



ALAN P. RICHY

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



DECEMBER 2006



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DECEMBER 2006 Issue No. 865

THIS MONTH INCLUDES.....

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

is the monthly bulletin of matters of interest to members of:

The Sydney Bushwalkers Inc
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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 Program (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 the Warrumbungles, Snowy Mountains, etc as well as interstate.

Our meetings start at 8pm and 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.

Website: www.sbw.org.au

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President's Report



happen all over again.

Just back from the approaching winter in the Himalaya to mostly warm days in Sydney and it's amazing to realise that Christmas and the summer holidays are about to

Our trip to Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal was excellent with the Bhutan part being the main reason for going - and we (Margaret, Angelika, Miriam and I) were not disappointed with what we found. From the moment the four 'Bhutan Booties' stepped off our Druk Airlines flight at Paro airport we felt like we had literally been transported back in time. After the choking air and madness of Kathmandu, Paro's clean fragrant air couldn't have been more of a contrast. The four of us stood stunned on the tarmac taking in the superb and uniquely Bhutanese architecture of the surrounding buildings and environment while snapped away on our cameras. Can't say I've done that before on arrival anywhere, and that was just the airport.

Our 12 days in Bhutan were fascinating as we traveled from the capital Thimpu, in the west visiting chortas and dzongs on route, enjoying walks in surrounding villages and beautiful conifer forests along the way. From there we traveled east through central Bhutan with many highlights, but for me the best was our camp for two nights in the Phobjikha Valley. The endangered Black Necked Crane migrates to the warm valleys of Phobjikha from Tibet, over the Himalaya to Bhutan each winter, and the resulting festival and chance to view the cranes up close was high on my list of 'must do'. This annual event is preceded by the king's birthday when many of the locals take a break from harvest time, and school children celebrate with dancing and traditional songs to pay homage to the last remaining kingdom of the Himalaya.

Needless to say there is much MORE to say and show from our trip to Bhutan which will be the subject of a night on the SBW social calendar next autumn, so check the next program.

In the meantime, if you have always wanted to travel to Bhutan but were discouraged by the cost, don't put it off too much longer. Bhutan will hold its first democratic elections in 2008, which together with the promised delivery of electricity to the whole of the country in that year will bring significant changes. The government is also planning to increase the current mandatory expenditure of \$US200 per day for visitors

to Bhutan upwards, as this has not changed in many years and there is concern that the rising numbers of tourists are degrading Bhutan's pristine natural environment and cultural heritage.

And finally, at the end of another year...

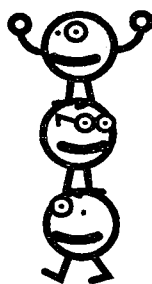
May there be water when you need to fill up your water bottle.

May your feet stay cool, and the weather be kind - wherever you wander.

And to everyone - walkers or not - best wishes for a very healthy, happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Hoping to walk with you soon...

Jan Roberts



New Members Notes by Maurice Smith New Members Secretary

Joining us as Prospective Members since my previous report are: Paul Couvret, Michael Ferioli, Marion Davies, Gary Barnes, Stella Sgambellone, Frank Sgambellone, Steven Hurst, Therese Douglas, Paul Douglas, Rhys Williams, and Gill Cape. Please make these folks really welcome.

In addition the following Prospective Members have been accepted as a full member of the club. Please welcome Jacqui Rosier, Dennis Trembath, Linda Tarran, Marina Chan, Ruth Richter, Jodie Dixon, Melinda Turner, and Roger Williams to our ranks.

The new Summer Walks Program is now in your hands so I'd suggest that Prospective Members spend a few minutes going through it and marking those walks that they are interested in doing. Start with the walks with the lower grade values to start with. Remember that it pays to book onto a walk early as some walks fill fast. With the warmer weather already upon us don't forget to take plenty of water with you on your walks. Dehydration headaches are definitely not enjoyable. I do speak from first hand experience.

At the date of writing this column we have 117 prospective members, 66 of that number are of the female variety, compared to 51 males.

See you on a walk soon
Maurice Smith
newmembers@sbw.org.au

From The Committee Room

*A report of proceedings at the
Committee meeting 6th December 2006*



- In the absence of President Jan, Margaret Carey (Vice President) chaired the meeting.
- Inwards correspondence included the following: a copy of the book by Jim Smith "*Last of the Cox's River Men- Ben Esgate*" for the Club's archives; a donation of \$1,000 for the Coolana toilet; a letter from Don Finch on loan of equipment for toilet construction; from the Game Council answering concerns expressed to the Premier.
- The Treasurer's report was adopted and approval given for the following payments; magazine postage \$449; Kosciuszko Huts Association \$80; social expenses \$150 and toilet construction \$8,110.
- David Trinder reported on the progress on toilet construction and costs incurred to date against budget.
- The New Members Secretary reported a successful navigation training night was held in November. Resolved that *Melinda Turner, Ruth Richter, Jodie Dixon, Kevin Songberg and Roger Williams* be admitted as full members.
- The Committee discussed the response to Melanie Freer's letter last month and decided to further investigate the possibility of compiling recommendations or guidelines on environmental matters for members to consider when walking and camping.
- The Magazine Editor reported on deadlines for the magazine and advised that she would have an electronic version ready for placing on the web site or issued by email from March next year.
- Suggestions to add "Jazz/Opera in the Park" events to our social programme and to advise details to members when sending out this month's social reminder by email.
- It was resolved to send a get well card and flowers to Barbara Bruce who is in hospital recovering from an operation.
- The Electronic Communications Sub-Committee advised that it now expected Stage 1 of the Electronic Data Base to be ready early next year. Work was progressing on maintenance and updating of the Club web site.
- The Committee discussed arrangements for the Annual Report to be issued before the AGM

COOLANA REPORT - November 2006

Here is a précis of last weekend.

On Thursday 16th Gretel and Don arrived about 9:30. Gretel did some weeds and then helped with the priority job of cleaning up of sticks around the toilet site. A start was made on building the holding bins for the sand and blue metal. More chain sawing and log clearing around the building site. The water pipe line was taken up as there was not enough time to bury it there is now no water tap down at the flat. The tree across the road to the car park was removed. A new post for the "Coolana S B Walkers" sign at the gate put in the ground and the sign fitted all done by 2030. Philip arrived about 2200.

