



THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



DECEMBER 2007



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December 2007, Issue 877

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THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER
is the monthly bulletin of matters of interest to members of
The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc
PO Box 431 Milsons Point NSW 1565.

Editor: Pam Campbell
Production Manager: Frances Holland
Printers: Kenn Clacher, Barrie Murdoch,
Tom Wenman Don Brooks Fran Holland

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

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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 Snowy Mountains, the Warrumbungles as well as interstate i.e. Victorian Alps

Our meetings start at 8pm and are held on Wednesday evenings (see Social Program) at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli (near Milsons Point Railway Station).

Visitors and prospective members are welcome www.sbw.org.au

Office Bearers

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

President:	David Trinder
9542 1465 (h)	dt28@tpg.com.au
Vice President:	Wilf Hilder
9587 8912 (h)	gretel34@bigpond.net.au
Secretary:	Greta James
9953 8384 (h)	gjam6037@bigpond.net.au
Walks Secretary:	Tony Holgate
9943 3388	tholgate@optusnet.com.au
Social Secretary:	Kathy Gero
9130 7263 (h)	social@sbw.org.au
Treasurer:	Margaret Carey
9957 2137 (h)	margaret_carey@bigpond.com
Members Secretary:	Fran Holland
9484 6636 (h)	ferband@bigpond.com
New Members Secretary:	Jodie Dixon
9943 3388 (h)	newmembers@sbw.org.au
Conservation Secretary:	Bill Holland
9484 6636 (h)	billholland@bigpond.com
Magazine Editor:	Pam Campbell
9570 2885 (h)	pamela.campbell@bigpond.com

Committee Members:

Ron Watters
9419 2507 (h)
wattersr@bigpond.net.au

Patrick James
9567 9998 (h)
pjames28@bigpond.net.au

Delegates to Confederation:

Jim Callaway
9520 7081 (h)
(no email address)

Wilf Hilder
9587 8912 (h)
gretel34@bigpond.net.au

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THE BUSHWALKER MAGAZINE

The Official Publication of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW is packed with information and interesting articles. You can download or read it on the internet at:

www.bushwalking.org.au

The Confederation runs training courses for members, provides a free wilderness search and rescue organisation, and helps run bush navigation competitions.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

David Trinder

You have probably received an email from Google and been suspicious about it. A year ago we were receiving short notice programs and social reminders but we are not any more because our internet providers are no longer allowing mass emails to be sent out. Our solution to this is Google Groups but you have to be invited and accept the invitation to be included in a group. We have had very few acceptances and that is probably because people don't know what the Google email is about but if you want to receive short notice walks programs you will have to accept.

Chris Wong, the new web master is working on renovating the web site. It is basically good but it has not been updated for a while and it is difficult for anyone to update it because it is "hard coded". We have to rebuild it and the cost of doing that commercially would be too expensive; but there are other options. Some of Chris's students may do it as an exercise but that won't be until the middle of next year. We may have to train people in the use of HTML so they can alter the new site when complete. Ron Watters, chairman of the electronic committee and I want to see all electronic issues, the site, the data bases, an electronic magazine, short notices, etc finalised by the end of 2008.

In the New Year we will be organising a photo competition, so watch out for that in the magazine!

Christmas is close now and that means Club events, the Christmas party on the 19th December, and the Christmas walks. Kenn Clacher has an interesting walk in Victoria, Tony Holgate is going down the Kowmung, I have a trip in the Snowy Mountains, Maureen and David Carter have a trip walking down Ettrema Creek and there will be a relaxed gathering at Coolana.

Best wishes for you and your families for Christmas and New Year.

David Trinder



Nigel & Margaret Weaver and friends at the Manly Dam 80th Birthday Celebrations



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Congratulations to the club members involved in the completion of the high tech Coolana loo, photographs of which appeared in our Magazine's November issue. Perhaps this has already been agreed on, but if not, may I suggest the planting of suitable foliage to improve the visual aesthetics of this facility and help it blend into the natural surroundings.

Peter Dyce

Dear Editor and President, David Trinder,

I am writing on behalf of our members to congratulate your Club on its attaining its 80th Anniversary. This is a significant milestone in any organisation, and indicates considerable enthusiasm over the years by many people. All I can say is 'well done, and roll on your 100th'. Would you also pass on our compliments to your members who were responsible for the 80th Anniversary Edition of 'The Sydney Bushwalker'. It made most interesting reading.

