



# THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



MAY 2005





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# MAY 2005

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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.*

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[billholland@bigpond.com](mailto:billholland@bigpond.com)

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### About Our Club

The Sydney Bush Walkers 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 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](http://www.sbw.org.au)

### Office Bearers

<b>President:</b>	Maurice Smith
<b>Vice-President:</b>	Rosemary MacDougall
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Tony Marshall
<b>Secretary:</b>	Leigh McClintock
<b>Walks Secretary:</b>	Ian Thorpe
<b>Social Secretary</b>	Kathy Gero
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Ron Watters
<b>New Members Secretary:</b>	Grace Martinez
<b>Conservation Secretary:</b>	Bill Holland
<b>Magazine Editor:</b>	Bill Holland
<b>Committee Members</b>	
	Caro Ryan Peter Love
<b>Delegate to Confederation:</b>	
	Jim Callaway Pam Campbell

### Contact The Committee:

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

**President :** **Maurice Smith**  
9587 6325 (h) [mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au](mailto:mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au)  
**Vice President :** **Rosemary MacDougall**  
9428 5668 (h) [rmacdougall@bigpond.com](mailto:rmacdougall@bigpond.com)  
**Secretary:** **Leigh McClintock**  
8920 2388 (h) [mcclintock@pacific.net.au](mailto:mcclintock@pacific.net.au)  
**Treasurer** **Tony Marshall**  
9713 6985 (h) [tbuilder@bigpond.net.au](mailto:tbuilder@bigpond.net.au)  
**Members Secretary:** **Ron Watters**  
0419 617 491 [wattersr@bigpond.net.au](mailto:wattersr@bigpond.net.au)  
**New Members Secretary:** **Grace Martinez**  
9948 6238 [g.martinez@bigpond.com](mailto:g.martinez@bigpond.com)

### 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 or by email addressed to The Editor.

Email: [billholland@bigpond.com](mailto:billholland@bigpond.com)  
Phone 9484 6636

### From The Committee Room



- A report of proceedings at the Management Committee meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2005

- Michelle Edwards, Clare Holland, Rodney Timm and Bill Pixton were accepted as Active Members.
- There was general discussion on a suggestion that regular walks leaders should have their membership subscriptions waived. Some spoke in support, others suggested that it seemed unfair to single out one section of the club's membership for special treatment, while overlooking many other members who give, or have given, great service to the club and that honorary membership was the traditional way of recognizing special service. The constitution would have to be changed to accommodate the idea. No decision was taken.
- The Committee approved payments of \$123 new members postal expenses; \$406 magazine related expenses, \$30 social expenses and other sundry payments.
- The draft Winter Walks Programme still had a few gaps in it. The Walks sub-Committee will finalise it after placing late walk submissions.
- The Committee approved a first aid training night and a navigation training night scheduled for the Winter Programme. Rooms had been booked at KNC on 4<sup>th</sup> July and 11<sup>th</sup> July. Twenty Prospectives had attended the navigation training night in April.
- The Committee had received a letter reporting a vehicle had been vandalised whilst parked in the Conjevoi Valley for a club overnight walk. The Committee instructed the Club's Confederation delegates to request that Confederation maintain a register of such incidents as this may be of use in liaison with the police and other relevant organizations.
- The Conservation Secretary reported that he was inclined to support NPA's stance on hunting by native Australians in national parks. He also drew members' attention to the draft strategy on walking and camping in the Budawang.
- The special Committee meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April to discuss electronic communication had passed two motions. A third motion covering terms of reference had been deferred to this meeting. Extensive discussion on suggested objectives of the sub-committee ensured with no agreement. The President said he would draft a motion on terms of reference, and seek Committee members' agreement by correspondence, before the June meeting.
- Following discussion on use of emails and data bases President ruled that the matter should go to the new sub-committee, when formed.

## Message from President Maurice:

I am pleased to report that our member, Patrick McNaught is definitely on the mend from his serious illness. Although Patrick still has some way to go before he will be able to get out and about, his prognosis looks good. When I visited him recently he was looking forward to being back at home with his family. Patrick did say that among his many visitors had been lots of club members. This makes me proud to be a club member; we really do care for our fellow members.

I have also received an email from our member Charles Montross, originally from America, lately living in Canberra, has advised that he is moving to South Africa in the very near future. Charles will be working "with De Beers making diamonds". Seeing as how Charles' new employer normally digs diamonds from various mines I'm sure that there must be a story in there somewhere. We wish Charles well in his new life in South Africa.

Last month the committee held a supplementary meeting to specifically discuss the issues surrounding the need to re-form a sub-committee to take responsibility for all of the electronic communications issues that the club needs to address. That meeting agreed it was

appropriate to establish a new sub-committee to be known as the Electronic Communications Sub-committee. This Sub-committee will be responsible for managing (a) our web-site, (b) various databases, (c) electronic archives, (d) email distribution, (e) electronic distribution of club material, and (f) (as if that list wasn't long enough) other matters as may be referred by the management committee. The Sub-committee's membership is not yet known however I expect that several members of the management committee will be included in the sub-committee.

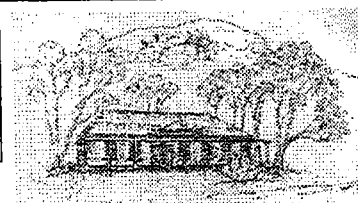
Also arising from the management committee meeting was the agreement that an amendment to the club's constitution be put forward for consideration of the club's membership. The amendment will be to the effect that the club's web-master will be a member of the club's management committee. The details of this constitution amendment will be developed and the appropriate notice will be given to all voting members as required by our constitution.

That is all from me for now. I look forward to catching up with you around the camp fire in the near future.

*Maurice Smith*

## NEWNES HOTEL CABINS

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## Treasurer's Report

### Receipts and Payments year to April 2005

#### Receipts

Members Subscriptions	8,021
Prospective Fees	2,772
Interest – Conservation	194
Interest – Coolana	576
Interest – General	328
Magazine Advertising	1,170
Donations – Coolana	55
Donations – General	5
Other	60
Investment redemption	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,182</b>

#### Payments

Magazine Production	722
Magazine Postage	1,653
Magazine Equipment	566
Coolana Rates & Occupancy	187
Coolana Maintenance	250
Rent – Club Rooms	598
Postage, Phone & Internet	1,702
Administration	881
Transfer to investments	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,559</b>

**Closing Bank balance 18,226**

The Club's bank balance is relatively high but the major part of the club's expenditure occurs over the next few months. The investment of \$15,000 with Colonial State was completed during April.

*Tony Marshall*

#### Annual Subscriptions Now Due \*

The Annual General Meeting determined that the SBW Annual Subscriptions for 2005 would be:

Single Membership	= \$45-00
Household membership	= \$73-00
Non Active Membership	= \$20-00
Non Active + Magazine	= \$34-00
Magazine only	= \$20-00

A payments slip has been mailed to you. Please return this with your cheque

*\* These subscriptions do not apply to Prospective Members*



## Editors Note

Here it is, another month - another magazine. This month, the magazine is a little different from the last few in that there is not a mention of the "Boots and All" competition. But, wait until next month - we will announce the winners and publish the winning entries.

Now, I see my editorial task as making the magazine appealing and readable to our members; to give members a voice; to record some of the history of the Club; and provide a conduit of contact between the Club's Management Committee and the members. In other words "communication"

In the report "From the Committee Room" in the last two months you will see considerable time has been spent by Committee discussing "electronic communication" and the apparent difficulties in defining its role in the Club. Perhaps this is a sign of the times; electronic communication via email and the "web" is moving so fast that all of our lives are feeling its impact. Many of us are uncertain how far and how quickly we want to change our lifelong habits for the gratification of instant communication.

