your copy of the Annual Report you will find the results of the 2002 Financial Year. Overall, we are in an excellent financial position as we start our 76<sup>th</sup> year of bushwalking.

*Maurice Smith - Treasurer*

#### 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.**

## THE CANBERRA CATASTROPHE

*Reg Alder*

For the week before catastrophic fires engulfed the south-western suburbs of Canberra, I had been staying at a Perisher Valley ski lodge.

There were fourteen fires raging in Kosciusko, the largest being in the vicinity of Yarrangobilly. We were constantly shrouded in a thick smoke blanket only occasionally partially clearing with a change of wind. All tracks beyond Charlottes Pass were closed and on a visit there little was to be seen beyond the immediate slopes and the buffeting gale force wind soon forced a change of plans to do a local walk.

Coming home on the Friday there were again high temperatures and after dropping off a friend at Lyneham I crossed over the northern saddle of Black Mountain, to become aware for the first time, of a thick, black smoke cloud streaming over from the west. At that location it seemed to be coming directly from the direction of my home in Higgins, which caused me some alarm as to where the source might be. As I traveled further along the smoke stream veered to the left and as I came nearer home almost disappeared from sight. Deviating I was able to locate its source to be behind Mt Coree or on it. The Brindabella range to the north being clear.

I was settled down on Saturday morning, the 18<sup>th</sup>, reading the weekend newspapers with a clear blue sky in my vision to the north. A friend rang inquiring whether I was listening to the radio. "There is an emergency - Duffy and Chapman are alight!" It hardly looked like it here but on going out to the back I could see a great pall of black smoke streaming across Black Mountain. The news came for my suburb to be on alert and for some adjoining ones to be evacuated because on the fringe there were extensive grass lands between those suburbs and the fire and it would only require a wind shift to bring the fire racing across. The force of the windstorm on the fire front may be judged from the one at Chapman lifting the 20m. steel cover from the water reservoir.

As the day progressed the seriousness of the extent of the fire became apparent, some 500 houses burnt out and miraculously some remained intact even though neighbours on both sides lost theirs. One friend at Duffy lost their home and a number in the area were evacuated, but with no property damage other than the use of phones and power for up to a week.

SBW members at gravest risk were **Helen and Brian Goldstraw** on Wallaroo road near Hall. Their alert only diminished on the 27<sup>th</sup> January, after a drizzle dampened down the ability of the

fire to run which was only a few kilometres from their home.

The centre of the fire threatening Canberra has been around McIntyres hut and as the name has been unknown to me and my friends its location has been a bit of a mystery except that it was in the northern end of the Brindabellas. It was built in the 1940's, burnt out once and is now frequented by 4WD fishermen on the Goodradigbee. Map reference is Bobbys Plains 581 959, it is north west of Mt Coree.

Fire emanating from this area had been a feature of all the news on the risk to Canberra. My suburb was put on High-alert and as a precaution I decided to load the car up with the family heirlooms, genealogical records and my photographic equipment and work to see how much space they would occupy and what else could be salvaged if I had to make a run or it. There was some space left for clothes and bushwalking gear! The photos comprised of over 6000 10"x8" prints bound into volumes of 100, many more negatives and in all weighing well over 100kgs.

Tidbinbilla has been completely burnt out, heritage and ranger homes, old visitor centre, game enclosures and animals and the nearby Birrigai Education Centre most of its buildings. Pryors hut was saved but Mt Franklin chalet reduced to ashes. Memorabilia has been saved including my home made 1940's skis. Mt Franklin chalet was my first ski-ing experience in 1939 when I went down with a SBW and CMW group over a weekend. The chalet had only been built in 1938, but with snow retreating and superior snow fields more easily accessible in Kosciusko its use diminished until Namadgi was declared a national park and overnight stays prohibited and locked up to casual visitors. Franklin was listed on the National Estate, it is too early yet to conjecture whether it will be rebuilt. From what I have been able to ascertain Namadgi has been burnt out and on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January fires were coming down off Scabby into the Yaouk valley.

Of course there will be recriminations and all the experts and those with an old axe to grind will come out of the woodwork or from under a bush to criticise the management of national parks and every other issue that can resurrected particularly about the return of grazing and hazard reduction burns. Admittedly the suburbs were in locations where the combination of drought, wind direction, low humidity and temperatures up to 40C would cause the adjoining pine forests to become an incendiary

bomb waiting to be ignited. The fire swept over the Cotter reserve and kiosk and the bridge to rage over Mt Stromlo and destroy the Observatory and on to the suburbs which had a pine forest only over the other side of the boundary streets. A planning failure?, but the residents wanted them for recreation use when there was a suggestion to harvest them.

