

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



JUNE 2005



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JUNE 2005

Issue No. 847

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.

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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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This is Part 2 of Caro Ryan's report of a summer walk in the Victorian high country.
- 18,19 Walking in the Prince Regent Area
This month is the anniversary of a very interesting walk in the Kimberley area - Tony Marshall looks back and reflects.

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

Website www.sbw.org.au

Office Bearers

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

Contact the Committee:

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

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9713 6985 (h) tbuilder@bigpond.net.au
Members Secretary: **Ron Watters**
0419 617 491 wattersr@bigpond.net.au
New Members Secretary: **Grace Martinez**
9948 6238 g.martinez@bigpond.com

Have You Changed Your Address?

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

Members: Ron Watters
Prospectives: Grace Martinez

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

From The Committee Room

A report of proceedings at the Management Committee meeting on 1st June



- The Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre will begin extensive renovations to the building at the end of June. Although still available for our meetings there will be no kitchen facilities available.
- The Committee approved
George Bertrand, Frances Bertrand, Geoffrey Colman, Anne Himmelreich, Gillian Thomas, Rochelle Howard, Wendi Timms & Margery Smith as full members.
- The Treasurer's report was received and payments for magazine postage \$447; printing materials \$574; YHA membership \$39; KNC rent \$598 and other expenses were approved.
- The addition of the Web Master or equivalent to the Management Committee would require a change to the Constitution by an addition to Clause 22(2). A "for and against" case will be placed in the July magazine along with the wording of the proposed change
- Following consideration of a letter on Child Protection Legislation from our Honorary Solicitor, the Committee endorsed a proposal to raise the minimum age of members to 18 years. This will require a change to the Constitution to be considered by a Special General Meeting.
- The Committee adopted the objectives for the Electronic Communications Sub Committee. An advertisement is to be placed in the Magazine calling for expressions of interest from members to be considered for appointment to the Sub Committee.
- A special email will be sent to Walks Leaders about camping restrictions proposed in the Budawangs Plan of Management of the Department of Environment and Conservation.
- The Conservation Secretary will send a letter of congratulations to the appropriate Victorian Authority about the decision to remove cattle from the Victorian high country.
- A copy of the Constitution with proposed amendments suggested by the Constitution Sub Committee is to be circulated for comment and will be listed for discussion at the next meeting.
- The Committee discussed the question of standardising navigation tests.

Please Add This To Your Walks Programme!

Sunday 31st July **Royal National Park**
Q Heathcote - Karloo Pool - Uloola Falls
- Wises Track - Garie Beach - Otford.
7-21 Waterfall train from Central
Jim Callaway 9520 7081

Message from President Maurice:

It has been a busy few weeks since the previous column. You might well say, "so what's new?" The effect of our promoting the recent St Johns Senior first aid training course was very significant. As one of the participants in the course I was pleased to see that we had 12 members (including 4 prospective members) attending the course. We all acquired or re-learned first aid skills that will equip us to be able to respond in the event of an accident, whether in the bush or at home or at work.

Following on from an alert from Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs, the state's peak bushwalking body (of which we were a founding member) and advice from the club's Honorary Solicitor the club's committee decided that we need to change the club's constitution to raise the minimum age for membership. At present that minimum age is 16, it is proposed to raise the minimum to 18. This proposed change will be put forward at the six-monthly general meeting in September 2005.

Even though currently we don't have many members in the 16 to 17 age group, those members are children in the eyes of the law.

The motivation for the change is that if we were to have a substantial influx of members in the 16 to 17 year group we may be obliged to meet the requirements of the state's Child Protection legislation. These requirements would be quite significant for the club and for trip leaders. If the proposed constitution change is approved children under 18 will still be able to participate in club activities as a visitor with the consent of the activity leader and provided that the child or children will be directly supervised by their parent or guardian.

Please watch for the advertisement inviting expressions of interest in becoming a member of the newly formed Electronic Communications sub-committee. If you have Electronic Communications expertise, experience or interest and the time available then we need your input. You will also be expected to perform various tasks arising from your participation in the sub-committee.

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

Child Protection and SBW

The NSW Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs has issued a Risk Management Framework document including a recommended Child Protection Policy. This policy results from the requirements of the *Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998* which extends to performance of work as a volunteer in a club, association or movement having a significant child membership or involvement.

The Management Committee, acting on advice from our Honorary Solicitor Richard Brading, has decided that SBW should opt out of child protection requirements as we do not have a significant child (less than 18 years) membership or involvement.

Opting out would mean that there would be no need to have a Child Protection Policy; no need to appoint a Child Protection Officer or to file declaration forms as otherwise required by the Act. In order to implement this opting out policy the Management Committee advises the following:

1. The club's minimum age for membership shall be 18 years of age. This requires a change to made to the Constitution
2. Persons under 18 years of age are only allowed to attend club walks and other activities if they are accompanied by a parent or guardian (or other relative who has authority from the parent/guardian) and that adult is responsible for the direct supervision of the child at all times;

Social Programme - July

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 th July | New Members Training Night - Basic Navigation |
| 6 th July | Committee Meeting |
| 11 th July | New Members Training Night - First Aid and Bushcraft |
| 13 th July | New Members Night.
Introduction to SBW for intending prospective members |
| 20 th July | Xmas in July - SBW Style i.e. a Mid-Winter Feast (7-45 pm)
Bring a Xmas plate. Drinks etc supplied |

Letters to the Editor:



Hunting by Aborigines in National Parks

I entirely agree with Peter Dyce's view expressed in the last Magazine. Welfare payments are more than sufficient to provide the Aborigines with food. Hunting is therefore just sport. I wouldn't be concerned if they hunted in the traditional way, on foot with spears and boomerangs, but they want to use 4WDs and guns. Letting them hunt in parks is no recompense for the depredation they have suffered since their land was appropriated by the European invaders.

National parks comprise mostly infertile land - that is why they were never developed. They were the least rewarding hunting grounds for the Aborigines - their good hunting grounds were the fertile land appropriated from them.

If reconciliation is to have meaning they must have self supporting occupation. To provide this, three policies need to be implemented. The first is education, now under way; the second is employment of those who complete their education, but many living in remote places are far from employment centres.

I have vivid memories of their shacks in the desert at Docker River and Warburton, where they lived with nothing to do. We should restore to them enough fertile land for them to be occupied and self supporting. This could be financed by using future budget surpluses for this purpose instead of tax reduction. Since they occupied the continent white Australians have enjoyed one of the world's highest standards of living and can well afford to share it with the dispossessed.

Alex Colley



Conservation and Health Double Whammy.

Nettles (*Urtica* species, *Laportea Canadensis*) can be prepared in much the same way as parsley, mint and spinach, chopped fine, sautéed, steamed, put into soup, made into a dip or infused as a tea. The trick is to use the fresh young leaves at the top of the plant.

The real trick however is to wear gloves (leather or rubber) when harvesting the nettles to prevent the bloody things from stinging the cook. (Who called the cook stupid?).

Nettles are full of minerals and vitamins and are used in herbal medicine to treat a multitude of ailments, too numerous to mention here. If a significant number of the population were to start and continue eating nettles the environment would benefit, we could have field excursions to pick nettles, and our health would benefit.

Patrick James.



Treasurer's Report *Tony Marshall*

Receipts and Payments to end May 2005

Receipts

Members Subscriptions	14,239
Prospective Fees	4,184
Interest - Conservation	206
Interest - Coolana	614
Interest - General	350
Magazine Advertising	1,170
Donations - Coolana	55
Donations - General	5
Other	60
Investment redemption	15,000
Total	35,883

Payments

Magazine Production	1,464
Magazine Postage	2,047
Magazine Equipment	566
Coolana Rates & Occupancy	187
Coolana Maintenance	250
Rent - Club Rooms	1,896
Postage, Phone & Internet	1,702
Administration	1,144
Transfer to investments	15,000
Total	24,257

Closing Bank balance 23,229

Thanks to the 77% of members who have paid there fees and shame on those 103 members who have yet to pay. The club's major expenses for insurance and Confederation affiliation will occur in the next few months. As most income has already been received these expenses will substantially reduce the bank balance.