If you would like to play a part in defining the role of electronic communication within the Club and implementing The Committee's decisions in this area, feel free to nominate for the soon-to-be-established sub-committee.

This month I have included an article that hopefully will assist the quality of photos printed in this magazine. This is another sign of our times and an example of the use of electronics - digital photographs sent in by email.

We also have a report on a visit to Coolana by one of our older members, a lyrical anticipation of the proposed toilet at Coolana and from way up north a tale of losing more than your shirt.

But more importantly - the walk reports. I am receiving good reports about extended walks but very little about interesting day and weekend walks, other than a brief mention in Barry Wallace's Walk Notes. These walks are the lifeblood of our Club so please let me, and our members, know about those special times.

*Bill Holland*

## Social Programme - June

1<sup>st</sup> June **Committee Meeting**

8<sup>th</sup> June **New Members Night.**

Introduction to SBW for intending prospective members

15<sup>th</sup> June **Antarctica Creativity**

Speaker David Synnotts will share his experiences with us via slides and talks of this amazing place  
Meet for pre-meeting dinner in the rear outdoor Bistro at the Kirribilli Hotel

**Letters to the Editor:****Hunting By Aborigines In National Parks**

In the April 2005 issue of our magazine I expressed views against hunting in national parks by anyone, including aborigines.

As a young man I worked as a jackeroo on a large property near the Queensland border. Most of the men were aborigines and together we worked from sunrise to sunset. The aboriginal workers were superb horsemen, had a natural ability with stock and were paid a pittance for their labour. At the end of a hot tiring day the aboriginal workers retired to tin humpies no better than chicken sheds. I had the comfort of the grazier's big house, shower, clean bed and good food.

In those days people classed as aborigines had no minimum wage, were not allowed to vote, could not enter a restaurant in the nearby country town and were not allowed in the swimming pool. It was a shocking case of discrimination against fellow citizens.

The wrongs of the past, the discrimination and injustices cannot be righted today by allowing the killing of our wildlife in National Parks.

For many years I owned a grazing property not far from Gilgandra. I found it upsetting to find piles of rotting carcasses on my property, shot and killed by unauthorised shooters.

Our wildlife is killed all over this country. The national parks are the only remaining sanctuary.

I have spent much time on the banks of streams in the Snowy Mountains. Watching the antics of funny, lovable wombats has given me great pleasure. I do not want these friendly wombats to be killed or injured by hunters or their dogs.

Our Conservation Secretary, Bill Holland, has invited members of SBW to contact him expressing their views over hunting by aborigines in national parks.

I propose to expand Bill's suggestion as follows:

A questionnaire should be mailed to each member, with a self addressed stamped envelope back to the Club. The questionnaire should ask:

*"Are you in favour or against hunting by aborigines in National Parks?"*

*In Favour: ☐ Against: ☐*

By this democratic process we will be able to gauge the members' feelings on this sensitive issue

*Peter Dyce*

**THE WINTER WALKS PROGRAMME  
IS ENCLOSED WITH THIS  
MAGAZINE**

**No Boots at All**

I refer to Jim Brown's article, 'No Boots At All' in the April Bushwalker.

His comment, 'You can tread softly, go around that prickly hakea, avoid squashing that tiny Boronia. You can make the bush your friend, not something to be beaten down " while obviously heartfelt (it is stated twice) is arrant nonsense.

I would have thought that where you placed your feet and what you walked through or around had more to do with what you have between your ears rather than what you wear on your nether extremities

*Frank Davis*

**NavShield 2005**

The 17th Annual Australian Wilderness Navigation Shield for Emergency Services is now open for registrations.

The event will be held on Saturday 2nd July and Sunday 3rd July and is organised by Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad Inc.,

Entry forms are available on the website at [www.bwrs.org.au/navshield](http://www.bwrs.org.au/navshield).

Previous participants will also be mailed a hard copy automatically

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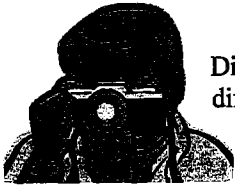
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## Send In Your Photos!

Bill Holland



Digital cameras have made a difference to recording our walks and I am very grateful to those of you who send in photos with your walk articles and reports;

however, here are a few tips to assist in having a your photo published in our magazine.

First of all, it is very helpful to me if you can supply a description of when and where each photo was taken. This enables me place the photo in the appropriate part of the narrative and give it an explanatory caption.

Also, remember that the photos will be printed on a laser printer with only one colour choice i.e. black printing on white paper. Fortunately our new printer is able to recognise and print shades of grey to black by spacing out the variable-sized black dots (halftones) used by the printer. A 600 dpi (dots per inch) printer can recognise around 65 shades of grey.

When I receive your photos I convert them to "greyscale" using Photoshop software. The challenge is to receive photos that have adequate colour gradients so that conversion to shades of grey will give a satisfactory printed result.

There are four matters to be considered: resolution, file type, emailing your photos and the background setting of the photo.

### ▪ Resolution:

Camera manufacturers use various resolutions depending on the end result required. The lowest setting is usually 640 x 480 pixels. This is not adequate for good quality printing. I suggest that you set your camera on at least 1280 x 960 pixels. If your camera has a "fine" setting this may provide additional clarity.

### ▪ File Type:

Most cameras use a JPEG file format. Whilst this is satisfactory if saved as a medium to large file, TIFF format will produce better printing results. PDF files are also acceptable if of good quality.

When using JPEG format the quality of the photo is reduced each time the photo file is copied. For this reason I convert JPEG files to TIFF format before printing in order to preserve the quality.

### ▪ Sending your file to me

Do not use Explorer or Word software to compress files when sending by email. This will make a smaller size file but may affect quality of the picture. I prefer to receive the larger uncompressed file but please limit the number of photos sent with one email.

And, to prevent loss of quality please avoid sequential copying before emailing the photos.

### ▪ Background settings:

What is the aim of your photo? Is it to show people or an interesting scene?

If showing people you must decide on whether you want recognisable faces (use a close up) or people in a bushland setting or sitting around a campfire. If you want recognisable people try to lighten the faces and, as suggested by Patrick James in an earlier article, ask them to remove their hats.

If showing a scene keep in mind that the probable size for printing in the magazine is in the vicinity of 10cm x 8cm so the details of a scene will be very small when printed. However, a good setting may prompt the Editor to increase the size.

Scenes should have contrast in the setting so that shades of grey will emerge when converted to greyscale for printing. Avoid over-bright conditions unless you are familiar with your white balance controls on the camera. Avoid too much sky or too much foreground. And, if there is a lot of dark colour in the background, such as the depth of the canyon or the night sky this may convert to solid black and obliterate detail.

All of the above refers to photos for greyscale printing - colour printing, whether on home or commercial printers, has different requirements. However, all photos intended for printing will benefit from a high resolution.

I am on a learning curve with my new toy (laser printer) and hopefully the quality of the printed photos will improve as I acquire more knowledge. Additionally the printout I produce has to be used as the master copy for the large Ricoh printer used to publish this magazine. I am not familiar with the settings of this printer so I will leave the final presentation in the skilled hands of our printing team.

However, your not-so-technically-competent Editor is more than willing to assist you if you have some questions about including good quality photos in your magazine reports.

### **The Coolana Fund:**

Donations to the Coolana Fund are very welcome and will be used to provide income to assist with the maintenance of this wonderful property.

Many thanks to those who have already donated or have indicated an intention to include the Coolana Fund in their wills. Please send in your donation, addressed to

**"The Coolana Fund"**

*The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc  
PO Box 431 Milsons Point 1565.*



## INDIAN HIMALAYA

Exclusive trip for SBW members by World Expeditions

Featuring Australian trip leader Sue Fear

The continuing details of the exciting trip for 3 weeks in October 2005.