Our Canberra Times cartoonist, Pryor, encapsulated some major critics very succinctly when he drew a couple looking down on the burnt remains of their home. Figures had risen out of the ashes, they were Kate Carnell our former Chief Minister and now with Forest Industries, Wilson Tuckey, always with something to say knocking a Labor government and Padraic McGuinness, a Canberra knocker from way back. The victims' comment is "Isn't it amazing how they seem to pop up immediately after every disaster".

We will now have 'experts' espousing how national parks should be managed for fire with increased demands for the return of grazing and burning until there is practically nothing left to burn. Seventeen professors and others involved in ecological research have issued a joint statement. Scientists say: "Beware of simplistic conclusions about fires" Too long to quote here

but in part: - "Quite apart from the fact that frequent hazard-reduction applied right across the landscape in this region would be of significant damage to biodiversity, it is unachievable and would not ensure protection from fires such as these. Evidence here and overseas suggests that weather plays a bigger part than fuel loads in the behaviour of fires burning under extreme conditions. Large areas that had recently been managed for fuel reduction burned in these fires. Areas with virtually no ground fuels carried canopy fires.



**WANTED - Persons willing to attend, to entertain or be entertained at the Coolana 2003 Annual Reunion on 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> March.**

### 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.

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## Fire Damage To Kosciuszko Huts

*(The following information and photos were obtained from the KHA website (<http://www.kosciuskohuts.org.au>) A further update on 9th February reports 17 huts destroyed in Kosziusko 4 in Namadji and 40 in Victoria*

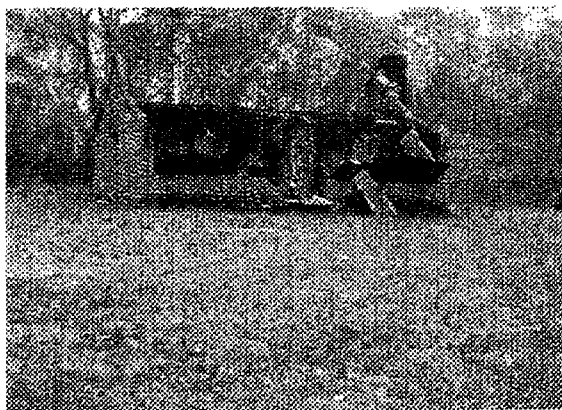
Extensive fires continue to burn in both Kosciuszko and Namadgi National Parks. One third of KNP and 90% of Namadgi have been burnt to date.

As at 2<sup>nd</sup> February 16 Huts are destroyed including Brooks, Delaneys, Bolton's Hill, Pretty Plain, Patons, Orange/Diane, Old Geehi/YHA and Geehi (shown below). These are confirmed by NPWS Press Release. Further notice from rangers indicate that Dr Forbes, Boobee, Pugilistic, O'Keefes, Verandah Camp, Olsens LO Shelter, Opera House and Grey Hill Cafe are also gone.

Previous reports from a NPWS ranger indicating the Cesjacks and Derschkos had been destroyed, appear to be premature, and these still stand. Others, such as Doctors, are badly damaged. Some are protected by backburns, including Pockets.

Huts remaining under pressure from fire include Cascade, Valentine, Kidmans, Teddies, and Cesjacks. We await verifiable news on these and others.

Top Hut at Snowyvale and Jounama ruins have also been burnt. Flanaghans and the hut on the lower Wallace site are also gone. The Snowyvale homestead stands.



*Geehi photos courtesy N. Gough & NPWS.*

Geehi Hut, shown above, after the fire is a candidate for re-construction.

Some huts appear to be safe for the moment, as fire has passed them by. Those reported by rangers, include Derschkos, Grey Mare, Keebles, Major Clews, Mackays, Round Mountain, Bradleys, Wheelers, Old Currango and Hoggs. Ted Taylor from Currango has built a special firebreak around Currango and is supported by a dedicated NPWS team.

In Namadgi, Franklin Chalet is gone, and probably Bendora and Slalom Huts. Most huts

in the ACT Forests including Lees Camp, Condor Ck and Blue Range are reported as destroyed in a 1-in-a-100 year firestorm. These are to be confirmed.

Visitors remain locked out of Namadgi by ACT Conservation, but a briefing was given to a wide range of interested parties (environment, ecology, heritage etc) on Friday evening. Rangers have warned that huts such Tennant, Bog, and The Banks have had fire pass by, and may be affected.