Friday 17th 5 degrees at 0500. Philip finished the other two holding bins and nailed down floors using the sheets of ply from the road gravel pile. Signs for the delivery trucks were made and installed at the front gate. David arrived about 0900. Normans arrived and were taken down the road to the site to access if the two tonne truck could make it down the hill. It could not and all supplies except the steel were dumped in the car park. David started work on the excavations. A semi trailer delivered the steel to inside the gate, a 15 tonne truck negotiated the road to unload the two pallets of blocks to the car park experiencing a bit of difficulty turning around to drive out. A 10 tonne truck delivered the timber and made it look easy while the 2 tonne bussed back and forth to Nowra with sand gravel and cement. A start was made on moving the cement in 70 x 20 Kg bags to near the toilet site. David and Philip hammered away at the excavations through the day. Philip took Gretel off to the train about 1500 and returned to continue. We gave it away about 1800. There is a word that rimes with rugged.

Saturday 18th Chris and Mai arrived about 0900, Spiro and Rick soon after. Solar panel battery etc were installed in the tool shed. The 240 v generator failed and was sent back to Sydney for repair. Philip and David continued with digging the excavations for the foundations, a very hard job! Rick and Spiro gave a hand too. Chris and Don moved cement timber and steel and blocks down to the site that is about 1.4 tonne of cement, 1.3 tonne steel and timber and flooring, 2.25 tonne of concrete blocks. A lot of the materials are stored in the shelter shed taking up about one third of the floor area, nothing should be moved until moved by David. Mai working on her own did battle with the weeds. About 1600 Libby and Greg arrived. Greg helped load the 4x4 with blocks the last load was left in the 4x4 until morning. I think it was while I was unloading this load of blocks that David came up and said that we were short handed and that I would not get all of the materials down the hill by the end of the weekend, I said \$5 says we will, we shook on it. Wayne and Wendy arrived about 1800. Philip cleaned himself up and left for home about 1830. The rest had a party.

Sunday 19th The last of the blocks went down early. David now had a team of Wendy, Spiro, Rick and Chris to work under his direction and a start was made on forming up the reinforcing steel in the excavation while digging continued in other parts. The posts for the tarp were put in the ground and the tarp erected providing shade for what was now a very hot site. Chris used the wheel barrow to fill the big hole in the camping flat where a strangers fire had burnt out a tree root system near the table leaving a very big hole. Libby, Greg, Wayne and Don started on the sand and metal piles 9 tonnes in all, last load at about 1500. David was unable to complete the steel form work due to lack of labour. Then the clean up of gear, a swim and pack up. I was the last to leave at 1800. Before leaving David gave me my \$5 bet.

We really needed a few more people to allow David to finish the steel work. But at least all of the material is safely stored at the site.

I took a trailer down which was loaded with the following. One of my customers in Marrickville gave us 3 flooring boards 900 x 3600 this was used to make the sand/gravel storage bins I cut them in half and put then into the trailer on Tuesday with the 51 off 65 x 19 x 2000 second hand deck timbers all of which were used along with the 50 x100 x 2000 posts. The 2 off 100 x 100 x 4.8 treated pine posts carried on the roof bars of the 4x4 are intended to be installed near the table to hold up the tarp in place of the trees which keep falling down, in the mean time they hold up the tarp over the site.

A very big thank you to all those who were able to come and help.

I think it is very important that everybody starts talking this project up on bush walks and at social functions. Start putting the question "can you please come and help for one or two days" remember the positive responses and ring them up when required or give their names to Patrick or David. We need new helpers now to work on the toilet as the bush regeneration team has now fallen way behind in it's work. I personally have spent a week in total going to and getting ready for this last weekend, everything from building a solar panel frame and electronics to washing and cleaning the 4x4 and returning it to Brookvale. This will pale into insignificance by the time David has finished the job, he will need lots of help, start asking all bushies directly and personally will they please help.

Regards Don Finch

Money Money Money Money - Help Build The Coolana Toilet

The site has been cleared - approvals received and construction of the new toilet is about to start. However, it will cost in the vicinity of \$10,000

We have already received some very generous donations to assist with this cost but need more.

Are you able to help us to fund this very important facility?

Donations of any size would be very welcome.

Please send in your donation, with cheques made out to "The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc" and addressed to:

The Coolana Toilet Fund"
The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc
PO Box 431 Milsons Point 1565

TOILET CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

David Trinder & Patrick James

By the time you receive this The Sydney Bushwalker, it is hoped that Stages 1 and 2 will have been completed: the footings excavated, the reinforcing steel in place, this work inspected by Council and then the concrete poured.

Help and assistance from able bodied men and women is still required. The ten metre long absorption trench for the sullage water has to be dug.

This is a most suitable job for say four women or six men over one weekend. The area around the toilet for a 10 metre radius needs to be cleared of fallen timber and surface fuel as a bushfire management measure (a condition of our Development Consent).

If you want to join in this exciting work call or email one or both of us.

David Trinder: (02) 9943 3388 (home) 0417 113 006
email: dt28@tpg.com.au

& Patrick James: (02) 9567 9998 (home) 040 904 1515
email: pjames28@bigpond.net.au



Breezy toilet model -
not considered by
working party



NSW WILDERNESS TRANSIT

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

Returns 4 pm Tues, Thurs, Sun.

Yerranderie Ghost Town first Saturday in each

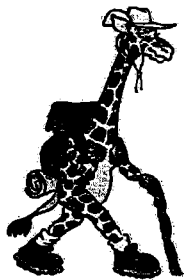
month, returns Sun at 1 pm (any Friday min 6)

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The Mid Week Walkers *Bill Holland*



Our final extended activity for the year was held at Brian Holden's house at Stanwell Park in mid-November. Ten people participated coming and going throughout the week. Despite the debilitating effects of very warm to hot nasty bushfire weather we were able to have an active week; walking in the Royal National Park and across the escarpment; cycling and walking over the Ocean Bridge and along the beaches. On a couple of nights we had dinner at the beach side. Thanks Brian for hosting a great week!

Our next scheduled activity is in late February (Mon 26th Feb - Fri 2nd Mar). We intend a cabin/house by the sea down south but have delayed a firm booking pending confirmation on numbers. Please let me know if you would like to join us.

Our day walks continue though December and the Christmas/New Year season and here are some details. More information can be obtained from the Summer Walks Programme.

22nd Dec to 2nd Jan: **Christmas/New Year at Coolana**

Come to the Club's property at Coolana in the beautiful Kangaroo Valley and join others for relaxing days. Come for any, some or all of the days. Celebrate the New Year in SBW style Your choice of easy walks, quiet reading, swimming and canoeing. - No need to phone.

Tuesday 26th Dec: **Ku-ring-gai Chase NP Waterways**

Boating and aquatic activities on the Hawkesbury River. Bring picnic/BBQ food and drink. 10am start and evening return.