**20 Oct 05 To Ralam Glacier**

We ascend the glacial moraine at the head of the Ralam Ganga to complete a challenging foray that will underline while the area is ripe for exploration.

**21 Oct 05 To forest camp (6 hours)**

We head down the Ralam Gorge to a delightful clearing (2300 metres) amid conifer and oak forest.

**22 Oct 05 To Lilam (6 to 7 hours)**

We complete a 300 metre ascent from where we appreciate the lower gorge section of the Gori Ganga and the trail we followed on the second stage of our trek. Descending through a series of farming villages we cross a bridge over the Gori Ganga to camp at Lilam.

**23 Oct 05 Trek to Munsyari (2 to 3 hours)**

We complete the ascent to the road head and the short drive to Munsyari. A short stage allowing us time to explore the marketplace and outlying villages of Munsyari and to gain one last memorable view of the Panchchuli peaks.

**24 Oct 05 Drive to Naini Tal**

A full day drive to the scenic hill resort of Naini Tal.

**25 Oct 05 In Naini Tal**

A rest day to take walks around the famous lake and catch up on life in this charming Indian hill resort.

**26 Oct 05 Drive to Delhi, transfer to airport**

On arrival in Delhi wash and change facilities will be available before transferring to the airport for our departure flight.

Note: Passengers may wish to remain in Delhi overnight, to break the long road journey from Naini Tal followed by a flight back to Australia. Accommodation can be booked for you accordingly and an extra charge for the night's accommodation will appear on your invoice.

**27 Oct 05** Depart: Delhi SQ 408 at 2315

Arrive: Singapore SQ 408 at 0710

Connecting with:

Depart: Singapore SQ 219 at 0930

Arrive: Sydney SQ 219 at 1850

For further details and information, contact Caro Ryan on 9909 1076 or email to: [justshootme@ozemail.com.au](mailto:justshootme@ozemail.com.au)

**NB: The trek schedule, is a guide, and variations may occur, according to conditions, and group preference under Sue's leadership**

**The Deadline For Bookings Is 30<sup>th</sup> June.**

At this stage we have only 3 deposits received and need a minimum of 10 people to run this trip. This is a fabulous trip and opportunity – don't let this opportunity pass you by. If you're keen call or email Caro on 9909 1076 or [justshootme@ozemail.com.au](mailto:justshootme@ozemail.com.au)

## WILLIS'S WALKABOUTS

## Kimberley Wild Rivers

## The Drysdale, Durack, Isdell, and Charnley



Many of our Kimberley trips follow major rivers. These rivers all pass through scenic wilderness and are dotted with Aboriginal art sites. They are fed by interesting tributaries which we explore without full packs.

**The Drysdale.** Huge river, huge park.

- > amazing concentration of art, especially Bradshaw style.
- > gorges, waterfalls and wildlife
- > every tributary is different

**The Durack.** New this year.

- > amazing cliffs
- > looks fascinating from the air

**The Isdell.** This is gorge country.

- Some of the gorges are
- > small & shady; others broad & grassy
- > full of paperbarks and flowers
- > dry; others wall to wall wet
- > home to some great Wandjina art

**The Charnley.** A spectacular

- 30km gorge
- > dozens of art sites in styles we have seen nowhere else
- > lots of exploring without full packs

For more information, see the trip list on our website.

[www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au](http://www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au)



Willis's Walkabouts 12 Carrington St Millner NT 0810 Email: [walkabout@ais.net.au](mailto:walkabout@ais.net.au)

Phone 08 8985 2134 Fax 08 8985 2355

## Coolana Report

Owen Marks

The report this month is the result of my one-day visit to Coolana on the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2005.

I was asked to write this Report by Don Finch. He thought that, as an older member who has been not been to Coolana more than three times in the last 10 years, I could write of my impressions and so I am dutifully doing so.

I wanted to see not only the site of the proposed composting toilet and the trees that had been planted, but also to see the result of all the work over the last 10 years or more, and of the never-ending weeding and mowing of the river flat.

I had contacted Don Finch two weeks earlier to compliment him on the latest Coolana Report in the magazine, and then he asked would I like to go down with him for the day with Gretel Woodward, to meet Helen and George Gray who would turn up at lunch time.

Don had brought lots of wooden stakes that were scavenged by someone and we all carried them down to the flat. The eucalyptus trees are thriving and popping out of their plastic guards. Gretel and I removed some guards, and tied them with stockings so that they would grow strong and tall and straight, yet move in the wind.

Cobblers Pegs two meters high all along the river bank made me depressed but not to the workers down there. I had been to Coolana with Shirley Dean about five months ago in the middle of the drought when the weeds were hardly above ground and the difference after the last few rainy months was amazing.

Her experimental patch covered by plastic cloth was still there, and not disturbed by wombats. There should be more of these temporary measures until the decision to poison. Surely, the wombats can't ruin them all! They are cheap to do and no Cobblers Pegs showing through Shirley's trial one.

Don worked putting up higher wooden stakes onto the present trees of those whose guards had been removed to keep the trees straight, while Gretel and I weeded around the bases of the acacias as well as the eucalypts.

Don put star pickets in groups of three close together, outside wombat holes so that they could rub their bottoms on them and not on the trees.

George decided to clean the tool shed and wipe all the leaf clutter off the roof. I noted the new wooden floor and all the shelves. Don showed me the huge dead wattle that had nearly crashed onto the roof. Everything takes time and energy.

After much fiddling with the mowers, Don, George and Helen did most of the green flat while I was inspecting from a distance. Gretel was doing weeding. I gave to Gretel, some Lomandra seeds from my own Bondi garden to be planted.

I suggested that maybe we need to pay a local man to mow as well, on a regular and that would really ease the burden. A mini forester. Would more petty cash make the problem easier? Well it certainly would help. This is our own Club land and the Water Board flat a great asset for our camping needs.

The road down to the shed was in need of much maintenance and that would take lots of work as well. Some of the older members would definitely come



down more often when the toilet is finished and when the road down is made easier. You can rest assured that the rest of our land away from the river is as beautiful as it ever was.

I did not cross the broken bridge but Don reported that the path he mowed four weeks previously has been completely covered over by Cobblers Pegs on the edges of the path.

I was shown the dead area near the riverbank caused by Roundup a general weed killer that kills everything it comes in contact with. Donald told me of the advice given to him by the water board man, of a specific broad-leafed poison for Cobblers Pegs. [See last month's Coolana Report] But will it kill the seeds that are already in the soil? Otherwise, would that mean more spraying during the growing seasons. I do not know these things.

I often camped on the river flat 35 years ago and all I can remember was the bracken, alas now all gone. I used to drive my VW beetle right to the Water Board flat.

The composting toilet was still being investigated and I laughingly told George that I hope I live long enough to use it. I was told that Patrick James was still in the throes of working things out.

The gate on the main road had been found open twice. It stated in the book in the shelter shed that two campfire's stony remains were noticed near the wooden table on the flat.

Re the management: there are long and short term plans going on together it seems. Both highly sensible. Trees to give shade and reduce the weed problem, and the mowing of the green grass to keep the small weeds from getting too high; but there must be other advice to receive and follow. I was told the Quaker property next door has problems similar to ours.

I take my hat off to those who over the years have been going down regularly at their own expense to keep our SBW property in order. I am glad that I am not on the Management Committee as it is a great responsibility.

When it started to get dark it was time to walk up to the cars and homewards bound on the fast freeway.

This is not the concise well-written report that you are all used to - just my humble impressions. Don Finch will take over once again, from the next issue.