For the moment, those that appear safe include Orroral, Rendezvous Creek, Hospital Ck and Gudgenby Homestead. Some huts remain in areas unburnt, and protected to some degree, by current control lines, including Horse Gully, Demanding, Westermans, Brayshaws and Waterhole. YHA hut is shown below, flattened by a great tree



### ..... And a Note from Ray Hookway

In case you are not across the situation in the Park re destroyed huts below is a note from a friend reporting official news. I thought that it might be of interest to Bushwalker readers.

The Snowyvale referred to in the second note is a private house outside the park which belongs to a Canberra group of which I and George Gray are members.

"We lost our new fences plus a hut which was on the fence line just outside the park. A house near Snowyvale owned by a family called Cameron was destroyed as was an old cattlemans hut nearby called Flannaghans which is also known and used by some bushwalkers but which is on private land. I am sure that others went but the picture is confused at the moment.

Information on the KNP hut situation can be obtained from the NPWS web site and from the KHA website."

*RayHookway*

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**Coolana Report:***Don Finch*

First the bad news that the Sydney Catchment Authority grants committee declined to offer SBW any money to assist with bush care at Coolana.

Some good news is that we have joined the Landcare nursery at Milton this is a renewable one year subscription of \$10 per year, the year starts at the end of August. Malcolm and Carolyn Whan are the planners and plotters of this group or should that be planters and potters. Anyway Mal, Carolyn and Eric Zarrella will be at Coolana on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> February at 11AM. The purpose of the visit is to assess the property for our particular needs in regards to trees and plants. This is also an opportunity for the groups to get to know each other. Come to Coolana if you would

like to be involved. A trip to the nursery is already in the offing where the possibility of assisting with the propagation of our seeds exists. Contact Don Finch if you require further details to attend.

On the Australia Day long weekend it was noted that a large number of Noogoora Burr was growing on the camping flat your assistance is requested in controlling this noxious weed. The whole plant should be removed, or at least the flower/seed heads, then place in a bag and put in the burning pit for cremation when fire bans permit. This needs to be done now i.e. all February and into March before seeds are set and dispersed. If you are able take a couple of garbags with you and spend one hour pulling weeds, that one-hour will make all the difference.

The weeders are also in need of a supply of strong woven bags, for putting weeds in but for reuse. A couple of wool bail bags would be useful also.

The water supply creek is dry for the first time since 1969. The rainwater tank at the shed is/was full and water is in the river. The tool shed locks have been removed with bolt cutters although nothing else has been stolen.

**Annual Reunion and Family Celebration**

Don't forget! Join us around the campfire at Coolana and be part of the fun on 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> March.

**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 (10<sup>th</sup> February) many national parks and wilderness areas are closed. This includes all "remote" areas (ie areas other than tourist ridge-top destinations) in the Blue Mountains, Kanangra Boyd and Wollemi. Many of our favourite walking tracks in suburban parks, Ettrema/Yalwal and much of Morton National Park are also closed or severely restricted.

**All Leaders** are reminded that they **MUST** comply with park regulations including fire bans, track restrictions and park closures.

**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!

## Summary of Walk Reports

Barry Wallace

**Nov/Dec 2002** (14<sup>th</sup> Nov. 02 to 10<sup>th</sup> Dec)

There was a general belief that a report existed for Tony Mane's walk over the weekend of 15, 16, 17 November but for some reason it did not reach me. There *was* a report in the December magazine indicating a party of 11 with hot and dry conditions and a total fire ban. It appears that either the new system needs some fine tuning or there is some back channel operating out there. No reports were received for Maurice Smith's Saturday start walk in Ettrema or David Trinder's Kanangra Walls area trip the same weekend. Errol Sheedy had a party of 9 on his Sunday walk out from Bundeena. There was no report for Roger Treagus' Great River Walk stage 15 programmed for the Sunday.

No details were available for Wilf Hilder's Sydney Spiderweb No. 3 scheduled for Thursday November 21.

For the weekend of 23, 24 November Jim Rivers cancelled his walk out to Glen Davis trig and return due to park closure. A similar fate befel Patrick James' "Five dams in a day" Saturday walk as a significant proportion of the walk was in closed areas of The Royal. Maureen Carter and the party of 15 fared somewhat better with her Illawarra Escarpment walk on the same day, describing the pleasures of walking in the rain so long denied to now. It looks as if Craig Austin had a walk in Wollemi NP programmed for the Sunday of that weekend. Due to park closure this too was either cancelled that weekend or deferred to Saturday 30 November and cancelled there.

