



ALAN P. RICHY

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



JANUARY 2005



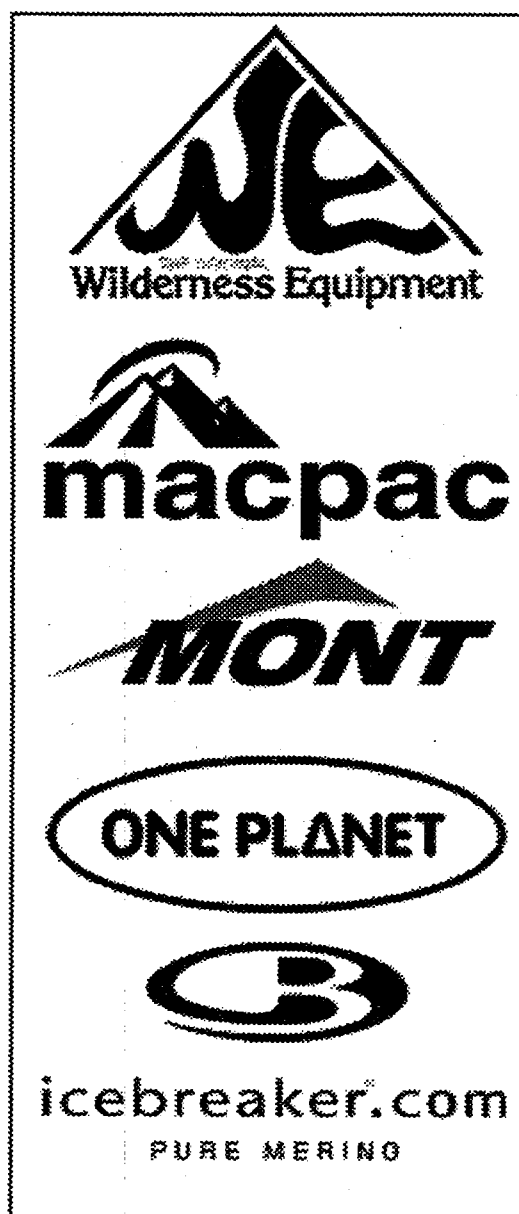
Print Post Approved PP 235723/01270



1045 Victoria Rd West Ryde NSW 2114 Tel **9858 5844**

Parking at rear of shop

- Tents
- Bushwalking Packs
- Travel Packs
- Travel ware
- Sleeping Bags
- Rainwear
- Icebreaker Merino
- Snow wear
- Bushwalking boots
- Sleeping mats
- Climbing Equipment
- Cookware
- Water filters
- GPS
- Books & DVD's
- Family Tents
- Tarps
- Camping tables & chairs



alpsport@optusnet.com.au



JANUARY 2005

Issue No. 842



A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL



THIS MONTH INCLUDES

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

Opinions expressed in this magazine are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc.

All material in this magazine is copyright. Requests for reproduction should be directed to The Editor.
billholland@bigpond.com

REGULAR FEATURES

- 3 **Message from President Maurice**
- 3 **Treasurer's Report**
- 3 **Editor's Note**
- 17 **New Members Page**
Ron Watters promotes a training weekend in the Nattai Valley
- 18 **Social Notes**

CONSERVATION

- 8 **Meet 'Old Blotchie'**
Wilderness campaigner Claire McVeigh has some good news about an old tree
- 9 **News from Coolana**
Gretel Woodward takes on task of reporting on Coolana

SPECIAL REPORTS

- 5 **Scarpa Boots Competition**
Write in and have a chance to win prizes
- 6,7 **The People One Meets at Coolana**
Shirley Dean introduces us to to Dick Monks who has an interesting story to tell.

THE WALKS PAGES

- 10 **Walk Notes**
Barry Wallace summarises your reports
- 11 **Munmorah SRA**
Richard Darke and 15 others race the tide to see "interesting" caves
- 12,13 **SBW Expedition to Hong Kong**
Susie Arnott gives "the real story" of their adventures
- 14,15 **Colo River Walk with Alison Sames**
Don Finch enjoys a pleasant weekend on the Colo River
- 16 **Wimpy Wine Weekend**
According to Susie Arnott, hardened SBW walkers are compromised by life's little luxuries

ADVERTISERS

Alpsport	Front cover
Paddy Pallin	Back cover
Newnes Hotel Cabins	5
Scarpa Boots	4
Wilderness Transit	7
Willis's Walkabouts	9

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.

The 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 on Wednesday evenings (see Social Programme) 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:	Maurice Smith
Vice-President:	Rosemary MacDougall
Treasurer:	Tony Marshall
Secretary:	Leigh McClintock
Walks Secretary:	Peter Love
Social Secretary	Kathy Gero
Membership Secretary	Ron Watters
New Members Secretary:	Grace Martinez
Conservation Secretary:	Pamela Irving
Magazine Editor:	Bill Holland
Committee Member:	
	Barry Wallace Gail Crichton
Delegates to Confederation:	
	Jim Callaway - vacant -

Contact The Committee:

Members are welcome to contact the following officers on Club matters:

President : **Maurice Smith**
9587 6325 (h) mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au
Vice President : **Rosemary MacDougall**
9428 5668 (h) rmacdougall@bigpond.com
Secretary: **Leigh McClintock**
8920 2388 (h) mcclintock@pacific.net.au
Treasurer **Tony Marshall**
9713 6985 (h) tbuilder@bigpond.net.au
Members Secretary: **Ron Watters**
0419 617 491 wattersr@bigpond.net.au
New Members Secretary: **Grace Martinez**
0405 473 029 (m) gracie_mar@yahoo.com.au

Message from President Maurice:

I wish all readers all the very best for the New Year and I look forward to lots of wonderful bushwalking during 2005.

While enjoying my seven day walk with eleven other members in the Victorian Alps starting on Boxing Day we slowly received information from other walkers about the disastrous tsunami that had occurred on the day we started our walk. As the information became clearer and the extent of the devastation expanded our thoughts turned to whether any of our members had been caught in the dreadful tsunami.

Thus far, and thankfully, I have not heard of any club member being caught in the tsunami. However, I know of at least one member who has direct family members living in one of the countries that has suffered severe devastation. I have spoken with that member and was relieved to hear that her family members were all safe.

I'm sure that as time proceeds I will hear further news of our members and their family who were involved directly or indirectly in the tsunami. I urge members to pass on to me any relevant news so that I can relay that news to our members.

As we head towards the March Annual General Meeting there will several vacancies on the Management Committee. While I'm aware that several committee members will not be offering themselves for re-election I don't have a comprehensive list of such members. So if you have the time, interest and the inclination to provide input to the committee please contact me to discuss how you can assist this wonderful club.

Since my December 2004 column the committee has not yet met, so there is nothing new from the committee to pass on to interested readers.

Cheers for now and see you on the track again soon.

Maurice Smith

January mid-Week Walk - Change Of Date

The Thursday walk on 27th January along Sassafras Gully Springwood area, lower Blue Mountains has had to be transferred to Australia Day, Wednesday 26th January, 2005. In other words one day earlier and on a public holiday. Any inconvenience is regretted.

Wilf Hilder - Leader.

The Club's AGM is on 9th March and the Club's Annual Get-together at Coolana is on 12th, 13th March

Treasurer's Report *Tony Marshall*

Statement of Cash Flows for the twelve months to December 2004

SBW Bank Account

Opening Balance January	6,745
Receipts	46,061
Payments	41,203
Closing Balance December	11,603

Receipts

Membership Fees	27,166
Advertising	1,945
Interest – General	1,213
Interest – Coolana	1,214
Interest – Conservation	523
Investment redemption	10,000
Donations – Coolana	3,355
Other	645
Total	46,061

Payments

Administration	5,327	
Affiliation & Insurance	8,516	
Magazine	7,249	
Communications	951	
Membership	765	
Coolana	2,507	Note 1
Other	319	
Investment	10,095	
Equipment purchased	1784	Note 2
SCA Grant	3,690	Note 3
Total	41,203	

Note 1 Includes rates paid to June 2005.

Note 2 Projector \$1,399, Mower \$385.

Note 3 SCA Grant now fully expended.

Funds Invested

Conservation	9,965
Coolana	29,558
General	16,839
Total	56,362

*Tony Marshall***From the Social Calendar!**Wed 16th February 8 pm A Kimberley Evening

Slides, chats and loads of great stories

Editor's Note:

I trust you all had a good holiday and the new year has started well for you.

Well, here we are in the middle of January with very hot and dry conditions in Sydney. There is the likelihood of continuing fire danger through to March meaning fire bans in most national parks, potentially dangerous walking conditions and problems in accessing good drinking water.

Whilst, personally, I will not lead or participate in a walk on extreme fire danger days, it is up to each leader to consider the wellbeing and safety of the party and make the appropriate decision..