**The New "Shed"****Don Matthews**

Don entertained us at the Annual Weekend get Together in March with this ode to the planned new toilet

*We are going to build a new "shed"  
Or that's what the magazine said.  
A small one, admitted, hygienically fitted,  
At how many dollars a head?*

*You might think that the cost's out of hand  
That it's all just a bit over planned,  
But a "User Pay" fee, will soon fix it, you'll see;  
And there's bound to be quite a demand.*

*There'll be six solar panels on top,  
To allow for some foliage drop,  
For we'll need lots of power, in this up-market bower,  
But my goodness, where will it all stop?*

*You will pay for a key card each year.  
As Committee explains "It is clear,  
You may not have the cash when you make a mad dash,  
And it really is not all that dear".*

*As you walk down the track there's a gate,  
So you'd better not leave your run late.  
There's a big neon light, quite incredibly bright,  
Which spells out "Enter Now" or "Please Wait?"*

*When you walk in you press button 'A'  
And an Eau de Cologne scented spray  
Will waft through the air, press it twice if you dare,  
It will make for a more pleasant stay.*

*And then, should you press button 'B'  
There'll be music, what's more you will see,  
You can have a pop tune or perhaps "Clair de Lune"  
Or your choice for a small extra fee.*

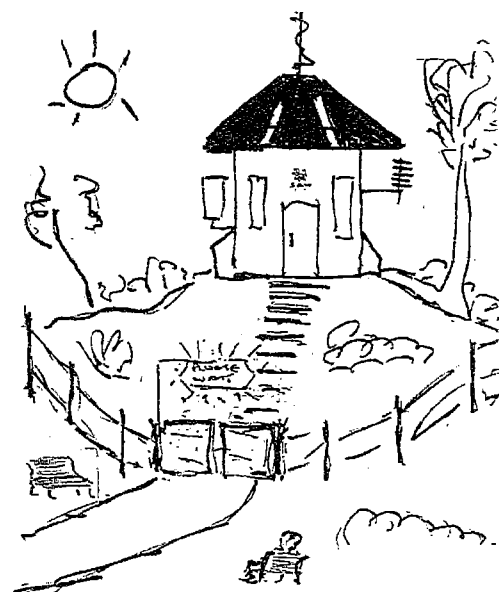
*Should your stay last beyond a fair time  
Then a bell will switch on and will chime,  
It is linked to the seat, activated by heat,  
And a message will flash up in rhyme.*

*But how, you may ask does it work,  
And by what biological quirk  
Can these waste products fair disappear in mid air  
What's the answer. Oh where does it lurk.?*

*We asked the Committee one night,  
And their answer was typically bright  
"You don't have to know, why not go with the flow  
Though they offered this glimmer of light*

*"It's an auto composting technique  
And though that may seem somewhat oblique  
It is proven in use, and lets nothing get loose  
To escape or flow into the creek."*

*So go forth if you think you can cope  
Which reminds us, hot water and soap  
Are there on demand, they've got everything planned  
Will it work? Well we'll just have to hope*



## CONSERVATION NOTES:

Last month I asked members to let me have their responses to the draft policy statement of NPWS allowing traditional owners hunting rights in certain national parks. So far I have received only one reply (see Letters to the Editor - Page 5). There is still time to state your opinion as the draft discussion paper will be released for comment later this year.

This month, on behalf of the Club, I wrote a letter to Gunns Ltd informing them of the discussion at our AGM in March where many members, questioning the court actions taken by Gunns Ltd to sue persons and organisations who have expressed criticism of the company and its logging activities, were assured that the Club has no direct or indirect investment in Gunns Ltd.

Our matter for consideration this month is the draft strategy for walking and camping in the Budawangs - see summary below. This is an area important to our walkers and it will be subject to some restrictions.

*Bill Holland - Conservation Secretary*

### Morton National Park - Draft Strategy for Walking and Camping in the Budawangs

DEC has prepared a draft strategy to manage the impacts of wilderness walking and camping in the Budawangs area of Morton National Park.

The draft strategy examines:

- the patterns and impacts of visitor use
- conservation values of the Budawangs
- the planning framework
- works that have been undertaken
- management options.

It aims to reduce the environmental impact of large numbers of visitors in popular areas, while maximising wilderness experiences in other parts of the Budawangs.

The draft strategy:

- continues the existing ban on camping and wood fires in Monolith Valley, Hidden Valley, the Castle Saddle, the Vines and along the Two Rivers track within wilderness
- prohibits camping in rock overhangs, except for a number of listed sites
- bans wood fires in all caves and overhangs
- sets maximum tent numbers and a 'fuel stove only' requirement in five popular camping grounds that are suffering significant damage
- aims to address pollution through the installation of toilets that require minimal construction
- allows minor track works to continue being done where necessary to prevent erosion and track braiding.

Walkers will be encouraged to keep group sizes small, to a recommended maximum of eight and an absolute maximum of 12 per club. A permit system is proposed at peak times. Walkers will also be required to keep to designated tracks and camping areas in the former artillery impact area.

DEC will provide appropriate information to walkers about conservation values, track conditions, restrictions and minimal impact practices. We will also encourage private publications to provide similar information. A monitoring program will be introduced to test the success of the strategy

#### Comment On The Strategy:

The draft Budawangs strategy is on public exhibition from 24<sup>th</sup> March to 29<sup>th</sup> July 2005. During this period, you can comment on the plan by sending us a submission. You can do this in one of the following ways:

1. Fill in an online submission form
2. Write a letter to the following address:

*The Planning Officer  
National Parks and Wildlife Service  
PO Box 707 NOWRA 2541*

All submissions must be received by 29<sup>th</sup> July

## NSW WILDERNESS TRANSIT Bus To

**JENOLAN CAVES. KANANGRA WALLS.  
YERRANDERIE GHOST TOWN  
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## NEW MEMBERS NEWS

**Welcome To Our New Prospective Members This Year To Date.....!!!!**

Maree Acquaro	Nina Clifford	Imke Herholdt	Geoff Martin	Patricia Sherry
Stephen Arnerich	Nick Clifton	Karl Holland	Rhonda Martin	Kate Sidebottom
Lynore Avery	Teresa Corcoran	Clare Holland	Anne Milson	Steve Smedley
Ali Barrett	Matthias Engele	Neil Holmes	Karen Mongey	Louise Smith
Paul Barton	Laurie Field	Anna Howard	Paul Myers	MaryJo Sparks-Simpson
Natalie Baxter	Abigail Gibson	Anne Kingston	Gerard Osman	Liz Story
Vicki Britton	John Gillespie	Helen Langford	Brad Pedersen	Misako Sugiyama
Sue Bucknell	Paula Hatch	Richard Lowson	Julian Radom	Ani Wieszma
Lars Christiansen	Keith Henry	Bryn Lynar	Rosie Richards	Kim Wilson

### **Congratulations !!! To Our New Full Members This Year**

Stephen	Bradbury
Graham	Byrne
Michael	Chapman
Clyde Stuart	Douglas
Michelle	Edwards
Susan	Ellicott -Darke
Melanie	Freer
Craig	Hannemann
Francis	Hartigan
Clare	Holland
Wayne	Scott
James	Swinton
Patricia	Tierney
Rodney	Timm

The Club has weekend walking gear for hire. Please phone:  
*Geoff McIntosh 9419 4619*

### **New Navigation And First Aid Night Tests**

The Autumn walks program included a 'Navigation Training night for Prospective Members' and participants were given the opportunity to learn about basic navigation. Also at the end of the night they completed a test and passed their navigation test to fulfill requirements for full membership. Twenty prospective members attended a 2 hour session with Peter Love as a facilitator and they all passed their tests.