Denis Eswell

Hon Secretary, Hobart Walking Club Inc.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this edition of The Sydney Bushwalker! A good time was had by all at the Manly Dam 80th Birthday Celebrations. See photos on page 16. There was complimentary champagne and the President, David Trinder presented Kenn Clacher, Tony Marshall, Don Matthews, George Mawer, Barrie Murdoch and Geoff and Grace Wagg with Honorary Memberships. Recognition was also given to members who had been in the club for 50 years or more!

I understand there will be many members participating in walks over the Christmas period - it would be great to read about these experiences and see your photos in the upcoming editions of the Magazine. If you have an adventurous story to tell - please share it. Articles do not have to be recent. This is your magazine, so the more articles submitted the more interesting it will be.

Regards Pam Campbell

From the Committee Room



A report of proceedings at the Committee meeting on 5th December 2007

The meeting opened at 7 pm with seven members present and six absent with apologies.

- The minutes of the November meeting were confirmed.
- Shirley Dean addressed the meeting seeking support for the club to pay for the publishing of a book she had written about the history of Coolana. She asked that the Committee review a decision from its previous meeting that it was unable to provide the financial support requested on the ground that the book would not sell enough copies to cover the funding required. The President reiterated that the publication of the book in the form proposed was not a justifiable use of club funds however he deferred the matter to the February meeting to give Committee members who were not present an opportunity to express a view.
- The correspondence included; a letter from Wilderness Society re Tasmanian pulp mill; changes of address for Marion Davies and E and J Sheedy ; a letter from KNC confirming we have yard area for Christmas party; a letter from Angelica Langley congratulating Patrick James for organizing the Big Day O.
- The President tabled a lengthy report prepared by Eddy Giacomel which proposed a management structure using a series of sub committees and use of General Meetings to determine policy questions. His aim was to promote greater participation in club management, lessen workload on the Committee and foster a greater involvement of the general membership. It was agreed that Patrick James would summarise the report and that the summary and full document would be circulated to Committee members.
- The Treasurer's Report was received and the following accounts passed for payment: 80th Anniversary \$79; Magazine postage \$495;
- Magazine supplies \$385; tarpaulin \$244; Coolana toilet \$120; 80th Anniversary \$289; magazine printing \$291; Coolana \$430; social expenses \$45; printing supplies \$151; postage \$33.
- A separate payment was authorised for weed control at Coolana but this is from the \$8000 special grant.
- Electronic Communication Sub Committee sought approval to change the ISP for our website. The website will be substantially changed. The take-up rate for Google Groups has not been

satisfactory and increased member participation will be sought.

- The Magazine Editor reported possible features of a photo competition with April or May seen as possible dates with final judging and display at club room.
- General Business included a letter from Nigel Weaver about accuracy of walk descriptions. This was referred to Walks Secretary for consideration.

The meeting closed at 9-00 pm.

Treasurer's Report at November 2007

	Current Month	Year to Date
Cash Receipts		
Members Subscriptions	90	18,696
Prospective Fees	0	6,256
Investment - Conservation	14	517
Investment - Coolana	35	1,277
Investment - General	23	827
Magazine Advertising	0	920
Donations - Coolana	0	55
Other	0	543
Grant - Coolana	0	8,000
Investment - Redemption	0	0
Total Receipts	161	37,091
Magazine Printing	1,485	5,254
Magazine Postage	811	4,379
Magazine Equipment	291	291
Coolana Rates	0	1,215
Coolana Maintenance	352	672
Coolana Equipment		499
Coolana Toilet - Coolana	33	1,808
Rent- Club Rooms	0	3,575
Donations - Conservation	0	250
Insurance - Public Liability	0	2,477
Insurance - Personal Accident	0	3,281
Affiliation - Confederation	0	2,255
Postage, Phone & Internet	0	1,030
Administration	78	2,065
80 th Anniversary	305	2,901
Total Payments	3,356	32,085
Cash Surplus /(Deficit)	-3,195	5,006

The Midweek Walkers Go To Dunns Swamp

Dunns Swamp is a spectacular car based camping and picnic area on the western edge of Wollemi National Park. It is 20 kilometres from Rylstone. The extensive waterway was formed by the trapped waters of Kandos Weir, established in the 1920s, when the Cudgegong River was dammed to provide water for the Kandos Cement Works.

It's a great spot for bushwalking, canoeing, swimming, bird watching and fishing. Flora and fauna are plentiful and include platypus and kangaroo. There are amazing formations, known locally as pagodas and high viewpoints providing excellent views of the park.



The campsite is large with spaces for caravans and camper trailers or you can camp beside your vehicle. Firewood is supplied for barbecues; there are picnic tables and pit composting toilets.