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News from Confederation:

Extracts from the Minutes of the May meeting of the Confederation Of Bushwalking Clubs NSW:

- The Catholic Bushwalking Club inquired whether the affiliation fee could be paid on active members only. Decided that as many clubs have non-walking members this was not possible, and that non walking members are affiliated with us in support of our conservation aims as well.
- There was also discussion on the maximum affiliation fee which applies to clubs with over 410 members and it was decided to write to the four clubs affected and ask for their comments, as we feel it is a much more equitable fee and fairer for small clubs, if paid per head.
- Kosciuszko's Historic Huts: Under a newly revised version of the Burra Charter, the historical significance of the area and not just the fabric of the huts is to be considered as worthy of preservation. This allows the possibility for KNP fire-destroyed huts to be rebuilt. Stakeholder involvement is sought and the plan will be on exhibition till June 10.
- Warragamba Dam Catchment Area: Following the apprehension of bushwalkers in lower Kedumba Valley at Easter and the \$300 fines levied on them, some bushwalkers believe that the Sydney Catchment Authority should be using its scarce resources to eradicate the army of feral animals roaming the Schedule 2 zone.
- Kanangra Boyd NP/Blue Mountains NP: The scrub on Tiwilla Plateau is now very thick across the plateau to within about ½ km of Compagnoni Pass. The cattle tracks along the Kowmung River between Tiwilla Creek junction and Devitts Range are very overgrown with thick scrub. This means serious delays to walking parties. You should allow two or three times longer than normal to traverse these areas.
- Morton National Park : Maureen Carter SBW reports that the NPWS has built an elaborate cantilevered lookout at Granite Falls on the eastern side of the Budawangs, some 7 km north east of Mt. Tianjara and 2 km north of George Boyd Lookout.
- Member clubs which have not taken out personal accident insurance for all their members can take out family membership (defined as 2 adult members and their children under 18 years) for the price of \$10.50 per family. Member clubs who are interested contact d.kruse@bigpond.com.



Editors Note:

Congratulations to our "Boots and All" competition winners. There were very good entries and the prizes, all donated by Outdoors Agencies, were greatly appreciated.

The winning entry by Pamela Irving is shown on Page 6 and other entries, including the section prize winners, will be shown in the months to come.

This month there is a report from monthly meeting of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs (see adjacent column). This will become a regular feature. We are a member of this body and have been a member since its inception in the 1930's.

It costs us a lot of money. Our affiliation fees were \$2050 in 2004. We pay the maximum fee and there is a move to increase this to a "per head" fee which if applied would cost us a lot more.

Sometimes it seems to me that there is very little to show for our affiliation. Perhaps we need to be more active in the Confederation and question the large increase in their costs in recent years. It may be worth our while having a closer look at the costs and benefits of belonging to this representative body. Do you agree?

And talking of costs, what about our insurance? We have no choice with public liability insurance (\$3,919 in 2004) but do we really need personal accident insurance? Last year this cost the club \$2,546. Many members already have this cover on their personal policies and with emergency hospital treatment covered by Medicare and private medical benefit funds it may be time to question the need for this additional expense.

For those members who need accident insurance there is a separate cover for families available from Confederation (see adjacent column).

What do you think? Is it time to review our insurance?

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.

Accompanying photos should be of good quality for printing.

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: (02) 9484 6636

Email: billholland@bigpond.com

DON'T FORGET - MID WINTER FEAST WEDNESDAY 20th JULY

BOOTS WELL TRAVELLED

Pamela Irving



Soft Italian leather, medium brown, light-weight, tapered toe -the height of walking fashion. My first pair of walking boots were bought in Adelaide decades ago, to walk the Overland Track in Tasmania.

My program for breaking in my new boots consisted of two walks around the block a week before we left home. In Tasmania, my walking companions suffered blisters and wet feet. Another walker we met en route had cut semi-circular holes in his brand new boots corresponding with the position of his little toes. However I was above all of this. Not a twinge of pain or a blister, and my feet remained perfectly dry.

But perhaps I was too smug. A couple of months later, in the Adelaide Hills on a stinking hot day, I hobbled in pain at every step. Why was this happening? In Tasmania these boots had been perfect. The answer lay in the word Tasmania. Think cool. Adelaide Hills in summer, think 40 degrees centigrade. My Italian tapered boots, so fashionable and functional in the cool Alps, were not designed for hot Australian conditions where one's feet swelled in the heat. My little toes shrieked for semi-circles to be cut in the leather. Sacrilege! Not in my beautiful new boots. I walked the rest of the way barefoot.

The boot maker tried stretching, and removed the inner soles. Nothing worked. My current boyfriend and I had the same sized feet and he wore the boots occasionally on cooler Adelaide days. The rest of the time they mouldered away in the bottom drawer of my wardrobe.

Thirteen years later I was in Northern Pakistan to trek. Before I left Adelaide I remembered shops I'd seen in Kathmandu during a previous incarnation as a hippie in the early seventies. Shops which bought western trekking gear from those who no longer needed it, or who needed the rupees even more. Northern Pakistan was a popular trekking area, surely the same situation would apply? I dusted off my now elderly boots and tossed them in my pack. This was a trip on a tight budget – a bit of extra cash would be handy.

There were trekking shops and they did buy western trekking gear.

"Three hundred rupees, madam!"*

"No, no. These cost me sixty US dollars!" But no amount of theatrics moved these hardened bargainers. Things had changed since the seventies. On principle, I tossed my boots back

into my pack and marched out the door.

A couple of weeks later I was cooling my heels at a bus stop. To kill time I checked out the local bookstore. *Birds of the Indian Sub-Continent* caught my eye. I pulled it off the shelf. Relations between India and Pakistan were at a low point – the front cover read *Birds of Pakistan and Indian Sub-Continent*, a discreet sticker covering the former title. I checked the price: 295 rupees.

I walked to the counter and opened my pack. "I'll swap you these boots for this bird book," I said. The proprietor, about my height and weight, said nothing and examined my offering. He took off his shoes and put on my boots and tied the laces. He walked around the shop. He took them off and examined the soles, a bit worn at the heel.

"Boots old, you give me one hundred rupees," he announced.

All that time as a hippie traveller now stood me in good stead. "No, no," I countered. "Very good Italian leather. Look." I pointed to the brand.

He put the boots back on, leaned back on the chair, stretched out his legs to admire his new footwear, and handed me the book.

* about \$16 Australian

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"BOOTS AND ALL"

THE PRIZE WINNERS !

We had a successful presentation of the latest in footwear and other bushwalking gear at the Clubrooms last night and we announced the winners of our "Boots and All" competition.

They are:

The **Main Prize** winning entry was "Boots Well Travelled" by **Pamela Irving**

Prize = 1 pair Scarpa Boots

Pamela's winning entry is shown on the opposite page

The **Section Prize** winners are:

Articles/Stories:

"Did You Know That Boots Can Change your Life?" by **Jane Putt**

Jane received a head torch + Re LED Night Vision System and a Nalgene water bottle

Poetry:

"The Final Stride" by **Colin Gibson**

Colin received a head torch + Re LED Night Vision System and a Nalgene water bottle

Limerick:

"Too Big For Her Boots" by **Barbara Bruce**

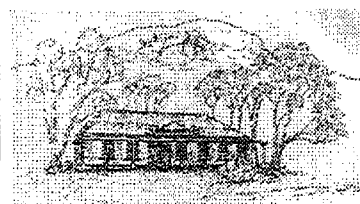
Barbara also received a head torch + Re LED Night Vision System and a Nalgene water bottle

Congratulations to our prize winners.

Many thanks to Scarpa and Outdoor Agencies for the donation of prizes. Also thanks to **Ben Ryan** of Outdoor Agencies for his great presentation which was so well received by our Club members at the Clubrooms on Wednesday 18th May.