The intention is to include this training night in each program and our next Winter program will include the Navigation Training as well as a First Aid night. **This is not a First Aid course** but will focus on healthy walking, basic First Aid kit, how to recognise Hypothermia (exposure too cold), Hyperthermia (heat exhaustion - too hot) etc. At the end of the night participants will have the option to sit for a test which will be valid to be included in their application for full membership. See the the Winter program for details and book early.

Please contact me if you have any questions [www.sbw.org](http://www.sbw.org)  
Grace Martinez SBW New Members Secretary

## Conservation News

### **Overland Track Walkers Face \$100 Fee**

Several thousands walkers **will have to pay \$100** to use Tasmania's Overland Track.

The track runs across the Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair National Park in the state's west.

The new fee will only apply during the peak tourist season. There will also be a new booking system to regulate the use of the track from November through to April.

Stuart Lennox from the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service says the extra money will be used to manage the track.

"Out of I guess most of the tracks state-wide, it's the one that's consistently grown and it's also the icon bushwalk both at a local level and clearly nationally and increasingly at an international level," he said.

### **Native Vegetation Law Attacked**

In the past decade a series of innocuously named "native vegetation" laws and regulations has been introduced in NSW, as in other states. The effect is to ban almost all further clearing of land. This includes not just virgin forest but regrowth, of

which there is a great deal around the state. -----

--- Native vegetation laws are an extraordinary attack on private property, and effectively nationalise large areas of private land. They are a reminder of how much harm can occur if only the cause in which it is done is sufficiently noble. It is disturbing to see just how savagely a group of Australian citizens can be targeted and hurt once they become unfashionable.

*Extracts from article by Micheal Duffy SMH 30/4/05*

### **Logging protest underway**

Anti-logging protesters have moved into a section of the Cathcart State Forest, east of Bombala in south-eastern New South Wales, to try and stop work in an area they claim should be preserved for its icon values.

Seven thousand hectares of the forest were locked up under the southern regional forests agreement, but protester Tony Whan from Tilba says that it is not enough, and that most of the remaining 18,000 hectares is of such high conservation value it should also be protected from logging.

ABC 26/4/05

## Sail Away

John Hogan

Almost ten years ago I did the big "sea change" and left Sydney and heavy engineering to take up a wonderful and rewarding career as a tour guide covering the area across the top of Queensland and making a new home in Cairns. I am thrilled with this part of the World and am very settled in a rather different culture. At home I am often naked, as the temperature almost dictates, but I am happy to find that many of my outdoor activities can also be done nude, particularly as my "weekends" do not often coincide with the majority of the population.

Amongst my various "toys" I am the proud owner of a very old and frail sixteen foot trailer sailer named "**Sunny**" which I love to take up to the Atherton Tablelands (a little over an hour away from home) and sail on **Lake Tinaroo**, a large man made lake on the Baron River. One of my main delights is to stay overnight on the boat (unfortunately I usually have to do this on my own) where I have the odd glass of wine and play some romantic music whilst I watch the sun set and the moon rise and just take in the sheer beauty of the place. Next morning I am awakened by the many bird calls beckoning me to sit up and view the sun rise and the mist across the tranquil waters. I find that the feeling of extreme freedom is markedly enhanced by *shedding my clothes*, except of course for my hat! Once the wind comes up I sail blissfully all over the lake quite naked.

This sets the scene for a very funny incident which occurred quite recently. I had sailed to a fairly remote reach of the lake and as is typical in such places the wind was light and tending to be a bit unpredictable in direction. I turned and began to sail out of the reach and found that the wind was directly behind me so I set the rig in a configuration we term "goosewinged", with one sail each side of the boat. At this stage the rig was beautifully balanced and the boat was virtually sailing itself so as it was past mid-day and the sun was over the "yard arm" I decided that a cold beer was in order ("**XXXX**" of course) so I took the opportunity to go below to grab one from the "Esky" but just as I came back into the cockpit there was an unexpected gust of wind and as I rushed to make some adjustments to the rig I put down my beer in its cooler which promptly fell over and rolled overboard.

Instinctively I took a grab for it but as I did I lost my balance and fell overboard also! I had actually intercepted the "coldie" so I found myself in the middle of the lake wearing only a hat and sunglasses and holding the "escapee" in one hand. Theoretically at this stage the boat should "round up" and come to a stop.....however theory has a habit of abandoning you in these situations and "Sunny" decided to go it alone.

As I bobbed up and down in the water clinging to my "**XXXX**", I watched her sail off into the sunset (so to speak). I swam the 50 metres or so to the shore and by this time she was completely out of sight. Now I stood on the fairly rugged bank with a rather delicate decision confronting me.....do I walk back about 300 metres to where I had seen a couple having a picnic and present myself stark naked and request a lift to retrieve "Sunny" or do I play a hunch that she would eventually lose her way and run into the bank.

Well there was only one obvious conclusion in these circumstances.....***I Drank The Beer!***

Next I headed off in the direction of my delinquent steed (no wonder they call boats "she") which meant clawing my way through some fairly daunting scrub and after the best part of a kilometre suddenly she came into view, nosed into the bank like a child looking very guilty at having run away.

There has to be a happy ending to such a story.....as soon as we were reunited: ***I Celebrated With Another "XXXX"***(or it may have been 2!)

*Good sailing, John*



## THE WALKS PAGES

**Walks Notes** *Barry Wallace*Period 10<sup>th</sup> February to 9<sup>th</sup> March

Wilf opened the bidding with four starters on his midweek walk on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> February out into Georges River Nature Reserve, but this is all we know of it.

John Bradnam was out the following weekend, 12, 13 February, on a walk out from Carlons Farm into the Megalong Valley by the look of it. The party of 5 enjoyed good weather and reported that Breakfast Creek is again flowing well with plenty of water and swimming holes. They enjoyed it all so much they were all back at the cars by midday Sunday. The milkshakes at Megalong Valley tea-rooms were followed by fish and chips in Blackheath to bring the walk to a satisfied conclusion. Jim Callaway led a Sunday walk from Helensburgh to Otford with a party of 2 in conditions that started out cool and overcast but fined to a warm afternoon. The sea was rough and this, together with patches of bluebottles in some places, suppressed the swim reflex somewhat. By the time they reached Figure Eight Pool, what with the extended lunchtime weeding session at the south end of Burning Palms, it was all too much for Jim, so he took a swim in the main pool despite the conditions. They passed through Werrong at around 1510 but there is no arrival time at the finish; they probably caught some train or other.

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February saw Zol Bodlay with a party of 8 on one of his summertime gourmet walks, this time from Blaxland to Glenbrook. Conditions started out humid and sunny, but a rainstorm set in while the party were sheltering under a commodious overhang; all of which was taken as a sign to get on with some leisurely gourmandising while the weather sorted itself out. Huey feinted a pause in the showers just long enough to get the party half way back to the cars, then turned the tap on again. The party rationalised that the showers were cooling for the climb out. The trip was rated as a fun day with beautiful swims in a cleaner than average Kanuka Brook.

Ken Smith's walk from Thornleigh to Berowra on Saturday 26 February was going well when they stopped for lunch at Tunks Ridge rest area and assessed the walk as half completed. However after they crossed the bridge down in Galston Gorge they were confronted by a notice proclaiming the track ahead closed due to fuel reduction burning. The party of 8 agreed to retrace their steps to Quarry Steps and exit to Hornsby. There was some discussion of the need to consult the internet in future to avoid such difficulties. As a postscript Ken has pointed out that had anyone in the party checked the NPWS website their

dilemma would have been compounded by the fact that the closure was not mentioned. The website had the last update marked as the day prior to the walk with the relevant pages clearly stating that there were NO track closures.