Wednesday 10th January: **Evening Walk (Before Beach Picnic)**

This walk starts at 4 pm and is planned to finish at Balmoral Beach at around 6 pm in time to join the others for the beach barbecue. The length of the walk and route depends on the heat of the day. Beach swimming is an option Grade: (Easy)

Tuesday 16th January: **Bondi and beyond (Evening)**

Bondi Beach (6-00 pm) - Clovelly etc to Coogee with optional return. An easy walk on a summer's evening along the coastal pathway followed by dinner (fish and chips or BYO) in a beachside reserve. Grade: (Easy)

Wednesday 24th **The Rocks "Historic Houses" Evening Walk**

Join Jan Roberts and a merry crew for the annual pilgrimage across the Harbour Bridge to the Rocks. Visit some old inns, sample their wares and soak up the atmosphere.

Tuesday 23rd January: **Sydney Harbour Foreshore**

Taronga Park wharf to Balmoral. An easy 8km summer walk with swims at Clifton Park and Balmoral.

The Mid-Week Walkers are an informal group of SBW members who have time to spare for mid-week activities, some of which are shown on the Walks Programme and some organised at short notice and advised by monthly newsletter. These can include easy to medium walks, perhaps some cycling or even a little bird watching as well.

If you would like to receive our monthly newsletter or join us on an activity please phone me on 9484 6636 or email billholland@bigpond.com.



FOR SALE

ACROPHOBIA CURED, ROCK CLIMBING STARTER KIT

Scarpa high top climbing boots (size 41)
(green suede with blue laces) plus
Black Diamond (size M) climbing belt.
Both boots and belt in excellent condition.

Starter kit includes: *The Basic Essentials of Rock Climbing*
by Mike Strassman.

Best offer, Patrick 9567 9998.

'A CAVE IN MORTON'

21 - 23 October 2006

by Maureen Carter

It was wonderful to have eleven people prepared to participate in a 3 day walk outside a long weekend, but, unfortunate that Ian and Linda Starkey had to withdraw due to illness, especially as Ian had first told us about the amazing Oyster Cave.

Our first objective was to walk through spring flowers to Rusden Head where I handed out home made muffins to eat whilst enjoying the spectacular views south to Pigeon House and across the Gorge to Tallaterang. We soon completed the short drop with the help of the rope and headed down the ridge to the Wombat Ridge Fire Trail for about one kilometer before plunging into the thick scrub for 670 meters towards the cave. Although the scrub was scratchy it was made bearable by the scent of the hakea in full flower and the delightful purple flag iris hidden in the grasses.

We arrived at our luxury cave by noon and everyone marveled at the stonemasonry that had gone into constructing elaborate lounge suites and tables of sandstone. We assume that someone has spent many hours amusing themselves whilst the weather prevented walking.

After a long lunch seven hardy souls made the sprint up to the top of Pigeon House and back before dark. Again we enjoyed the hedgerows of boronia, bauera and white epacris. Back home in the cave we tucked into a gourmet selection of happy hour and copious quantities of port. The clouds cleared to a starry night which we all enjoyed whilst chatting around a low fire in our lounge room. Some of us even had a constructed 'double bedroom' to retire to.

Sunday dawned warm and sunny and we were ably led by Ian and David down the steep but vegetated hillside to Pigeon House Gorge without incident. Before scrambling down the hill we had discovered another fully furnished cave with even more elaborate furniture and bedroom enclosures. Even Henry had not been there before. There was enough water flowing to form some large pools as we rock hopped down the Gorge or scrambled along its banks. Only Rosemary braved the cold pool at lunch time. It was a challenge finding our way back up the eastern side of the Gorge with some 'interesting' rock scrambles, but, only one required a rope. David's route finding soon had us back on the Wombat Ridge Fire Trail. Some of the party collected water from the dam before we once more darted through the scrub to our cosy cave. we began eating at 3:30pm and continued enjoying the shared feast for many hours. Tony's pack was considerably lightened by our indulgence in the remains of the port.

On Monday morning it was a pleasure to be woken by the birds calling whilst they feasted on blossoms rather than the bedside alarm clock. No work today but just a short walk out, reversing our trip in on Saturday. We even managed to climb back up Rusden Head without the aid of the rope. What a group of champions!

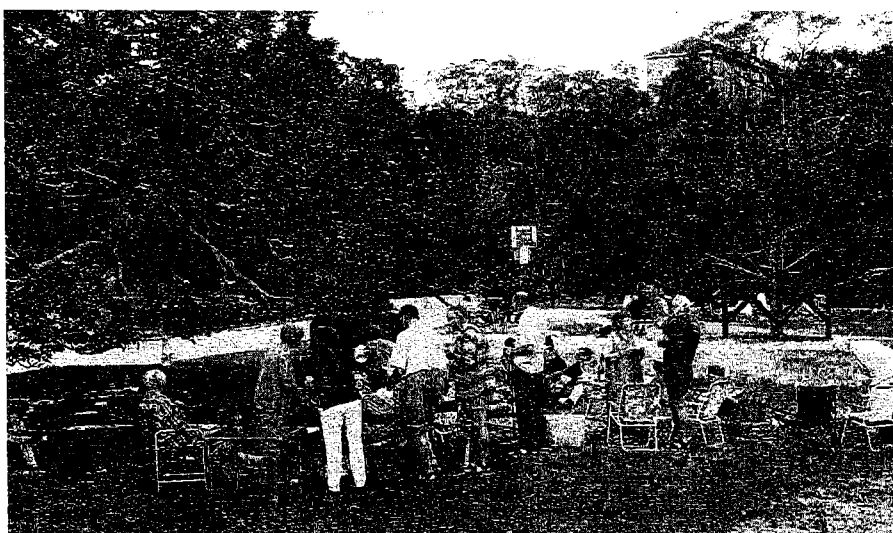
Many thanks go to the party for their good company and fine food. Party members were: David and Maureen Carter, Bronwyn Dunn, Rosemary McDougal, Tony Manes, Terry Moss, John Pozniak, Henry Roda and Ian Thorpe.

Club Beach Picnic at Balmoral Beach - Wednesday 10 January from 6pm

....Join us for a relaxing evening under the trees at the southern end of Balmoral Beach. Swimming, walking or just relaxing with your bushwalking friends.

Bring your own food and drinks or buy from local shops. Great fish and chips!

For more details contact Bill Holland 9484 6636.



NAMASTE FROM NEPAL - *Susi Arnott*

Sunday, 26 November, 2006

Namaste!

