



THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



OCTOBER 2003



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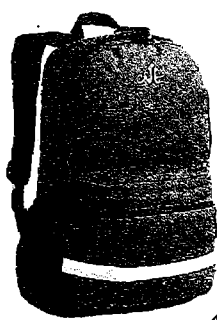
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OCTOBER 2003

Issue No. 827

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 Fran Holland



Missing Members

No, they are not lost in the bush (at least not that we aware of) but they have moved and not told us where are now living so they are missing out on their magazine.

If you know where these members have moved to please ask them to contact us to give us their new address. The missing members are:

Norm Rodd (formerly of Mt Tomah) and

David Song (formerly of Pennant Hills).

All information to Pam Morrison, Membership Secretary -details next page

Social Night - 19th November:

Trevor Kloeden presents slides and stories of the Everest 50th Anniversary celebrations in Nepal

The Summer Walks Programme closed 17th October. If you hurry Peter Love may accept a late submission.

Death of Reg Alder

It is very sad to report that Reg Alder passed away on the 6th October after a long illness - aged 86 years.

Reg joined SBW in the late 1930's and was one of the "tigers" of the period. He was active in the Club for many years before moving to Canberra.

He will be sadly missed by his family and many friends.

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- 19.. Of Interest to New Members:
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The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc.

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.

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 McClintock
Walks Secretary:	Peter Love
Social Secretary	Caro Ryan
Membership Secretary	Pam Morrison
New Members Secretary:	Heike Krausse
Conservation Secretary:	David Trinder
Magazine Editor:	Bill Holland
Committee Member:	
Barry Wallace	Pamela Irving
Delegates to Confederation:	
Jim Callaway	Wilf Hilder

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) rmacdoug@bigpond.com
Treasurer: Maurice Smith
9587 6325 (h) or mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au
Members Secretary: Pam Morrison
0418 463 923 or at pamm@unsw.edu.au
Vice President: Wilf Hilder
9587 8912

New Members Secretary: Heike Krausse
For prospective membership enquiries please phone 9998 0587 and leave a message

President's Report:

The bi-annual general meeting in September started off with 18 members present and during the course of the evening another 6 people up.

I commented on the matters that had occupied the Committee's time since March 2003 most of which had been reported in the monthly magazines. The major issues were as follows:

March - an extension of 6 months had been granted to prospective members who had been unable to do their qualifying walks because of the bushfires.

April - members had shown no interest in the Kosciuszko Plan of Management and therefore the Committee decided not to make a submission at that time.

May - the Committee supported the upgrade of the Berowra Valley Recreation Park to National Park status.

June - discussion about the new website occurred. We received advice from our honorary solicitor that our walks were not subject to the provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. A new printer was purchased because the existing one had died.

July - our new web site went live. The Coolana sub committee prepared a submission to the Sydney Water Catchment Authority for foreshore rehabilitation to be used at Coolana.

August - the Committee agreed to subsidise members doing the St Johns ambulance course to the extent of \$50.

September - the application to the Sydney water Catchment Authority was successful and a grant of \$4500 is available for free seedlings and plant guards on the riparian areas at Coolana.

A discussion ensued about managing the Coolana funds. The general feeling of the meeting was that donations for Coolana should be added to the capital investments and that the interest should be used to pay the rates and maintenance for Coolana. Any short fall in interest to meet these commitments, so the meeting seemed to feel, should be met from club funds. Don Finch the chairman of the Coolana committee agreed to prepare articles about these issues for publication in the magazine because there will be motions put forward at the AGM to clarify these issues.

At our October meeting we received some feedback from Caro of her discussions with prospective members. Further consideration is to be given to providing a more accurate grading of our walks. This is not a simple task but we will see what we can come up with. Any recommendations you have would be gratefully received. More easy

introductory overnight walks are requested and Caro has offered to lead at least one such walk in the summer program. Any other leaders willing to do this would be appreciated.

Pamela Irving raised the question about burning rubbish and whether or not there is policy. None exists although one assumes that as much rubbish as possible should be taken out. She had some useful information about the toxicology of burning various bits of rubbish and will prepare an article for the magazine. In areas where we cannot have fires all rubbish has to be taken out. Perhaps we could apply that to all areas. Whatever happens a considerate approach to the needs of all the party members ought to apply.

It appears likely that walking in Kosciusko National Park this summer will be restricted because of the bushfires at the beginning of this year. At this point in time we do not have information about which areas are affected although the Jagungal area is likely to be one such place.

See you on the track
Rosemary MacDougal

Treasurer's Role:

Maurice our current Treasurer, has indicated that he will not be standing for re-election to the role at the Annual General Meeting to be held next March. As this role is one that requires good accounting knowledge it is not always so easy to fill. The role requires the holder to:

- (a) have a good understanding of the concepts of income and expenditure and assets and liabilities.
- (b) ideally, have experience in the use of MYOB accounting software
- (c) be a signatory along with other committee members to the Club's cheque account
- (d) provide monthly financial reports to the Committee
- (e) attend and participate in the monthly Committee meeting

So if you have the relevant skill set and you are willing to contribute to efficient operation of the club, over the next month or so give consideration to putting up your hand to take on this important committee role.

If you would like further information please contact Maurice on (02) 9587 6325 or email him on treasurer@sbw.org.au

Editor's Note:

In past years when the rains came and the day looked soggy I would either walk on or retire to the tent ready for the challenge next day. Now, despite having gortex gear and a reasonable if old tent, I was very happy to call off the camp at Deep Pass and retire to the not-so-distant farmhouse, a warming log fire, a glass or two of wine and a soft bed.

Now I know that I've changed; a little older, perhaps a little weaker and maybe my "get up and go" has "got up and gone" but what about the rest of you? It will be interesting to receive the reports of the October long weekend walks and see how the rain affected the outcomes.

But no matter how much we welcome the rain, the bush out there will soon dry out and fire restrictions remain. Unless more rain falls over the next month or so we will still face dry conditions very similar to last year.


This month the magazine is a little larger than normal with diverse articles including a detailed report of the club trip to the Cockburn Plateau, the second part of Cycling Tales in Austria, Caro's report of Horses for Courses and several walk reports. The techno-age is reflected in articles about changes to the satellite system and digital maps. We also have two letters.

Finally, one of the duties of the Editor is to record the passing of members and this month we sadly note that Reg Alder died after a long illness.

Reg was a regular contributor to the magazine until recent months, when illness made it difficult for him to write. Members will recall the many articles, letters and the occasional photo which appeared over his name. He will be greatly missed by his many friends in SBW.

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)

EPIRB – Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon

SBW has purchased an EPIRB for use by club members, in particular walks leaders. If you would like to take the EPIRB for a walk give Leigh McClintoch a ring on 8920 2386 and arrange to collect it.



Letters To The Editor:

✉ Coolana Funds:

At the AGM in March 2004 there will be several motions on the agenda relating to Coolana Funds, the interest earned by the funds and how and when the interest is spent.

The view that I take is that the Coolana fund principal is donated by people for the purpose of generating interest, which can be used to assist the general account to pay for the costs of Coolana. The principal of the Coolana fund is to stay intact and be added to by surplus interest if there is any. The Coolana fund principal is not to be used to pay for any costs of SBW including Coolana costs. Only the interest from the Coolana fund is to be used to help SBW pay the costs of Coolana.

Why do we need new motions? Because in the last few years the principal of the Coolana fund has been used to pay for Coolana costs. The Coolana fund principal has been diminished and that was not the original intention of the Coolana fund.

The general meeting May 1970 adopted item 8 of Management Committee meeting that rates should be a charge on club funds.

Ira Butler, Dot Butler, Marie Byles, Mr and Mrs Davison and several other members and friends contributed to the Coolana Fund over several years to help pay the rates with the interest generated.

General meeting January 1976, letter from Dot informed the club that her late husband Ira had bequeathed a sum of \$2000 invested through solicitor George Beswick, Managing Director of Natural Areas Ltd. The interest from the investment was for the purpose of paying rates on Coolana. Estimated investment yield \$200 payable from 31.1.1976.

It seems fairly clear cut to me that SBW should hold the Coolana fund and the people who donate to it in esteem. That SBW should provide for the preservation of the principal of the Coolana fund as a duty and a memorial to those people. To allow it to diminish is to ignore the original wishes of those people.

Don Finch

Have You Changed Your Address?

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

Members: Pam Morrison
respectives: 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 Social Secretary:

Re Kay Chan's letter last month about members standing for Committee, especially the position of Social Secretary, at the next AGM. While I agree with most of Kay's letter, it may be wise to point out what may happen to anyone "having a go" at the Social Secretary's position.

You'd be elected in March. You probably would not get much done at your first Committee meeting in April as it's a new Committee and the Social Programme would not be a high priority. The May meeting reviews the Walks Programme, so again you would not get much of the Committee's attention. If you're lucky, the earliest significant amount of time (say 3 minutes at your third 3-hour Committee meeting) that could be given to you to explain your intentions and discuss the several "why don't you...?" options from other Committee members would be June. The significance of this is that you'll have just missed the winter programme (June, July and August), so the earliest you could do something "novel" is for the spring programme (September, October and November). December and January are not good months for the Social Programme and by February you're winding down for the AGM. If you're lucky, you'd be Social Secretary for 12 months and have a 3 month window starting 6 months into your term to do something novel. If you're lucky!