This month we announce a competition for all readers of this magazine. This is your chance to win a pair of Scarpa boots (or other Scarpa products such as walking or casual shoes etc) together with other prizes. You do not need to be a skilled writer or literary genius. Just put together a report, article, poem or letter featuring footwear and send it in to the Editor. I look forward to receiving your entries.

This month the magazine features an article on the history of Kangaroo Valley, raising the possibility that William Throsby crossed the land that is now part of Coolana. I suggest you check the grid references stated in this article to see where he crossed the river etc.

We also have and interesting walk reports and an article on preserving 'Old Blotchie' (this does not refer to pickling your Editor)

Which reminds me? The Club has it's AGM in March and all Committee positions become vacant -including that of Editor. After three years it may be time for a change and if any of you have the time and inclination to take on the editorial role I would be please to advise and assist you with this decision.

See you at Coolana on 12th 13th March

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, or by email addressed to The Editor

Telephone: 9484 6636

Email: billholland@bigpond.com



SCARPA BOOTS COMPETITION - See Page 5

— THE ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES, CHAPTER IV_a —

NATURAL SELECTION;

OR THE SURVIVAL OF THE PERFECTLY EVOLVED.



Fig. 1: Scarpa Trek, circa 1985.



Fig. 2: Australia

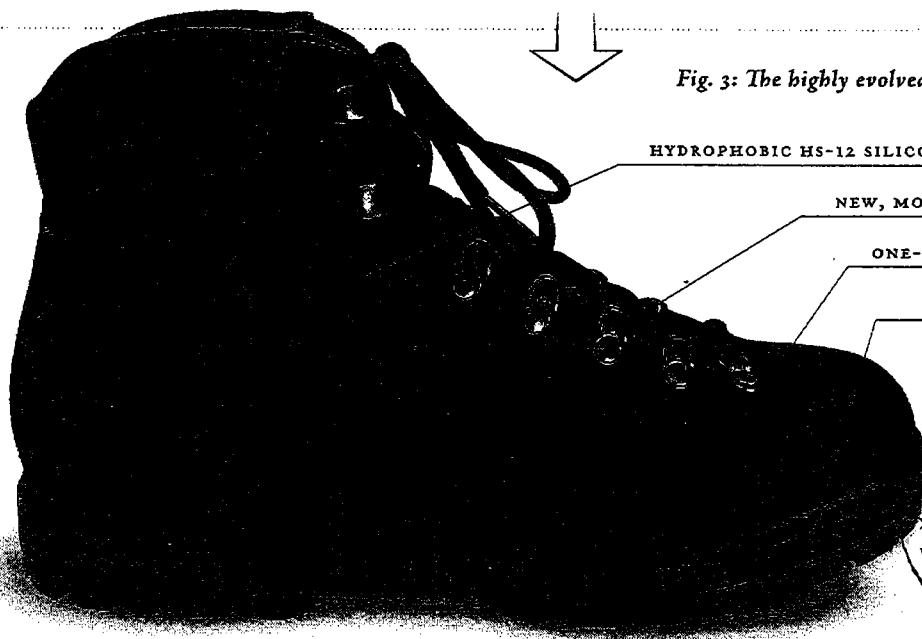


Fig. 3: The highly evolved Trek Pro, circa 2005.

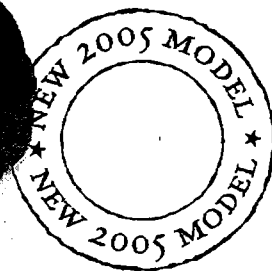
HYDROPHOBIC HS-12 SILICONE TREATED LEATHER

NEW, MORE COMFORTABLE CUT

ONE-PIECE LEATHER UPPER

VIBRAM® GRINTA SOLE

...& MORE!



ADAPT & SURVIVE. In the mid eighties, Scarpa set a new standard for bushwalking boots with the Scarpa Trek. Comfortable, supportive and practically indestructible, each handmade Trek combined the highest-quality Italian construction with a design that was completely focused on the needs of Australian bushwalkers. **REVOLUTIONARY EVOLUTION.** Now—20 years later—it's time for a few changes. The new Trek Pro has been engineered from the ground up to take advantage of modern design techniques and materials—like incredibly grippy Vibram® Grinta soles, a hydrophobic one-piece leather upper, and completely redesigned inners & cushioning. The end result is a boot that's more rugged, more comfortable and more durably water resistant than ever before—a boot that's perfectly evolved to survive Australian conditions.

Proudly distributed by OUTDOOR AGENCIES PTY LTD — call (02) 9438 2266 for your nearest stockist. sales@outdooragencies.com.au


SCARPA®



"BOOTS AND ALL"

The "Sydney Bushwalker" Competition

PRIZES! PRIZES! PRIZES!

For Your:

Short Story

Joke

Article

Poem

Limerick

Letter or Comment

* * Your chance to win a pair of SCARPA BOOTS * *

OTHER PRIZES also available!

All you need to do is submit your entry on any subject featuring:-

"FOOTWEAR"

(This may cover the choice, failure or lack of suitable footwear when bushwalking, skiing, touring or other activity)



Your entry may be humorous, serious, a personal experience, anecdotal, real or imaginary

So, start writing NOW!

Conditions:

1. Send in your short story, article, poem, letter or comment relating to an interesting or humorous experience with boots or other footwear.
2. The entry should be directed to the consequences of the choice of footwear, failure of footwear or lack of suitable footwear when bushwalking, touring etc. Brand names should be avoided.
3. The experience can be imaginary or real, personal, or anecdotal.
4. The prize for the most interesting/humorous entry will be a prize of Scarpa boots (value \$300 or you choose other Scarpa products) donated by the agents for Scarpa Boots in Australia. Other prize packages also will be awarded.
5. The judges will be Maurice Smith - President SBW, Bill Holland - Editor of "The Sydney Bushwalker" and a representative of the Australian Agent for Scarpa Boots.
6. The competition will run until the end of April with prizes announced in the May 2005 issue of "The Sydney Bushwalker".
7. Entries may be published in "The Sydney Bushwalker" as received, or at a later date.
8. Address your entry to:
"Boots and All Competition"
C/- W. Holland
216C Quarter Sessions Rd
Westleigh NSW 2120
Or by email to:
billholland@bigpond.com.au
9. Closing Date 30th April 2005

The People One Meets At Coolana.

Shirley Dean

Hilary Walker and I met Dick Monks and his wife at Coolana. Dick, who is working on his family history, had discovered that Charles Throsby was part of his family. So there they were late in the afternoon trying to decide whether the crossing from Bendeela, up through Coolana and then on through the Skanzi Gap was the route which Throsby explored in March-April 1818. Throsby was endeavouring to make his way to Jervis Bay. Below is an account from Dick Monks of his findings -

"Throsby was in Kangaroo Valley and the Shoalhaven from 29th March 1818 to 9th April. He probably followed the last (westernmost) kilometre or two of the Jack's corner road (refer to Map 8928-I-S, Bundanoon 1:25000) before descending down a very steep hill to the river flats somewhere in the vicinity of the homestead "Trendally" at 657532. He proceeded for about an hour along the north side of the river and camped probably close to the public camping area at 526688. In the morning they crossed the swollen river carrying their gear across a fallen tree and wading the unladen horses across. They then ascended in an unrecorded direction to Skanzi Gap. Throsby described the ford as a very good one, and because the local old-timers say that the one near where we recently met was well used until the dam was built I think there is a good chance that this was the location of Throsby's ford. (Coincidentally there was a tree across the stream there the day I visited!).

The previous day to get to Jack's Corner Road from the highlands Throsby had roughly followed the present Griffin's Fire trail and had camped the night on Yarrawa Creek (somewhere, between 630568 and 618566 I suggest).

In the morning he took a short diversion up to a point where he could see water emerging from a cliff face. Many have assumed that this was Fitzroy Falls, but I am convinced that it was more likely to be Crankey's Creek as there was insufficient time to get within sight of Fitzroy. (Crankey was the name of an Aborigine in the contemporary records, and he may have been one of the Aborigines who aided Throsby on this trip.) However, the party had been considerably delayed by flooding on the southern highlands, so it could have been another, intermittent, waterfall. (Now on map 8928-11-N Burrier 1:25000)

After passing through Skanzi Gap, the party followed the Burrier Road for about a kilometre to about 683493 before dropping down to the - School Creek crossing- at 684486. From there they travelled south to the Burma Rd at 6874717 and followed it to the crossing of Bugong Creek at 663457 (after field inspection of the area I think he probably took the northern branch of the Burma Rd down to the creek.) Then he probably followed Abernethy's road up to the plateau at 668447 before heading south to Kellen's Creek and Burrier. Just which gap in the escarpment he used to get into the Kellets Creek I am not sure, but they followed it for about a mile to get to the Shoalhaven. At Burrier they crossed the Shoalhaven and went via Nowra Hill and Currumbene creek to Jervis Bay, their objective. They returned via the same route.