Jim Percy's walk out from Mount Hay over the weekend of November 30, December 1 went to program, that is; it was cancelled. Zol Bodlay's Colo River, Tootie Creek Saturday walk that weekend was cancelled due to park closures. No information was available for Wilf Hilder's Saturday Marie Byles walk from Patonga to Woy Woy. Vicki Garamy had 9 starters and 8 finishers on her Sunday bike ride from Maroubra Beach to San Soui and return out under grey skies. The rain held off but for a time the wind made things interesting until the sun finally won out. There was also a walk that day, with Rae Ogilvie leading a party of 6 on a trip out from Blackheath Station to Porters Pass and Centennial Pass. Conditions were perfect and the group fit and cheerful.

The weekend of 7, 8 December saw Nenad Stellin cancel his two day walks in Newnes State Forest due to park closures. Nick Bertso also cancelled his Saturday walk on Sydney

Harbour Foreshore due to lack of starters, possibly occasioned by the closure of most of the route. Brian Holden's cycle trip from Thirroul to Wollongong went, with a party of two and George Mawer providing car support due to a back problem. Brian expressed the view that this was a "pathetic response to an advertised activity in good weather". Ron Watters re-routed his Sunday walk out from Mount Banks some three times before finally leading a party of 5 on a walk from Manly to Newport along the coast. They braved large boulders and a heavy ocean swell under Dee Why Head and survived mugachinos and bilious pink milkshakes along the way to arrive unscathed, well mostly unscathed, at Newport by 1910. They described the day as most enjoyable. Bill Holland's Advanced GPS Instructional was described as OK but we have no indication of the numbers present (*There were 6 of us Barry!*)

**Dec/Jan 2003.** (11<sup>th</sup> Dec. 02 to 8<sup>th</sup> Jan. 03).

The weekend of 13, 14, 15 December had only Sunday walks programmed. Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> saw Errol Sheedy with a party of 7 making their way from Bundeena to Otford in conditions that made the track feel like an oven. They recuperated with cool drinks and cappuccinos at Audley kiosk along the way. There was some surprise when a bushfire broke out near the exit point at Loftus the following day. Wilf had a Great River walk (Stage R) programmed for the same day but no report appears to have been received for this.

Carole Beales led a party of 7 on her Saturday walk on the 21<sup>st</sup> from Newport to Manly in hot conditions with cooling breezes. There was ample time in the schedule for refreshing swims, coffee and ice creams. No doubt this also helped. Peter Christian had a Sunday walk out from Bilpin that same weekend but there is no report for this.

Boxing day saw Mike Bickley leading a party of 6 on a walk and boat trip out from Bobbin Head with not a lot more detail than that.

There were a number of extended walks over the Christmas New Year period. Kenn Clacher had a trip in the Bogong High Plains from 26<sup>th</sup> December to 1<sup>st</sup> January. No doubt more details will have appeared elsewhere in the magazine but the bare details are that 9 walkers attended. Maurice Smith had a walk out from Munyang in the Snowy Mountains from 27<sup>th</sup> December to 2<sup>nd</sup> January. There were 10 starters, three of whom dropped out early, two due to blisters and one

due to severe headache. The walkers came out a day early due to seriously inclement weather conditions. There was another Snowys trip programmed from 26<sup>th</sup> December to 1<sup>st</sup> January led by Tony Crichton. There is evidence this walk went, as Maurice's party spent the evening of 28<sup>th</sup> December in their company, but no other report seems to have been received. An elaborated base-camp in the Capertee valley was programmed for the period 27<sup>th</sup> December to 1<sup>st</sup> January under the leadership of the walks secretary but no information on the fate of this one seems to have been recorded.

Ian Rennard led a mid week Sydney Harbour foreshores walk on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> December with a party of 7 under overcast skies in fine conditions.

Jim Calloway gave a Sunday walk from Helensburgh to Otford on the 29<sup>th</sup> but nobody else came. Jim pressed on nonetheless and even managed to fit in a spot of lunch and weed pulling at Burning Palms. Conditions remained near perfect throughout, though Jim says his aim had not been solitude.

New Years Eve saw Ian Rennard leading a party of 12 on an evening expedition from Balmoral to Bradleys Head and return. Conditions were overcast with a gale force wind from the North East but the route was generally sheltered and walking conditions pleasant. The following day Michael Bickley had 11 starters for his walk and boat trip at Bobbin Head.

An extended walk; the Great South West Coastal Walk - Victoria was programmed over the period from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> January with Geoff Dowsett as leader but no details have become available for this.

Nick Bertsons' Sydney Harbour Foreshore walk, scheduled for Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> January concludes the report for the period. This walk was cancelled due to bushfire closures and a poor response, one of which may well have been the cause of the other.