Oscar Wilde noted: "There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about." However, on committees, there may be only one thing worse than being ignored, and that is not being ignored. If other members take an interest in the Social Programme you could find yourself like a chef in kitchen with other chefs. Put 15 chefs in a kitchen and you'd get 15 proposed menus, each enthusiastically detailed with appetising delicacies. Each chef would defend his/her proposal with vigour and passion. Put the proposed menus to a vote and each would receive one vote for and 14 votes against. The population starves.

In your 3 minutes (at the end of the meeting when all are tired and wanting to leave) you would need to discuss what we are trying to do with the social programme – encourage it, fall in behind what is happening or take corrective action. If you wished to spend money you'd have to navigate your way through the "chicken and egg" debate. What comes first – spending money on the Social Programme or high

attendances? You'd have to deal with the school of thought that thinks we can make it a better club by saving money (many organizations and corporations have been destroyed by economising, especially by taking short term gains at the expense of investing in their future). You'd also have to deal with the school of thought that we only give members what they want (when management is about informing and leading people, not following them; encouraging an enthusiastic minority, not just listening to a majority that may be disinterested; about taking note not only of what is happening but also what *should* be happening and perhaps what *could* be happening).

The future of any organization is determined by its values. One reason the club has survived for 75 years may be because its founding members had the foresight to enshrine socialising in the constitution as an *object* of the club (clause 2e). If we focus on saving money without taking an interest in and planning for our future, without trying to understand our organization, well, who knows where we'll end?

While it is up to individual members to "have a go", it is also up to the rest of us to somehow make it easy for those who do have a go. And it may not be that difficult to do.

Eddy Giacomel

Treasurer's Report - September

It is fortunate that my Treasurer's workload is not high at this time of the year because with the arrival of the warmer weather and the reduction in the availability of some of the walks which I have come to enjoy so much and after recovering from a broken toe (self inflicted on a club walk) I'm trying to get as much walking in as I can while the opportunity is still there. However, with the arrival of the warmer weather we can still scheme and plot next season's walks, I've already logged several in my mind. So watch out for next year's autumn program. Anyway enough of my musings here is my report on the club's finances which are in a healthy state.

Set out below are the figures for September.

Bank Balance 1 st September	\$6,503
<u>Income Received:</u>	
Membership Fees	372
Total Receipts	372
<u>Expenses Paid:</u>	
KNC - rent	260
Postage and stationery	153
Magazine postage	519
Purchase of club EPIRB	240
Total payments	1,172
Bank Account 30 th September	\$5,703

Coolana Fund

The Coolana Fund is a sub-set of some of the club's investments in low risk blue chip debentures, government bonds and cash management accounts.

At 1st January 2003 the value of the Coolana Fund was \$21,563. In the year to date the fund has received \$2,778 in income (interest on investments and donations) and has expended \$950 (mostly council rates on Coolana). At 30th September the balance of the Fund stood at \$23,391.

A discussion is presently underway within the committee and with members of the Coolana sub-committee about the rules that should be applied to this Fund. The rules which have yet to be agreed will set out how the Fund may be used and how it should be reported to members.

If you have strong views on this topic then the committee would love to have your comments.

Maurice Smith - Treasurer

For Sale

75 litre backpack in top condition = \$85.

My wife unfortunately is giving up the challenge of the heavier pack, so burdening yours truly. Please call **John Pozniak** day time 9240 5277 and evening 9913 2701

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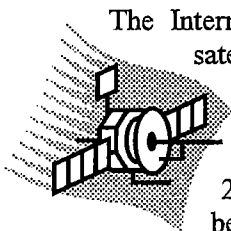
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Important Changes to the Satellite System



The International Council that controls the satellite system, Cospas-Sarsat, decided in October 2000 to cease processing 121.5 MHz analogue signals by satellite on 1 February 2009. From that date only 406 MHz beacons will be detected by satellite.

The decision was made to reduce the chronically high false alarm rate from analogue distress beacons. Currently 97 percent of analogue distress beacon signals are *false alarms*.

What Is A Satellite Distress Beacon?

Satellite beacons take much of the search out of search and rescue. When activated, beacons transmit a signal to the Cospas-Sarsat global search and rescue satellite system which processes the information to obtain a position. This information is relayed to Australian Search and Rescue (AusSAR) in Canberra.

Beacons come in many shapes and sizes. They include Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELTs) found in aircraft, hand-held Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) and marine-based Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBs).

2009 - A Change Is Coming

From February 2009 the Cospas-Sarsat satellite system will no longer process the 121.5 MHz frequency used by most distress beacons. The distress frequency used by the satellite network will be 406 MHz.

Why The Change?

AusSAR detects many false distress alerts from non-beacon transmitters that interfere with the 121.5 MHz frequency and from inadvertently activated beacons. In Australia about 98 percent of the distress alerts detected are false.

False alerts can be resolved quickly with 406 MHz beacons as they transmit a digital signal that identifies the owner. AusSAR keeps a register of 406 MHz beacon users and can simply make a phone call to determine if there is a genuine emergency or not.

If there is a problem, a 406 MHz beacon will eliminate much of the guesswork in a search by telling AusSAR your name, address and the type of boat, aircraft or vehicle you are in.

121.5 MHz beacons are based on obsolete analogue technology that does not support an identifying message. In most cases, when these beacons begin transmitting, an expensive search has to be launched to determine if there is someone in distress. These searches could divert rescue resources away from a genuine emergency.

What Should You Do?

2009 may seem a long way off, but you should start planning to upgrade now.

If you already have a 406 MHz beacon then you need not worry as long as it is registered. If you are not sure call AusSAR on 1800 641 792 and ask a Search And Rescue Officer to check. You should have your beacon's fifteen character hexadecimal code ready for AusSAR.

If you are relying on a 121.5 MHz beacon, you could upgrade when your beacon's battery is due to be replaced or you could simply make the change now. 406 MHz beacons are more expensive, but the price is expected to fall over time. Regardless of the price, if it saves your life, it is cheap insurance.

More Information

Australian Maritime Safety Authority
GPO Box 2181 Canberra ACT 2601
www.amsa.gov.au/beacons

Expressions Of Interest Required

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Sat 27/12/2003 to Sun 4/01/2004 - The ultimate Kowmung experience! Your chance to experience the superb wild and scenic river in the Blue Mountains. Travel the full length of the Kowmung from Tuglow Creek to the Cox's River.

This is the 50th anniversary of SBW member Ron Watter's 1953 walking expedition (when as a teenager he and several mates did this walk) deep in the heart of the Kanangra Boyd National Park. Ron has provided us with some of his photos from 1953. See how the river has changed over time. [in next month's magazine....Ed]

Swims with packs compulsory, lots of rock hopping, exposure through Morong Deep, and beautiful campsites. Hopefully at a leisurely pace. Possible food drop somewhere around the halfway point, details of that and travel arrangements to be negotiated. Party size will be strictly limited.

Interested members (and prospectives) please contact Maurice Smith on (02) 9587 6325 or email to mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au Grade: Medium

Digital Map of Australia to the Rescue:



No longer will tourists, firefighters or search-and-rescue teams have to wrestle with multiple maps when they head off the beaten track. Australia is on the verge of having the first seamless, detailed, digital map of the entire continent.

The move will allow people to print customised maps of any part of the nation - for the cost of a printed page.

Updated topographic maps of all 7,660,000 sq km of the continent - seven years in the making using satellite technology - were unveiled in Parliament House in Canberra yesterday.

The 513 maps will be available on the Internet early next year as an interwoven topographic database.

Liberal MP Gary Nairn, who worked as a surveyor on the project before entering parliament, said Murphy's law dictated that whenever

a map was needed, the area fell in the gap between maps.

Work on the previous full set of Australian topographic maps began in the late 1940s and continued until 1968.

The national mapping division director of product development for Geoscience Australia, Daniel Jaksa, said the new map would be a boon for firefighters and search-and-rescue teams.

He hoped it would also be used by mining companies, environmental engineers, national security experts, transport developers and tourists.

"This will ensure people don't have to try to stitch different maps together to get the information they need," he said.

"For emergency crews, it will mean they can co-ordinate their activities in the full knowledge of what is on the ground, what paths they should take to get to certain places, what the terrain is like, and where power lines, drainage and man-made infrastructure is."

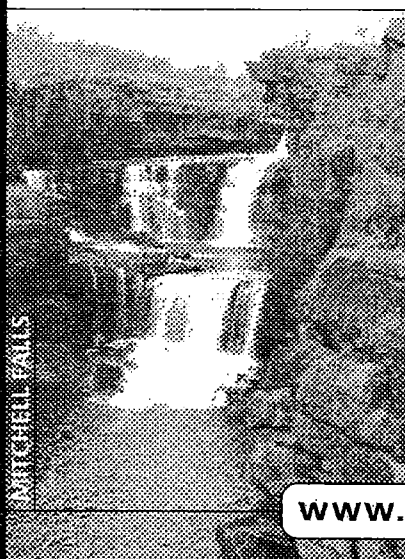
While the Federal maps are free, Mr Nairn said maps commissioned by State Governments would come at a cost.