So Jack's Corner road is only one of several current roads which should be regarded as the oldest roads in the Shoalhaven'. Other sections of current roads used

by the Aborigines, and then by Throsby on this trip, include:

1. Griffin's Fire Trail
2. On the north bank of the Kangaroo river - some of Camping Ground access road and the continuation of that road downstream to about "Trendally"
3. The entrance road to Coolana and the Skanzi Gap/Budjong road south as far as the Burma Track.
4. The Burma Track and Abernethy's road back up to the plateau
5. Either Abernethy's Road as far as the Budjong Road and thence to Budjong Vale, or possibly the 4WD track from Ilaroo up Kellets Creek, up to the plateau and north to the T intersection. (But most likely something in between these two).
6. On the south side of the Shoalhaven River: the road east from Burrier for probably at least 5km, perhaps as much as 10km.
7. A few kilometres of the road past Nowra Hill Radar Station.
8. The road down Currumbene Creek from the Princes Highway to Huskisson.

The name of the man who accompanied Throsby was Joseph Wild (conditional pardon). Wild was Throsby's right hand man on several exploratory trips and at the time one of the most experienced bushmen in the colony, having accompanied Barralier on one of his trips west from Nattai; naturalist Robert Brown on numerous excursions beyond the outskirts of Sydney, to the Kent Group of islands, Port Phillip, Port Dalrymple, Hobart and the Hunter River; and geologist A. Humphrey on his (largely undocumented and unproductive) trips. Under Throsby's directions Wild found the first pass from the Illawarra to the Southern Highlands and discovered Lake George in the ACT. Macquarie named Wild's Pass across the Cookbundoon Range after him, and Wildes Meadow is where he eventually settled down to farm.

There is strong evidence that Wild had very good relations with the Aborigines. (In his earliest years in the colony he may in fact have been what came to be disparagingly referred to as a 'combo' -someone who lived with both blacks and whites). After fairly superficial mentions of them in his 2 years circumnavigation with Flinders Robert Brown began to record a deeper interest in them only after Wild had joined him.

It is clear that Throsby shared these close relations with the Aborigines although he did find the Jervis Bay blacks to be very threatening, and thought it prudent to make a diplomatic withdrawal back to the Shoalhaven. Over the years he received considerable - and at times brave - help from a number of clans and language groups and also defended them vigorously from various threats from white people.

On this trip Bundel, a Camden/Illawarra Aborigine and Broughton from the Shoalhaven accompanied Throsby, while Illawarra Aborigines Timelong and Munnaa/Munaaria sought Throsby out and joined him before he descended from the highlands. Along this well-used track way they met numerous new Aboriginal faces among whom Honnay was recognised by Throsby for his assistance. Despite his anxieties about the Jervis bay blacks he singled out Turong from them for special mention. It is entirely possible that his difficulties with the Jervis Bay natives was due to Aboriginal rivalries involving his guides. It is also to be noted that his dealings with all of them occurred in the context of the Camden, Southern Highlands and Illawarra Aborigines having been recently hunted down in a three-month military operation which resulted in at least 16 (Including a high proportion of women and children) being driven to their deaths over the cliffs of the Cataract River at Appin.

Other whites who accompanied Throsby were George Grimes (born in the colony), William Sly (prisoner), and Thomas Waters (prisoner). George Grimes. was probably the son of the former colonial surveyor and Sly and Waters were probably assigned servants of Throsby who probably virtualled them and funded other aspects of this official expedition.

As you can see I have a pretty fair knowledge of what I consider to be Throsby's probable route, but as yet I have not produced a map. Hopefully the above description will suffice for the moment.

There are plenty of opportunities for walks related to Throsby's trip - including almost certainly through Coolana. There are a number of interesting if not challenging areas which require closer examination in the field and if a few of your members are interested I would be delighted to have the 'extra legs' to assist me in my field studies. If a small group of members of the club were inclined to help, I would be delighted to discuss with them the basis on which this might be achieved to the satisfaction of all.

There is another matter that I would like to investigate with anyone who has attempted to navigate in both the northern and southern hemisphere, but I don't want to poison the outcomes by disclosing specifics of it at this stage. For the moment I would like to say only that several expatriate (ex-hemisphere?) journal-keepers in Australia appear to have made the same sort of error including, I am currently assuming, Throsby on this trip. I think I have experienced it myself when navigating in the northern hemisphere and I would I would like to find out if others have done so too. As a layman I suspect that 'Spatial Cognition is the scientific field of study which covers it and I am also hoping to enlist the aid of someone trained in this field.

Finally, I have no objection to you sharing the above information with Club members or with the Kangaroo Valley Voice provided that, in addition to myself, the valuable assistance given to me by Dr Wolf Mayer,

Visiting Fellow ANU, and Kangaroo Valley residents Tim Hansen and Peter Gerey are formally acknowledged in every case.

I am looking forward to going down some interesting pathways with you and other members! However I am heading overseas for 12 months in February (spending some of it researching Throsby) and if anyone is interested could you please ask them to contact me by about mid-January?

Regards, Dick Monks. *Phone* 9437 4702,
Email: dick.monks@bigpond.com

**There are many articles in the Journal of the Royal Historical Society regarding early explorations. A.K. Weatherburn, The Exploration and Surveys of James Meehan between the Cowpastures, Wingecarribee River, Goulburn Plains, Shoalhaven River and Jervis Bay, 1805, 1818 and 1819) JRAHS - December 1978, gives an interesting account. However in his forward to R. Roxburgh's article Vol.66? Part 4.287, March 1981 Weatherburn admits that he possibly got it wrong and Meryla Pass was the route of Throsby's descent into the Valley. like to find out if others have done so too. As a layman I suspect that 'Spatial Cognition is the scientific field of study which covers it and I am also hoping to enlist the aid of someone trained in this field.*

NSW WILDERNESS TRANSIT

Bus To

JENOLAN CAVES. KANANGRA WALLS.

YERRANDERIE GHOST TOWN

STARLIGHTS TRACK. BUNGONIA CAVES.

WOG WOG. NERRIGA

Departs from Sydney's Campbelltown Railway Station

Via Penrith, Katoomba & Blackheath for

Kanangra Walls Mon & Wed at 11am. Frid at 7am

Returns 4pm Mon, Wed, Frid.

Via Starlights, Mittagong & Marulan for

Wog Wog-Nerriga Tues. & Thurs & Sun at 11am

Returns 4 pm Tues, Thurs, Sun.

Yerranderie Ghost Town first Saturday in each

month, returns Sun at 1 pm (any Friday min 6)

Group booking discounts or charter service

Tel 0246 832 344 Mob 0428 832 344

www.wildernesstransit.com.au



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

MEET OLD BLOTCHY *Claire McVeigh*

Clair McVeigh is The Wilderness Society's NSW Campaigner. The following article, appearing in the Summer 2004 edition of "Wilderness" the magazine of the Wilderness Society, is reproduced here with the kind permission of the author.

Old Blotchy is a truly magnificent old growth Spotted Gum tree, located in South Brooman State Forest, approximately 30 minutes north of Batemans Bay. Roughly 500 to 600 years old, with a circumference that takes nine adults to circle, hand to hand, Old Blotchy is one of the many great attractions of the Nature Coast of NSW.

South Brooman State Forest is public land- it belongs to the people of NSW. Ironically; this does not mean that Old Blotchy's future is safe. Despite his immense size and age, this King of the Forests is in fact quite vulnerable. Vandalism, soil erosion and compaction, and risks of logging mean that, without proper protection in a National Park, Blotchy could be damaged beyond repair.

Old Blotchy needs protection in National Park NOW! With the fate of trees such as this hanging in the balance, your voice is essential in ensuring their protection.

See For Yourself!

You can see Old Blotchy for yourself, either by joining The Wilderness Society on a weekend forest tour or by heading straight there yourself. We ask only one thing: please write a letter to Bob Carr requesting immediate protection of Old Blotchy and the other magnificent forests of South-east NSW.

(Call or email Clare McVeigh on 02 9282 9553 or clare.mcveigh@wilderness.org.au for info on trips, fact sheets and letter guides).

How To Get There

Old Blotchy is in "logging coupe 70" in South Brooman State Forest, off 18 Mile Peg Road. Just off the highway, about 30 minutes north of Batemans Bay on the left hand side (heading south) is 18 Mile Peg Road - a small dirt road but the entrance is fairly clear and easily accessible. Take this turn and go straight on (staying left as you reach the fork in the road) until you come to a road on the left. Depending on whether it has been raining, you can either leave the car here and walk, or turn left and follow the road until you see a path right. This takes you an open cleared patch, then back into the forest where you will see a small area for parking. The short path to the tree (max five minute walk) is behind you and slightly right. Have a great time!