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

Conservation Notes

Bill Holland

World Environment Day falls each year on 5th June. It is a day when people focus on the environment and it is celebrated in over 100 countries. Did you notice it this time? Our Federal Government apparently overlooked it when announcing measures to open up the Victorian alpine areas to cattle grazing again after the Victorian Government decided not to renew grazing licences - see news items below.

This month I have sent a letter to the NSW Government referring to their policy on granting indigenous people hunting rights in selected national parks. This letter reflects the NPA policy, as stated in our April issue, but also takes into account some concerns expressed by our members. I have also sent a letter to NPWS commenting on the camping strategy in the Budawangs - see May magazine.

It is very important that matters concerning the environment are brought to the attention of our members and that our members are given the chance to comment on, and support, environmental issues. We should always remember that SBW is more than a walking club - it is also an organisation that protects our environment. Alex Colley was Environment Secretary for many, many years - extremely active both at Committee levels and in the environment movement. Through Alex, and others holding this position, SBW is a recognised environmental organisation.

However, unlike other bodies we do not need government funding or tax breaks to sustain our efforts. We have our own conservation fund and do what we can through limited donations and members' individual efforts. Other organisations have paid and voluntary staff engaged in monitoring and researching environmental issues. They need this funding support!. Therefore it is a pity that such organisations are being targeted by the Federal Government - see news items below.

Conservation News

Environment Minister Attacks The Environment

Many Australians who donate part of their hard earned wages to the environment benefit from claiming their donation as tax-deductible.

Now this is under threat !

The Federal Environment Minister has written to The Wilderness Society and more than 300 environment groups stating their tax-deductible status is at risk if they engage in 'political activity'. Furthermore he has removed funding for state-based environment groups involved in environment advocacy or awareness-raising

From The Wilderness Society Newsletter

Conservationists Divided Over Tas Forests Package

The announcement of a package aimed at saving Tasmanian forests and protecting the logging industry has drawn a largely negative reaction from conservationists.

Prime Minister John Howard and Tasmanian Premier Paul Lennon have announced up to 193,000 hectares of public and private native forest will be added to reserves. A \$250 million package will help the industry restructure.

Some campaigners are breaking out the champagne, while others say the deal does not offer protection to enough of the state's old-growth forests.
ABC 13/5/05

Rally protests over Govt's Brigalow Belt decision

A rally is under way today at Gunnedah in north-west NSW to protest against the State Government's strategy for logging in the area. Local business people and members of the community have gathered outside Gunnedah Timbers to protest against the State Government's decision to lock up 348,000 hectares of bushland in the Brigalow Belt.

The protest comes on the day the Government announced that 15,000 additional hectares will be made available. The rally was supposed to coincide with a visit by Environment Minister Bob Debus, but he postponed his trip because of the protest, claiming it was orchestrated by the Nationals.

ABC Regional Radio Thursday, 2 June 2005

Victoria Ends Cattle Grazing In Alpine National Park

The Victorian Government has permanently banned cattle grazing in the state's Alpine National Park.

Grazing in the park has been temporarily banned since 2002 to help the area recover from the bushfires. But the Government has now decided not to renew any of the 61 cattle grazing licences, most of which expire in August.

The decision is based on the recommendations of the Alpine grazing task force, which found the cattle damage soil, trample watercourses and threaten rare flora and fauna. *The Australian*

Federal Gov't To Aid High Country Graziers

The Federal Government has granted emergency heritage listing to the 660,550-hectare Alpine National Park.

Federal Environment Minister Ian Campbell said the park had equal environmental and historic values. "The Victorian Government's decision to ban grazing in the park poses a clear threat to the historic heritage values," he said.

But Senator Campbell could not explain how the park's heritage listing would overturn Victoria's ban. He said the "legal practicalities" had not been worked out. Instead of battling the issue in court, he wanted to talk to the Victorian Government about modern management techniques to protect the environment while leaving cattle to graze in the park. *The Age*

Coolana Report

Don Finch



Glenn Draper arrived on Friday evening and was well into mowing when Don, Gretel and Wilf arrived about 10-00 am on Saturday morning. Chris and Mae arrived before lunch. Glenn, Chris and Mae mowed the camping flats. The sloping areas that had been missed for several months were covered in cobbles, some were mowed. These areas were the subjects of the call for urgent extra assistance last month however nobody was able to help and as a consequence there is now a heavy seedbed present. Wilf cleared tracks and repaired the road.

Gretel made a start on tying and weeding around trees, however she was not able to finish the job and more needs to be done ASAP.

Don made a start on the dead trees around the tool shed. Glen cleared the tracks to the trees on the eastern flats ready for a carer to access the trees. Unfortunately we did not have enough people to do this so the trees on the eastern flat still need attention.

The old mower has a broken motor cowling and the exhaust has broken off it is no longer serviceable. Don is looking into a new mower.

The SCA trees continue to thrive and Coolana looks a picture. There are, as usual, several maintenance weekends on the walks program consider yourself invited if you would like to come and help we would love the company.

Mark This on Your Calendar - Coolana Maintenance and Bush Regeneration Weekend:

23rd, 24th July: It's a wonderful property but needs some gentle care and maintenance. Join us for a pleasant weekend of light work and socialising around the evening campfire. Wine and cheese. Family and friends welcome. **Leader:** Don Finch 0418 417 593

WILLIS'S WALKABOUTS

Kakadu

too special ... two specials



Trekking Kakadu since 1986

I've spent 30 years walking in Kakadu. No one knows it better.

I know the best places, the easiest routes and the nicest waterholes. I can even take you to a few places you can't get a permit to visit on your own.

Special 1. The recent *Kakadu - Shared Visions* document proposes a new vision for the park. I'm helping the promotion by offering an extra 5% discount to anyone booking one of our 2005 Kakadu trips and quoting this ad within a month of when it appears.

Special 2. May 2006 will be the 20th anniversary of my first trip as Willis's Walkabouts. To mark the occasion, I am offering a special, leisurely, three week Kakadu Circle which I'd like to share with people from the clubs who have provided so many of my clients and friends over the years. *Ask for details. Russell Willis*

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

SNAKE BITE FIRST AID Elapid (All Australian venomous snakes)

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In accordance with ARC Guideline 8.9.1. (February 2005) and with consultation with the Australian Venom Research Unit (www.avru.org) our curriculum on first aid treatment of snake bite in Australia has been updated, effective immediately.

The basic changes are that Pressure Immobilisation Technique (PIT) has now been standardised to start the compression wrap from the end of the limb and work upwards.

These changes to PIT are applicable to Blue Ring Octopus bites, Funnel Web Spider bites, Cone Shell stings but no longer to Box Jellyfish stings

Signs and Symptoms

- Localised: fang marks, local swelling, redness, sweating, bruising, pain (variable).
- Paralysis: drooping of upper eyelids, visual changes including double vision, speech impediment and loss of facial expressions are early signs (2 - 4 hours or more) after the bite.
- Bleeding tendency: external – persistent ooze from the bite site; internal – change of conscious state is a key sign and may occur within 30 minutes of a bite, particularly common with brown snake bites.
- Muscle damage: progressive muscle weakness and pain on movement (or contracting muscles against resistance) with dark urine. Signs of muscle damage take hours to develop.
- Generalized pain, generalised sweating, generalised weakness, nausea and perhaps vomiting with decreased urine output.

Treatment Principles

- Scene safety: ensure that no further bites occur to patient or rescuers; do not try to catch the snake.
- Monitor the Airway / Breathing / Circulation.
- Assume envenomation has occurred so prevent spread of venom by the pressure and immobilisation method as illustrated. This is the single most important measure of first aid treatment, which has been responsible for a major fall in snakebite deaths. It is never too late to apply, and the bandages can be left on indefinitely because they will not constrict blood flow.
- If possible, place a piece of gauze over the unwashed bite site and mark on the pressure bandage with an X where the bite site is.