Misha Schubert *"The Australian"* September 23, 2003

WILLIS'S WALKABOUTS

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walk the wet



90% of visitors to the north come during the dry season.

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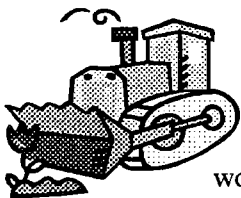
Willis's Walkabouts 12 Carrington St Millner NT 0810 Email: walkabout@ais.net.au

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Biodiversity and Land Clearing

David Trinder

The Federal Government spent more than one billion dollars on repairing the environment under the Natural Heritage Trust, but for every tree planted with that money 100 were bulldozed for land clearing. According to a landmark report, thousands of Australian native animals, birds, and plants are facing extinction this century because of land clearing.



Land clearing involves the destruction of vegetation and habitats, including the bulldozing of native bushlands, forests, savannah woodlands and native grasslands and the draining of natural wetlands.

The report, "Australian Terrestrial Biodiversity Assessment 2002: Our Species In Peril" is the most comprehensive stock-take of the state of Australia's wildlife ever produced. It shows that nearly 3,000 unique natural habitats are disappearing, and they are taking with them 1,500 species. The report shows that in general the more land clearing there is in a region, the more threatened species and ecosystems occur there. Land clearing not only kills wildlife and destroys habitats, it causes salinity, land degradation and results in huge amounts of greenhouse gas pollution from the rotting and burning organic matter following clean up.

In the lead up to the March state election, the Carr Government announced a policy to end broad scale land clearing and a package of incentives and support for farmers affected by the changes. An implementation group was formed in June 2003 to advise the Government on how to implement the decision. After three months they reported to Government and now new legislation in the Spring Session of Parliament is awaited with interest.

Biodiversity is the variety of all living organisms (plants, animals, fungi and micro-organisms), the genes they possess and ecosystems they form. The systems have

evolved over a very long period of time into a stable, sustainable network of interdependent life forms, all parts are essential to the whole. They were there long before we came and we have the responsibility to ensure that future generations can also enjoy their benefits.

The report notes that biodiversity cannot rely solely on the protection offered in national parks and other protected areas, it requires ecologically sustainable management across the whole landscape. Weeds and pest animals are a major threat to the conservation of biodiversity. NPWS has developed a plan to reduce the impact of the Red Fox predation on native species. The service is also preparing threat abatement plans for the Mosquito Fish, Bitou Bush, Feral Cat and High Frequency Fire, all of which are key threatening processes in NSW.

The NSW Biodiversity Strategy funded a project to evaluate the various programs that had been set up to manage the Red Fox, one of the most widespread and destructive introduced pests. The program aimed to measure the affect of techniques on the threatened Malley Fowl and Brush-Tailed Rock-Wallaby, using field trials to measure the costs and benefits of the techniques used. The Strategy has also funded the Bitou Bush program which is conducted by Local Councils, community groups, Coastcare and the Weeds Cooperative Research Centre. Bitou Bush is a highly invasive weed that poses a major threat to coastal ecosystems across public and private lands.

Aboriginal people place great value on the concept on kinship with the natural world. The NSW Biodiversity Strategy funded a project to explore the extent of aboriginal protection of biodiversity in the face of 200 years of European settlement.

Sources:

Australian Conservation Foundation, The Wilderness Society, The National Parks Journal.

Don't Let A Quarry Proposal Despoil World Heritage

A giant 27 million tonne sand quarry is proposed adjoining the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area at Newnes Junction, just to the east of Newnes Plateau.

If World Heritage listing is to mean anything to the Blue Mountains, then this quarry must be stopped! This diverse bushland of the Village Reserve area must be protected from quarry proposals by adding it to the Blue Mountains National Park.



Please send a letter opposing the quarry to:
The Hon. Bob Carr MP- Premier of NSW
Parliament House Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

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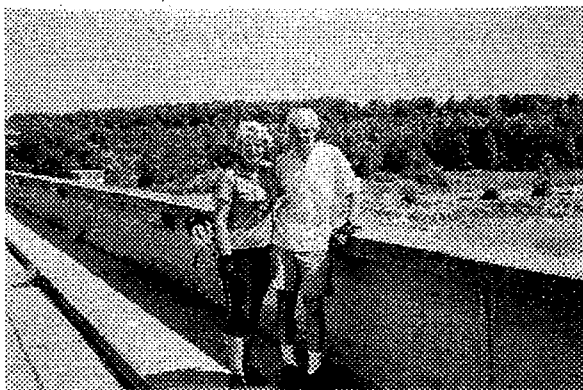
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Christine & George Floyd - Cycling Tales Part 2



After our experiences on the Prague - Vienna Greenways related in Part 1 we continued in Austria for another 3 weeks (June 2003).

The Salzkammergut Region

From Vienna we took a train to Salzburg. Its very easy in Austria to just throw your bike on and go - quite unlike France where bikes can be quite a problem. Most trains have a bike carriage and the guard usually takes over loading and unloading. The bike carriage has hooks for hanging the bikes and can accommodate about 20 bikes. There are also hinged seats for those who don't want to be separated from their bikes and luggage.

In Salzburg we met up with four other Bike Friday riders. Six Bike Fridays made quite a sight and we attracted a lot of attention. The bike paths in Austria are very good - mostly dedicated to bikes and with a good firm but unsealed surface. However in the Salzkammergut many of them were alongside a busy road and that meant a pretty noisy ride.

From Salzburg we went to St Gilgen via Mondsee. We were already in "Sound of Music" land, and all these years later they're still reaping the benefits (or should I say the dollars). The church in Mondsee is where "the wedding" was filmed.....but fortunately for all, an alpine rally of historic cars was in progress and the check in point was right in front of the church. Needless to say that was far more interesting... And we were spared any chance of a rendition of the song about HILLS or anything else!

Most of the places we went to in this area were very touristy and the people there quite ritzy - beautiful, and their even tans (right down to the big toe) suggested many winter hours spent under the tanning machine. The lakes and scenery are beautiful and we were quite content to just soak it all up. From St Gilgen round Wolfgangsee to St Wolfgang, then Bad Ischl, Bad Goisern, and over a huge hill in pouring rain to Hallstatt. We had a couple of nights there - very beautiful and most interesting with its still productive salt mines, and also ice caves nearby. The parish church there had a "Bone House" - where bones from re-used graves were neatly stacked and the skulls decorated with paintings!

Four of us took a rather adventurous route from there - a train from Obertraun to Bad Aussee, then a wonderful day pedalling round Grundlsee to

Toplitzee (where the Nazis are reputed to have stashed treasures - none of which have ever been found). From there we cycled up fairly serious hills (we were fully laden - George & I towing the trailers, the others with panniers) to Blaa Alm - then down through a National Park on an extremely rough road back to Bad Ischl. This is the only time I have ever walked down a hill - it was just too rough to ride. All good fun

From Bad Ischl we followed the Traun Valley to Ebensee, then round the lake to Traunkirchen and Gmunden. Traunkirchen was probably the highlight of this area. It has a really beautiful church and is set right on the edge of Traunsee. This was all very easy cycling and we treated it as a time of rest. In Gmunden our party split, two to return home to Australia, the rest of us to continue to the Enns River cycle path.

The Enns River

To get started we took a train from Gmunden south alongside Traunsee and Halstattersee and back through Obertraun and Bad Aussee to Bad Mitterndorf where we took to the bikes again.. This was really beautiful country. The valleys were green, green, green and the cows looked very content. The mountains were close and our first day was spent cycling through a gorgeous valley which seem to have no exit. But right at the end a little slot appeared and through we went and there was the Enns River waiting for us. This was beautiful riding - probably the best we had in Austria. We were thankfully off the tourist route and the villages were small and unsophisticated. The bike path followed the Enns River closely, in fact, we crossed back and forth many times.

It was particularly beautiful through the Gesauseeingang gorge between Admont and Hieflau. Here the river is quite wild as it squeezes through the gorge - and is a popular spot for the more adventurous white water kayakers. We were back on a sealed road which became quite narrow and a bit hairy when the odd logging truck rumbled through. From Hieflau to Altenmarkt the gorge opened up and we stayed on a road and close to the river - very beautiful forested valley all the way.

In Altenmarkt, which is a very small village, (one small supermarket, no camping, and no information office) we were entertained by a very Germanic style brass band which was rehearsing its parade routine up and down the street. Interesting too to watch locals arrive at the supermarket first thing in the morning... on the single speed clunker bikes with basket on the front and often a child on the back. Life is so simple and straight forward.

We had a choice of routes from here - sealed road with traffic or unsealed bike path through the Hintergebirge in the Kalkalpen National Park. On the advice of the waitress we took the latter. She assured us that "its down hill all the way" and "even children do this ride". BUT she failed to tell us that

there was a 4 kilometre slog up a steep hill just out of Unterlassa to get started! How was she to know that we were fully laden for touring and for us this wasn't just a picnic outing. It was the right decision despite this. It turned out to be the highlight of all the riding in Austria.