Stop Press !!

On 22nd December the NSW Government announced measures to protect 6,115 hectares of the NSW south east forests by incorporating these areas in national parks. The decision promises to protect some vital areas such as the upper Deua and Monga State forests. The small South Brooman addition to Murrumbidgee National Park, which includes the 500 year old icon tree 'Old Blotchy', completes the final piece in the long standing proposal to protect all State Forests east of the highway. All forests from Ulladulla to Batemans Bay will now be protected in national park.

Protection at Last !

The reservation of Blotchy means that NPWS NSW should now ensure that its roots are protected by installing a boardwalk around the tree base. This means that the public can enjoy visiting the tree and learning about it, without causing any damage that may threaten his future. The new National Park status also means that he is safe from logging operations. This compartment of forest also marks the final addition to that area of the Murrumbidgee National Park. Please note that the area may have to be closed for a short period to allow NPWS to assess existing damage and carry out necessary work.



The Wilderness Society's South-east forest trip 2004 © The Wilderness Society Publication



NEWS FROM COOLANA

There is not a lot to report this month being such a busy time of the year for all concerned and no scheduled maintenance week-end, nevertheless Shirley, Hilary and myself managed a couple of days.

After such a splendid effort at the last scheduled maintenance week-end the property was looking as good as we have ever seen it, (except for the other

side of the creek), however one of the reasons it looked so good was that quite a lot of rain had obviously fallen over the past few weeks and everything was growing madly, unfortunately nothing is perfect and of course the weeds were starting to rear their ugly heads once again. We continued the general maintenance of weeding and in particular around all our new trees, this being our priority until they are big enough to look after themselves, but I must say the majority of the trees planted are doing just fine and this latest fall of rain will ensure their future barring accidents.

Don has nearly completed the shelving in the small shed, the materials, courtesy of Barry Wallace, being new timber which was destined for the tip therefore very economical. The installation of the shelving is a perfect job, professionally done, and next time any of our members are visiting Coolana they will see what I mean. The river was up further since our last visit and after it rained the night we were there it was up another couple of feet which was a great surprise and a wonderful sight.

The next scheduled maintenance week-end on the 15th and 16th January will be a very busy one and we will be hoping for a good team to again chop the heads off those pesky Cobbler Pegs before they seed. Each time we manage to mow prior to seeding means our maintenance hours are gradually being cut down considerably for ever and a day. *Gretel Woodward (filling in for Don Finch).*

Christmas and New Year at Coolana:

Coolana is a most enjoyable place, especially in the summer holiday season when the day is hot and the river so inviting. And, there are no crowds! So it was not surprising that there was a constant flow of members from Christmas to New Year's Eve. The New Years Eve campfire was very well attended by adults and children.

Now, let's look forward to a great get-together in March!

WILLIS'S WALKABOUTS

Enjoy Summer in Winter

Escape to the North



Enjoy the world's most comfortable wilderness: clear skies and pleasant temperatures, weather so perfect you can leave your tent at home.

You see no one else, no tracks, no 4WD's, no trail bikes, no farms – the only signs that anyone has been there before are the Aboriginal rock paintings that dot the landscape.

Have a swim with every break: clear tropical pools, perfect for swimming, pure enough to drink.

Every night brings another beautiful, spacious camp site.

Have a wander. Find your own special flowers, plants, birds, animals, rock-art, and other things unique to our region.

We handle the hassle, organise the transport, cook your evening meals and share the knowledge gained from 30 years of walking in the region.

Want more info?
Visit our website or ask for our brochure.



www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au

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

Phone 08 8985 2134 Fax 08 8985 2355

THE WALKS PAGES

Walks Notes: 7th October to 10th November

Wilf led a mid week walk on Thursday 7 October from Terrigal to The Entrance. The party of 9 enjoyed fine conditions with North-East winds from 15 to 20 kts, or so 'tis said. They modified the starting point to Terrigal due to the bus timetable. High tides, soft sand, and bluebottles along Termeil Beach also rated a mention in there as well as. All in all it was declared to be a strenuous day, somewhat compensated by the magnificent coastal views, particularly at lunch just south of Cromarty Hill trig station.

Over the weekend of 9, 10 October the "Nattai Valley/Coolana training experience No. 2" was led by Rosemary and Caro with a total of 12 participants. The president dropped in from Saturday evening for meeting and greeting and attendance during the training sessions on the Sunday. The weather was great and a terrific campfire was enjoyed by all. John Bradnam led a Saturday start walk into the depths of despair area near Kanangra Walls. The party of 5 were unfazed by all the names but did feel that Devastation Gully was not worth the visit. The Kowmung River campsite and the views from Mount Despond rated better, but the party did not dawdle and emerged unscathed at 1300 hours on the Sunday. The deferred stages 8 and 9 of the Great North Walk was deferred yet again due to a lack of starters, which must surely be a welcome relief for Wilf as an alternative to knee problems. Yes the knee is recovered, and even withstood a test trip with a 20kg pack that same weekend. Richard Thompson cancelled his 3 day walk out from Kanangra Walls that weekend due to lack of starters. A day walk, led by Jim Percy went with a party of 7 on Saturday 9th October. Conditions were somewhat hot and there were some route finding difficulties, leading to a truncated walk with the party emerging from the bush at around 1630. Jim plans to try again in King Georges Brook at a later date. Ken Smith's Sunday walk down Starlights Trail and return was cancelled due to a lack of starters.

A qualifying walk out from Touga Road in Morton National Park over the weekend of 16, 17 October went, with a party of 7 and Maurice at the helm. We know nothing more than this. Mark Patteson led a Saturday walk that weekend out from the picnic area on Mount York with a party of 12 and cool fine conditions. The group was described as sociable and many bad jokes were present. On the Sunday Patrick James led a bicycle ride and walk trip off Jambaroo Mountain to Gerringong Falls with 4 SBW starters. Conditions were cold and dry with fine views to the South-West from the head of Kangaroo Valley near Gerringong Falls. After a refreshing afternoon tea in Kiama those returning to Sydney joined the throng of vehicles and people on the traffic jammed Princes Highway.

There were no weekend walks over the weekend of 23, 24 October but Peter Love led a Saturday walk into the Colo River from Grassy Hill firetrail with 12 starters and a good time was had by all what with introductory meetings with lawyer vine and a spot of

swimming. They even extended the walk somewhat, though whether this was by popular demand or collective insanity is still under debate. Nigel Weaver's qualifying walk to Mount Solitary, scheduled for the Sunday was cancelled due to a lack of starters. Ron Watters fared better, with his Sunday walk out from Evans Lookout attracting a party of 4. Conditions started out wet and misty, but the mist cleared half way down Horse Track to reveal Govetts Leap Creek running well. This provided the great sight of Edenderry and Hillary Falls as a pounding white mass of water. On the descent from Carne Walls the weather deteriorated, with a thunderstorm bringing heavy rain, then rain persisting all the way back to Evans Lookout. On the strength of the views and the waterfalls in full spate the party rated it a good day.

The weekend of 30, 31 October saw John Bradnam and a party of 6 out in good weather on his trip in Kanangra Boyd National Park. The ascent to Mount Barallier went easily but the scrub on top turned out to be impenetrable so they dropped down to Baralliers Crown for the panoramic views. The ascent of Mount Groaner on Sunday morning exceeded expectations due to a slight overindulgence in happy hour the night before. Nonetheless the party returned to the cars by mid-day in good spirits. Despite the combination of an exploration of Mount Carrialoo on Saturday and a lazy Sunday at Coolana Chris Miller's walk only ended up with a party of 2. Conditions were good and the views from Carrialoo were described as great. Mark Patteson and Graham Conden both led Saturday walks that weekend with the party of 12 on Mark's Sydney Harbour Foreshores walk from Circular Quay to Manly enjoying cool clear weather. The 9 starters on Graham's Wollemi National Park trip out from Clarence were reported to have enjoyed a great day in the Wollemi wilderness. Maurice Smith had a party of 6 on his Blue Mountains National Park trip out from Furbers Steps. The weather was good, the views were excellent and there were no problems on the walk.

Leigh McClintoch has reported only that there were 5 starters on his weekend walk out from Wee Jasper over the weekend of 6, 7 November. Saturday saw Zol Bodlay leading a party of 9 on his walk in Marra Marra National Park over various surfaces in fine, mainly sunny weather. A couple of swim stops controlled the worst of the heat build-up. Nigel Weaver led a Sunday walk that weekend with a party of 9 on his trip from Woy Woy to Wondabyne in Brisbane waters National Park. Conditions were fine and mild to warm as the day progressed. Great views were had from Mount Wondabyne and a swim in Kariang Brook at lunch followed for a couple of brave souls. Then it was just a matter of more views up the ridge and down to Wondabyne station for the ride home.