I'm sending this from Lukla, almost at the end of our trek as we anxiously await our flight out and back to Kathmandu - all flights out cancelled yesterday due to cloud so a lot of trekkers crossing their collective fingers (and reading very long novels to pass the time)!!

I'll start my reportage back in Gokyo, at 4,759 metres the highest point of my trek in the Everest Region, where I sat in the sun in a teahouse overlooking the turquoise waters of Lake Dudh Pokhari, snow-capped mountains looming behind against a perfectly clear blue sky. That morning we had left our tents at 4.30 am to climb the ridge called Gokyo Ri (5,483m) - a near-death experience (just kidding) and worth every step for the 360 degree sunrise views of the 8,000 metre peaks of Nepal, Everest included, naturellement. I'd actually got 3/4 of the way up it the afternoon before to get sunset views as well, before clouds and cold had turned me back. But I did catch Everest pink in the setting sun.

Our trek with World Expeditions has consisted of two people, Lisa aged 31 and me. We've got on very well, and have been spoiled rotten by our entourage of 11 (2 guides, 2 chefs and 7 porters - all of whom cheat appallingly at cards!), and because there were only 2 of us we wormed our way into every warm teahouse between Lukla and Gokyo and met a stack of different fun people from all over the place as a result. Only at the very end of each evening did we retire to our chilly tents, to the general amusement of all. We'd wake up in a tangle of layers inside our sleeping bags, our water bottles frozen solid inside our tents! But we did have a toilet tent WITH A SEAT- Kili veterans eat your hearts out...

Each day has been a delight - sherpa villages of stone huts and walls, terraces of wheat, potatoes, and beans, rushing rivers, mighty peaks looming ever close; the further we went, the more revealed themselves. They have wild and wonderful names like Thanserku, Kusum Kangru (easy to remember that one), Towerche, Ama Dablam and of course, Everest, Lotse and Makalu. We had our first view of Everest from the Everest View hotel, sipping tea (as one does).

The Buddhist prayer flags flutter everywhere, a colourful addition to any mountain scene, and the prayer wheels and stupas along the way are a reminder of the spirituality of the nepalese: a porter laden with everything including the kitchen sink has a few moments' respite along the way as he turns the prayer wheels and chants 'Om Mani Padme Hum' (hail the jewel in the lotus).

We've had a lot of fun trying to learn the near-impossible sounds of the nepali language. There are pitfalls I discovered when trying to pronounce the name of a mountain - Santos the sherpa burst into gales of laughter - apparently I said 'arse'. But we got our own back and our leader Bikass (pronounced Bikash) became 'Big Arse' and Santos 'Saint Arse'. When one is on holidays such nonsense is permissible.

I've visited three schools along the way - one special day when a Science and Maths Fair was taking place and I was the only Westerner - card games, guessing games, microscopes and experiments all in English. A second when a small boy dragged me up the path to see his school and I met the teacher and ended up reading a story of a bunyip to a gaggle of wide-eyed youngsters in the year 3 classroom. I'm really looking forward to the next stage of my stay when I'll be teaching English near Kathmandu - I think the level of English will be very good and I'll be able to teach them a lot about Australia. I've got enough materials - I carried 10kg of resources onto the plane in my hand luggage which luckily no-one weighed!

In KHUMJUNG WE ALSO VISITED Edmund Hillary's 'Schoolhouse in the Clouds' which it literally was - on our first cloudy day in 15. Freezing, but it didn't stop the kids racing out for a game of soccer at lunchtime. At Tengboche, famous for its monastery, we stood before monuments to climbers of Everest, the mighty peak itself looming in the distance. There were no monks at Tengboche as they'd all gone to Pengboche nearby to pray for 6 people killed in an avalanche. Such is the uncertainty of life, especially up here in the mountains.

The Tibetan jewellery is to die for - I've bought enough pairs of earrings to last a lifetime. Well I did only get my ears pierced in May so I've got some catching up to do!!

Have lots of champagne for me during the festive season over there, especially on December 16 when I turn 25 yet again. I'd love to hear from you if you have a minute and I'll send my next instalment soon.

Lots and lots of love to each and every one of you, I'll end as I began, with Namaste which means I greet the God within you.

Susi

Tuesday, 5 December 2006

Namaste to all my lovely friends!

Thank you so much for your replies to Edition 1 - it is lovely to get news from home. Now it's time for Edition 2 - hope it's not too long but please persevere to the end.

NAMASTE FROM NEPAL - *Susi Arnott*

I have just moved from the Pagoda Guest House in Bhaktapur, where I spent 10 delightful days exploring this medieval town when not on the bus riding to and from school. Bhaktapur is medieval in every sense of the word - magnificent 5 storey Hindu temples several centuries old grace the three main squares, but once you leave these, you find yourself plunged in a squalor which is straight out of 14th century London - dark and narrow alleys, cobblestones slick from the soapy water tipped out after washing the clothes - all that's missing (thank God) is the contents of the chamber pots being hurled from rickety balconies above!

On my walk to the bus stop I passed artisans still practising their trades as they have for centuries, albeit while watching television or listening to a blaring CD player - a tailor sitting cross-legged before an antiquated sewing machine in the dust; a cobbler making shoes; potters firing pots in piles of ashes created by smouldering straw beneath; a stonemason chiselling away at what will become an exquisite statue, and a quilt-maker sewing his wares by hand! Even the children play 'stick and hoop', but the 'hoop' is an old bicycle tyre!

Everywhere Hindu shrines abound, each with a bell, stained with vermilion and adorned with rice and marigold petals. Passers by ring the bell, scrape off some of the dye and press it to their forehead, then sprinkle rice and petals over their heads. Groups of worshippers strike up drums and cymbals at all hours, processing through the squares or sitting in the shelter of a temple; a priest holds court each evening to a hundred or so pilgrims who sit, cross-legged (mostly very old and worn-looking), and watch as people adorn him with daisy chains or marigolds and wave burning scraps of paper around his head before depositing them in a small fire beside him.

Bhaktapur is known as the City of Devotees and it's easy to see why!

Once my stomach settled I ate at a different little restaurant each day, for \$A3 to \$A5. I love Nepali food, particularly the spiced yoghurt called 'Sikarni' and the Chinese spring rolls were pretty good as well!

On Saturday (the 'weekend' - not Sunday though!) - I visited the rural home of one of the students at school, a dear little girl in Year 8. I was given a traditional Hindu welcome, presented with fruit, spiced yoghurt, a bouquet, a red tika, and showered with rice and petals. The generosity and hospitality of people who have so little is truly humbling.