The Hintergebirge is a gorgeous forested area that was logged in the late 1800s. Originally the river (the Reichraming) was dammed at the narrow points and then the water released in a torrent to carry the logs down to the Enns River and on to the Danube. By the 1920s there was a railway to carry the logs, but this was discontinued by the 1960's when the area became a National Park. Our bike path followed the train route (rails and sleepers have been removed) - through gorges and through 19 tunnels (lit by sensor operated solar power), downhill all the way to Reichraming. The bike path surface was quite damp in the tunnels and our bikes and gear got splattered with mud... so we had a hilarious bike washing session in the river before showing up in town again.

In Steyr our companions left us to return to Zurich, and we made contact with some friends of friends who live there. Well, the intended "cup of tea" visit turned into a wonderful day spent in the Steyr and lower Enns area. Our hosts Willfried and Judith took us on a tour of the town and then we cycled with them further down the Enns River for lunch at a delightful restaurant. From there with 4 bikes loaded into the car, we visited friends and had a fast tour of the sights in the area (the castle at Klam, the magnificent abbey at St Florians, Roman ruins at Lorch, the town square at Enns). It was great to be able to speak English again and ask questions!. It was a wonderful day. We stayed overnight so the next day we could spend more time exploring Steyr - probably the most interesting of all the Austrian towns we had visited to that point.

The lower Enns River is quite industrial and the landscape spoiled by high tension pylons. The bike path wound through farmlands with crops of canola, grains, sunflowers and poppies (not the opium variety I was assured!). So we finally reached Enns and decided to take a train via Linz and Wels to Passau to start the final phase of the trip.

Passau To Vienna Along The Danube.

This is a very popular trip for cyclists - the route follows the Danube all the way to Vienna - mostly on a dedicated bike path, sometimes on a sealed road. It is a flat and easy ride - and in retrospect the section of the trip we enjoyed least - possibly because we were tiring, but probably because we had covered some very exciting ground by this stage. So here are the high lights.

Passau - is a wonderful city with about 2000 years of history and needing much longer than 24 hours to explore! You can stand right at the junction of three rivers Danube, Inn and the Ilz. We had never imagined the Danube to be such a huge river, very wide and fast flowing - and were surprised at the number of huge dams across it each with locks for the ships to pass through. And while we knew there would be a certain amount of shipping we were amazed at the number of huge cruise boats, carrying

hundreds of tourists for several days at a time for varying stages between Passau and Vienna - big business. We camped along the Ilz river at a beautifully located 'no car' campground right beside the river - one of the nicest campgrounds we had.

Grein - a pretty town with a castle. I particularly wanted to visit the museum there (history of Danube transport) but unfortunately the museum was in the castle and the castle was closed in preparation for the Prince's birthday! Further downstream and across the river was Ybbs - best vanilla slice of the trip! And on the northern bank, Persenber, which has a linden tree in the square planted about 1300.

Melk was just amazing. The abbey absolutely dominates the town. We became real tourists and took a tour which was well worth while, as was the view along the Danube from the top of the abbey.

We camped right by the river in a peaceful camping ground with a restaurant building which had the flood levels of previous years marked on it. 2002 floods reached about $\frac{3}{4}$ way up the ground floor windows. Floods in 1501 reached the upper storey window. I guess the dams are controlling the waters these days. The next morning we woke to a huge noise, to find that 5 cruise boats had moored alongside overnight and megaphones were being used to organise passengers onto the dozens of buses that had arrived....so much for our peaceful riverside camping!


The Wachau area is famous for its grape growing and is very pretty with the vineyards squeezed between the hills and the river. We liked Spitz which had a Gothic-with-Baroque-renovations church with a strangely offset chancel, and also Durnstein which has an abbey painted blue, white and gold, and the ruins of a castle on the hill above, where Richard I (Lionheart) was incarcerated (and bleak that must have been too).

Towards Vienna the bike path was along the top of the dykes built to keep the river on course. The houses were actually at a lower level and sensibly built on stilts. We gathered that flooding along this stretch is a regular occurrence, and although the 2002 floods were worse than usual, everything was back to normal within a month.

It was like arriving home at Klosterneuberg - we were remembered at the camping ground, and the routine of supermarket and washing familiar. We took a train into Vienna for the day of sightseeing. It was a Sunday so we started off with mass in St Stephens, my favourite cathedral in the whole of Europe. The choir and organ were in full swing and the church packed, making it feel quite an event. We followed this up with a treat of coffee and cake at Demels (which we liked better than Sachers), then a tour of the Imperial apartments which we'd never seen, and a tour of the Opera House.

On our final day we cycled into Vienna to our hotel, packed the bikes, and treated ourselves to a wonderful dinner at Plachutta and a rather touristy Mozart concert at the Opera House. By then we were more than happy to board the Lauda flight home, having been on the road for 6 weeks and cycled a total of 1731 km *George and Christine Floyd*

THE WALKS PAGES

Walks Notes: *Barry Wallace*Period 14th Aug to 10th Sept


Bill Capon led a party of 6 on an extended walk into the depths of Wollemi National Park over the period 14th to 17th August. In order to avoid the necessity of carrying water for extended periods Bill completely rearranged the walk route from that programmed. They went down the Capertee River to about 1 km below the Capertee/Wolgan junction and ascended a side creek that not only gave access to the plateau but also provided water for the second night's campsite. From there they traveled via some thoroughly burnt high ground and an old firetrail bearing recent 'dozer tracks to Gaspers Mountain. The return to the hot showers at Glen Davis was accomplished via Running Stream Creek over a long last day.

Over the weekend of 15, 16, 17 August Rosemary MacDougal had a party of 12 out on the Saturday for her Wattagans State Forest walk. It was a lovely sunny day, so much so that the lack of rain meant the leeches only arrived in dozens rather than the expected hundreds. As is becoming traditional Gail Crichton led Tony's walk out from Carlons Farm that day, with a party of 14 and just a little help from Mark Patteson. It was a lovely day with great weather and the members of the group were all nice people. Maurice Smith led a Sunday qualifying walk from Victoria Falls to Govetts Leap in warm conditions with a party of 9 members. It appears that not only did Roger Treagus re-route his Great River Walk stage 11 due to park closures; he also rescheduled it from 24 August to 18 August. The walk became a canoe trip from the Warragamba River junction to Penrith. The party of 8 were distributed over 3 double kayaks and one canadian. Conditions were pleasant and all enjoyed the day, coming out at 1600 well before dark.

Jim Rivers had scheduled a trip in Ettrema Wilderness over the weekend of 22, 23, 24 August that had been marked as a qualifying walk. In the event there were 9 starters none of whom turned out to be prospectives. The going in sections of Boolijah Creek was described as extremely hard with boulders and waterfalls. The ridge out of the creek was steep but negotiable with conditions on the plateau made more bearably by long sections of open rocky going and some recently burnt areas. Strong gusty winds over Saturday evening and Sunday only really became a problem when the party encountered fallen trees across roads on the way home. With hindsight Jim concluded that this

was not really a prospectives walk. Tony Crichton had a party of 25 plus 6 supporters on his Six Foot Track in a Day trip on the Saturday that weekend. The weather held good until around 1400 hours then progressed from drizzle to rain in cold conditions from around 1600 hours, with the tail enders arriving at the finish in quite cold conditions. The party was fit and fast and the meals arrived on time after a pre-emptive pre ordering. The Sunday walk that weekend was in Heathcote National Park with Errol Sheedy escorting a party of 9 intrepid souls who ignored the very wet night that preceded the walk. Conditions improved to a pleasant if breezy day with fine displays of Gynea Lillies and violet blossoming Hardenbergia creeper.

The weekend of 29, 30, 31 August had one weekend walk scheduled, and that turned out to be a stroll down Ettremah Creek for a party of 5 under the baton of Peter Love. There were two Saturday walks scheduled, one out from Carlons Farm led by Frank Grennen and one around Mill Creek Circuit led by Zol Bodlay, but no reports appear to have been received for these walks. The Sunday walks fared a better, Nigel Weaver led a party of 19 on his walk in Muogamarra Nature Reserve in wonderful mild conditions and Ron Watters had 11 starters for his walk in Nattai National Park. By happenstance they had the pleasure of lunching with a party from Canberra Bushwalkers on the banks of the Nattai.

There was a weekend walk in Wollemi National Park scheduled over the weekend of 6, 7 September led by Carol Lubbers but no report appears to have been lodged for this trip. A similar situation prevails for Tony Crichton's K to K in a day trip on the Saturday. Peter Love led a party of 10 on his Sunday half day walk. There was a certain brief period of terror coming up Sublime Point but otherwise the trip generally conformed to the easy/medium grading.

Here endeth the walks notes for this month.

For Sale - Tent etc

I have the following items for sale if any of your members are interested. Sue. 9517 1467

Dome tent - sleeps 4-6 - easy to erect - excellent condition - Kolon Sport 3 saucepan set - electric travel jug which plugs into cigarette lighter - camp oven & toaster (sits on top of gas stove) - 22 ltr jerrycan with tap, jaffle iron, homemart stretcher - hurricane lamp (1 new, 1 used) - little shovel, plastic plates, frying pans and other assorted odds and ends - Will take \$90 the lot - ono. View at www.geocities.com/lotsofharmony2/tentforsale.

Wollemi - Coorongooba Creek 6th 7th Sep**Leader:** Carol Lubbers**Party:** Heike Krausse, Vicki Garamy, Pamela Irving, Leigh McClintock.