Wilf Hilder led a midweek walk on Thursday 3 March from Warriewood wetlands to Narrabeen shops with a party of 9 in excellent walking conditions. At least one member of the party braved the breeze to get in a few laps of Narrabeen ocean pool during the lunch stop and then the leader had to struggle to get the party back on the track from the Coastal Environmental Centre at North Narrabeen. The lower than usual tide enabled the party to walk around the rocks to Mona Vale beach and save some time at the finish, which they promptly squandered by having coffee at Narrabeen on the way home.

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March saw Nigel Weaver leading a party of 10 on his trip out from Carlons Farm to Mount Mouin in near perfect conditions. They took the route down Carlons Creek to the foot of Blackhorse ridge then ascended all the way to Blackhorse Mountain. The narrow ridge from there to Mount Mouin provided spectacular views from both sides over the surrounding features. After lunch on Mount Mouin they descended into Medlow Gap then followed the fire trail around to Carlons. All in all it was rated as a great day with great camaraderie.

All of which brings the walks reports for this period to an end. From the looks of things we may need to check the pipeline.

**Midweek Walkers**

We had a great week at Berrara Beach in April. There were ten of us in total averaging eight on any day. The weather was very good and the cottage facilities great. Cycling, bushwalking and just relaxing - what a way to spend Monday to Friday!

In June, we have the next extended stay this time at Currawong Beach in the Pittwater (opposite Palm Beach). We now have twelve booked and have reserved a cabin as well as the house so there is room for one or two more.

Looking further ahead, the late Winter and Spring weather is most pleasant for cottage stays etc. so here is the planning so far.

July: Cabin stay at Wombeyan Caves

Sept: Houseboat on Myall Lakes:

Nov: Glasshouse Mountains (Qld).

If you would like to join in any of the above activities please phone me on 9484 6636 and watch the walks programme for mid-week walks or email [billholland@bigpond.com](mailto:billholland@bigpond.com).

*Bill Holland*

## VISIT TO BOGGY HOLE (In the Finke River Gorge, West of Alice Springs) *James Cryer*

*While staying with our son, Jamie, who resides in Alice. January, 2005.*

Jamie and I set off after I'd carefully supervised him loading the heavy gear and provisions onto the modern-day camel, known colloquially as a turbo-diesel Nissan Patrol (also known by its Latin name of "testosteronus patrolii"). After a meticulous check that the cargo had been properly secured, I put down my coffee cup and gave the "all clear" - and off we took, towards the West MacDonnell Ranges.

After a delicious hamburger, at the Alice Springs' West McDonalds, we realised the error of our ways, and took off again, this time for the ancient home of the Arrernte people, the real West MacDonnells - a series of great pressure-ridges, running east-west - which are intersected by various rivers, which all flow due south. This confounding topographical configuration has lead to a titanic clash between the rivers and the ranges.

So far the rivers have prevailed, by cutting a deep gash (or "gap" in geomorphological parlance) every time they have come in contact with these ridges. The resulting gorges are a photographer's paradise, forming deep rock pools surrounded by crimson cliffs - rich in wildflowers and birdlife.

Hence, there are a lot of gaps in local Alice Springs history - such as Heavitree, Simpsons, Honeymoon - there's even an Emily and Jessie Gap. But I digress.

In fact we digressed about 130 ks to the west, along the famous Larapinta Drive, a beautiful bituminous ribbon snaking along in parallel with the ranges. (After about 30 ks we crossed the north-bound track of John McDouall Stuart, who dignified the word "stubborn" by having three goes at trying to cross the interior from Adelaide to the Top End - in 1860, 1861 and 1862.)

Pressing on in our latter-day steel camel we eventually arrived at Hermannsburg, the early Lutheran mission established back in the 1880's. Wandering around the impressive ruins, I was struck by one word: futility. The futility of trying to convert a people away from their own belief patterns which they'd evolved over millennia and which had melded inextricably into their own daily struggle of survival. Here, today, 130-odd years later there is probably not a single Lutheran convert, although there are a lot of better-educated Aboriginals as a result - so the victory was secular, if not theological.

Whether it was really worth the price of so many German missionaries living so long in the desert ... I doubt it. The Superintendent, Carl Strehlow and his wife, officiated at Hermannsburg mission from the 1890's until the 1920's. That's a lot of Vienna Opera concerts and sleigh rides in the snow to miss. Then again, he may have just loved heat and blowflies.

Tearing ourselves away from the results of well-intentioned but misguided German spiritual

imperialism, we digressed again, this time due south, to respond to the call of nature. After that, we found ourselves bouncing along a dirt track (one of many in this part of the world) that all seemingly led nowhere. Luckily, this track followed the same pattern - into the great void known as the Finke River Gorge.

The Finke River (never was a word used more optimistically) is in fact, a great, wide tract of dry dirt, which has all the features, style and manner of a river, although it is lacking in one small detail: water.

Putting this trifling deficiency to one side - first to the left-hand side, and then to the right - we carefully navigated our way along its course, as Jamie gingerly nursed the steel camel over bumps, logs, boulders and other impedimenta carelessly strewn in our path.

To lighten the load, I would occasionally leap out of the camel ... sorry, the Patrol, and run ahead, while he furiously played the gears like a violinist playing a Stradivarius.

The scenery was haunting, and one never knows if it's a true feeling, or one brought about by too many travel writers, but one has the sensation that you are intruding into a mysteriously ancient land - where the passport to freedom, is to be abandoned at any place at any time - and be able to survive indefinitely.

While Jamie and I felt reasonably bullet-proof with our esky packed with essential supplies such as VB, rum, vodka, chardonnay and other life-supporting fluids, we didn't relish the idea of breaking down in this forbidding yet beguiling terrain.

That, I believe is the mystical attraction of this place - it is at once beautiful yet threatening ... welcoming yet forbidding ... embracing yet intimidating.

The Finke is regarded by geologists as one of the oldest riverbeds on the face of the planet - due to the stability of the Australian tectonic-plate, there has been nothing to disturb its course for millions of years. It is in fact one of the major drainage systems in this region (when it rains, that is).

As late afternoon approached we had travelled a slow 20 k along its bed, with no sign that any water lay in this "river". Eventually, around the proverbial bend was the quintessential oasis of all oases - the eloquently named "Boggy Hole"!

Boggy Hole is a Hollywood set-designer's dream. Proving that man cannot improve on nature, it is perfect in every way, as a waterhole should be. From where we sat on our camp-stools, we gazed across the lagoon to the thick band of bull-rushes opposite, sanctuary to a million frogs and other aquatic creatures. Every so often a waterhen would dart out and back, perhaps sensing Jamie's desire to reach for his high-powered hunting rifle. Behind this row of reeds arose a series of stark white gums, towering over the lagoon like sentinels and home to great white



cormorants eyeing off any food source that dared move, down below.

Punctuating the stillness was a patrol of black darters, that on command would regularly "sweep" the lagoon in low level strafing attacks.

Behind all this, and forming the ultimate geological backdrop was a magnificent curtain of sandstone, red and orange in the setting sun, rising up several hundred feet in the background.

And, as if to top that off, like a celestial crown, was the moon rising – right on cue – stage right.

With the stage scenery in place, we momentarily returned to reality with a cooling swim, and with housework to be done Jamie set about his chores – cooking the evening meal, which he had hitherto neglected to do!

Again, with glass in hand I took on-board the onerous task of supervising. Finally, a delicious repast was served up, the result of my gastronomic guidance, and we again returned our gaze to the now darkened edifice. We felt secure however by the darters' constant vigilance as they continued their regular patrols back and forth across the water.

Satiated by the delicious view, not to mention the food, and having drunk in the ambience (not to mention the chardonnay) we then proceeded to "bag" every member of all our various extended families – except for those actually present at Boggy Hole. By then, even the flies and mozzies had got bored so we retired under the stars, to be woken, on cue by the first blowies at precisely 5:30am.