It is a crowded place on weekends and school holidays but mid-week was reasonably quiet. Our twelve members had a large area to ourselves - right on the river bank. The kayaks and canoes were pulled ashore, very close to our tents. Picnic tables were available on the river banks and fortunately our large tarpaulin offered ample shelter when storms struck later in the week.



Most of us stayed for the five days but others only for two or three. The walks were not too long but very interesting - the rock formations are truly remarkable. The kayakers went out early each morning when the mists were rising from the water and many, many birds very active. A great number of cicadas emerged from the ground to enjoy the surroundings.



We had a great time and look forward to repeating this sometime next year. Why don't you join us?

Participants were: Rick Angel, Fran and Bill Holland, Patrick James, Jean Kloydahl, George Mower, Brian and Elizabeth McGrath, Kate and Barrie Murdock, Jim Percy and Jo van Sommers

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 sent to all on my Mid Week Walkers list. These activities can include easy to medium walks, perhaps some cycling/canoeing or even a little bird watching as well. Partners and non-walkers are welcome to join us, particularly on the extended stay activities.

Bill Holland

BIG DAY-O 2007

Your photos are required....

At the Big Day-O oodles of people took oodles of digital photos. The plan is to collect as many photos as possible and put them onto one DVD to be made available to all, as well as a copy in the archives.

Please copy your photos onto CDROM or DVD and post to: George Mawer, 42 Lincoln Road, Georges Hall, NSW 2198. Keep the photos at the resolution they were taken at, so many megapixels, with digital photos (file) size is important: big is beautiful! Do not email them or reduce/shrink the file size. Include your name so that we can send you back the complete photo collection.

Patrick James

PATRICK JAMES WINS THE RON RATHBONE HISTORY PRIZE!



Now in its second year, the Ron Rathbone history prize has grown both in popularity and prestige. This year, a total of 15 wonderful essays, each documenting various snippets of the City's past, were submitted to Council.

Now in its second year, the Ron Rathbone history prize has grown both in popularity and prestige. This year, a total of 15 wonderful essays, each documenting various snippets of the City's past, were submitted to Council. This also included a number of high school entries that were submitted for the Ron Rathbone School History Prize which was run in conjunction with the main prize.

The History Prize, initiated by former Mayor of the City of Rockdale, Councillor Shaoquett Moselmane is held in recognition of the late Mr Ron Rathbone OAM, former Mayor and Councillor of the City of Rockdale. Ron had an amazing passion for the history of our City, as Rockdale City Councillor, Michael Nagi highlighted: "Having been a student of Ron's, I can certainly vouch for his untold commitment to education. And when unable to satisfy his efforts in the classroom, he took to educating the entire community with his various publications, detailing the history of Rockdale. With 14 published books under his belt, he has almost single-handedly cemented Rockdale's history in our hearts and minds," Councillor Nagi said.

Despite the number of fascinating entries, there could only be one winner in the Ron Rathbone History Prize. Local resident Patrick James, with his essay 'The Formation and Development of Rockdale Estate', claimed the \$5,000 prize.

The Ron Rathbone School History Prize was a closely run race with each entry displaying wonderful and professional writing and research. The result however meant that the judges had to split the prize between two winners: Joshua Laurence who submitted a biography of his grandmother who grew up in Rockdale and Alexandra Britt who submitted an essay entitled 'Rockdale, Ever Changing'.

LETTERS OF THANKS

Dear Patrick,

Re: SBW 80th Anniversary Party

I would like to congratulate you and the committee for organizing such a special birthday party last Sunday. What a great day it was! Just look at all the photos on the CD which I have enclosed and everyone can see how much fun we all had. Thank you all for such a happy birthday party.

To make it such a success always requires a lot of hard work for months before the event. You and your team have done such a superb job.

On top of it we were very lucky to enjoy one of those magic Sydney spring days - sunny with a little breeze to keep us cool. Manly Dam resort with its beautiful bush setting was such a perfect choice for our party.

Rating: 10 / 10

Again, a BIG thank you to you and your team.

Warm regards,
Angelika and Brian Langley,
Cremorne Point

THE BIG DAY-O MANLY DAM 2007

by Errol Sheedy

How good it is for bushwalkers to gather
at reunion time,

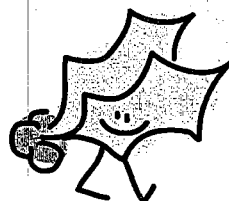
It is like the glorious sun that rises over
frosty tents to welcome the day,

Or the flannel flowers that are the symbols of our
Club, and bedeck the paths of our summer walks,

Or like the precious warmth of the camp-fire that
dries us after a wet day on the track,

Or ever the good humour around that fire
(but beware of some of those limericks!)-

Then shall we recall those times when
we return to meet again.