### **Luxembourg Day Walks:**

New member Alan Sauran and wife Suzanne Aubrun have not encountered any bushfire problems during their day walks in the Luxembourg Ardennes. They report that;

"the walks mainly follow the ridges, but descend to each village. Each Climb is only about 150 metres, but you can expect five of these on a long day walk, so it adds up to a Kowmung and back climb, which is OK with a day pack. Water is no problem - you can buy it, but avoiding alcohol before the last village requires some

willpower. We will return to Australia when the bushfire season is over, and Alan can finally collect his members badge.

### **Other Walk Reports**

**Berowra Recreation Park** Sat Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Leader: *Bill Holland*

20 people attended with all but two walking in the morning when we walked from Pennant Hills Station to Westleigh (for extended lunch). This morning walk was about 9 km through rain-forested gully and along a ridge-top plateau following Berowra Creek. After a long lunch-break (some swimming), 11 elected to follow the leader in a 6km afternoon walk further downstream to Fishponds and returned via an alternative track. The BBQ followed



### **A Useful Map Tool:**

I have found a good map tool for use in transferring GPS UTM co-ordinates to a map. It can be found on web site.

[www.maptools.com/UTMTools.html](http://www.maptools.com/UTMTools.html) and can be downloaded for free as a PDF file. It consists of a 1km square grid with 100m divisions for 1:25K scale maps (other scales are also available).

It can be printed onto clear film and mounted in a clear plastic pouch. I have the pouch attached to my compass string making it easy to access and use. *Richard Thompson*



### **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.

Some of us will be absent shortly for several weeks in Chile and other trips in the planning stage. Possibly a 3 or 4 day stay at Wombean caves in March/April (date to be confirmed)

A regular newsletter provides details of short notice activities and the Walks Programmes gives details of scheduled mid-week walks.

Phone Bill Holland on 9484 6636 or email to [billholl@hotkey.net.au](mailto:billholl@hotkey.net.au) for more information.

Note these dates:

**Thurs 6<sup>th</sup> March** Stage 7 of the Spider Web Walk from Beecroft to Hornsby

**Tues 11<sup>th</sup> March** Easy to medium bicycle ride from Meadowbank to Parramatta

**Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> April** An easy walk along the North Arm walking track at Castle Cove

**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.**



## Triathlon Weekend Report

Heike Krausse

**Day 1: Cycling** Coolana was the base camp for the preparation of the athletes in competition for getting the hottest, dustiest and wettest on the Australia day weekend. The water pipeline had been disengaged in 2 places most likely by thirsty wombats, however the dam being dry and scum-filled meant that all vital fluids as well as the usual vitality fluids needed to be carted in.

Fourteen in fine fettle set off on bikes ranging from the trusty dusted off from the back-shed to custom made super-sprung models. The undulations went down (wheeee....) and the undulations went up (puff, clank... oops wrong gear change...) the riparian curves were pretty and the tree lined stretches relaxed the intensity of the increasing heat. Morning tea at a picturesque olde worlde rickety wooden bridge that provided welcome relief for some and a wee challenge for cycling over by others. One found the easiest way to get off a bike was falling but came well equipped with kneepads after discovering the ouch factor involved on her practice ride. Corrugations provided an "all shook up" jive to the day.

We were passed by the occasional 4WD out for it's annual dusting, the interneers in their aircon comfort surely not as desperate as we were for the swimming hole. Extended swim/lunch as the heat of the day was searing, asphalt bubbling stuff. While some relaxed in the rockpools or attended to seat adjustments (of tender priority importance), a few surveyed the seductive curves of the river crocodile style, slithering from pool to pool to find the waterfall but decided t'was more prudent to await a cooler weekend for extended exploring via bush and rockhopping. (We did find a superb waterhole for next year).

Only 13 returned to the afternoon re-group spot, search for lost member found him ahead by 2 beers at the pub. SBW contributed greatly to the fact that the "friendliest" pub became the "pub with no beer" (or in this case no lemon squash!!).

**Day 2: Kayaking.** Extremely hot temperatures again, 44-46 degrees was quoted. 13 ventured out some elegantly coordinated others less so. Bass is usually known to be a type of fish however the kayak of same name was the source of much frustration as those so equipped traversed the river both by length and width.

A mothers distressed call for help finding her lost child briefly interrupted the paddle,

thankfully he was found away from the river at a neighbours, sleepily bemused at the flurry of unfamiliar faces relieved at his appearance.

The bushwalking purists found the upper-body strength requirements demanding but the 2 true triathletes of the group in their ruddered wonder came to the rescue of those needing respite.