Again, under strict supervision, Jamie was able to cobble together a passable breakfast.

We contemplated our surroundings – a beautiful wide-open valley, covered with native grasses, encircled by striking cliffs – with our magnificent dirt-river "flowing" through it towards the south.

Après breakfast, we decided to do some exploring "on foot" – a novel idea to the modern "new age" explorer. We visited the campsite of some earlier intrepid investigators, namely a certain Stuart and Michael Cryer, who had suffered the privations and sacrifices of life in the wilderness, as far back as August, 2004! We saw the evidence of their lonely existence – discarded Playboy magazines and ...well, some things are better left unsaid.

Forging on, where the hand of man had never set foot, Jamie and I discovered the remains of the old police "station", actually a forlorn pile of mud bricks – all that was left of the proud police force that operated at Boggy Hole briefly during the early 1870's. It was not that crime was prevalent among the citizens of Boggy Hole. In fact there were NO citizens. Then "why have a police station?" I hear you ask.

This is a good question.

The official reason was to "discourage" aborigines spearing sacred cows (and bulls), which belonged to the early pastoralists moving into the area, typically

from Adelaide. "Tempe Downs" had recently been established about 50 ks away to the south and the directionally-challenged cattle, who didn't understand the subtleties of open-range farming, kept wandering into tribal areas. The aborigines didn't put up proper signs, and the cattle were probably illiterate anyway, so it was a recipe for disaster – for the cows, anyway.

To the aborigines, however, it was a recipe for baked cow, roasted cow, grilled cow, fricasseed cow and "cow-to-go" – one of their favourites.

Constable Wilkinson was on the cow's side and may have shot one too many blacks, as after 2 years he was hauled off to Adelaide and charged with murder.

Leaving the scene of these poor cows (not to mention the cattle), Jamie and I forged up the steep scree-slope, which was originally Constable Wilkinson's backyard. Towering over the lagoon, we enjoyed magnificent views both up and down the dirt-river they call the Finke. Amazingly, on top of this arid plateau we found visible evidence of an earlier lake or creek-bed – sandstone "plaques" displaying perfect ripple patterns.

Trudging along the ridgeline of these elevated Pleistocene ramparts, we again had the sensation that we would not wish to be left here without an esky, and it only reinforced our admiration of those that had lived here for millennia – with no such assistance.

Scrambling down the hot, steep scree-slope at the northern end, we were grateful to plunge straight into the cooling waters of Boggy Hole, to replenish our spirits and to re-invigorate our soles. As the cool waters caressed my epidermis, it was then that I experienced a latter-day epiphany: I suddenly realised how Constable Wilkinson filled in his busy days!

Sadly, we bid farewell to the sensory pleasures of the eponymously named Boggy Hole, and endured the rocking and rolling of the steel camel as we headed south. Another few hours of dust and heat, snaking back and forth over the dry river-bed, with Jamie playing a constant tune on the gear-shift.

Eventually we reached the Ernest Giles Hwy, and took a brief detour to visit the Henbury Meteorite conservation area. 4,000-odd years ago, a large incoming meteor split into half-a-dozen fragments, leaving a series of mini-craters, still very visible and now covered with their own unique vegetation. Considering the offending meteor was only the size of a 'fridge, yet caused a virtual atomic explosion, it probably gave the local natives strong grounds to mount their first-ever claim for industrial deafness (unless there was a meteorite exclusion clause).

After scaring off a pack of "wild" camels (out of the reputed herd of 3/4 of a million) we headed back to civilisation. Travelling eastwards at 100 kph we again crossed John McDougal Stuart's tracks, slightly south of before.

We swerved ever so slightly, realising we had JUST missed him – by a mere 143 years.

## The Plans They are a-Changing (Part 1)

### A Christmas "Holiday" Walk in the Victorian High Plains

Caro Ryan

Tawonga - Bogong - Feathertop - Harrietville 26<sup>th</sup> December - 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005

**Leaders:** Maurice Smith & Rosemary MacDougal

**Walkers:** Jouni Lapanen, Pat Tierney, Marella Hogan, Greta James, Pam Morrison, David Trinder, Christine McColl, Hiroko Clark, Bob Milne, Caro Ryan.

*Casey Donovan and Australian Idol have a lot to answer for. OK, so maybe just one day of a song in the head, trudging up Mt Bogong is fine, in fact, probably a welcome distraction, but seven days of the same tune? Such was the opening soundtrack to a colourful adventure of teamwork, camaraderie and relaxing good times, set against the backdrop of the Bogong High Plains.*

#### Day 1: Boxing Day (Tawonga Carpark to Bivouac Hut)

We were a diverse bunch of 12 experienced walkers, who had made the road journey down from Sydney on Boxing Day, and after surviving what can be the most hazardous and confusing part of any bushwalk – the car shuffle – began our trudge up the aptly named Staircase Spur at 5 pm. (With our bellies fresh from several days of Christmas feasting and drinking, it's a wonder that we made it up the hill at all!)

Mt Bogong, when seen from the lowlands of Tawonga, is the type of towering, awe inspiring mountain that can instill fear into even the hardiest of bushwalkers, as they think about their pack and wonder if that extra little bit of alcohol or happy hour food was really necessary. It's a 1986m climb from the cars and thankfully, one that we decided to do in two stages. The late departure ensured a cooler ascent up to Bivouac Hut through mountain eucalypts and the beginnings of colourful wildflower displays that would be the hallmark of our route for the next week.

Arriving at the hut in dribs and drabs around 7.30 pm, the reward for our afternoon's efforts was an evening of entertainment with which no \$9,000 plasma screen, home entertainment system could compete. As the hot pink sky silhouetted the dead, spindly snow gums and threw a band of vibrant colour that enveloped our group, the ruby red moon began its slow ascent. Like a bizarre mirror reverse of each other, it was like witnessing an ancient celestial competition held between the sun and the moon.

Sitting in the box seat, leaning back and enjoying the extra 300 grams that was my Thermarest seat, hot rum lemon barley drink in hand, I quickly forgot the friction spots on my heels and settled back to enjoy the moment of bliss.

#### Day Two Bivouac Hut to Big River)

We left camp around 8 am to begin the final ascent to the summit of Mt Bogong. The beautiful and stark snowgums, with their beds of lush wildflowers soon gave way to rolling hills of cushion-like meadows. Hundreds of colours; pinks, whites, yellows, reds, purples and blues, laid down like giant Persian carpets rolling over the sweeping hills towards Bogong. As we climbed, the air was pierced by a shrill whistle, like a giant invisible alpine tuning fork, which signaled the

ever growing wind rushing through the holes in the old metal snow poles.

We made the top around 10 am for morning tea and, after a slightly immature display by your author of climbing to the top of the cairn, (just to be the tallest person in Victoria for a brief moment) we headed south west.



The sun caused the ground to glisten and twinkle before us, as white crystals all around confirmed our location on Quartz Ridge. On the descent, below the tree-line once again, we were greeted by beautiful 'mini meadows' of flowers. We blamed these colourful displays for the early lunch call at 11.45 am. Heading off again at 12.15 pm, we fixed our course for the fire trail, knowing that a long leisurely afternoon by Big River campsite was ahead of us. A leisurely afternoon in which we experienced four seasons in 4 hours; sweltering heat, cold winds, hail and rain – ah! *The Alpine!* We were into it – scurrying away from our camp fire to the shelter of our tents, only to be escaping our ripstop nylon sauna's 10 minutes later.

Big River is a beautiful place. Camping just across

from a bootless river crossing, in that bone numbing, pain producing cold water you hope to God that you don't fall into, we spent a leisurely afternoon and evening before settling down for a chilly night in our tents.