All of which brings the walks reports for this period to an end.

Barry Wallace

Munmorah SRA

Richard Darke

This was the leader's 'second annual' visit to this beautiful area, one of the unspoiled sections of coast between Sydney and Newcastle.

15 enthusiastic members gathered at Doyalson for the car shuffle between the start at Caves Beach, Swansea and the finish 15 km away at Red Ochre beach. Maths not being the leader's strong point, this was the most taxing problem of the day. How many cars to position at each end? Which ones? Who has National Parks stickers already? Who is it turns out not to have a back seat in what otherwise appears to be a 5 seater car (no fingers pointed, though I can disclose that Ian Hill made up for only announcing the fact at the END of the walk by having a seemingly ended supply of snakes and biscuits to share around!

Once we got organised, and as we were setting out, the rain came down. However, 2 minutes later it stopped, and thenceforth we enjoyed perfect walking conditions, low twenties, with mixed cloud and sun, and a nice breeze in our faces.

This stretch of coast provides terrific variety, with it's mix of heath, beach, rock platform walking, and some interesting cliff climbs. Lots of deep inlets, the sea a wonderful range of light to inky blue hues. Half way along, Catherine Hill Bay was holding a SLSC competitions. We swam there and at two other

spots, the walk being timed to get to Timber Beach and the Pirates Cave at exactly low tide and lunch time.

It's only possible to get into the cave a few times a month, on the lowest tides, and without too many waves. As usual, getting in was a challenge with the water surging from calf to chest deep at times, so timing was everything, and made the entry 'interesting'. Once inside, what appears initially to be a minor cave dramatically opens up to a cathedral vault-like roof span, with waves booming in through outer entrances, and lots of noise - very impressive!

Moonie Beach is also a highlight of this walk, positioned as it is on the old colliery land at Wallarah which has not long been closed, freeing up access at last to this lovely secluded cove, much appreciated by our Group.

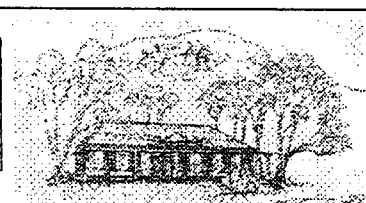
The many rock pools are also an endless delight on this walk, especially at such a low tide. And the four slightly exposed cliff climbs added a bit of spice to the proceedings, while the final descent to the nudist beach at the end comes as a bit of a surprise to modest, shy walkers.

This is such a nice walk it is worth repeating, so hopefully the Third Annual visit will go ahead sometime next Summer.

Richard Darke.

NEWNES HOTEL CABINS

Wollemi National Park



Surrounded by the wilderness of Wollemi National Park, spectacular sandstone cliffs and the historic ruins of the former shale oil mining town, Newnes Hotel Cabins invite you to stay in their newly completed cabin which offers spectacular views of Mystery Mountain from the front verandah.

This is the ideal base for numerous bushwalks in the area.

Our cabin can accommodate up to 6 people and is equipped with a modern kitchen, bathroom, 1 bedroom with a queen sized bed, and four single beds that double as comfortable seats during the day. Built with ecologically sustainable goals in mind, this spacious cabin also suits the requirements of disabled guests.

We also offer accommodation in our on-site caravan and campground.

Visit us at our website at www.lisp.com.au/~newnes or give us a ring on Ph.: (02) 63 551 247

SBW Expedition to Hong Kong, 13 – 21 November, 2004

Susie Arnott

Leader : Richard Darke Participants : Alan & Suzanne Sauran, Anne Maguire, Graham Byrne, Frank Grennan, Kenn Clacher, Marie Rose, Susie Darke, Pamela Irving, Joelle Morin, Valerie Joy, Michael & Susie Arnott, Marian Plaude, Peter Blackband, Steve Bradbury.

For those familiar with Alan's account of a certain SBW expedition to Hong Kong's Victoria Peak, I hasten to add the following in our defence.

According to Lonely Planet, travelling by Hong Kong's Mass Transit System is 'child's play'; but they do add the following qualification, 'About the only problem you may have in using the system is determining the appropriate exit for your destination.' Well, yes. The name of the ticketing system, 'Octopus Card', should be a warning; you need to BE one to find your way out.

However, with typical SBW resourcefulness, we did in fact, all find our respective ways to the meeting place for the first day walk. Standing out somewhat in the crowd of Hong Kongers on their way to the office, with Richard our leader at the helm, we dived into the MTR maze for a fifteen-minute ride, then climbed onto a double decker bus which took us winding around vast roundabouts, past apartment buildings of jaw-dropping size – people LIVE up there?? – then out into the countryside.

(Each walking day began with a similar commute, less than an hour from the bustling city centre, and all accessible by the brilliant Octopus Card, Australian technology, apparently, which begs the question . . .)

In hazy, overcast conditions we climbed off the bus at Pak Tam Hau, in the Sai Kung East Country Park, roughly thirty kilometres north east of Hong Kong in the New Territories. We took advantage of the 'amenities' (the first of many we would visit along the walking trails, in vastly varying conditions of cleanliness!), and set off along the concrete path which took us around a bay and then up to an elevated point where we gazed across low scrubby hills sloping gently down to our destination, the beaches of Tai Long. To our left, the path continued across a ridge then steeply up, threadbare with erosion, off into the distance to a ridiculously high point called Sharp Peak (468m). The more sensible headed straight down for swim and lunch, including Richard to find Suzy, who'd been abducted by a well-meaning group of local Sunday hikers. The reduced group advanced to the end of the ridge as far as the sign; 'Warning : the trail to Sharp Peak is very treacherous and difficult'; where a few more headed down for rest and sustenance. That left only six for the climb to the top, a scramble under the sun which had just come out. We got there, and enjoyed a triumphant SBW picnic to rival the best, with sunlit views north-east over beach-fringed islands out to the South China Sea, and north-west to the distant coast of mainland China, its urban sprawls huddled beneath looming mountains. We took a hot, exposed track down the mountains, (except Kenn who went cobra-hunting in the jungle), to a beautiful beach and welcome splash for hot feet and heads, finding the others suitably relaxed at a café which sold water to parched Sunday walkers at a price which enabled

them to shut for the week. After a further hour through the hills with sparkling views over the water, we reached the end of our walk to find a minibus waiting with just enough room for us all. No coincidence, the availability of transport where and when you want it being one of the delights of walking in Hong Kong.

The day didn't end there! An exquisite seafood dinner on the waterfront at Sai Kung, then back to the hotel for hot showers and comfortable beds, raising (some would say lowering!) the bar forever for these SBW members.

For our second walk we took a ferry west over to Lantau Island, then a minibus to Nam Shan where we headed off once more in haze, but with a cool breeze, to follow a winding path of stone steps upwards through scrub and grass scorched by earlier hill fires. We passed way above the massive apartments and runways of Chek Lap Kok Airport, built on 9.5 square kilometres of reclaimed land (once the habitat of the Chinese pink dolphin – very few of which survive), and continued on to Sunset Peak (869m). From there a long descent took us to Tung Chung Au and lunch with about thirty naval cadets who'd been out for eleven days (so you can camp overnight if you really want to!), then most of the group opted for the bus on to the Po Lin Monastery while a handful decided to go up and over Lantau Peak (at 934m, the second highest peak in Hong Kong.) Hundreds of steps later we stood at the summit and picked out distant islands and coastlines in the haze which Richard assured us had been clear views five years ago, before China started belching industrial fumes into the air. On the way down, 'death by a thousand steps', Steve's soccer-knees wept aloud, but for inspiration and guidance we looked towards the 28 m tall bronze Buddha sitting serenely in the valley. We arrived at the Po Lin monastery in a state of exhilarated exhaustion and gazed up at the peak we'd ascended and descended, before tucking into vegetarian food and Liptons Tea!

The rest day allowed a sampling of the delights of Hong Kong. Intriguing names tempted; the ladies' market, night market, flower market, bird market, jade market. Or of course the camera shop, antiques, fashion boutiques; or the pet shops, one street of puppies, one of kittens. Or a neck-cracking gawk at the 88 storey 'Two IFC' building. In the afternoon a group ferry trip to little Lamma Island, just south of Hong Kong Island, a haven for old hippies where an hour's walk lead to the wharfside restaurants of Sok Kwu Wan. At the 'Lamma Hilton' we tucked into another memorable seafood dinner, this time with free beer and French wine thrown in!