A very warm weekend, despite Saturday being cloudy. Most of Coorongooba Creek up to Running Stream Creek junction is burnt. The escarpment behind Glen Davis looks severely burnt. Five km into the walk, Vicki Garamy sprained her ankle so we camped a few hundred metres further on in a pretty spot which had been spared by the fires. The sight of Vicki writhing on the ground and moaning she had broken her ankle was too much so we made her sit in the creek until she complained of the risk of hypothermia. After lunch with Vicki, the rest of the party continued on to the junction with Running Stream Creek and ventured about 300m into Running Stream to find this was unburnt.

You cannot see the once pretty rocky and sandy banks and base of Coorongooba Creek as they are covered in a silt of ugly black ash. The water is drinkable but tastes bitter.

We saw lots of animal prints - probably cat or fox. We also noted that a predator had also been frequently dining on the local rosellas, leaving red and blue feathers in many places along the creek (maybe a bird of prey?). There were also strong signs that a wombat is attempting to make the banks of the creek its home - lots of footprints and unsuccessful digging projects! The wombat tracks were overprinted by the cat/fox tracks, all fresh after rain the previous week had made a sticky black slick on the sides of Coorongooba.

After an exhausting 12 hours' sleep, we packed, sharing the contents of Vicki's pack between us, and left camp by 10 am, anticipating slow progress back along the Creek for Vicki, but without the contents of her pack, she managed quite a brisk pace, especially on the fire trail back to Glen Davis. We had a late lunch at the Lithgow Workmans Club and everyone went home early.

Carol Lubbers

Wollemi NP - Deep Pass

We had planned to do this walk from Monday 29th September to Thursday 2nd October but then extended it to Friday so that some of us could join in the holiday weekend activity with Mark Patterson at Mt Canobolas.

Seven of us met at the Zig Zag railway and made our way to Deep Pass. The area has been badly burnt and we had the campsite to ourselves. Tuesday was spent exploring the wonderful gorges for which Deep Pass is so well known. On Wednesday we walked up the valley and made our way to the natural bridge.

But the rains came and in the afternoon we decided to exit early; two returning to Sydney and five adjourning for a lazy couple of days in front of a roaring fire at Robyn's farm at Georges Plains.

Bill Holland

Great River Walk - Only 4 Stages To Go Wisemans Ferry To The Sea.

In November (the 2nd and 16th) the 4th last and 3rd last stages will be walked. On the first of these we will be walking through Dharug NP and reaching a lovely section of Mangrove Creek by mid afternoon at a private property with quite an afternoon tea planned. The next stage will cover a remote but fascinating part of the river through the Glenworth Valley, the village of Neverfail and on to Mt White.

After walking down river since October 2000 it is getting quite exciting to be nearing the finish line. The final 2 stages are planned for March. The walk series has gone on for so long it has developed its own mini culture with many followers completing most stages. So for something a bit different consider stages 16 and 17 of the Great River Walk (see your Spring Programme).

For more info the current edition of Australian Geographic has an article about the Hawkesbury and mentions the walk which is planned to be developed into a permanent long distance track.

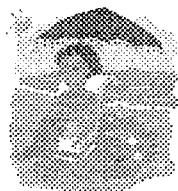
Roger Treagus

The Mid-Week Walkers:

Ten people plan to join us for the cottage stay in New England National Park at the end of this month and after our day walks in magnificent rain forest country and a roaring log fire each evening, we will be in excellent form for the next extended activity - which is

Berrara Beach Holiday Cottage - South Coast

Mon 24th Nov - Frid 28th Nov.



Beach walks canoeing on the lagoon and river, cycling beachside and on forest roads or just easy to medium bushwalks. Enjoy good company, comfort

and water views.

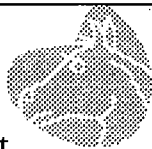
Here are the mid-week day walks in the coming month. Full details are shown in the Spring Walks Programme

Thurs 30th Oct. Garigal NP 16km

St Ives to Mt Kuringai. An easy/medium walk with water views.

Tues 18th Nov: Blue Mountains NP 12km

Mt Victoria - Porters Pass. A splendid walk with cliff-top views



Horses For Courses

Caro Ryan

The phone call went something like this:

'Good Morning, XX National Park, YY speaking.'

'Oh 'morning YY, I'm wondering if you can tell me if there are any track closures in the Park today?'

'No, there are no closures in the park today. But hang on, I've got the Horses's Mouth beside me, let me just ask.'

'Great, thanks.'

(mumble, mumble) No, there are definitely no track closures today.

'That's wonderful, thanks YY. Cheers.'

And so we set out, (6 perspectives and me) for a nice easy day walk. The sun was shining, the police helicopter was circling, the faint whiff of smoke was in the air, but no – the tracks were definitely all open. The *Horses's Mouth* had told me so.

The black cockatoos were making a racket, the water dragon was dancing, we'd just seen a well-fed goanna in a fight with a currawong and all was well with the world. It was obvious that there had been some hazard reduction burning fairly recently, and having only visited this area 2 weeks prior, I surmised that it must have happened last weekend. Hmm, if that was the case... why was it still smouldering?? Oh well, it's a beautiful day to be out, and the tracks are open after all, the *Horse* told me so.

About 1/3 along the track (5km mark) we came across a yellow & black barricade with a notice. It bore the logo of the XX National Park and had the words,

'Track Closed. Hazard reduction burn. Sat & Sun 27 & 28 September.'

The next phone call went something like this:

'Good Morning, XX National Park, WW speaking.'

'Um, hi, I called earlier this morning and was told that there were no track closures in the park today...'

'Yes, that's right – there are no tracks closed today.'

'Well, I'm on the ZZ trail and about 5kms down the track and we've come across a track closed sign and I just wanted to check to see if that is actually the case.'

'Oh, really? We weren't aware of any closures. Where are you again?'

(description)

'Oh. OK, let me make a call to the RFS and call you back, what's your number?'

(dum de dum de dum... minutes pass... nice

excuse for 2nd morning tea – besides, the sun is shining and it's a lovely day and the Horse said something about a track.)

<Ring Ring>

'Hello, Caro speaking.'

'Hello, it's WW from XX National Park here. Look, I've just spoken to the local RFS guys and ended up speaking with the Area Commander. Turns out that they are burning in the area today and they don't even want you where you've just been as it was only burnt yesterday and could flare up. Not only that, there's a danger of unstable trees falling, etc.'

'Oh, that's interesting. There was no notice at the track-head 5kms back and you guys didn't know anything about it.'

'Yes.'

'So we turn around and go back?'

'Yes.' (did I imagine that I heard a faint neigh in the background??)

So our happy little mob sat and 2nd morning tea'd whilst chatting about our options. It's still a nice day, the sun is still shining and there are bound to be tracks open somewhere.

As we turned to leave our spot, the billows of smoke moved through the blue sky and another party of about 10 people appeared out of the bushes from the same direction we had come.

Being the friendly mob that we are, I approached knowing that I was going to be the barer of bad news for them....

'Hiya! Sydney Bush Walkers here, how are you? You with a club?'

'No, we're National Parks Guides', said one of the two friendly fellows in their regulation khaki uniforms. 'Taking a group on a walk for the day'.

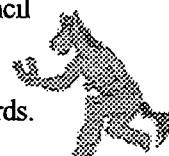
'Oh, I'm sorry I've got some bad news for you. The rest of the track's closed. In fact, we're not meant to be here either.'

'What? Why? You're kidding.'

'Neigh. I kid you not.'

The moral of the story is that it would appear that communication sometimes breaks down between the various bureaucracies that govern our wilderness. Rather than relying on them to speak with each other, my advice would be to check both (www.npws.nsw.gov.au and www.rfs.nsw.gov.au) websites or make two phone calls instead of one when planning a walk.

PS: We returned the way we came and added an extra 3kms by walking in a local council run wildflower sanctuary. We saw the most sensational array of flowers, a couple of waterfalls and not a few lizards. It was a lovely day after all.



Cockburn Plateau - Kimberleys June 2003

by Wombat

Leader : David Rostron Walkers: Edith Baker, Kenn Clacher, Bob Duncan, Helen Gray, Henry Gold, Brian Goldstraw, Spiro Hajinakitas, Rosemary MacDougal, and James & Margaret Swinton

Day 1 Saturday

After breakfast at the Kununurra motel, we were driven by minibus to the El Questro Emma Gorge Resort at the south-eastern corner of the Cockburn Plateau. After disembarking, we strolled into the resort building for an ice-cream. This was our bad mistake; El Questro have recently purchased the plateau, and except with a hired guide at an astronomical daily charge, forbade us walk across it. This was a disaster: the demanded fee was prohibitive, and their guides were mainly accustomed to lead customers along a tourist path on the half-hour walk to Emma Falls. After David had argued with them for a couple of hours, El Questro relented, and allowed us go without a guide, at the enormously reduced charge of \$90 a head. A condition of our going was that on his return David should give a report on the geography of the region; Obviously, El Questro themselves knew little about the plateau.

So, enormously relieved, we set out to climb towards the tops. On the way we met a few walkers coming back from what were probably day trips, but certainly guideless; either these walkers had been sensible enough to go out without passing through the resort, or the resort had been bluffing when they insisted on our having a guide. We climbed to a saddle, from which David & Kenn reconnoitred down the other side; they came back and reported water and a possible campsite. We followed them down and camped, most on rock slabs, though a few on grass.