#### Day 3 (Big River – Ropers Hut)

We set out at 8 am and made good time on the climb up to Timms Lookout. The 500 m climb, along overgrown fire-trail seemed fairly easy and before we knew it, we were ducking off the trail straight up the nose of the spur to the heights above the fire-trail, reaching the survey marker at the peak around 10.45 am.

The following 2.5 kms across the top of Timms Spur afforded outstanding views of Mt Bogong to our left and Mt Feathertop to our right, whilst beneath our feet, was a beautiful mass of springtime wildflowers. Being up this high, with a sense of expansiveness and vast meadows, windswept above the tree-line makes me wish that as humans we had evolved just that wee bit further to develop wings and be able to soar across the mountains and valleys.

The pace and priorities for our trip were fast becoming apparent, with a few zzz's accorded us in the sunshine at the summit of Timms Spur. On a mattress of wildflowers with views of Mt Bogong and it's small snow drifts at our feet, we stretched out and quickly succumbed to the relaxation that our bodies and souls craved.

Reluctantly, we set off again along the watershed of Timms Spur on the rough track down towards Ropers Hut. Well, the former hut as all that remains from the 2002 bushfires is a ruin and the toilet, standing strong!

Ropers Hut is a beautiful, five star campsite, hemmed in by majestic snowgums, proudly striped in grey and green hues. A bizarre testament to the selective path of the bushfires. And it was here, that yet again, we found ourselves in camp early, 6 kms early to be precise, as a minor revolt (yes, the bushwalkers *are* revolting) of a suggestion to turn our lunch destination, into camp for the night, was realised. So therefore, it was with relaxation on the agenda, that we settled back into an afternoon with beanies, thermals, fire and the occasional snow flurry.

#### Day 4: (Ropers Hut to Mt Cope)

After a night of snow and wind, day four seemed to groan into being, through cold, sleet and rain. Never before has hot porridge in bed been so welcome. We packed up quickly in the unkind weather and donned packs to begin the walk across the high plains on the fire-trail to Wallace Hut for lunch.

As we rose to the top of the first hill (our socks and shoes already damp from the long grass), the wind hit us in the face and made standing tall difficult. The low white cloud ahead, felt as though we were walking into the belly of a great dragon. White and swirling all around us as the rain pelted our faces, feeling like tiny shards of glass hitting at high speed. We trudged on, setting quite a good pace, determined to reach our goal

as soon as possible.

When the clouds cleared from around us, views of rugged and rolling wind swept mountain plains filled our vision. On the far side of Mt Nelse, the weather began to clear as we sat down in the road for a well deserved morning tea. The finer weather and proximity to Falls Creek also brought out many day walkers in groups of one, two or more, not to mention the five runners who passed us in the midst of the really bad weather. They were wearing teeny running shorts, beanies and t-shirts... some didn't even have beanies! Not quite sure where they were going, as they were running by at such speed, only managing a 'morning', on their way. Talk about hard work in horrible conditions!

Once around the Falls Creek Storage Lake, the weather cleared slightly and we began our road bash to Wallace Hut. It's the oldest standing original hut left in the high country and with its closeness to Falls Creek it's popular with the crowds. As we arrived at the hut there were already several groups of day walkers out, some with small children and even a stroller – proving its place on the tourist trails around Falls.

Lunch was swift as coldness descended quickly upon us. It was one of those changeable 'days of many layers' – on again-off again. The warmest we were all day was settling in around the fire at camp, half way up the north, north-west side of Mt Cope with expansive views across the valleys, hills and mountains of the Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT). As we got to camp at (the now habitual) 3.30 pm, we settled back into another leisurely afternoon. Our red faces a strange mixture of windburn, sunburn and rain whipping.

The sun was setting to our left, the fire (which was being constantly beaten into submission, so as not to run away in the snow grass) and sunshine was wonderfully warm. We gathered water from a creek running from Mt Cope's peak, through lush boggy ground, covered in Sphagnum grass, mosses and those teeny weeny versions of the Pandanus tree that you see in Tassie. *(To be continued next month)*



*Rosemary, Hiroko and Bob*

## SOCIAL NOTES

### Social Notes From Kathy

Hi Everyone - This year is going very fast with lots of change happening within SBW. With a new committee come fresh ideas!

In April we had President Maurice's slides relating to Christmas walks which was well attended and enjoyed by all. You can now look forward with even more enthusiasm to this year's trips.

At time of writing, the much anticipated "Boots & All" social evening is still to eventuate. This will include the award of competition prizes, a presentation of the latest gear and floor prizes. All results/congratulations will be revealed in the June social notes column.

With the May magazine comes the Winter Walks Programme and Winter Social Agenda.

You can keep warm and amused at the club rooms and enjoy a slide show on Antarctica in June, followed by a "Christmas in July" party (mid-year feast) with glühwein in July and more slides on Mt Kaputar and the Warrumbungles in August.

Preceding each social night (except July) there will be the opportunity for people to get together for a meal at the Kirribilli Hotel, 35-37 Broughton ST Milsons Point (opposite the train station exit - club side) from 6:00 pm onwards. Walk through the bottle shop to the restaurant and look for familiar faces - Maurice will most likely be there. Prices are average and food is good.

With the Winter programs out, I look forward to seeing you either in the club rooms or on a walk. Cheers Kathy

### June Social Programme

*(All social activities are on Wednesday nights at the Kirribilli clubrooms unless otherwise stated.)*

1st 7pm **Committee Meeting**  
Observers welcome

8<sup>th</sup> 8pm **New Members Night**  
Introduction to SBW for intending prospective members

15th 8pm **Antarctica Creativity**  
Speaker David Synnotts will share his experiences with us via slides and talks of this amazing place



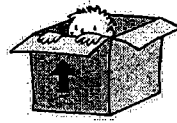
### The Mouse

A mother mouse and a baby mouse are walking along, when all of a sudden, a cat attacks them.

The mother mouse goes, "BARK!" and the cat runs away.

"See?" says the mother mouse to her baby. "Now do you see why it's important to learn a foreign language?"

### Is Your Daddy Home?



The boss of a big company needed to call one of his employees about an urgent problem with one of the main computers, he dialled the employee's home phone number and was greeted with a child's whisper. "Hello."

"Is your Daddy home?" he asked.

"Yes," whispered the small voice.

"May I talk with him?"

The child whispered, "No."

Surprised, and wanting to talk with an adult, the boss asked, "Is your Mummy there?"

"Yes."

May I talk with her?"

Again the small voice whispered, "No."

Hoping there was somebody with whom he could leave a message, the boss asked, "Is anybody else there?"

"Yes," whispered the child, "a policeman." Wondering what a cop would be doing at his employee's home, the boss asked, "May I speak with the policeman?"

"No, he's busy", whispered the child.

"Busy doing what?"

"Talking to Daddy and Mummy and the Fireman," came the whispered answer.

Growing concerned and even worried as he heard what sounded like a helicopter through the earpiece on the phone the boss asked, "What is that noise?"

"A hello-copper" answered the whispering voice.

"What is going on there?" asked the boss, now truly alarmed.

In an awed whispering voice the child answered, "The search team just landed the hello-copper."

Alarmed, concerned, and even more then just a little frustrated the boss asked, "What are they searching for?"

Still whispering, the young voice replied along with a muffled giggle: "ME."

*Submitted by George Mawer*



### A Lot Of Bull

Four young Bulls were boastfully discussing their hopes for the future.

"I'm going to Rome to be a Papal Bull", said one.

"I'm going to become a stock market bull" said the second.

"I'm going to be a bull in a china shop" said the third.

"Well" said the fourth, "I'm not going anywhere; I'm staying here for heifer and heifer".

 cloudveil

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AS BAD WEATHER  
ONLY INAPPROPRIATE CLOTHING



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