The class size at the SOS school is 40, in rooms about half the size of our classrooms at home! But because they sit side by side, pairwork is easy. I've been using

all the resources I brought (all 10 kg worth!) in question and answer activities which they all seem to enjoy. They are very responsive and interested - they call me 'ma'am', and when they all get over excited and call out they sound like a plague of little chirruping crickets! They know a surprising amount about Australia - the official Government textbook in English was co-written by an Australian.

Some of their pronunciation is - interesting - but hey, they can speak and write in at least 2 different languages, Nepali and English (many 3, including Hindi) from age 5. I think their level of English is awesome. Especially compared to my Nepali, in which my gaffes continue - this morning I was asking for 'more tea' to the great amusement of the lovely ladies who give me breakfast. Apparently I was saying 'fat'!! Hope I didn't offend anyone!!

So now I am living on the school campus to facilitate my preparation for the 5 day seminar I am presenting next week to 21 teachers from all over Nepal. Help! It will be in their training centre in Kavre, up in the hills, apparently very beautiful. All the Language Teaching conferences I've attended over the years are being dredged up - and the ESL resources I brought used to the maximum!! I am looking forward to it - if somewhat nervously - and I hope I can be of some use.

Oh - an explanation. The SOS Children's villages is a world-wide charity, supported largely by European and Scandinavian countries, which provides accommodation for orphans. Here in Sanothimi (6 k from Kathmandu) there are 20 cottages, each housing a 'mother' and about 8 children - the 'luckiest unlucky' kids in Kathmandu! Attached to the village is the 'Hermann Gmeiner School' founded by guess who, of which there are 7 in Nepal. Not every SOS village necessarily has a school attached to it. Here, orphans go automatically to the school until year 10, but for outside kids, it is highly selective and very difficult to get in - and in high demand because the fees are much less than the expensive private schools, and the standard of teaching way above that of the government schools, for which teachers only need to have completed as far as Year 10. Education is valued very highly, and teachers greatly respected (nice!) - and there is so much need.

Time for me to stop. Thank you so much for your replies - keep drinking champagne for me . . . the rice wine over here doesn't quite measure up!!!

Namaste and lots and lots of love to you all, Susi Ma'am. xxx

YERRANDERIE BY BIKE PART 1

Don Cornell



It was in the late 1960's when as a member of NPA, I was approached to lead a bike ride to Yerranderie from the Picton side.

This was before Gary Fisher in California had developed the mountain bike with its wide tyres, small chain ring and large rear sprocket all essential if one intends to ride on rough dirt roads in steep country. In spite of that the bike ride was put on the activities program and about nine members phoned in wishing to participate.

Unfortunately as often happens it rained heavily prior to the event and I duly phoned around expecting everyone to cancel however, it was not to be as all nine members who booked in were insistent that it go ahead.

I drove along to Wanganderry on the Friday night having previously phoned Jim Samson and told him we wished to camp near his yards. The track was extremely slippery and I only made it to some cattle yards on the highest point at Mt Wanganderry, not game to risk going further to the main yards nearer the start.

Early on Saturday the rest of the group arrived and wisely parked nearby. It wasn't long before we all donned our pack and set off on our bike.

Shaughn was soon forced to withdraw because mud had collected under the mudguards causing the wheels to jam, the remainder of us continued when Allen got a stick caught in his front wheel and toppled over the handlebars, quickly recovering he gripped the front forks while the rest of us heaved on the rest of his bike finally straightening the down tube sufficiently for the front wheel to turn and in spite of his bruised state he was able to continue.

The slippery descent, crossing and re-crossing the swiftly flowing Burnt Flat Creek eventually led us onto the muddy fire track and we headed in a northerly direction for some kilometres with a stop for lunch. The noise of the Wollondilly River in flood was deafening with the river heaving up as it pounded over the rocky bed.

Later in the day we finally came to a small moderately level area not far from where we had intended to cross on a ford which led across to the Sheep Run and Jooriland, here we lit a small fire, set up tents and

discussed the predicament in which we found ourselves, we all agreed it was impossible to cross the Wollondilly River.

It was then decided that on the following day, Sunday, the group would split up, some of the group would trust their luck and see if they could continue along the muddy fire track through a restricted zone and get up the steep road alongside Sheehy's Creek. The rest of us then pedalled our way back to our parked cars along the route we came in on, we then drove the cars around through Hilltop and Thirlmere to pick up the rest of the group. All went well and so ended my first attempt at biking to Yerranderie from the Picton side which if successful would save a 200 kilometre drive through Oberon.

YERRANDERIE BY BIKE PART 2

It was now in the early 70's when I got my next opportunity to bike into Yerranderie from the Picton side. While the first attempt failed due to appalling weather conditions the participants had shown me that an alternative route was possible which would eliminate the difficult descent from Wanganderry, however this meant risking prosecution if we were caught in the prohibited zone. I had carried out a survey and discovered an abandoned property in the vicinity which made an excellent overnight campsite and a place to leave vehicles.

This was then put on the activities program in a slightly ambiguous manner, ten riders turned up on this bright sunny Easter Saturday morning. We set off early and were soon faced with a company notice at the top of a steep descent which spelt out "ALL TRAFFIC MUST KEEP TO RIGHT DESCENDING". With the weight of the heavy pack on our back we sped down the hill at more than 60kph over the bridge across the Nattai River past the colliery turn off and onto the dirt track.

We were at last able to relax our vigilance and pedal along leisurely enjoying the scenery and the gurgling Wollondilly River on our right. As time for morning tea approached we came to a ford across a broad section of the river and were soon testing out the depth which was almost chest high. By balancing my pack on my head I was able to wade across the river keeping the pack dry, then returning and balancing the bike with my head through the frame I got the bike across. Then with much shouting the rest of the group followed suit, eager to boil their billy.

Suitably replenished we set off again up the Sheep Run and found a satisfactory campsite with a water tank opposite the Twin Peaks, this then gave us the opportunity to pedal along and climb to the top of Yerranderie Peak where we took photos and added our

name to the hundreds of others already in the book, I've often wondered what happens to the book when filled.

The following day, Sunday, Charlie and I pedalled off up the Scott's Main Range dodging potholes and small rocks and pushing the bike up the steep sections eventually reaching the Cedar Rd where we turned off for an easy downhill ride to water for a dip and boil the billy.

The 4.5km ride back up was tiring and on the way back along the range we again turned off to look at the Bran Jan chapel when who should emerge to greet us and insist we come in for a beer but Pat Harrison who had walked in from Katoomba.

We eventually had to leave the convivial atmosphere and face the rough ride back getting to our campsite just before dark desperate to eat and eager to get some sleep.