Day 2 Sunday

Next morning we continued down the stream we had camped on. This became a canyon with flat road-like slabs, before dropping over a big fall into a deeper canyon running at right angles to the first. [This was a constant pattern throughout the trip; the flat quartzite plateau is broken into a checker board by two orthogonal sets of geological cracks, along which the streams zigzag as canyons.] We easily climbed down this big fall into the orthogonal crack and the main stream that ran along it. As a side trip, after dropping our packs, we first walked upstream (i.e. to the right), but encountered very cold pools that had to be swum. The skinny ones especially, i.e. Henry & I, got very cold, so we all returned to where we had first climbed down, put on our packs, and proceeded downstream. The route rapidly became a narrow and challenging canyon, but we water-proofed our packs, and clambered down the Claustal-like slot. Soon it became even narrower, with a daunting series of waterfalls separated by deep cold pools.

Most of us paused at the top of a difficult narrow slot, but to check if it was feasible for the whole party to continue, Henry, David, James, and Kenn pressed on. Henry went first and after jumping 2m into about 30cm of water, continued downstream through a V-

shaped, 1m wide, canyon until he came to a 2m waterfall. David & James caught up to him here, and reasoning that it was essential to explore further, elected Henry, as the lightest and most easily rescued member, to jump into the deep pool below and swim downstream between its dark vertical walls. At the end of a cold 20m swim, Henry reached a 3m waterfall and jumped this and continued swimming in deep cold water in a narrow almost dark slot. This next pool continued for 100m but then, to Henry's great joy, ended on a pebbly beach, with vegetation. Henry became confident that, although the timid party members would need to be thrown over the waterfalls, the route was feasible. However, after walking through this friendly area, he found himself at the top of a 10m precipice with a black pool below; and beyond this a succession of three pools in a 1m wide canyon, which finally dropped from sight.

At this Henry lost his nerve, and returned with dread to swim back along the freezing pools. But on reaching the base of the last waterfall that he had jumped, he found that he was too cold and exhausted to climb it. Fortunately however, at that moment, Kenn arrived at the top of this 3m fall, and threw him a rope; Henry failed in his first attempt to climb it, but on the second attempt Kenn, miraculously bracing himself on the smooth wet polished rock, managed to haul him up bodily. Then they both swam back through the 20m pool to the base of the 2m fall that Henry had first altruistically jumped. David and James were still at the top, and James threw down a rope. Kenn climbed up without the rope, but skinny Henry, who had now been dog-paddling continuously in frigid water for half an hour, was so cold and exhausted that he had to be hauled up by James and then grabbed by David and lifted bodily over the lip of the vertical wall.

These heroic explorers then climbed back up the slot to rejoin us, and we all scrambled back to the slot entrance, made camp, and had lunch. After lunch David, James, Brian, and Kenn climbed out of the canyon and across the tops, to reconnoitre a bypass route around the impassable slot. They discovered that the canyon route was less negotiable than even Henry had feared; beyond the furthest spot that Henry had seen, the creek disappeared into a tunnel under the next mountain.

Day 3 Monday

After breakfast, we followed the bypass reconnoitred the previous day, and climbed onto the tops. From these heights, we looked down into the horrendous slot into which Henry had ventured, and across to the enormous red cliffs that rise everywhere above this and surrounding canyons. We could see also the extremely narrow crack, virtually a tunnel, into which the creek next flowed. We descended to reach this crack at its downstream end.

And what an incredible crack it was – only 1 or 2m wide, and 200m high. Most of us climbed the small ledge into it, and explored along it, hoping to reach its upstream entry at the other side of the ridge. But the vanguard (David, Kenn, & Brian) was stopped by an underground waterfall. This downstream mouth of the crack was the only place in the whole trip where we experienced rain, but it was light and short-lived, and we easily sheltered beneath the overhanging canyon walls.

After exploring the crack, and sidling downstream a short distance, we discovered a wide flat platform forming the top of a dry waterfall. Flat viewing platforms were rare on this trip, so here, although it was only 11am, we made camp and ate lunch. A hundred metres vertically below the platform lay a large pool.

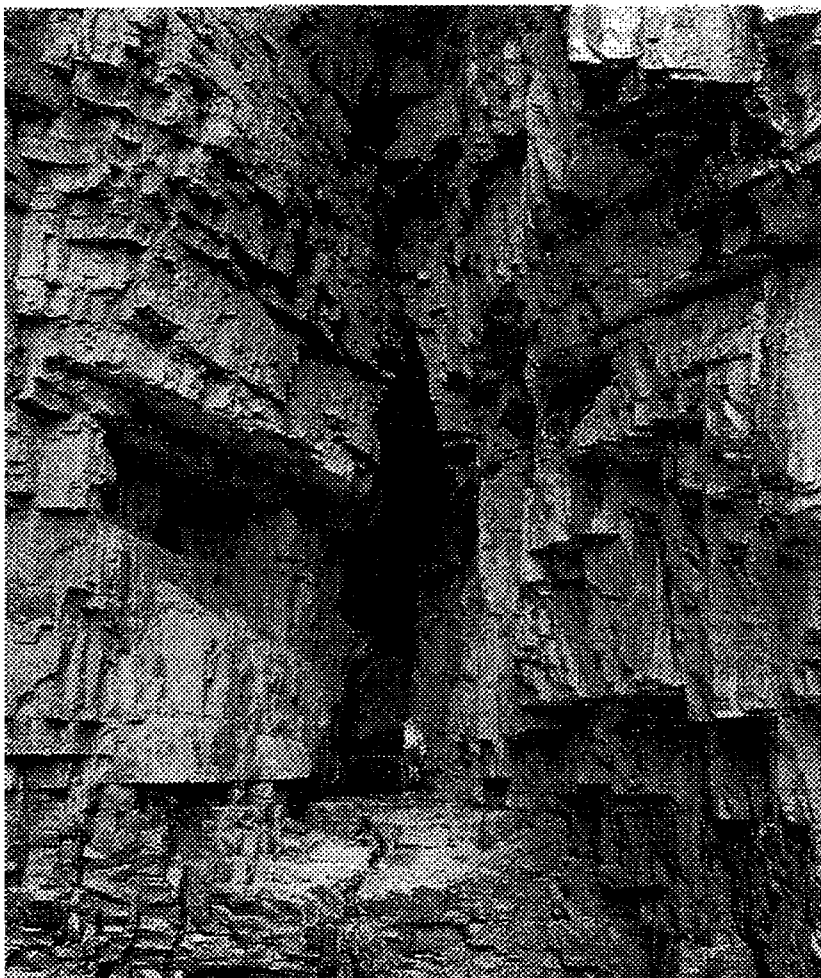
After lunch, leaving our packs, we dropped to the base of the waterfall and walked up a side creek to the right; then after a short distance, we turned right again up a side gully. This led to a magnificent pool at the base of a giant wall, and there we swam. We returned the way we had gone, but instead of climbing immediately to the eyrie that was our campsite, we investigated the large pool below it

It was warm and fed by water flowing from cracks in the cliff face; on swimming across to these cracks we found that at its source the water was hot; the cracks were geothermal springs.

We climbed back up to our eyrie, the chef for the day cooked, we ate the resulting meal, and then retired to our sleeping bags. Helen, who joined the SBWs the same day as Spiro, and has always felt a deep responsibility for him, became agitated. Because of his fear of rain, Spiro, a notorious sleep-walker who as recently as last October had wandered into the night from our sleeping cave on top of the Grampian's Mt Stapleton and become lost, had made his bed under a small overhang only 3m away from the 100m cliff edge. Helen pleaded with him to sleep further from the edge, and tie himself to a boulder, and Spiro reluctantly agreed. But then he was hit by two small rain spots (or more probably bat urine), and consequently returned to the exposed cliff edge, and ensured Helen a sleepless night.

Day 4 Tuesday

In the morning, we put on our packs, once more descended from our eyrie to the thermal pool, and then followed the creek down until it entered a 20m-wide canyon that had been explored on Sunday by Kenn & Brian. At its mouth it was occupied for its full width by a compulsory-swim pool; beyond the pool was occupied by rain forest, but after that opened out into a wider



David checks on Kenn & Brian who just ventured into the slot

Photo by Henry Gold

valley. We followed this wider valley for a short distance, turned up a side gully, and soon came to a pool where we swam and ate morning nibbles.

After the nibbles, we continued up the gully, which rapidly became narrower and filled with rain forest, and finally ended as a large pool into which "rain" constantly fell from the enclosing cliffs. A cave at the side of this pool formed the bottom end of a crevice which went right up to the plateau top, and through which we could see sky light. After a very cold swim, we returned to our nibbles spot and ate lunch.

After lunch we retreated back to the wide valley of the main creek, and scouted up another side creek to look for a good camp-site. But we found nothing, and so returned and camped in the wide valley, alongside a Boab tree, and on perilously inflammable dry grass.