Back into the New Territories and Walk No. 3, where we SBW Immortals tackled the 'Eight Immortals'! This ridge of eight peaks crosses the Pat Sin Leng Country Park about thirty kilometres north of Hong Kong. Posters at the information office urge the walker to 'Respect your Hiking Leader' and

'avoid mishaps' so, suitably reminded, we set off to climb the nature trail up the wooded hillside with views back over Plover Reservoir. The sun shone through clear sky as we left the trees for the top of the first (and smallest!) Immortal and took in the view, the stone steps clearly visible in the low grassy scrub, stretching out before us, 'undulating' along the ridge. Hong Kong on one side, mainland China on the other. Atop each Immortal a signpost gave its name in Chinese characters and an arrow showed progress along the ridge. At lunch on the stone steps in the shade we looked back at the trail we had walked, then set off for the final assault on Immortal No. 8, Wong Leng (639m). We gazed across the water far away to high rise Sha Tau Kok in China, then headed down, once again into woodland, passing family shrines and emerging amongst the market gardens of Kan Tau Tsuen.

Even in this apparent outpost, a bus came along within minutes to whisk us back to the train and the city, where hot showers waited, and dinner next door to our hotel with beer and wine from the 'Wellcome' (sic) supermarket opposite.

Cloudless conditions for Walk No. 4, a return to Sai Kung Country Park, this time to the western part. After hopping off the bus and peering through the windows of an old house renovated as a weekender (Richard and Kenn even got a guided tour from a proud owner!), we walked through terraces which had once been rice paddies but now remained a dried up relic of the past. Beyond a bay another climb gave clear views over Plover Cove Reservoir before we turned inland on a hot rough trail reminiscent of certain Australian walks! After lunch in whatever shade we could find in a cluster of rocks overlooking the water in the distance, we marched over more hills and into Cheung Sheung village to sit in the shade with water but no Tofu (that's only on weekends). Graham had a friendly chat with a wild cow (these once-domestic beasts now roam Hong Kong) while the more nervous of us scurried past, then our last climb of the afternoon rewarded us with all-round views over harbours and peaks, in particular a smug look at Sharp Peak for those of us who'd climbed it on Day 1! And just below us, the path wending off to a road, where of course a bus came to pick us up and transport us back to the comforts of city living.

How to describe the shopping day in Shenzhen? Like a Westfield only five times as big, all in Chinese, and you have to get a visa and cross a border to go there! Where illegal pedlars run all over the place to avoid police raids (with you in tow if you're trying to buy something from them!), pirate DVDs appear mysteriously out of ceiling panels and watches from the middle of loud speakers! Where 'fake' fake handbags are sold in the shop but 'real' fakes are sold in the secret room at the back, through the false door behind the shoe shelf (just ask for Sally, or Jenny, or Suzie). Where shop keepers run after you and try to drag you back to

bargain further. Veteran shopper Joelle had the merchant weeping 'I'm ruined!' as he handed over her 'designer' sunglasses at rockbottom price; closet shoppers Valerie and I got home after 8pm having sent Mike back at 4pm with the first container-load; canny Kenn headed straight for the mountaineering shop to negotiate a whopping bargain on a jacket; Marian got a new lining for her coat, stitched and delivered to the hotel the next day; but did Pamela ever get those DVDs after the police raid?

And so to our last walk in Plover Cove Country Park, the furthest north and closest to mainland China. Climbing off the bus in Luk Keng, some pottered among family temples and tombs while others (led astray by Tony our accompanying local expat) drank hot chocolate at the café. A false start on a path which dwindled into impenetrable scrub led to the temporary misplacement of Suzanne, however we eventually set off on a path by the water looking straight across the Starling Inlet to the high rise of Sha Tau Kok mainland China, glistening in the morning sun. The peaceful water belied its gruesome past when desperate Chinese regularly became shark bait as they tried to swim over to British Hong Kong. We came across an elderly Hakka gentleman cooking his lunch over a little stove: a fresh lobster he'd just pulled from the sea. The Hakkas (Cantonese for 'guest people') migrated from north-eastern China in the late 1600s, and lived off the land and the sea. Our path wound past several of their villages, now jumbled ruins of a simple rural lifestyle, left deserted with the move to urban living over the years. We found tombs containing urns with the bones of ancestors, and ornately decorated temples.

Late in the afternoon, Richard and Tony, worried that we might run out of daylight, ushered us on ahead promising to follow as soon as everyone had caught up. The advance party reached an intersection of paths. Despite Peter's sound navigational advice, Frank's efforts to read the signs and Annie's to hail down a passing ferry, we remained unsure and so, like good SBW members, we waited for our leader . . . and waited . . . and waited, eventually sending back scouts to find out what could possibly have happened to the others. Snake bite? Doc. Marie administering anti-venom? Hmmm. A fall? Off the concrete path? Hardly. The reason for the delay? Beer. Yes, beer. Well, they couldn't go past such a nice little road stall, now could they? . . .

We finished the walk as evening approached and hailed the waiting taxi who called some of his colleagues to transport us back to civilisation, and out to our final dinner together; items nos 1 to 50 on the Chinese menu and lots of green tea!

From all of us lucky enough to have been part of the group, 'Thank You', Richard, for a memorable trip bursting with energy, interest and a whole heap of fun!

Susie Arnott



PAY ATTENTION - Please ensure that you carry adequate water in these hot and dry walking conditions!

Colo River Walk with Alison Shames 4-5/12/2004.

Don Finch

The final twelve walkers started to assemble from 6:30pm on Friday 3rd at the appointed spot, one kilometre along the Culoul Range fire trail. Ros reported ill and left work early on Friday to return home to bed a disappointed non-starter. The weather was quite cool with low cloud and a light breeze prompting Jim to get a fire going for warmth and cheer this was done until about eleven.

At 5:30am the early birds were out of bed getting ready to meet the leader Alison Shames' edict of a 7:30am departure for Hollow Rock car park. Advice from Wilf indicated that a small tree which was across the road two weeks previously needed temporary ramps to negotiate. So an early start was made by Don to see if the chain saw would help. It did. The group was finally all together at Hollow Rock car park and after the usual formalities we moved off about 8:15am. Initially walking back along the road but after a hundred metres our leader led us off into the scrub on a bearing of 101 degrees magnetic until we cut an old road, this was followed for 700 metres to a cairn indicating the start of a track, which we followed along the Boorai Ridge. As we came down the hill into the saddle north of spot height 484 the track came onto an old road at a substantial cairn. The remains of this fire trail were followed along the ridge top to the end at grid reference 699197 (AGS66). Morning tea was declared and taken with relish. A few hundred metres past the end of the road a rock platform and cliff provide a spectacular view into the Colo River. Including a clear view of Barakee Creek and surrounds where we were intending to find traces of Townsend's survey track and a cave used by his party. Wilf and others had located these traces on previous trips.

The leader led us down through a cliff line along a rocky ridge and then down a cairned track to emerge on the Colo River 100 metres up stream of Boorai Creek. We crossed the river to a very large sand bank and found ourselves at our lunch and campsite at 11:00am. Tents and flys were erected in the preferred spots provision made

for the evening campfire and it was announced that the side trip would start after lunch but before one o'clock. The weather which had been mild all morning was now starting to warm up.

Don was given the job of leading the party up to find the track which was known to be somewhere up the western side. But having led the party up into an impossible section of the cliff a bloodless coup occurred and Roger, John and Francis set off to retrieve the situation. After several false starts, Alison who had been there before remembered the way and we moved further to the left (south) where James, Kelly and Stephen found separate ways through the steep broken cliff line. Above the cliff line at 190 metres ASL, 70



metres above the river were remnants of Townsend's survey track. The party gathered and waved down to Jim and Caroline who were on guard duty at the camp below. The track was followed to the west along a wide ledge dotted with angophoras an enormous orange cliff soared up on the south side and the cliff drop down to the river to the north provided a clear view up the Colo gorge. The consensus was that it would have been a most spectacular train ride if Townsend had been able to build his railway line.

The track is well formed and easy to see in some places, trees are growing in the middle of it in other places and scrub hides it completely in other places.

The track disappears into the small creek at GR 693189 it was followed around the ridge into Barakee Creek at GR 689193 and again followed around the ridge north of Barakee Creek to GR 692196 where a wall of built up stones a metre high brings the track around a corner onto a down sloping ramp. The track zigzags down to the creek with several more substantial rock walls built up along the way one of which is over a meter high at one and 5 meters long. In the creek on the northern side at GR 692196 is a low overhanging cave and given the presence of flood debris caught at the back of the cave it is subject to flooding by the creek from time to time. On the floor of the cave near the eastern end are about 12 crowbars and what appear to be wedges all very badly rusted. These relics from 1920 were not disturbed. The track was followed 250 metres past the cave to the east and around the corner to a point above the Colo River. Several more man made rock walls were noted on this section of track. It was possible to get down to the river from the cave on either side of the creek, on the true right side side high above the creek to the ridge leading down to the junction and then fiddle down through the cliff on the creek side. A very refreshing swim was had in the pool at the junction and it was noted that some birthday suits were showing signs of wear. An easy amble in the now very hot afternoon down the river to the camp was enjoyed with the leaders assurance of happy hour for all of the good kids.