- Reassure the patient and treat for shock.
- Monitor for shock or cardiac and respiratory depression.
- Research stresses the importance of keeping the patient still. This includes all the limbs. Bring transport to the patient if possible.
- DO NOT cut or excise the bitten area.
- DO NOT apply an arterial tourniquet. (Arterial tourniquets, which cut off the circulation to the limb, are potentially dangerous, and are no longer recommended for any type of bite or sting in Australia.)
- DO NOT wash the bitten area. The type of snake involved may be identified by the detection of venom on the skin. Do not attempt to kill the snake.

Note: Even if the bitten or stung person is ill when first seen, the application of pressure immobilisation first aid may prevent further absorption of venom from the bite site during transport to hospital. If the bandages and splint have been applied correctly, they will be comfortable and may be left on for several hours. They should not be taken off until the patient has reached medical care.

The treating doctor will decide when to remove the bandages. If a significant amount of venom has been injected, it may move into the blood stream very quickly when the bandages are removed. They should be left in position until appropriate antivenom and resuscitation equipment have been assembled.

Bandages may be quickly reapplied if clinical deterioration occurs, and left on until antivenom therapy has been effective.

Prevention

- Wear protective clothes in areas where there may be snakes eg bushwalking, walking in thick grass or along riverbanks. 70% of bites occur on the ankle/foot region and 90% occur on the lower limbs. Boots and gaiters are essential items.
- Leave snakes alone when found.
- Avoid blind placement of hands and feet in suspect areas.
- Avoid travelling at night without a torch.

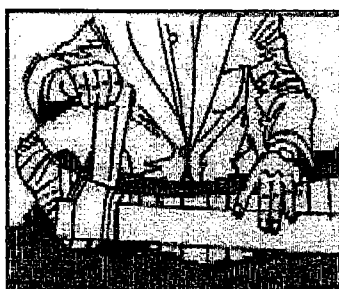
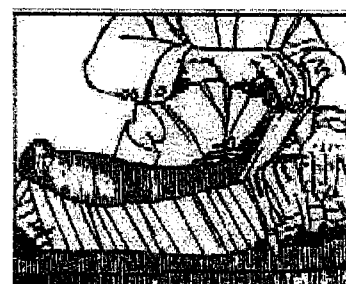
* NOLS) National Outdoors Leadership School.

SNAKE BITE FIRST AID

Apply a pressure bandage over the bite area as soon as possible. Crepe bandages are ideal but any flexible material may be used. Clothing, towels etc may be torn into strips. Panty hose has been successfully used. Do not take off clothing as the movement in doing so will promote the movement of venom into the blood stream. Keep the bitten limb, and the patient, still.

Bites To The Lower Limb:

1. Bandage upwards from the lower portion of the bitten limb. Even though a little venom may be squeezed upwards, the bandage will be more comfortable, and therefore can be left in place longer if required
2. The bandage should be as tight as you would apply to a sprained ankle
3. Extend the bandage as high as possible up the limb
4. Apply a splint to the leg. Any rigid object may be used as a splint eg. Piece of wood, rolled up newspapers or thermarest etc
5. Bind it firmly to as much of the limb as possible. Keep the patient still. Lie the patient down to prevent walking or movement around..



Bites To The Hand Or Forearm:

Bandage as much of the arm as possible, starting from the fingers. Use a splint to the elbow. Use a sling to immobilise the arm. Keep the patient still. Lie the patient down to prevent walking or moving around.

Bites To The Trunk:

If possible apply firm pressure over the bite area. Do not restrict chest movement. Keep the patient still.

Bites To The Head Or Neck:

No first aid for bitten area. Keep the patient still



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST REQUIRED !

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

Responsibility of the Sub-Committee

The newly formed Electronic Communications Sub-Committee has responsibility for the following matters:

1. Managing the club's web site including the:
 - publicly accessible section
 - members only section
2. Electronic Communications Management including:
 - email distribution
 - electronic delivery of club material
 - databases to manage membership details
 - electronic archives
 - other matters referred by the Committee

Composition of the Sub-Committee

The Sub-committee is expected to consist of 4 to 5 club members. If you have experience/expertise/interest in any of the above areas and have the time available to work with on the sub-committee members we need YOU.

Sub-Committee Meetings

Interested persons must be able to attend early evening meetings once a fortnight and are expected to work independently on agreed tasks. You will have the opportunity to develop new skills.

Skills Required

We need members who have experience in:

- information technology project management
- the use of email, databases, records management and the internet

A **WebMaster** will be required to work independently and will require current working experience in web design including the use of web graphic tools eg Adobe Photoshop as well as information design and navigation systems. Must also know how to format text, add graphic elements and make links on web pages. Knowledge of databases and email is also required

To express your interest, in the first instance please contact **Maurice Smith** on (02) 9587 6325 or via email at mauricethewalker@ihug.com.au by June 30.

New Members News *Grace Martinez (New Members Secretary)*

New member's training nights are still very popular and have proven to be the preferred method of joining SBW. We are having an average of 20 wishful future prospective attending and we (especially me) have a lot of fun demonstrating how to pack, what to take, what to eat for an overnight. The biggest test comes when they get to try the fully packed overnight backpack and the most asked question is "do you have to carry it all weekend?"

Our Website is attracting a lot of interest and although prospective members can download the application form, they still wish to come in and hear about our club. As predicted there are a number of applications coming in through the mail and these are usually people that because of their work / family commitments can not get to

the club rooms, but wish to join.

We are having a mix of ages joining, but I will dare to express my view, that we are attracting a lot of younger people (mid twenties, mid thirties) and I can only blame our website for that as most people have visited the site before they come in.

Technology is a wonderful thing....

.Well done Webmaster!!!

Prospective Members. The winter program includes a Navigation Training night on Monday 4 July starting at 7pm at the club rooms. Also a First Aid night on the following Monday 11 July also starting at 7pm at the club rooms. If you choose to, you will be able to sit the Navigation and First Aid tests which will go toward your full membership qualifications. See the winter walks program for details.

Welcome to SBW New Prospective Members

<i>Ray Horne</i>	<i>Marina Chan</i>	<i>Peter Holyfield</i>	<i>Paul Armstrong</i>	<i>Rae Rogers</i>
<i>Georgina Nash</i>	<i>Anna Wells</i>	<i>Chris Standen</i>	<i>Sue Armstrong</i>	<i>Janet Oakley</i>
<i>Linus Hindmarsh</i>	<i>Nicole Li</i>	<i>Tracie Jenkins</i>	<i>Maggie Robinson</i>	
	<i>Erin Gallagher</i>	<i>Joanne Rosenzweig</i>	<i>Keith Henry</i>	

Congratulations New Full Members

From 1st June the following prospective members have become new full members:

Geoffrey Colman Gillian Thomas Anne Himmelreich Georges Bertrand Frances Bertrand Rochelle Howard

Announcing a New Initiative

On the May Committee meeting the new member's team introduced a new initiative which was accepted by the committee members and will be introduced as soon as possible.

This new initiative will allow the club to electronically record the names of all the participants on each walk. This is a big job and is going to keep somebody very busy. By now you will be wondering how are we going to do this. There are a few options that we are considering, but all of them will include the cooperation of our leaders.

I know that our leaders already do a lot, and we can not thank them enough for their great efforts. Leaders already write a report, but sometimes this report does not get to the club very promptly, and we would like to gather this information on a weekly basis.

So our options are:

Option 1.

Leaders to email the name of the participants including the status of the participants (members or prospective member) to Grace (g.martinez@bigpond.com)

Option 2.

A member of the new member's team will ring each leader after their walk. As not all leaders are on email, we decided to go for Option 2.

If leaders agree they will be able to email as well.

The benefits of this exercise are numerous:

- Current up to date data, reports on who is walking in the club
- How many active members are actually walking
- It will include all members of the club (prospective and full members)
- It will provide historical data which is currently non existent
- It will provide the new members secretary with a central data storage to check on perspective's progress
- Quick verification of walks completed when applying for full membership
- Data on the most popular day and overnight walk and most popular leader

Thank you all for your support and please feel free to call me or email, I welcome feedback.

Grace Martinez (New Members Secretary)

THE WALKS PAGES

Would You Like to Put a Walk on the Program?