Canoes and canoodling seem to go together, lots of couples out and about, and 2 to a canoe does look easier!! Batteries are usually defunct after immersion in water however a bellyflop splash and bobbing to the surface of a life-jacketed pinkclad bot was the indication that one member was "recharging" hers. Another doing similarly spiked himself via a submerged branch, but considered himself lucky it was upper flank rather than lower mid...

The return paddle after a "baked" lunch stop had a tailwind direct from the furnaces of hell. Rather cringing to say the least but sped up the return journey, plus some had really got the hang of their "basses" and were hot-paddling the straight for home!!.

Starlit sky and sputnik spotting meant no lack of "fireside conviviality" despite the total fireban and it was magic to watch the excited wonder of the children who came along on the weekend, some experiencing their first taste of bush, lack of home comforts and "hunting" wombats with torchlight.

Thank you to all whom came and made it a marvellous team weekend, truly triathlon winners all.

### 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.

## Bogong High Plains Walk 26<sup>th</sup> December – 1<sup>st</sup> January 2003 Kenn Clacher

*Participants: nine members, one prospective member and one visitor*

The objective of this walk was to climb Mt Bogong, by the easiest way possible and take in some of the other delights of the Bogong High Plains. Mt Bogong, at 1,986m, is the highest mountain in Victoria. While it is a little separated from the Bogong High Plains by the Big River, it is easily accessible on the northern side by road from the township of Mt Beauty and indeed can be climbed before breakfast by setting out from Mt Beauty.

We, of course, eschewed such ease and included the summit of Mt Bogong in a planned six-day walk that proceeded in a clockwise direction from Falls Creek. The walk took in the Bogong High Plains and Mt Wills to complete a varied, enjoyable and interesting circuit. In this way we were able to use the least demanding of the established tracks to the summit of Mt Bogong, and with less than full packs.

The walk started from the Rocky Valley Dam and proceeded via Heathy Spur to The Park, where we met up with Bob and Marella. From there we walked past Mt Nelse and along the headwaters of Big River to camp on a saddle just south of the Crows Nest. This was handy to a swimming hole and to Spion Kopje. It also had views down to Bogong Village in the valley below.

Day 2 saw us walking along the Grey Hills to Bogong Creek Saddle and lunch, then a climb of about 500m up Quartz Spur in warm sunshine to camp in Stirling Gap. There was plenty of water in the top of Bogong Creek and our campsite was an easy stroll to the West Peak of Mt Bogong. There some of the party took in the sunset and great views of just about everywhere.

Next morning a stroll along the top of Mt Bogong brought us to the highest point where we encountered a walker who had set out that morning from Mt Beauty and climbed the 1,300m Staircase Spur to beat us to the top. Then we descended to Cleve Cole hut and the delightful Camp Valley before heading up past Maddisons hut ruins to The Long Spur. A little way along here we stopped for a long lunch while the heat of the day subsided.

Here we were joined briefly by a walker who had left Falls Creek that morning (at around 4:00am) and climbed Mt Bogong, before overtaking us. He was proceeding to Mt Wills and beyond, to complete his day's walk. A sixty-km cycle ride was then on the agenda. This was a bit

much for us and we wandered in to our campsite at Big River Saddle feeling pleased with the mere 20km we had covered that day. Some of the party enjoyed a shower thanks to some gardening around a road culvert. The campsite was packed with people and ants.

Day 4 started with a 500m climb in drizzle to Mt Wills (1757M) and morning tea at its newly-constructed hut. The ridge upon which Mt Wills and Mt Wills South are located provided some very pleasant walking and good views to both east, to the Snowy Mountains and Gippsland, and west, over the High Plains. A little past Mt Wills South we left the Alpine Walking track and headed down to Big River. After a descent of around 1000m we had another long lunch in warm sunshine, allowing time for swimming in Big River and contemplating the afternoon's activities.

The outcome of the contemplation was a decision to ascend to the High Plains that afternoon, at least as far as the snow grass plains on Wild Horse Creek. The warmth must have been getting to us. The location, or even existence, of track 107 that was to take us the 1000m back up to the High Plains was in some doubt owing to map inaccuracies and past accounts of this walk, but after some scrub bashing (no walk should be without it!) we found the track and climbed the 800m to our intended campsite location. This turned out to be a delightful spot with a babbling brook and flat snow-grassed terrace conveniently located above it, on which the tents could be erected.