Happy hour took place but was mostly missed by your scribe who had taken his ease on a far too comfortable bed under a fly net and woke to the left overs an hour too late. Did I mention the flies, black bush types and lots of them? At dusk the odd mosquito reinforced the definite need for the net which was packed JIC. With dinners on the coals and fire smoke annoying various people the leader announced an 8:00am start in the morning to go up Barakee Pass.

At 8:00am, with Caroline left in charge of the camp eleven people with water moved off up the river to the creek at GR 694192. We went up the creek thirty metres and then climbed the slope to the west up to the cliff then sidled around to the right and climbed up through a cave and then fiddled up through the cliff line to find the track we had been on the day before. Climbing higher and angling to the right we passed around the impossible bit of the cliff to a more broken section just around the corner. Roger found a cairn and a zig zaging route was followed more or less straight up through the cliff to GR 690190 some awkward sections required a joint effort with John hauling up Alison, Rosemary and Don. The cliff claimed several bits of skin from various members during the scramble. Stephen lost some visual perception when he took off his glasses and he immediately walked into a rock losing skin, some red fluid and control over his vocabulary for a short time. At the top, a short easy sidle east onto the nose of the ridge brought us to a view up and down the river. The day was very hot and Margaret made a determined effort to off-load her chocolate-laced scroggin before it melted, liquid filled M&Ms are quite a nice surprise. The twenty-minute break soon passed and it was then back the way we had come to the survey track, which was then followed back around to above the camp at Boorai Creek. A careful descent through the cliff brought us to the river at 11:30 am where swims were most appreciated as the heat of the day was now in the stinker class, the sand on the river bank was too hot to walk on.



Lunch was all over by 12:30 pm and with storm clouds gathering from the west people started packing for the climb up the hill. At 12:40 pm it started to sprinkle and as the last walker started up the hill it rained with lightening all the way to the top. The good bit was, of course, the drop in temperature. Quick time was made walking along the fire trail to an afternoon stop on the 500-metre contour just past the cairn at GR 718211. The damp and a light breeze kept the temperature under control for the walk back to the cars where we arriving at 3:45pm after a very enjoyable walk well led with pleasant companions.

Mid - Week Walkers

We are now in the planning stage for some extended activities in the months ahead. At present, plans include a stay at the Berrara Beach holiday cottage (deferred from December) and a week at Currawong. Dates are yet to be determined.

Other possibilities include another houseboat trip (this time on Myall Lakes) a week in cottages near Jenolan Caves, a camping trip at Washpool National Park or perhaps a visit to Fraser Island.

Suggestions are always welcome and if any of the above appeal to you let me know and I'll add your name to the list.

And don't forget to study the walks programmes for the regular midweek day walks. These offer an opportunity to walk during the week when walking tracks are quiet.

If you are interested in joining in any of our activities, or just wish to receive the monthly newsletter please give me a call.

Bill Holland 9484 6636

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.

"www. Wimpy Wine Weekend For Weary Walkers. sbw.org.au" Susie Arnott

Leader: Mark Patteson **Participants:** Susie and Mike Arnott, Steve Bradbury, Kay Chan, Richard Darke, Frank Hartigan, Pamela Irving, Tony Manes, Jenny Paton.

Hardened SBW bushwalkers find themselves compromised by life's little luxuries in the Orange wine country on the Long Weekend, 2nd – 4th October, 2004

In Sydney it pours. By Blackheath, it's bucketing. Huddled inside the Wattle café, we voice enthusiasm about catchment areas, but keep silent our secret fears about the state of the camping spot if the deluge hasn't stopped by Orange . . .

Near the base of Mount Canobolas, an extinct volcano near the town, we climb out of the car into the mud and survey the site where we are to sleep. The rain has indeed stopped — blown away for the moment by gale force winds which lash at the tall gums above our heads.

We are seasoned bushwalkers with many a wild stormy night in porous tents under our belts. And yet we stand, hesitating, till somebody (I divulge no names) says, 'Maybe there's a pub in town.'

The relief is palpable. 'Too old for all this', 'Nothing to prove', 'Been there, done that'. One call on the mobile, and we're heading for the Hotel Canobolas, currently being restored to its former grandeur, with one hundred rooms, and space for us.

That night, eight Wussy Walkers lie warm and dry, listening as rain pelts down on a solid roof which neither flaps nor leaks.

Saturday dawns, sparkling over the wide streets of Orange, lined with elegant residences well into their second century. Beds of pansies, daffodils and bluebells splash colour through cool and leafy Cook Park, named in 1882 after Captain James. Historic Duntryleague nestles behind its greens and fairways, dotted with golfers already out after sumptuous breakfast. Rhododendrons line the way, dazzling against the blue sky.

At the Mountain Tea House, we leave cars and hoist daypacks, mindful of our reputations as walkers. Barely pausing to take breath, we march straight to the 1,396 metre summit of Mt. Canobolas, there to find a car park (for the less fit or just plain sensible) and a lookout. With nothing higher west until Africa, the view spreads over Orange and the Cabonne Country, a lush, undulating landscape sprinkled with orchards, vineyards and yellow fields of canola.

The track leads down through alpine grass and stands of snow gums to Federal Falls, impressive after the rain. A climb behind the waterfall leads to a grotto in which to sit dry and watch the curtain of tumbling droplets. The top of the Falls affords a spectacular viewpoint for a well-earned picnic lunch.

Two hefty afternoon climbs restore bushwalking honour; first, Young Man Canobolas, then nearby Mount Towac. The perfect weather extends into the evening, spent camping near the summit of the mountain. There is little to rival good food and wine round a fire beneath a night sky studded with stars . . .

The walking done, the following day is spent sampling cool climate wines; the grape growing district around Orange being the highest in NSW. at 860 metres.

In a minibus driven by Mark's dad, the sprightly septuagenarian Ray, we set off on our tour of four wineries carefully researched and selected by our dependable leader, each one different and offering something special beyond excellent vintages.

At Ibis Wines, three ancient dogs, Gabby, Portia and Malo, rush out to greet us, and frolic with balls in the garden while hosts Phil Stevenson and Susan Sanders introduce their range of wines plus home-grown relishes and chutneys. Two pillowcases hang from a post in the sun, each with a tiny joey inside, tended by WIRES member Susan.

At Ross Hill, Peter and Terri Robson have set up a railway carriage from the 1954 Sydney – Melbourne Daylight Express. After wine tasting and a picnic lunch, Sonia Begg shows us her edible snail farm, a research project begun in 2003. Tiny hatchlings thrive in gardens of specially grown lettuce in tailored rock landscapes, until they are large and juicy enough to harvest for the table.

Down the road waits Bloodwood, established in 1983 by Rhonda and Steven Doyle. Their sought-after wines sport distinctive labels, illustrated by Wayne Harris, and a close look at them dispels all seriousness from the business of sampling. Who could resist a rosé named 'Big Men in Tights' — with a choice of 'property developer' or 'election' label, wickedly tongue-in-cheek offerings from ex-librarian Steven? Not to mention his aviary of prize-winning budgies.

Dark clouds loom over the Cargo Road Winery, as those still up to it swill and gargle 'cool climate wines with altitude', notably the rare red 'Zinfandel'. The café offers steaming mugs and a wonderful view as a wild storm breaks. The pelting rain sends lorikeets diving into dense foliage, and we wonder how the little snails are faring.

This time, the decision is made without a moment's hesitation: these wussy walking wine tasters won't be in tents tonight!

Thanks to Mark, Florrie and Ray for all the hard work organising such a different and enjoyable weekend.

We all had a www.great.time@orange.nsw.au!!

NEW MEMBERS PAGE

Nattai Valley / Coolana Training Experience No. 3 *Ron Watters, Walk Co-ordinator*

This successful weekend event will be held for the third time on 16 and 17 April 2005. Autumn is a delightful time to walk, not too hot and not too cold.

The walk is specially designed for new members to facilitate transition from day walking to overnight walking by providing experience in preparing, packing and carrying an overnight pack in conditions that can be expected on a weekend walk.

Successful completion provides a good basis for the new members overnight qualifying walk on 14 and 15 May to Goolara Peak-Quart Pot Ridge and the Cox River Valley.

The Experience Is In Two Parts. On Saturday you will walk with full pack from Welby near Mittagong into the picturesque Nattai Valley following a circular route. The walk is in fact heart shaped. The full group walks a common route to lunchtime beginning with some off track walking and following the historic Box Vale track through the fern filled cuttings and old railway tunnel. View the Nattai Valley from Box Vale Lookout. Then its down the historic incline used in the 1880's to haul coal. For every metre forward you drop one metre on a rocky slope arriving at the Nattai River 180 metres below for a well earned lunch.