Next morning thoroughly refreshed we were soon on our way again with a pleasant downhill run to the river where Charlie's brakes didn't work and he came to a halt with the water up to his armpits, we swam, then waded across with our gear, and boiled our billy.

We had barely finished our early lunch when we heard a vehicle approaching, quickly dousing the fire as the F100 skidded to a halt. The ranger demanded to know what we were doing in the forbidden area, we tried to explain saying we were now on our way out, the ranger then threatened that if we were caught in this area again he would prosecute us. We pedalled on eager to get back to our vehicles and with the hard push up the steep hill, there at the top was the ranger who said I'm just checking up to see you all come out of the prohibited area.

It was unfortunate for us to get caught within the prohibited area 30 kms from the finish and we were lucky not to get prosecuted.

From then on I arranged all future bike rides to go in from Bindook.

Editor's Message



By March next year I will have the electronic copy of 'The Sydney Bushwalker' ready for your enjoyment. The electronic version will be the same as the hard copy and an easier to read layout with snippets of information and colour photos (in the electronic version).

If you have ideas or preference for specific types of articles now is the time to let me know. My email address is pamela.campbell@bigpond.com.

Have a great Xmas! **Pam Campbell, Editor**

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Membership List for 2007

In order that the Membership List for 2007 is up to date, could you please check the current 2006 list and make sure all your contact details are correct. The new list is prepared for printing next month so please post any changes to Membership Secretary, SBW, PO Box 431, Milsons Point. 1565, or email to:

fernband@bigpond.com as soon as possible.

Fran Holland

TRACKS & ACCESS REPORT - November 2006

BLUE MOUNTAIN WALKING TRACK PROJECT. In the Wentworth Falls area the Princes Rock Track has had a major upgrade and the track is now reopened. The Undercliff Track is now reopened after minor improvements. National Pass from Fletchers Lookout via top and lower crossing of Wentworth Falls is closed for upgrading until mid 2007

BLUE MOUNTAINS NP. Due to the major bushfires burning in the Grose Valley the following tracks are closed: - Victoria Falls to Acacia Flat, Govetts Leap to Junction Rock and Acacia Flat, Rodriguez Pass from Grand Canyon Junction, Pearce's Pass and Walls Lookout track. The following access roads are also closed: - Hat Hill Road from the NP gate, Victoria Falls from the NP gate and Pierces Pass Road. I believe Blue Gum Forest has been burnt out. For latest information ring the NPWS Heritage Centre, Govetts Leap Road, Blackheath on 4787 8877 [0900 - 1630 (4.30pm) seven days].

NARROWNECK PENINSULA - Myles Dunphy pointed out to me years ago that Clear Hill was marked as Clear H. on Sir Thomas Mitchell's famous Nineteen Counties map. He believed that the name should have been Clear Head as there is no significant hill in the area. I agreed with him as the headland that marks the southern end of Narrowneck Peninsula needed a significant name (shame on you Wilf!)

I note that Myles used the name Clear Head in 1919 until the 1920's. Speaking of passes in this area yet again, I see that Jim Barrett (CBC) believes Fred Eden's descent of Clear Head, oops I meant Clear Hill, was on the almost unknown and unnamed 1889 miners ladders on the western side of the track down the side of the nose to Taros Ladders and Duncan's (Miners) Pass. The remains of the ladder are still there in the first gully below the steel NPWS ladders. If you don't believe me ask legendry rock climber Bryden Allen who handicapped with a weekend pack, climbed down the bushfire damaged ladders in the 1960's thinking he was on Taros Ladders, (surely a feat for the Guinness Book of Records) . See also Jim Barrett's 1996 book "Narrowneck and the Birth of Katoomba". In case you are wondering why the miners built 2 passes at Clear Hill, early maps show different mining leases in the area and the unnamed ladders appear to be on the border of the different leases.

I would be most surprised if the miners had not found Dunphys Pass many years before Myles did, when you look at the access challenges through the cliffs on the east side of Narrowneck at Cedar Head. In the substantial cliffs of this area the Wall Brothers found a place in 1889 to put two ladders separated by a stone step to make Walls Pass. It seems likely that this pass was rediscovered in 1942 by Ben Esgate and his local wartime cadet corps (see Jim Smith's book "The Last of the Cox's River Men - Ben Esgate " p40 & 41). I rediscovered the pass in 1966 and persuaded the Federations Search and Rescue Section to install a chain there to replace the vanished ladders soon afterwards (see Brian Fox's Blue Mountains Geographical Dictionary, 2nd Edition p 296)

MOUNT MOUIN. There appears to be much nonsense being bandied about Jim Smith's proposal to restore the very old local name Peter O'Reilly's Range to Yellow Pup. I would argue that the name of this very important range should not stop at Medlow Gap but continue over Debert's Knob and Narrowneck to the Blue Mountains Range at Katoomba to mark this important watershed. No one that I know of, would be silly enough to suggest that the Three Brothers as they were originally called, which we know as Mounts Mouin, Warrigal and Dingo should be changed to Peter O'Reillys Range. They would remain as mountains on the range. To the Gundungurra Tribe the Mt. Mouin area was "Mee - oo - wun" and the research by bushwalking author, Jim Smith indicates that the name could derive from the Siderite (Chalybeate), Iron Carbonate spring beside the Gundungurra Trade Route (Black Dog Track). This spring was a valuable resource for the Gundungurra Tribe as they roasted the siderite iron ore to get a deep red pigment, which they used for making red paint for decoration and cave paintings as well as a valuable trading material (value added export?).

JENOLAN CAVES. Former Jenolan Caves Guide, John Poleson (SBW) has asked me which walking tracks are being closed at Jenolan, and I understand only 2 of the 17 tracks in the area will remain open. These are the Blue Lake Circuit and the Carlotta Arch Track.

Earlier this year cave entry fees were substantially raised and latest - not too subtle step - to privatisation is the proposed abolition of the Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust. Perhaps the Government could make the Jenolan Caves Road a toll road to help pay the rebuilding of the Five Mile Hill section of the road?

NORTH HEAD. Stage 2 of a new walking track through bushland within the former School of Artillery was opened in October as part of the Great North Head Walk. Stage 3 will be commenced in early 2007 taking in the bush to the east of North Fort Road.

SYDNEY CATCHMENT AUTHORITY is desperately searching for additional sources of water to supplement Warragamba Dam to slake Sydney's unquenchable thirst. A nameless informer from the Recidivists Clue claims that the SCA's power bill for Bendeela Pumping Station (Kangaroo Valley) was \$1 million last year. The SCA admitted (under pressure) that the Tallowa Dam (Shoalhaven Catchment) supplied 20% of Sydney's water last year. They are looking at increasing this to 50% in future by constructing a new pipeline from Tallowa Dam (they must be joking). Rumours (furfies) from the Recidivists Club claim the SCA are about to look at the Grose and Colo Rivers once again, to boost Sydney's dwindling water supplies.