Thanks to the enthusiasm and ability of the party we were now one day ahead of schedule, which was just as well. During the night the wind freshened considerably and the weather became threatening. By the time we reached the rebuilt Fitzgerald's hut around mid-morning distinctly alpine weather was upon us. The party abandoned thoughts of the leader's promised five-star campsite on Mt Cope for New Year's Eve and most elected to scoot the short distance back to Falls Creek and head for home a day early. Those who stayed at the hut were treated to an entertaining array of visitors before partying the night away to the accompaniment of wind, rain and fog. The weather cleared up sufficiently next day to make the short stroll to the cars quite pleasant, in keeping with the whole walk.

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

## OF INTEREST TO NEW MEMBERS

### Hello From Heike:

Recently I had the pleasure of meeting one of the older members of SBW, sprightly and sparkle eyed and although the body now has slowed him down still very much a "Sydney Bushie" in spirit... at 93...not looking a day over 2 decades younger. He attributed this to the fact that all those years ago he was out most weekends, backpack and gear in at work for a quick Friday night getaway or in modern parlance "P.O.E.T.S."

The beginning of the year seems to traditionally entice new recruits into all sorts of activities and judging by the past new members nights SBW is no exception and I have to agree what better way to gain health, fitness (and friendship) than a bushwalking club.

Endurance walking has many health benefits, strengthening all muscles and especially for longevity the heart. The pull of muscle and tendon promotes bone strength, lessening risks of Osteoporosis and fractures. It promotes more efficient use of Insulin, glucose and fats mobilisation. Aids the immune system with better flow of the Lymphatic system. It keeps general circulation vessels more elastic and responsive. It also assists with mental health and depression by the release of endorphin's, the body's natural ecstasy.

But the most difficult part of starting a new program of activity is the mental motivation. Some philosopher ( I can't think who in the midst of my frantic must -get-this-in-on -time typing) said the journey of a 1000 miles starts with one step. yes it does but the continuation on from that one step takes mental fortitude and determination.

When the legs burn and tremble whilst standing still, the heart pounds, the lungs heave and still you're breathless, the gut has shut down, you're numb and feel you just cannot move a centimetre more, this is when mental strength shows its character. Put yourself through this every 2nd weekend you will find that over the weeks, the legs may feel weary rather than burn, the heart pounds but you're not as short of breath, and although you're grumbling and feeling "stuffed" you know you'll get to the top, enjoy your morning tea, be able to join in conversation and appreciate the view (as a new walker and even now my up-hill mantra is "Can't talk" puff..."breathing" puff puff...They say you should be able to walk and talk at the same time - whoever invented that saying has never

experienced Blackhorse or Yellowpup Ridges whilst carting several litres of water).

When out on your first walks learn to conserve energy at every break be it a tea stop, catch up stop or a where-are-we-now? stop, sit on a log or lean against a tree, if time take off your pack. At lunch have a stretch out and wee snooze. Keep pack light. Take only the essentials. See Prospectives pamphlet and how to pack a pack night coming up.

If there's a swim stop, take it, it's amazing how the feet revive after a paddle.

Keep up your energy. Drink plenty of water (see Dec issue!!), have glucose via jubes, "snakes", bananas, scroggin. At the lunch stop I add a supplement or cordial powder to my water (or have a now defrosted bottle of cordial - it keeps lunch cool and gives me that extra oomph when the muscle reserves have gone later in the day). Supplements such as Staminade/Gatorade can be useful but I tend to use them sparingly as they seem to make me thirstier, depends on how much you sweat and the strenuousness of the day as to whether you may need a supplement.

It is however mental fortitude and determination that will get you out there for those first weeks of walking when it may feel tough. Endurance walking is a challenge and you have to set yourself up for it.

The best way to increase fitness in my experience (and I don't have much so ask around for other opinions) is to take the stairs as often as you can 2 at a time. Easy at most workplaces, free, and effective just be wary of fire doors that lock behind you. Walk whenever and wherever you can, yes it may mean ditching the dressier heels, but you'll be thankful for it come the weekend and the beauty of it all is that after a weekend of walking, come Monday and facing the working week, you'll be grateful for the sense of perspective/reality grounding that being-out-in-the-bush can give.

**Please welcome on your next walk:** Ludmila Jouiko, Paula Doudle, Siobhan Saunders, Ralph Bergman, Janina Grzazek, Julie Allen, Alice Zgolak, Graham Cook, Katya Planska, Ros Sorensen, John Bradnam, Ben William, Marie-Elise Allen, John Watt, Muir Mathieson, Heng Wong, Alistair Merrifield, Chris Henderson, Caroline White, Katherine White, Rachael Brown, Rose Pengilly, Thomas Walker and Tu Tran.