After lunch the group splits in two. The more challenging option goes downstream along the route of the Mittagong – Katoomba walk and back over Mount Waratah to an abandoned coal washery. The easier option goes on track upstream through the Natural Arch and up the 40 foot falls to the Welby Track Head from where they drive around to rejoin the others.

Easier does not mean a doddle. The track has river crossings, exposed tree roots, step ups over rocks, sidles across hills, logs to go over or under and ups and downs. It is all meant to show a sample of what to expect on an SBW walk. A sustained effort over 6 hours, excluding breaks is needed. So you need to be fit. Some day walks over varied terrain requiring a sustained effort will have you in good shape for the Nattai..

The leaders recognize that the walking ability can vary widely on an event like this. They will guide and assist when needed. But you will not be mollycoddled. All the leaders ask is that you stick at it and be cheerful. There are two leaders assisted by two co- leaders for each walk option. Before the walk packs are weighed. I cannot emphasise too strongly how important it is to keep weight down. Heavy packs use up energy. They put you off balance off track.. A check is made to ensure packs are properly adjusted and that no items are outside the pack. Gear hanging off packs gets caught on bushes and jams between rocks.

Talking of leaders, I am now assembling the teams. Leaders, I commend this experience to you. You will get the opportunity to meet new members. It is great experience, particularly for new leaders, or aspiring leaders, in getting a team to work harmoniously together in a social setting. Leaders are rotated for each Nattai Valley/ Coolana experience so that the work load is spread and that the maximum number of

leaders can have the experience. It also allows new members to meet a range of leaders.

At the end of the walk the party drives to Coolana, the club's beautiful riverside property in the Kangaroo Valley. That will take an hour. Enjoy welcoming rum and barley, set up camp and gather around the fire for happy hour.

After breakfast on Sunday there are three round robin training sessions on walking related topics presented by the leaders and a short walk on the property introducing rock scrambling technique and pack hauling. Participants will be issued with a schedule setting out the topics, presenters and composition of the groups.

Mid afternoon, evaluation forms are distributed so I can hear from you and better plan the next experience. Then its off to the Kangaroo Valley village for milkshakes and fudge, or whatever takes your fancy and home.

Oh and a volunteer is needed to take photos for the web and write an article of the experience for the magazine before the events pass into distant memory.

Expressions of interest to Ron Watters, Co-ordinator, 9419 2507, mobile 0419617491,

wattersr@bigpond.net.au to obtain walker's kit with more information on the walk, the training activities, menus and gear

19th, 20th February Coolana Training Weekend

Training in Navigation, First Aid and Bushcraft

This weekend is ideal for New Members. It offers a pleasant social weekend at Coolana in the beautiful Kangaroo Valley. We can assist with tents and other camping gear and there is a shelter on site. SBW members are also encouraged to attend and assist with training and social activities around the campfire on Saturday evening. Activities start on Saturday morning and finish about 4pm on Sunday.

Phone: Bill Holland 9484 6636 (m) 0418 210290
billholland@bigpond.com

Phone: Patrick James 95679998 pjames@idx.com.au

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
Sleeping mat:	\$5
Ground sheet:	\$2
Tent:	\$20
Complete kit	\$50

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

Equivalent refundable deposit required.

Contact: Geoff McIntosh 9419 4619

SOCIAL NOTES

Greetings! from your Interim/New Social Secretary: **Kathy Gero**

As you all (probably) know, Caro has had to abdicate from her regal role as social secretary due to work commitments. On reading a club email from President Maurice requesting a volunteer to fill this role till the March AGM, I thought I would like to help out as my work commitments in this period are minimal. My offer was instantly accepted..

As many members know, I am mostly involved in the walking side of club activities and have been a member for over 20 years. I am a seasoned traveller and it is only due to my love of hiking (thanks to SBW) that I have been to so many walking areas on this planet; from Africa, Asia, North & South America, NZ and of course many areas in Australia. Indeed, the last time I visited my hairdresser (having just returned from Ethiopia and trekking in the Simien Mountains), he suggested I write a book about my hiking adventures.

So now for about 3 months I hope to provide some interesting entertainment and enlightenment to the social evenings on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at our clubrooms. If you have never come to a SBW social, try to do so: it is always fun, a learning experience and provides an opportunity to see fellow members in gear other than their grotty shorts, tees and muddy boots.

If anyone has any ideas about events to include on the social calendar, please email me at Kathygero@aol.com See many of you soon, Kathy

Social Programme:

December: A great Club Christmas Party.

Nearly 150 attended with the tables set up on the lawns weighed down with lots and lots of food.

January: About 40 plus people attended the Club picnic at Balmoral Beach on 5th January. No report on the evening with Almis Simankevicus presenting "Macquarie's Journeys" on the 19th but this will be reported in the next issue.

February:

Wed 2nd 7 pm **Committee Meeting**

Wed 9th 8 pm **Introduction to SBW**

Learn all the important information needed to join SBW

Wed 16th 8 pm **A Kimberley Evening**

The Kimberley has seen quite a few visits from Sydney Bushies in the last year. Come along for an evening of slides, chats and loads of great stories.

On Walking: !

Jan Roberts offers these thoughts:



Walking can add minutes to your life. This enables you at 85 years old to spend an additional 5 months in a nursing home at \$5000 per month.



My grandmother started walking five miles a day when she was 60. Now she's 97 years old and we don't know where the hell she is.



I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.



The only reason I would take up exercising is so that I could hear heavy breathing again.

Now Ya Tell Me !

A beautiful woman walked into an orchard and found a lovely pool in it. She decided to go skinny-dipping. She looked around, didn't see anyone, and undressed. Just as she was about to dive in, the orchard owner appeared from behind the bush where he was hiding all along and told her that swimming was prohibited.

"You could have told me that before I undressed!" she scolded him.

He replied, "Swimming is prohibited, undressing isn't."

On The Bus with the Seniors !

A tour bus driver drives with a bus full of seniors down a highway, when he is tapped on his shoulder by a little old lady. She offers him a handful of peanuts, which he gratefully munches.

After 15 minutes, she taps him on his shoulder again and hands him another handful of peanuts.

She repeats this gesture about eight times. At the ninth time he asks the little old lady why they do not eat the peanuts themselves, whereupon she replies that it is not possible because of their old teeth, they are not able to chew them.

"Why do you buy them then?" he asks puzzled. Whereupon the old lady answers: "We just love the chocolate around them....."

Contributions Welcome:

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.

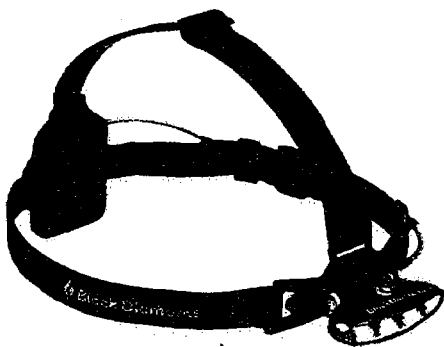
Fax: 9484 6009 (phone 9484 6636 first)
billholland@bigpond.com

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

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

Paddy Pallin, 1900-1991

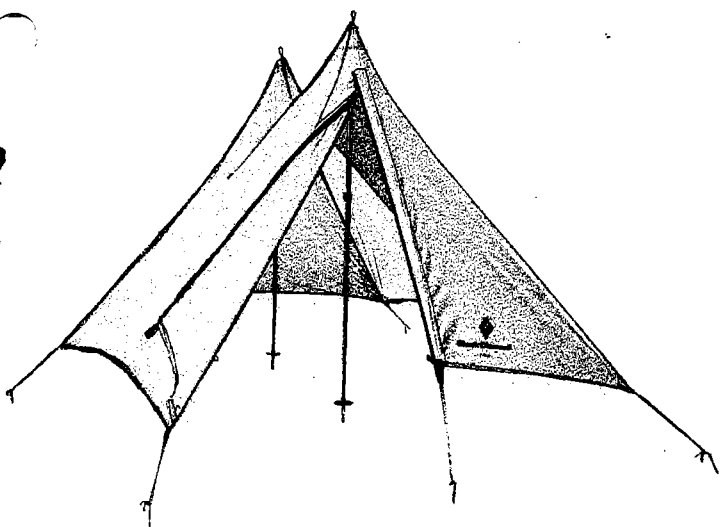
then move up to **Black Diamond**, exclusive to Paddy Pallin.



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



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



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

Store locations: Sydney: 507 Kent Street • Miranda: 527 Kingsway • Parramatta: 74 Macquarie Street • Katoomba: 166 Katoomba Street

Also in Canberra and Jindabyne

Website: www.paddypallin.com.au

Mail order: 1800 805 398

Paddy Pallin