Hi, Ian Thorpe here, your new Walks Secretary. Thinking of putting a walk on the Spring Program? You can phone me at home on 9922 4742 (leave a message if I'm not there) or send me an email at ithorpe@evanspeck.com. I can email you a proforma to help you fill out the details of your proposed walk or activity. And don't forget, entries for the Spring Program close on Friday 15th July, so please get your walk to me before then.

Cheers and good walking, *Ian Thorpe*

Walks Notes *Barry Wallace*

Period 10th March to 13th April 2005

Purely for Nigel Weaver's information; the report covering his walk of 6th March out from Carlons Farm reached me via the pipeline during this past month, sometime after I prepared the last set of notes.

The weekend of 12, 13 March saw Tony Manes and a party of 10 out on his walk in the Wollemi/Gardens of Stone area in fine conditions. Water is still a problem in this area despite some recent falls of rain. Progress along the road into Newnes was slowed by debris from recent heavy rain-storms with fallen trees and branches adding to the obstacles.

Jim Rivers cancelled his walk in Dharug National Park scheduled for the weekend of 18, 19, 20 March due to the prevailing inclemency. Maurice Smith also adjusted his walk, programmed for Ettrema Creek that weekend, to avoid forecast severe weather conditions that did not eventuate. Instead they went to a section of the Shoalhaven River with an excellent campsite. The exit via Tims Gully tired the party out a bit, what with the traversing of waterfalls of various sizes and a fine growth of stinging nettles. There were also a couple of Saturday walks that weekend, with Mark Patteson substituting for Tony Crichton to lead a fast party of 8 in fine, sunny conditions from Otford to Bundeena through The Royal; and Maureen Carter leading a group of 12 out from Stanwell Park Station. The predicted rain never arrived and temperatures were near perfect throughout the walk. An old bullock track finally provided access through the escarpment and the party then spent some time wandering among the various plant communities (seven, count 'em) until turnaround time at the microwave towers. They even managed to find a lunch spot where the view did not include the colliery, but were still hungry enough to head for the café after the descent along the Woddi-Woddi track. Maureen also wants to know if anyone knows a way down from the escarpment in the vicinity of Coalcliff. Wilf, where are you?

Sunday saw Carole Beales and a group of 8 walkers making good time on the circuit out from Perrys Lookdown to Evans Lookout, down to Bluegum and back up the hard way. The cooler autumn conditions that prevailed no doubt helped somewhat.

Easter came early this year so it was only late March when Kenn Clacher and a party of 9 ventured forth on his Northern Three peaks walk in the Wollemi. Conditions were fine and the walk was great. When Peter Love begins the report for his walk that weekend out from Grassy Hill firetrail with: "Tambo Creek, done that, never again"; you can only worry. The party of 7 descended via a variation of Pass 12 to enjoy a one star campsite on the slopes of Pinchgut Creek for the first night. Day 2 was spent climbing Mount Savage and descending to a 2 star campsite on the dreaded Tambo Creek. The alleged wide rock platforms proved elusive throughout day 3, and what's more the map looked wrong. The 3.5 star campsite that night was probably a reward for the hour of blackberry bashing they did to arrive there. The walk out up Canoe Creek on the last day went to schedule with hamburgers at the roadhouse. Peter is even thinking about going back to try the western branch of Tambo Creek next year, or so he says.

Ian Rennard's Sunday walk in Garigal National Park was blessed with brilliant, if a bit warmer than expected, weather. The party of 16 included a blow-in Roger Browne and covered ground steadily throughout an enjoyable day with views of Middle Harbour and a great lunch spot on the rocks of Bluff Lookout. Recent coastal rains had given a freshness to the bush, with lush new growth and a scattering of wildflower blossom. They even managed to reach East Roseville just 3 minutes before the bus to Wynyard.

April 2, 3, 4 was the weekend for John Bradnam's qualifying walk out from Kanangra Walls, down Gingra Creek to the Kowmung and back up via Compagnoni Pass and the Gangerang Range. The party of 6 was strong and fit and the rough conditions across Ti Willa Plateau were offset to some extent by the views along the ridgeline (and the hamburger at the Mad Austrian after the walk). All in all John thinks the walk is probably a bit hard for a "Q". Tony Crichton led a Saturday walk out from Mountain Lagoon to the Colo and back, with a party of 10 in hotter than expected conditions. The views of the Colo Gorge were great but there was no sign of the dog that accompanied the party throughout the walk on a previous occasion back in 1993. No, it

couldn't read and no one could explain to it that it was not permitted. Ian Thorpe's potentially "somewhat challenging" day walk out from Carlons the same day turned out to be numerically challenged in the way of takers and did not go. Maurice Smith led a Sunday walk out from Glenbrook station to Glenbrook Gorge. Conditions were hot, particularly in the gorge so they took advantage of the pools along the creek. When one of the party of 10 began suffering leg cramps they shortened the walk somewhat. One suspects the "decadent afternoon coffee and cakes in Glenbrook" remained.

A week later and John Bradnam was back out there with his "Silver Wilderness Walk" and a party of 8 enduring very hot days on a strenuous bash out to Yerranderie from Kanangra and back. The climb up Mount Milo from the Kowmung was hard work and two of the members suffered from heat stress. Everyone made it to Yerranderie for the hot shower

and happy hour but 1 member elected to return from there with a visiting 4WD club the next day. Heat was an issue again as the party toiled up Colboyd Range, with 1 member suffering some stress but persisting to the finish. Dinner at the Mad Austrian rounded off the experience. Rosemary also led an overnight trip that weekend leading a party of 16 on her Budawangs walk. The experience of the camp cave on Saturday evening was enhanced with hot rum and lemon barley and appeared excellent to all. A number of side trips added to the good views, and they even managed to arrange a swim just before returning to the cars. Mark Patteson led a party of 7 on his walk out from Victoria Falls on Saturday 9th that weekend in warm and humid conditions. They observed that all of the streams they passed along the way had low water flows.

So that concludes the walks reports for this period.

Barry Wallace

The Northern Three Peaks

Kenn Clacher

Most SBW members will have heard of the Three Peaks walk from Katoomba to Cloudmaker, Paralyser and Guouogang in the Kanangra area— but the "Northern Three Peaks" walk may not be so familiar. The Northern Three Peaks are Savage, Mistake and Island in the Wollemi National Park. The walk starts near the end of the Grassy Hill Fire Trail at Canoe Creek and finishes at the Putty Road end of the Drip Rock Fire Trail. While the Three Peaks walk features four big climbs, each of around 800 – 900 metres, its northern counterpart has a total of only around 2,500m of climbing with the biggest single climb being around 600m from the Colo River to Savage.

I first saw mention of the Northern Three Peaks in a 1985 article in *Wild* by David Noble and filed it away for future consideration. I finally put it on the programme as a four-day walk in Easter 2005 rather than a two-day walk. It still promised to keep us interested for four days, and so it proved to be.

The party of nine got off to a flying start on the Friday morning thanks to the assistance of Peter Love's party, whose walk started and ended where ours started. They drove us in to near the top of Pass 13 and this allowed us to avoid spending time car-swapping. We were able to reach the Colo for morning tea, taken while I searched for Pass 17, which climbs the ridge almost directly opposite the Canoe Creek junction.

The last time (which was also the first time) I climbed this pass about 20 years ago it took a couple of hours to find, and I hoped I would be able to find it more easily on this occasion. It was easy enough to find, but that didn't necessarily make it easy to climb! On the Bob Buck (Colo passes pioneer and compiler of the Colo sketch map) scale of difficulty

it gets almost the most difficult rating with a note of "30 feet rope very handy". It was. Nevertheless we all managed to scramble up by the skin of our teeth, or of other body parts, or both. But once the 'rope handy' bit was negotiated it was a fairly straightforward 5km to Savage, the first of our three Peaks, where we arrived around mid-afternoon.