*Heike Krauss*

**Social Programme:**

The Walks Planning night on January was a pleasant evening with good ideas being exchanged over red & white wine & nibbles. Anyone out there thinking of leading your first walk, or leading a walk in a new area, be aware there is a lot of support available for you.

**February:**

By the time you receive this magazine our social night for the month will have passed. The feature of the month was shown as:

**Wed 19th Hinchinbrook Photo/Slide Night**

8 pm. SBW had several groups walking on this fabulous island in Aug/Oct 2002.

**March:**

Our social activities for the coming month are:

**Wed 5th Committee Meeting**

7 pm. All members welcome. See how the club is managed and contribute to the evening

**8 pm. Introduction to SBW**

The New Members Team will introduce the club to prospective members together with a slide/photo presentation

**Wed 12th Annual General Meeting**

8 pm. Always an interesting night as we hear reports on SBW and elect the new Management Committee

**W/E 15th/16th Annual Reunion at Coolana****Wed 19th Alpsport - New Gear Presentation**

8 pm. Alex from the outdoor store Alpsport, West Ryde will be giving a presentation of bushwalking gear at the club house. Great opportunity to check out the latest offerings. Club discounts/specials possibly prizes offered.

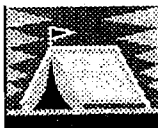
**How To Pack - New Members**

After Alpsport's presentation the new member's team will be making a how to pack for your first overnight trip presentation. Both presentations are not to be missed.

8 pm. **Introduction to SBW**  
(see above)

**Advance Notice: Wed 23rd April****Jan Mohandas - Cycling in North France**

Jan will be presenting slides of his & Margaret's cycling tour of the south of France. For anyone thinking of touring trips. This is a must. Come early enough to guarantee a good seat.

**SOCIAL NOTES:**

Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson go on a camping trip, set up their tent, and fall asleep. Some hours later, Holmes wakes his faithful friend.

"Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see."

Watson replies, "I see millions of stars."

"What does that tell you?"

Watson ponders for a minute.

"Astronomically speaking, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets. Astrologically, it tells me that Saturn is in Leo. Timewise, it appears to be approximately a quarter past three. Theologically, it's evident the Lord is all-powerful and we are small and insignificant. Meteorologically, it seems we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?"

Holmes is silent for a moment, then speaks. "Watson, you idiot, someone has stolen our tent."



Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of the world-famous detective Sherlock Holmes, was not above telling tales about himself in which he was the laughing-stock.

In one situation, he was waiting at a taxi stand outside the railway station in Paris. When a taxi pulled up, he placed his suitcase in the car and took a seat next to it.

"Where can I take you, Mr. Doyle?" asked the taxi driver.

Doyle was flabbergasted. He asked the driver whether he knew him by sight.

"No, sir, I have never seen you before."

The puzzled Doyle asked him how he knew he was Conan Doyle.

"This morning's paper had a story about you being on holiday in Marseilles. This is the taxi-stand where people who return from Marseilles always come to. Your skin colour tells me you have been on holiday. The ink-spot on your right index finger suggests to me that you're a writer. Your clothing is very English, and not French. And so, I deduced that you are Sir Arthur Conan Doyle."

Doyle remarked, "This is truly amazing. You are a real-life counterpart to my fictional creation, Sherlock Holmes."

"There is one other thing," the driver said.

"What is that?"

"Your name is on the front of your suitcase."

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

out of what you carry with you,

*Paddy Pallin, 1900-1991*

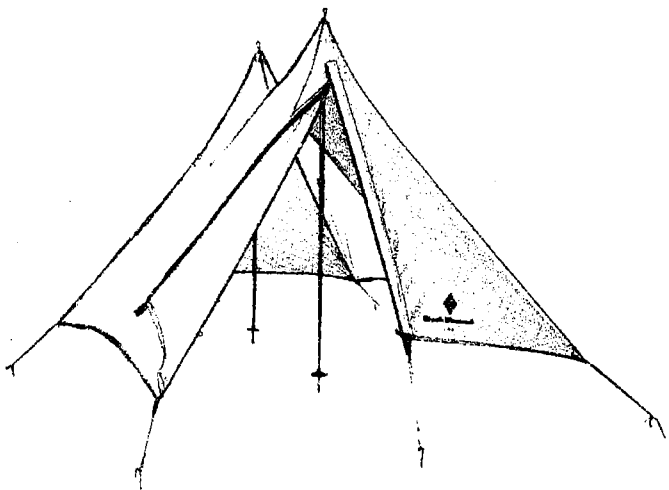
then move up to **Black Diamond**, exclusive to **Paddy Pallin**.



**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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