Day 5 Wednesday

Tuesday had been relatively quiet, but today made up for it. We first walked down the main creek, explored another side gully on the way, and in mid-morning came to a pool and the grassy flat that eventually became our campsite. After morning nibbles, we walked up a side canyon on the true right of the main stream. While clambering up this canyon, Henry slipped and landed heavily on his

buttock on a razor-sharp knife-shaped piece of scree, hurting himself badly. But he managed to hobble back to the camp-site.

The canyon became a compulsory-swim pool, and into this Kenn lost his glasses. But after having been given eye exercises by David, he discovered, as he had always suspected, that he didn't really need glasses at all.

After the pool, the canyon branched. We first climbed the right-hand gully, which proved to be a dry scramble leading to the base of a vertical wall. To keep Helen, Rosemary, and Brian who had started later company, I climbed this gully a second time, and on coming back, at the edge of a big pool that seemed to be the upper end of the left-hand gully, we found David's clothes. We knew therefore that the canyon went further, so Rosemary & I swam across the pool, and found indeed that it entered a dark water-filled slot about 2m wide. Helen and Brian decided to take their cameras into this slot, and waterproofed them as best they could. We swam into the slot, which went on and on, and became narrower and narrower, until it became completely dark, and filled with twittering bats. We began to doubt that we would ever reach the end, but after about 200m of swimming, and 100m of wading, we came to a chock stone where we met David and the others returning. They had been stopped about 50m ahead by an even larger chock stone. Then we all waded and swam back. On the journey back I discovered that it was much easier to swim backstroke; the slot was so narrow that it confined one's arms, making forward swimming difficult, but by 'swimming' backstroke one could use ones arms and legs to push against the walls. By the time we left the slot, we were shivering with cold, and both Helen's and Brian's cameras were saturated.

But we still had to swim, one more pool (in case you have lost count), and then, as soon as we reached a sunny spot, we stopped for lunch. After that we returned to our campsite on the main creek. There we found Henry almost crippled by a haematoma bulging like a mango on his buttock, and David and James photographing this and contemplating flying him out by helicopter.

Day 6 Thursday

As dawn broke, I rolled over in my sleeping bag and saw Henry, determined to exercise his mango-sized haematoma into submission, painfully hobbling back and forth with a walking stick and full pack. When I rose for breakfast an hour or so later, he was still exercising.

Nor were Henry's the only injuries on the trip. Spiro began the trip with an enormously swollen calf muscle, incurred on a recent Mt Colong trip. Then Helen incurred a similar injury on this current trip. Rosemary suffered two falls, the first resulting in suspected (and since confirmed) broken ribs, and the second a suspected fractured coccyx. And many of the party, particularly Henry and Rosemary, were constantly plagued by water-lice and ticks. But Margaret, a true Florence Nightingale, attended and mended everyone; the only person not needing Margaret's attention was Edith; she was always clean

and well-groomed, and so agile & nimble that even at the end of the trip her unprotected legs remained completely unscratched.

Others suffered emotional injuries. Helen was fretting over her water-logged camera; she still had two photogenic trips, the Bungle Bungles and Kakadu, ahead of her. But, though Kakadu would also be a swimming trip, Rosemary, with incredible recklessness & generosity, insisted that Helen borrow her camera.

Compared with yesterday, today was lazy. We went up a side gully to a pool with fish, a resident Lyre Bird, and a geothermal shower. Just for fun, David, Kenn, and Brian, climbed up onto the tops, and returned via a gully.

Henry's haematoma gradually receded to a 3 x 15cm jet-black bruise, looking like a giant love bite, but in reality mirroring the shape of the knife-shape piece of scree onto which he had fallen. Much of the stale blood previously in the haematoma had drained down to a now black ankle. But, despite also nursing a suspected broken little finger, which he had strapped to his fourth finger, stoic Henry remained uncomplaining.

After lunch and a snooze, we walked downstream to a pool surrounded by paperbarks and a rock shelf. Here we made camp. Sleeping spots were scarce, but Helen and I were lucky enough to find coffin-shape, soft leaf-filled, slots just wide enough for one person. From such coffins, we, unlike the others, were safe from inadvertently rolling into the river.

Day 7 Friday

Next morning we continued downstream, dropped our packs at the edge of a compulsory swim, and had morning tea. Because the SPAM map suggested that another large waterfall lay further downstream, we then swam this pool and explored. David & Kenn went first; Helen & I followed, but we lost them in the rather wide valley, and continued much further than they had gone, until it became obvious that, far from promising a waterfall, the valley was flattening and widening as it approached the northern edge of the range. On the way back we encountered a large snake lying in the track we had made in the tall grass on the way down. We eventually met the others back at our morning tea spot, where we ate lunch before returning to our previous night's camp site.

Day 8 Saturday

Today, now near the northern edge of the range, we began the journey back south to our starting point at Emma Falls. After breakfast, we climbed a spur on the true right, and then a gully, onto the tops. In a slot in this gully, we saw a large python, which on the evidence of the globular bulge in its centre, had recently swallowed a wallaby. We walked some distance across the hot dry tops, and then dropped into, and walked down, a broad dry creek. Suddenly, and surprisingly, we came to a large pool below a dry waterfall, where we stopped for morning tea.

After morning tea, some of us walked further down the creek, which rapidly narrowed before dropping into a bottomless slot. This was the upstream end of the pitch-black, bat-filled, walker-freezing, camera-destroying, slot we had swum into on Wednesday (day

5). We returned to the morning-tea pool (the side trip had taken ¾ hour), for a long lunch.

After lunch we climbed a side gully and crossed the divide to the earlier-visited side creek that runs back to Monday's (Day 3) waterfall-top campsite, which again became our camp.

Day 9 Sunday

This morning we climbed the slopes on the true right to the tops. We marched east across the tops in the heat, crossed the upper gullies leading into the bat-slot of day 5, and eventually reached the sheer eastern escarpment of the plateau, from where we gazed down at the plains, while eating lunch.

Here Brian, although it was the 9th day, again fed us on curried nuts, marshmallows, jelly beans and the delicious cake that his wife Helen had cooked. We were offered more than we could eat. Brian was not the only one to feed us luxuries throughout the trip. James distributed chocolates & smoked oysters, David Mars bars & caviar, Spiro Melba toast, and Kenn cashews & soya crisps. No wonder their packs were so heavy, and ours so light.

Tramping across the tops, which were strewn with razor-sharp gibbers, uncovered a new peril, VSS, - 'Volley Shoe Syndrome'. Those of us with relatively soft-soled footwear, principally Brian, Helen, and I, suffered terribly; each step became an ordeal. By the end of the trip, my joggers had lost much of their soles.

After a siesta we struggled on, first along the escarpment, then through Cockburn saddle into an upper branch of the Emma Gorge system. We followed this down, hoping for water and a camp site, but fate seemed against us; the creek deepened to a gorge, but remained dry. Then almost at dusk we came to the top of a high fall with a pool at its base. As uncomfortable as the site was, we were so demoralised that we were resigned to sleeping there, and trying to get water with a rope and bucket.

But then David, who had gone ahead, came back and talked sense into us. It was relatively easy to climb down this dry fall, into a deep lush valley with plenty of water and good camping sites. We finally camped on the shelf of a waterfall coming in from the other side.

Day 10 Monday

This was our last day. We walked downstream to a large pool and swam. Then we walked further downstream till we reached the top of Emma Falls, where we ate nibbles, while gazing 300m down into the magnificent gorge below.

After nibbles, we scrambled up a side gully to the tops, tramped across the tops and then down a shallow valley, until we found ourselves directly above the El Questro car park. We were almost back in civilization, but before us lay a very long and incredibly steep slope covered with extremely sharp scree. Those of us whose shoes had already disintegrated suffered terribly, and were totally exhausted and foot-sore by the time we reached the

bottom.

Once at the bottom, the leaders raced along a tourist track; I followed, head down, eyes half closed, musing that in a few moments I would be enjoying the comforts of the El Questro resort: flush toilets, ice-creams, and cool drinks. But the track went on and on and on, and I became puzzled by the sight of tourists rushing back in the opposite direction. Finally, lifting my head, I saw that we were once again in a deep gorge; we were going to the pool at base of the very falls whose top we had sat on so many agonising hours ago!! If I had known that we were going to do this, I would have been tempted when at the top to risk my life and jump the 300m.

After what seemed an eternity, we reached the magnificent pool at the base of the falls. The tourists were swimming, but I was too footsore. But a rest and lunch worked wonders; the walk back to the resort was quick, easy, and enjoyable.

Thank you every one, especially the pathfinders, Henry, David Kenn, James, and Brian, for making this a trip none of us will ever forget.

Wombat



Orcs on Harley Davidsons

It was as we left the main canyon and entered a small tributary that we first heard it. At first I thought it might be several helicopters behind a ridge, but it was really more like the sound of an express train in a tunnel. It was a strange sound, and I thought about the movie 'Blair Witch' in which three young people are driven almost to the point of insanity by strange noises in the night. I was glad that I had not heard this sound whilst travelling alone in the bush after dark. I tried to rationalise the situation and decided that the wind had something to do with it, yet the day had been quite calm. One of my companions, being half way through book two of the Lord of the Rings at the time, suggested Orcs on Harley Davidsons. I tried to imagine one hundred Harleys about a kilometre away, with Orc riders shouting at each other over the roar of their engines, and decided that it was not a bad analogy.