BUSHWALKERS RADIO PROGRAMME. Michael Keats (Bush Club) has advised that Gary MacDougall, well known bushwalking author has secured a time slot on FM.88.5 2RRR station for a bushwalking programme on Saturdays between 1400 (2pm) and 1500 (3pm). Michael Keats was interviewed on Saturday 25th November. I have hinted to several bushwalkers who I suspect are members of that very exclusive Recidivists Club (whose unpaid SCA fines run into millions of dollars) that they might care to say a few words on this important radio programme - no names of course and laundered voices - but they were all - like our wary politicians - unavailable for any comment. If you are not publicity shy and have something to say on bushwalking issues you can contact Gary MacDougall on 9810 3695 regarding this radio programme.

DAY WALKS IN THERABULAT COUNTRY (WILD DOG MOUNTAINS). I have been barking about this book for months. Michael Keats, our well known bushwalking author, informs me that very soon this long awaited book will be released and my tail will be wagging if not my tongue. No more barking up the wrong Wild Dog ridge once the book is released. I hope there are lots of (Eleven) Grand Country Walks included - for the armchair bush walkers - of course.

Wilf Hilder

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Walks Notes ~ August 2006

Barry Wallace

Walks notes covering the interval 09 June 2006 to 18 June 2006

There appear to be no reports for overnight walks for the weekend of 10, 11, 12 June but the day walks make up for this somewhat. **Nigel Weaver was out on the Saturday with a party of 6 on his part-exploratory walk out from Mill creek.** Cool, misty conditions prevailed throughout the day, depriving the party of any of the views, and the light rain kept the scrub damp. Nonetheless they set out from Mill Creek at 0930, following the main Mill Creek track to Boronia Ridge where they left this track and followed a much fainter one along the ridge to the North. This ridge twisted and turned in the mist, meaning tricky navigation that kept the leader and party on their proverbial toes. There was an eerie beauty about the bushland shrouded as it was, but they were somewhat surprised when a party of 10 emerged from the encircling gloom near the junction with Matthew Ridge. Given that the group was comprised of 2 adults and 8 children the best guess seemed to be that they were on a Duke of Edinburgh trip. At this point the party abandoned their Northerly bent and tracked South along Matthew Ridge; lunching quickly in light rain along the way and rejoining the main Mill Creek track after some more tricky navigation. From there it was just a matter of following the track along a forested gully to the cars, and then rounding off the day with coffee at Wisemans Ferry.

Further West Jim Percy led a group of 4 on his walk from Faulconbridge to Linden in overcast and increasingly damp conditions. The walk went well, but the stand-up lunch in heavy drizzle was not one of the better aspects of the overall experience. **Ian Rannard cancelled his scheduled Sunday walk from Leura to Katoomba due to a dearth of starters.** Ian suspects the erroneous 6km route description in the walks program may have had something to do with this, but also opines that the weather forecast for the day would not have helped. **Monday 12th also saw Nigel Weaver backing up for another helping with his Botany Bay National Park walk from Maroubra Beach to La Perouse via gun emplacements and an old shipwreck.** The party of 9 enjoyed a fine but cool day, with great coastal views as they went along. The seas were running high; providing the spectacle of waves crashing against the cliffs and rock platforms in a mass of foam. There were also two or three whales spouting and frolicking out to sea. The party carried out a circular walk around Cape Banks Peninsula, taking a good look at the wreck of the Minmi which ran aground there in 1937. They proceeded via Henry Head with its spectacular views across the mouth of Botany Bay, and reached La Perouse at about 1600 after a really great day full of wonderful coastal views.

Gail Crichton's overnight walk along the Kowmung over the weekend of 17, 18 June was typically fine winter walking with Saturday dawning crisp and clear for a delightful days walking down from Kanangra Walls. After a lovely camp fire on Saturday evening they awoke to ice on the tents and another beautiful day to follow. A day of steady climbing brought the party to the cars in mid afternoon. Gail remarks that there were no prospectives on the walk but there is no other indication of the size of the party. **The walk in Namadgi National Park that weekend was programmed by Alexander Popovski but he suffered an injury before the walk so Terry Moss stepped as substitute.** The party of 5 enjoyed unusually good weather throughout the walk with clear skies and calm, cool nights. Boboyan Plains was covered in kangaroos and Mount Gudenby was covered in snow, this latter leading to a minor revision of the planned route for the Saturday but they still achieved the summit on the way out on Sunday for the panoramic views. From there it was just a matter of down the North East saddle back to the Boboyan Plains and Yankee Hat car park.

Ron Watter's day walk out from Carrington Falls on the Sunday of that weekend attracted a party of 13 who began the walk with pies at the pie shop in -2 degrees. Later conditions were sunny and generally ideal for the walk with a good flow over the falls. The presence of moisture from the melting frost on the rocks in Kangaroo River made the going slippery and the mossy rocks up Diharowal Creek forced a retreat from the planned exploration of the creek. They opted instead for a lunch in the sunshine with rainforest, lovely trees and ferns. They achieved the top of Missingham Falls by 1530 and were all back at the cars by 1600. A convivial dinner at the services club in Mittagong rounded off the day nicely. **Bill Holland led another whale watching trip that same day after deferring his planned trip on 11 June due to inclement weather.** The 10 starters were all candidates for the earlier outing but this time the weather was good and the whales performed to their great satisfaction.

This is where we stop for this report.

CONSERVATION NOTES

Bill Holland

In June this year I wrote a letter to the NSW Premier Mr. Iemma on behalf of Club members expressing concern about the impact of new laws that allow recreational shooters to shoot feral animals in state forests. As well as danger to wild life and harmful environmental effects I wrote that there was a real threat to personal safety when bushwalkers visit a state forest or drive on roads that pass through state forests.

You will not be surprised, and may share my disappointment, that the letter was finally answered (five months later) by the CEO of the Game Council after the Premier passed the letter to the Minister for Primary Industries who passed it on the Game Council.

Of course the Game Council has no problems with the legislation. Their letter tells me they have implemented "management measures" and "where the risks are considered too high, hunting will simply not take place". Also, "licensed hunters may only target introduced species authorised by their licence. Game and feral animals are easily distinguishable from native species and therefore mistaken identification should not be an issue". Try telling that to the Hunter Valley man whose pet dog was shot by mistake when it ran up to a hunter in friendly greeting. Also, some time ago a hunter told me that wombats can be mistaken for pigs. Perhaps for their own safety the native species should be dressed in the "mandatory blaze orange clothing" recommended for hunters.