From there for the next two days we would be on unknown territory. The route description in *Wild* had been pretty cryptic. Just cross Tambo Creek, then three branches of Main Creek, to get to Mistake, it said. Being the Colo, it was unsaid but understood that most creeks, even at their higher reaches, are guarded by imposing cliff lines which are often not mapped. From Savage the first task was to get down to Tambo Creek before night fell. The plan was to walk down the ridge to the west of the creek junction at 861 147 (1966 Datum). The plan worked alright, except for a patch of thick lawyer and other vine on the saddle to the west of Savage, as a result of a basalt cap in that area. Nevertheless we made it to Tambo Creek in daylight (just!) and Ian found a small but comfortable campsite just down the Creek.

The next day's itinerary required a climb out of Tambo creek, the three crossings of Main Creek, a climb up and over Mistake and then six kilometres along a ridge down to the middle reaches of an unnamed creek that joins the Wollangambe a few hundred metres before it joins the Colo. With not much hunting around for passes through the cliff lines the first branch of Main Creek was crossed at 666 128, according to plan. The second crossing was planned for 655 116, but on coming down the ridge we were confronted by a cliff line of 30-40m on both sides of the creek, rather than the gentle slope shown on the map. We moved west to the first side creek

where Ian found a cunning route down a hole between boulders, and the cliff lines on the opposite side gave way to a climbable spur. The third branch put up little more than token resistance at 654 093, and suddenly, around mid-afternoon, we were on Mistake, our second Peak.

To get to the Colo from Mistake, we had a choice of going either along Clews Ridge, over Maiden and down Pass 25 to the Colo/Wollangambe junction, or along a ridge and down to the unnamed creek at 693 063. We didn't have enough water to complete the first option before nightfall, as to do that would have required either a descent of Pass 25 in the dark, or a camp without water, or both. We rejected this option as it had already been done, with both consequences, by a Bill Capon party last year. The second option was recommended in the *Wild* article and we could probably get to water and a campsite in daylight. A six kilometre walk had us at another small but comfortable campsite at the designated spot on the unnamed creek by dark (just!), after the requisite scramble through a cliff line.

It was six kilometres from our campsite along the unnamed creek to the Colo. The party was encouraged by the leader to expect it would be an idyllic stroll on easy Angorawa Creek-like open and picturesque rock shelves. The reality was scrubby rock hopping where 1km/h was the going rate. It got a little easier the further downstream we got, and there were some beautiful and spectacular rock shelves and other stretches of creek, but it took until mid-afternoon to reach the Colo and a well-earned swim.

To climb Island the *Wild* route called for an assault straight up Straws Gully at 752 068, but that would have required a water carry and was reputedly somewhat hazardous. This route is not marked on the Bob Buck sketch map, which was another indication of probable considerable difficulty. Accordingly we opted to go downstream along the Colo for a few kilometres to camp at the bottom of Pass 28, before making an assault on Island the following day. The resulting walk down the Colo was much like our unnamed creek, slow and very scrubby. And we had to cross the river, which had a

fair amount of water as a result of the rain the previous week. There was a party of liloers around and we almost resorted to offering to hire their lilos to get our packs, and us, across. But eventually Ian found a crossing at rapids where the water was around waist-deep. At the bottom of Pass 28 Craig found an expansive and comfortable campsite to while away another very pleasant evening.

Next morning we started climbing straight away up the southern ridge of Island. As we climbed the views opened up and became sensational as we neared the top. Like all the other days on the trip, the morning was clear and crisp and visibility great. From the top of Island, our third Peak, we headed down to Clews Cave and the upper part of Clews Short Cut, Pass 24. Here at last Ian blotted his copybook in diverting the party from, rather than to, Clews Cave.

The upper part of Clews Short Cut had the obligatory cliff lines, but these were by now easy pickings for this party and we sailed through them. All that remained was a few more kilometres of ridges, then 12km of fire trail that was polished off in little more than two hours.

Well, how does the Northern Three Peaks walk compare to its more illustrious southern counterpart? It is certainly different. While shorter and with less ascent (and descent) than the Three Peaks, it has much more variety and different challenges. The six kilometres of rock hopping in the unnamed creek would be difficult to do quickly, while the many cliff lines to be negotiated means that night navigation would have to be absolutely pinpoint. The cliff lines and denser Colo scrub also make the going slower in the Colo.

The last word goes to Christine. Sometime on the first day she broke a rib (confirmed by a doctor about a week after the trip). So she did almost the whole walk with a broken rib, without a word of complaint to the leader or the rest of the party. It is enough to make the rest of us feel like wimps!

Party: Christine Austin, Craig Austin, John Bradnam, Edith Baker, Kenn Clacher, Clare Holland, Kellie Rees, Margaret Rozea, Ian Wolfe.

Mid - Week Walking Group:

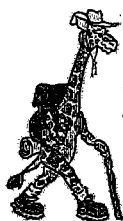
There is a group of members with time available to participate in mid-week activities.

Earlier this month about twelve of us enjoyed five days at Currawong Cottages on the Pittwater - opposite Palm Beach. (More of this next month). We have plans for the months ahead and you are welcome to join us!

The second half of the year is always our busiest for mid-week extended walking as the warmer months slowly emerge. Possibilities are expanded walks/stays in the Glasshouse Mountains in Queensland, a houseboat on Myall Lakes and a midweek stay on cabins at Wombean Caves.

Also, early days yet, but we are thinking of a trip to Lord Howe Island early next year.

If you would like further information please phone me - and keep an eye open for those mid-week day walks! **Contact:** Bill Holland 9484 6636 Email: billholland@bigpond.com



The Plans They are a-Changing (Part 2)

A Christmas "Holiday" Walk in the Victorian High Plains

Caro Ryan

Last month Caro told the story of Day 1 to Day 4 of this walk in the Victorian high country with a backdrop of the Bogong High Plains. This month we have Day 5 to Day 7

Day 5: (Mt Cope – Blair Hut)

The dawn was like a silent white shroud that had been laid down all around us. I awoke at the sleep-in time of 6.30 am and sensing sun on the tent, poked my head out to see just what type of day was greeting us. I felt myself gasp when I saw the beauty of a white dawn. Some stoic snowgums glistened, whilst others were silhouetted to the rising sun, trying desperately to shine through the white curtain, when our breakfast guest made his presence known...

There, standing no more than 20 metres from the fire and 15 metres from Jouni's tent, was a strong, black, shiny stallion. Solid, determined and inquisitive. He hung around for the duration of our breakfast and usual morning rituals of breaking camp, only to trot off just prior to our departure.

It was quite awe inspiring to see such a beautiful animal, so free, yet suspiciously staking us out. When it whinnied and neighed, it almost brought tears to my eyes. Who knows why it was there. It might have been sussing us out to protect its mares; it could have been looking for food. One thing is for sure, it was drawn by our unique and all pervading smell - even though we'd been bathing whenever possible - we were ripe. The presence of the horse meant that we got to see our very own *Horse Whisperer*, Pat "Pirelli" Tierney, work some magic. She must have come within 4 metres of it, before it shied and turned away. It was like watching a dance and grand challenge of wits!

We finally got going after a delightfully leisurely morning and headed for the mysterious sounding 'Pole 333'. We had morning tea at a spot just north of Mt Bundera, with expansive views back across the plains towards Falls Creek. It was then decided that 2nd morning tea should had on top of Mt Jim. The climb that was well

worth the small effort. Views in all directions - from Falls Creek in the

north, Mt Hotham to the south and Feathertop (our final goal) to the west. Crows circled and swooped, around the magnetic anomaly that is Mt Jim, whilst we pondered some old graffiti on the fallen down survey marker which said, 'Anzac Day 1950'.

After descending Mt Jim we made our way north west across the plain and we came across a valley opening up before us and easing it's way to the river below. It felt like we were walking up and over something significant - the view was breathtaking.

On the way down into the valley, heading for Weston Hut for lunch, there were ample photo opportunities with further stunning wildflower views. Our luxurious one hour lunch break was had in the front yard of the hut, whilst we aired our feet and commented on how we looked as though we were waiting for the show to begin, sitting in what was a natural grass covered amphitheatre.