As we climbed onto higher ground the sound changed, and then we noticed the high tension cables. They were suspended from pylons on distant ridges and sagged to just metres above the top of the canyon. Clearly the shape of the canyon had amplified the crackling of the static electricity.

Well it's nice to solve puzzles when they arise, but such a prosaic solution was disappointing compared to Orcs on Harley Davidsons.

Dick Whittington

Notice - Camp Fires and Stoves



All members are advised to check the restrictions on lighting fires in intended camping areas.

OF INTEREST TO NEW MEMBERS

Heike Krause

Hello from Heike



Fine, partly cloudy, Cool to mild, isolated thunderstorms contracting to the northern inland. Milder light to moderate southeast to Northeast winds. Local morning fog inland..... If like me you have a complete disregard for the weather forecast as per the channel news of your choice and base your decisions on what you see out the window and a gut feeling take heed... It is very easy to become complacent in attitude to packing for the weekend and even easier to forget one vital rule after pack light and that is, pack for all possible weather.

Thursday night and the room is buried under the various preparations for a weekend walk. Dressed in knickers and a t-shirt after week of "above average" temperatures hitting late 20's and 30+ degrees, I'm rubbing sweat out of my eyes thinking "light" in my decisions. Plan is off to Mt Talaterang cave camping weekend... Gosh I'm hot, cannot even comprehend the thought of picking up the woolly long-johns let alone shoving them in the pack, Beanie? Get real.... Sky shimmering blue all week, air is dry as...raincoat, um the little one, nope lots of Hakea, armour plating required better take heavy duty one. That turned out to be the only prudent decision but for the wrong reason.

Started out looking grand, sunny and mild but as we got further south and higher brisk winds and rapidly dropping temperature...damn forgot my wind stopper, bought precisely for these conditions not to worry we'll be walking soon and getting warm...Walk on we did over fabulous heath and cliff. Sun stayed out but wind got stronger in the gusts, dark clouds started to flick across, looking grey, looking grim. Thick, driving, heavy as if buckets being tossed down it came arrkkk! On with the Gortex, thank the deluging heavens I brought it, 5 mins later rain gone sun out and if in a hollow shelter for orchid hunting quite lovely and warm. Sun in and out of fast moving cloud. Great cool walking weather, invigorating winds and very dramatic backdrop for the wild "Wuthering heights" scenery.

Clambering down the rock just as we're about to hit the thick scrub, bit more of a change thwack, hey that's hail, "Nah don't be silly"....Smattering of rain...Hakea battled (on with the Gortex) afternoon tea cold and windswept (awesome views), off we go 30

minutes to camp, "Snow'!!!!... Now who's telling tales...but no t'was no tale down came the flakes soft and floating.....The temperatures of the days before were a distant dream.

I mentally sorted the contents of my pack; it was looking to be a long chilly night.... all through my stupidity and lack of forethought. I knew I was travelling south. I knew I was going up a mountain, I know through previous experience how weather changes, I know through previous observations hypothermia happens very easily, I know never to trust the forecast! I have all the correct gear and strength to carry it yet here I was caught out in the cold.

However I did not end up a complete ice maiden because of experience also, I had my heavy duty gortex (even if for the wrong reason), I had a hat, I did have groundsheets to use as windbreaks and winter weight sleeping bag. I did have a light weight change/addition of layers (which are fine after considered opinion if going north on a more geographically sheltered, low altitude mid summer route but really inadequate for between seasons where the temperatures are more fickle). Between each preparation pre-bed I got up close and personal with the fire so not to get into my bag with a lower temperature from having had the wind strip all warmth from what layers I had (hot coals put holes in my gorgeous pink reef bootie/camp slippers well, after Rennie's tunnel they already had lost some of their "princess qualities" is this the butch-ing up of this Bushie???)

So moral of the tale? Think about the latitude and heights of your trip not what is out the window as you pack. No you don't have to take the beanie as well. Your sunhat with the hood of a rain jacket will keep in heat as will a plastic bag if desperate. A long-sleeved thermal weighs little as do dry socks (which can act as gloves if *really* keeping weight down vice versa doesn't work!). Keep a lightweight groundsheet always in the base of your pack.

Have a list so essentials such as a windproof jacket and extra layers are not forgotten. I still use the one in the prospectives' handbook. Be realistically prepared for anything, anywhere. Mother Nature like any woman has the prerogative to change for no perceivable reason!

Please Welcome On Your Next Walk: Trish Lloyd, Alexander Popovski, Pam Campbell, Stephen Quoye, Steven Papp, Fiona Glynn, Sheree Anaru,



SOCIAL NOTES

Hi All,

What a sensational slide night we had in September with the group who returned from South America! Their photo's, along with the informal presentation style and huge variety of souvenirs / artifacts that they brought along made for an entertaining evening. It was wonderful to see quite a few Prospective Members there on the night too – great to have you along guys! There were even a couple who came along for the New Members night, but ended up by mistake in the slide night... great to see that they came back to join up last week!

By the time you get this newsletter, we would have had October's social night, i.e. Roger Treagus & Co. telling us about the exciting opportunities awaiting people wanting to become SBW leaders. If you missed out on the night, don't despair, you can ring Peter Love, Walks Secretary, to discuss putting on a walk at any time.

19th November is going to be another HUGE slide night for us in the Clubrooms. Trevor Kloeden took part in the Everest 50th Anniversary celebrations in Nepal in May this year. Let me encourage you to come to this night as his photos are just amazing and he has some incredible stories to tell of adventures and mis-adventures along the way. I'm sure you'll find this evening inspiring.

See you on the track!

Cheers Caro ☺

Are you on the SBW Email List?

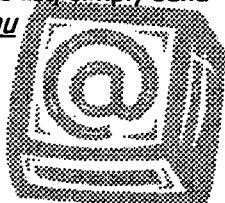
Once a month, we send out a friendly email to SBW Members and Prospectives.

Currently, we have over 200 email addresses and we'd love yours to be one of them.

Your address will not be provided to any other party and all correspondence is sent out blind (i.e. no-one else can see your address)

The email acts as a reminder of the upcoming social event for the month, along with a short note on something of interest to our members.

If you'd like to be added to the list, simply send an email to: social@sbw.org.au



At Sunday School:



"If I sold my house and my car, had a big garage sale, and gave all my money to the church, would that get me into heaven?" I asked the children in my Sunday school class.

"NO!" the children all answered.

"If I cleaned the church every day, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy, would that get me into heaven?"

Again the answer was, "NO!"

"Well, then, if I was kind to animals and gave candy to all the children and loved my wife, would that get me into heaven?" I asked them again.

Once more they all answered, "NO!"

"Well," I continued, thinking they were a good bit more theologically sophisticated than I had given them credit for, "then how can I get into heaven?"

A five-year-old boy shouted out, "YOU GOTTA BE DEAD!"

Contributed by John Pozniac



My Weekend Parking Ticket:

I went to the city on the weekend, and I had to duck into a shop to get change for the parking meter. I was there for only about 5 minutes. When I came out of the shop there was a Parking Nazi writing a parking ticket.

So I went up to him and said, "Come on, mate, how about giving a man a break?"

He ignored me and continued writing the ticket. So I called him a biro sucking idiot.

He glared at me and started writing another ticket for worn tyres! So I called him a piece of horse manure.

He finished the second ticket and put it on the windscreen with the first. Then he started writing a third ticket!

This went on for about 20 minutes...The more I abused him, the more infringement notices he wrote.

I didn't care. My car was parked around the corner.

I try to have a little fun each day. It's important

Contributed by George Mawer

Members' contributions to this magazine are very welcome. Send in your interesting stories of recent walks, letters, notices, jokes etc by mail (preferably typed), on floppy disc, by fax or by email addressed to The Editor. Email: billholl@hotmail.net.au
Fax: 9980 5476 (phone 9484 6636 first)

"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

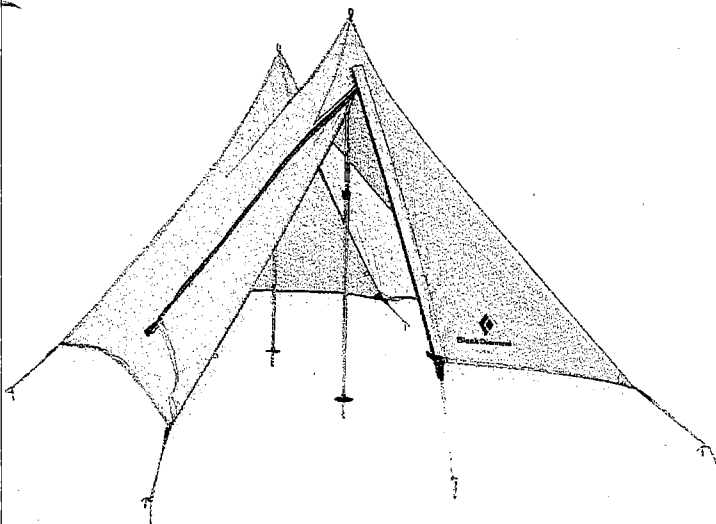
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Black Diamond Contour Trekking Pole: Trekking poles don't just improve your balance and reduce the strain on your lower limbs; they help re-distribute the load to your upper limbs as well, meaning you can keep going for longer. The Contour, featured, 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.



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