Environmental concerns it seems are a non-issue as "the environmental impact of hunting is similar to other bush walking activities like orienteering and regaining" and "motor vehicles are not permitted to be driven off road on public land areas declared for hunting"

I found this reply to my letter to be unsatisfactory and was not happy that it was referred to the Game Council for reply. Another letter will be sent to the Premier letting him know that this legislation continues to cause concern to bushwalkers and others within the community.

Conservation News

NSW Govt Urged to Allow Graziers Access to Forests, National Parks

The New South Wales Farmers Association wants graziers to be given access to state forests and national parks to help feed hungry livestock. The association says feed is become scarce as the drought intensifies.

President Jock Laurie is urging the NSW Government to consider the proposal, which he says would help farmers hold onto core breeding stock. "As far as we're concerned it would be a good tool for the feeding of core breeding stock throughout this drought period, especially when feed reserves are so low," he said. The State Government is yet to respond. **ABC News November 21, 2006**

Stoner Tells Parliament Of Forest Hunting Concerns

The New South Wales Nationals' leader and Oxley MP Andrew Stoner has taken his concerns about hunting in public forests to State Parliament. The Government has given the green light to accredited hunters to cull feral animals in many of the state's forest, including on the north coast. Mr Stoner yesterday focused on access to forests in the Nambucca, Bellinger and Orara valleys for hunters with rifles, crossbows and dogs. He told Parliament the same forests are used by trail bike riders, and community groups including the Nambucca horsemanship club and there are brumbies in the area. Mr Stoner called on the Government to guarantee the safety of people and horses in state forests. **ABC News November 17, 2006**

Dam Will Help Drought-Proof Hunter Region

The NSW Government has made the surprise announcement that it intends to build a \$342 million dam to provide water for the Hunter and Central Coast. It will be the first new dam in the Greater Sydney-Hunter region since the Tallowa Dam was built 30 years ago. The announcement is part of the State Plan to be produced by the Government this week. Dairy farmers in the area will have their land acquired so it can proceed.

The Premier, Morris Iemma, said the Tillegra Dam, to be built on the upper Williams River near Dungog, would hold 450 billion litres of water and "help drought-proof the Hunter and Central Coast region for the next 60 years". He said it would take 10 years to build and fill.

But there was immediate criticism of the plan from conservation groups. The Nature Conservation Council's director, Cate Faehrmann, said dams were an old solution that had effects on river flows. The answer was in recycling, she said. "Dams aren't the answer to our water shortages." **SMH November 13, 2006**

CONSERVATION

SOCIAL NOTES

Hi Everyone,

Firstly, on behalf of the Committee, I wish you all a Merry Xmas and Happy New Year.

Provided you get this magazine before the 20th December, just a reminder to come and celebrate the end of 2006 with all your buddies at the Xmas party. In typical jargon, let's make this the best party ever. You know what to do!!! COME

The November social night provided the 25 attendees with a wonderful insight into some lesser known places in Tasmania - especially Cape Raoul. Thanks Peter for your awesome presentation.

The social nature of SBW is highlighted by our January social and walks programs. Of course there are the Xmas/New Year extended walking trips. Michael Bickley continues the 'partying' on his boat on 26th December and 1st January. The Balmoral Picnic and walk follow on the 10th January. The January Committee meeting and Social night occur on 17th January. President Jan, leads the annual pilgrimage visiting the many pubs and historic houses of The Rocks area on 24th January. SBW also "turns cultural" - we are going to Jazz and Symphony in the Park. More details of this will be issued closer to the dates via e-mail.

So, if you are lonely, lazy, bored or it's just too hot to walk, you can amuse yourself with all these relaxing activities.

Wishing you all the best for the rest of 2006 and all of 2007.

Kathy

LOST

Stand still. The trees ahead and the bushes beside you are not lost.
Wherever you are is called here,
and you must treat it as a powerful stranger,
must ask permission to know it and be known.

The forest breathes. Listen.
It answers,
I have made this place around you,
if you leave it you may come back again,
staying here.

No two trees are the same to raven.
No two branches are the same to wren.
If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you,
you are surely lost.
Stand still. The forest knows
where you are. You must let it find you.

An old Native American elder story rendered into modern English by David Wagoner

SOCIAL PROGRAM

20 Dec SBW Annual Xmas Party

6pm Come and celebrate the end of 2006. Bring a plate of food to share. The club provides all beverages. Venue: outside rear courtyard of the KNC

27 Dec Club closed

3 Jan Club closed

10 Jan Club Beach Picnic

6pm Meet at the southern end of Balmoral Beach. BYO everything. See Walks Program for more details.

17 Jan Committee Meeting

7pm Observers welcome

17 Jan Tasmania in all seasons

8pm Club member, Alex Popovski, will present a Winter Wonderland - the Overland Track and the rugged beauty of the Western Arthurs which he encountered on his summer trip last year.

24 Jan SBW President Jan's Pub Crawl

6pm See Walks Program for details

7 Feb Committee Meeting

7pm Observers welcome

14 Feb New Members Night

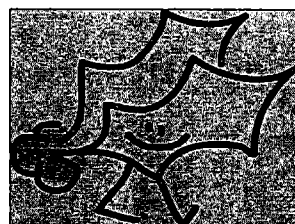
8pm Introduction to SBW for intending prospective members

21 Feb Organic vitamins and supplements - will

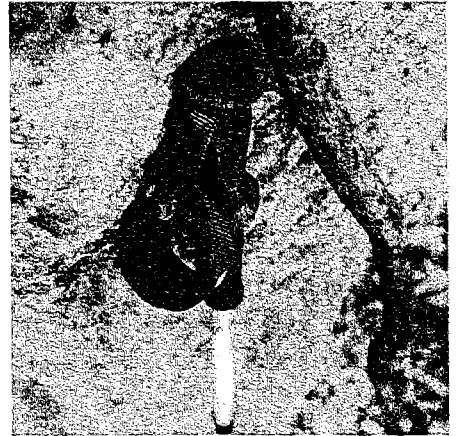
8pm they help you up Perry's or even to compete the K to K? Prospective member, Kerry Iozzi has offered the services of 2 friends - a doctor and a nutritionist to inform us on the real health benefits of these products which are organic and contain phytonutrients.

28 Feb New Members Training Night at the

7pm Clubrooms - NB early start
An opportunity for prospectives to learn the basics of the art and science of cross country navigation using a map and compass. See Walks Program for more details.



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