After lunch, it was only a matter of a few kilometres down, down, down to Blair Hut and a beautiful 5 star campsite (albeit with a multitude of flies and midges) - the perfect place for a chilly clothes and (head-ache producing!) wash in the creek. We would cross this creek tomorrow to begin our ascent up Diamantina Spur, heading for Mt Feathertop.

Day 6: New Years Eve (Blair Hut – Top of Diamantina Spur)

As we were all anticipating a tough climb up the steeps of Diamantina Spur (700m), we managed to get away just before 8 am. The climb starts surprisingly steeply, before settling into a monotonous and continuous grade of 'up'. Unlike Staircase Spur on Day 1, there were few plateaus or rest spots along the way.

After a couple of hours, the views started to open up as we neared the top of the tree line. Towards the top of the Spur, there is a moment of frustration as you realise you need to lose 100 metres of height that you've just fought hard to gain, before finally continuing the assault to the summit.

We started the day with MUMC hut as our planned camp for the night, however, like many days already behind us, our plans were changed when we reached a great lunch spot, just near the summit and junction with the Razorback track and decided that this would make a perfect New Years Eve party location and

promptly set up our tents.

We lazily munched our lunch (by this stage starting to

tire of crackers, peanut butter and hummus) before settling back to snooze in the shade of the beautiful snow gums. The call of 2.30pm came, which was our signal to head off with empty packs and wineskins in search of water and a climb up Mt Feathertop.

Stopping to 'look both ways', lest we be run over by the tourists coming along the Razorback Ridge track from Mt Hotham, we trotted off at a brisk pace for the newly finished Federation Hut II. Our thoughts of finding water at the hut were dashed by a group who told us that the hut's watertank was empty. We

Quotable Quotes:

Marella: (On thinking about heading to Mt Hotham for NYE supplies, I need to stay out of the sun...

Greia: Well, there won't be any sun in the bottle shop.

therefore, settled ourselves into the task of finding the 'nearby' spring to refill our bottles.

After what seemed a VERY long time of traipsing down Bungalow Spur, we came across the Old Federation Hut site (about 1.7kms down) and the fast running fresh spring where we refreshed ourselves. Some of the girls even managed to wash their hair!

With newly fluffy coiffures atop heads, we set off, back up the hill towards Federation Hut II, where we chatted with several people who had told us that they had come to witness sunrise 2005 from the top of Mt Feathertop. They were a handful of probably 30 or so people who we met along the way with the same idea. We now knew that we had made the right decision in camping where we were, further back and well away from any other crowds or people.

Just past the junction to Feathertop, we dumped our water filled packs on the edge of the treeline and continued on our climb, and what a spectacular climb it was. Breathtaking, expansive and beautiful! We passed only one other group of walkers on top, who had come up the north west spur and were on their way down.

On the way up, we were treated to a 'whoosh' as an unpowered glider was playing on the thermals above us. It circled a couple of times – the pilot buzzing us as he went by. Truly a beautiful sight and sound – a sense of freedom and silence!

On top we took in the view for quite a while as the sun began its descent. Off to the east, below us, we could just make out the smoke from master fire-maker, Marella's handiwork and after everyone had munched on the last of my scroggin, I can announce that 12 sour bears climbed the mountain and only 1 returned!

Pulling ourselves away, we headed back to camp to wind down from what ended up being our biggest walk day yet and to prepare for the obligatory Happy Hour for New Years Eve. Once Rosemary laid the classy tablecloth (spare fly) down, there was a selection of smoked oysters and mussels (some even on traditional Finnish rye bread), pate, camembert, Pringles, pretzels, cheesy twists, the obligatory hummus and Bob's impressive pistachio halva (all 400g of it!).

The LRB (Lemon Rum Barley, not to be associated with Glenn Shorrock or John Farnham) flowed thick and fast, necessitating Hiroko to sit down (before she fell down) and we pondered how our 'other' friends would react if invited to a house for a NYE spread such as this. Fijian new year was celebrated at 9pm as the sky began a beautiful colour-filled display around Feathertop. We languished in our private resort, glad to have escaped the hordes.

We all slept well that night. It may have been the warmth of the evening or perhaps the LRB, but many of us woke up with

stories of sweating and jumping out of our bags somewhere between Fiji and dawn.

Day 7: (Top of Diamantina Spur - Harrietville)

We slept in and left camp at 8.30 am. The group split in two at the main track junction of Razorback and Feathertop, with half of the group wanting to investigate the alien space capsule that is the MUMC hut (polished floorboards no less!) whilst the rest ventured down the never-ending, relentless hill of Bungalow Spur. The soporific plodding of tired feet gently rocked our bodies in silent meditation. Our silence was only broken by Jouni (aka Steve Irwin) spotting two black snakes.

After arriving in Harrietville, yet another change of plans, led us to spend the final relaxing night at the Bright Backpackers (they give discounts to bushwalking club members to match YHA discounts), rather than the Harrietville Caravan Park. There were well earned showers and hearty lunches, before gathering for the obligatory cooling ale and dinner in the town's wine bar. Entering civilization again, now filled with news of the Tsunami was a dramatic culture shock for us all.

This news aside, such was our fabulous, relaxing, Christmas walk wonderfully led by both Rosemary and Maurice, proving that the best laid plans... can sometimes be even better! Especially when dealing with a bunch of revolting bushwalkers!

And as I drove back up the Hume Highway with a feeling of accomplishment and refreshment, the sounds of Casey Donovan, straining out the words to 'Listen with your Heart' continued to waft through my mind, eight days since they first started So thank you Casey. No really, thanks.



Walking in the Prince Regent Area, Kimberley, June 2004 *Tony Marshall*

Leader: Wayne Steele. Party: Russell Bauer, Marella Hogan, Wendy Lippiat, Pat McBride, Tony Marshall and Bob Milne

Wayne's email invited me to write up our 2004 Kimberley trip as all the other participants had all declined to do so. Rising above the unflattering implications of his note, I sat down, looked out the window at the falling autumn leaves, and began the enjoyable contrast of recalling a trip to tropical northern Australia a year ago.

Wayne has led three trips of 10 days or over to the Kimberley area, mainly with the same participants. The first was to the Mitchell Plateau. The second introduced us to the Prince Regent area. For the 2004 trip, we returned to the Prince Regent with the idea of exploring a smaller area in more detail. This article sets out my thoughts and recollections of the last trip rather than a day-by-day account. An extended version giving daily route details can be found on the club's website.

A year after the trip, I jotted down my memories without looking at my notes. Then I reread my notes and was surprised to find that I had a cold and sore throat at the beginning of the trip and that I remarked on the heat. I hadn't recalled these annoyances. Instead what surfaced were pleasant memories, some big and some little, that will stay with me forever.

My two big memories are what I call the green gullies of the region, and the Aboriginal art we found. We were surprised to find green, park-like gullies in the small creeks that are on top of the plateaus. They were delightful to walk through. The gully floors were soft green sedge-land with stands of paperbarks and



scattered tall eucalypts. In places the gullies were bordered by intricate rock formations.

We found a few exciting examples of Aboriginal Art. These were in small caves on rocky outcrops and even the untrained eye could detect a range of styles. We guess that much of the Aboriginal art may be in the open plains rather than on the higher plateaus where we spent most of our time.

Another recollection was of the remoteness and extent of the region where we walked. Throughout

the bushwalk we were probably close to 100km from other people. Although we were not conscious of this on a daily basis, I think it was at the back of our minds, making us more cautious and careful than we may have been on a day or weekend walk outside Sydney. Being so far away from other people was satisfying and it is undoubtedly worth the considerable effort it takes to get to this remote area. Although trips to the Kimberley are not uncommon, the area is so extensive that it is far from being well known. Despite three trips there, we haven't begun to scratch the surface of what there is to see in this unusually varied and fascinating country. We were fortunate on this last trip to have two members with professional expertise who added to and confirmed this impression. Wendy is a geologist, and Patrick is a biologist, and both have worked in Northern Australia.

For me the sense of remoteness is linked to sunrises and sunsets. I hope I am never sad enough to consider sunrises and sunsets a cliché. At these quiet times the sense of distance is particularly acute. Experiencing the colour and light changes expanding over the plains in the morning or gradually retreating at the end of the day is one of life's small pleasures. Photographs never do the panorama justice. The overwhelming quiet at these times, punctuated only by distant birdsong, is one of my chief memories of all the Kimberley trips. It is an effective meditation to consciously recall these times in the more hectic moments of our city existence.

Thinking of sunsets brings back the evening routine, which started with ritual rum and lemon barley, followed by the evening meal as the light faded. We ate very well, and I particularly recall Pat's Tuna and Ginger, and Mushrooms à la Russell. The moon was waning during the trip so the night skies became progressively more brilliant, with the Milky Way gloriously living up to its name. The evenings usually ended with some constellation and satellite spotting, mixed with a little eavesdropping on Bob and Wayne's deeply philosophical chats on the nature of the universe's fundamentals.

In addition to these inevitable major memories, I also recall smaller ones that also bring back the experience and flavour of the 2004 trip.

Just getting to the Kimberley takes a bit of doing. Although the others seemed to have no trouble preparing for the trip, I found myself, as usual, up until midnight checking my gear and packing. There is quite a bit of work involved in thinking through what's needed to be self-sufficient for 10 days when walking in a remote area. As always, I've resolved that in the future I will be prepared well before the departure time. Wayne got us to the start of the walk with his usual superlative efficiency. The trip

required commercial flights to Kununurra, followed by a light plane to a remote cattle station, and then a 4WD journey of over 3 hours to reach the even more remote start of the trip. The need to use light aircraft and 4WDs limits the party size.

This was Russell's first Kimberley trip. As we flew from Kununurra to our dropping off point over what appeared to be barren desert, his face clearly showed that he wondered what he was getting into. I think we all sensed the strangeness of flying for an hour over desert and then ending up walking in extremely pleasant, well-watered plateau country.

We soon fell into a daily routine, which, while not dramatic it is a pleasant memory. We were almost like a tribe, where individuals had responsibilities to the group, for example Marella starting the fire, Wayne cooking the porridge, and myself making coffee. This sense of order and cooperation had a nice feel—even if I was sacked as the coffee maker for making the brew too weak (in the opinion of some).

We had seen plenty of fish on the previous trips so this time we planned to catch a few. Although none of us had fished for over 20 years, we researched and came up with different methods ranging from nets to various combinations of hooks and lines. We needn't have bothered because we found that the sooty grunters were so naive and curious that we could have caught them an unbaited hook. The books say that sooty grunters are only medium-grade table fish but we found them good eating. We had them as an entrée, cooked in foil with lemon and herbs. For the record, Wayne caught the first fish, Marella caught the biggest—and I caught the tastiest. In future trips in the area, we'd seriously consider relying on fish for one or two meals because they are plentiful.

When I put on my boots for the first time after getting home from the Kimberley the aromatic smell of the spinifex gum really brought back the trip. In particular it brought back memories of 'Big Pink'. For those who do not know Wayne, Big Pink's demise may seem a trivial matter, however I feel compelled to record the event. Big Pink was a large pink mug that Wayne received as a gift some time ago. It accompanied him on many trips for many years, sort of a macho man's security blanket. We were on our way down from exploring some tops. As those at the end of the party passed through a gap between two rocks they were greeted by the sight of our leader disputing right-of-way with a patch of spinifex. The spinifex was assisted by a hidden

rock, and together they prevailed, with our Leader finishing most inelegantly legs up. On his back was his pack, and clipped to the back of the pack was what used to be Big Pink. After providing appropriate grief counselling, we collected the remains of Big Pink for environmentally sensitive internment.

My final recollection was the hospitality of the people from the cattle station who drove us to and from the start of the trip. I remember not only the tea and scones but also their great knowledge and interest in the region. This was our second trip starting from this cattle station. This time the owners and staff were much more relaxed with us. We sensed their increased confidence that we were competent and would actually be at the rendezvous twelve days later. This was a source of satisfaction for us, even more so as we felt equally more confident about them.

Extended trips offer many of the best bushwalking experiences. Not only do they to provide an opportunity to see different country in detail, they require you to use all aspects of your bushwalking expertise. Anyone can go walking and do it tough; this takes no skill and experience. It was gratifying to be part of a small supportive group organised to spend 12 days in remote country comfortably and happily, without any external assistance. This is not uncommon with SBW trips but it should not be forgotten or taken for granted.

Finally these trips wouldn't have happened without Wayne. He did the planning, organizing and leading, with a more or less consultative style of dictatorship that we all happily supported. All his trips have been unqualified successes, and a great point to his credit is that in all three walks I cannot recall even the slightest instance of friction amongst the group. It's been a privilege to be a member of these trips.



SOCIAL NOTES

Greetings from Social Secretary - Kathy

There is quite a bit for me to chat about this month, so settle down with a beverage and read on.....

Firstly, all about the "Boots and All" competition Social night held on 18th May with about 25 attendees who unanimously were exceedingly glad they made the effort to come.

The evening started with the usual socialising which was enhanced by the Scarpa beer provided by our guest Ben Ryan of Outdoor Agencies. Ben gave a most interesting and comprehensive talk about boots and then gave a 'run - down' on other items of outdoor equipment, including backpacks, torches and water bottles. He was then asked to hand out the prizes which were very generous.

The over-all winner was Pamela Irving for her entry entitled 'Boots Well Travelled'. The article is in this month's mag. She received the Scarpa boots prize. Section prizes went to Jane Putt (articles/stories section), Colin Gibson (poetry) and Barbara Bruce (limerick). All received a head torch and Nalgene water bottle. Lucky door prizes of Backcountry dehydrated meals were also donated. A huge "Thanks" to Outdoor Agencies for their generosity.

The pre-meeting informal dinner at the Kirribilli Hotel proved a success also, with 8 people enjoying the food and ambience of that venue. Everyone is invited and the same venue is scheduled for the 15th June (next social night). David Synnotts, a member and creativity writer will be showing slides and talking about his trip to Antarctica.

Over the next few months the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre will be undergoing extensive renovations. This will not impact on social evenings generally. HOWEVER our July mid-winter FEAST will require the loan of 2 microwave ovens for that evening. If you are able to help out please contact me on 91307263 or email Kathygero@aol.com. This evening will still be ON regardless of renovations!!

That's it! Enjoy your walking and I'll see you soon.
Kathy

Lost in the YMCA



A little boy got lost at the tennis club and found himself in the women's changing room. When he was spotted, the room burst into shrieks, with ladies grabbing towels and running for cover.

The little boy watched in amazement and then asked, "What's the matter -- haven't you ever seen a little boy before

July Social Programme:

Mon 4th New Members Training Night
7 pm A basic navigation training night for Prospective members will be held in the club rooms. Booking essential. Ring Grace Martinez on 9948 6238

Wed 6th Committee Meeting
7 pm Observers welcome

Mon 11th First Aid For Prospective Members
7 pm This is not a first aid course. Come along to a training night that will give you the chance to learn and to pass your first aid test for your full membership. Bookings are essential.

Wed 20th New Members Night.
8 pm Introduction to SBW for intending prospective members

20th July Xmas In July - Mid Winter Feast
7-45 pm Please bring a plate of nutritious food to share. Club will supply wine, soft drinks and the traditional glühwein. A chance to celebrate and meet friends



Man of the House:

A husband had finished a book about being the "Man of the House". By the time he reached his home. All charged up he stormed into his house and walked directly up to his wife. Pointing and shaking a finger in her face, he said:

"From now on, I want you to know that I am the man of this house, and my word is law! I demand that you prepare me a gourmet meal tonight, and when I'm finished eating my meal, I expect a sumptuous dessert afterward! Then, after dinner, you're going to rub my tired feet and draw me my bath so I can relax. I will be expecting you to bring me some beer while I soak in the tub! And, when I'm finished with my bath, guess who's going to dress me and comb my hair?"

"The funeral director," replied his wife.

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, with cheques made out to "Sydney Bush Walkers", addressed to

"The Coolana Fund"

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

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