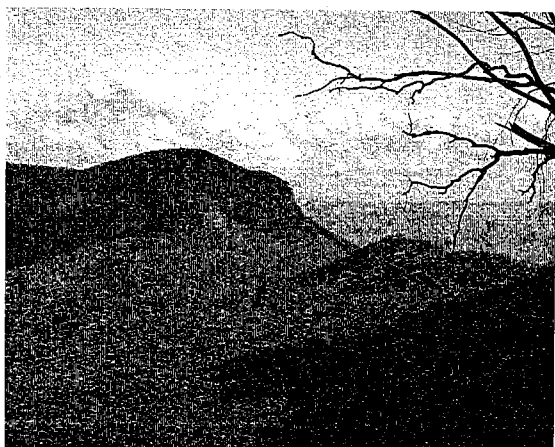


A SPECTACULAR TRIP TO MOUNT SOLITARY *by Nigel Weaver*

On 11 November I led a trip to Mt Solitary, starting and finishing at the top of the Golden Stairs. This walk is about 19kms all up, and is one of my favorite walks because of the magnificent views that you can get of the southern Blue Mountains.

Our party of ten left the top of the Golden Stairs under a clear blue sky at about 9am, making our way steeply down through the cliff lines to the level track which then leads southwards through the rainforest to a small clearing below the Ruined Castle. From there we followed the track through Cedar Gap and up onto the Knife Edge, which is the narrow rocky ridge that takes you steeply up to the top of Mt Solitary. On the Knife Edge there are many vantage points where you get great views of the Jamison Valley, Narrow Neck and the Ruined Castle. We then clambered right up to the top, and headed to Melville's Lookout which is located on top of the sheer cliffs on the southern side of Mt Solitary. What a spectacular place for a long lunch! You get panoramic views across the Cox's River valley to Kanangra Walls, Mt Cloudmaker, Mt Colong, Kings Tableland, and the Wild Dogs including conical Mt Mouin.

It's hard to want to leave a spectacular spot like that lookout, but we eventually headed off, retracing our way down the Knife Edge. Just past Cedar Gap we took the steep sidetrack that leads up to the Ruined Castle, a cluster of tall vertical rocks, some of which you can climb to the top of. There are panoramic 360 degrees views of the surrounding valleys and hills including Mt Solitary itself. Once again it is hard to want to leave a wonderful spot like that! Nevertheless we eventually headed off back to the main track, then through the darkening rainforest, and then steeply up the Golden Stairs to our cars. It was nice for us to finish this walk with a good meal together at one of Katoomba's hotels. All up, it was a great day of wonderful walking, good weather, truly breathtaking views, and much pleasant camaraderie.



The Western end of Mt Solitary as seen from the Ruined Castle



Jennifer Whincup, Melinda Turner (partly obscured) and Tim Yewdall descending the Knife Edge down a narrow defile between two large crags

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THE CENTENARY, WHAT CENTENARY?

Eddy Giacomel

Due to the commitments of my young family, participation in SBW events has been severely limited in the past few years. So the 80th celebrations provided a welcome rare opportunity to catch up with old (older!) friends. Of course, many thanks are due to the organisers of the events. However, those who look forward to the centenary in 2027 puzzle me. I'm puzzled, because by my calculation, SBW won't survive until then.

The distance travelled by a bus depends on many factors - e.g. the condition of the bus, the enthusiasm of the driver, the desires, hopes and aspirations of the passengers, the time available, the condition of the road, etc. The "etc" includes the fuel in the tank. If the fuel gauge is showing "E" (and presuming it is not faulty), then the bus won't be travelling very far. "Super excellent" conditions of other factors do not compensate for the lack of fuel.

We can apply similar logic to SBW with one of the "etc" factors being the number of members participating in management. This provides some sobering thought before the December de-sobering season starts. Several years ago, before my young family appeared, I began compiling a list of all SBW committee members since 1963. It's the sort of thing I'm sure everyone would do if they didn't have the commitments of a young family to occupy their spare time. By analysing the data it is possible to quantify the following:

- SBW has a 15 member committee
- The average number of years served by new recruits (i.e. those who served their first year ever on committee) in the decade 1995 to 2004 has been 2.29 years. (It is not possible to provide figures up to 2007 because we don't know yet how many years the recent new recruits will serve.)
- For the past two years, we have been recruiting one new committee member per annum. At this rate, for SBW to survive, new recruits must serve an average of 15 years! If one serves say 3 years (just above the average of 2.29 years), then another may have to serve 27 years to compensate!
- The years served by current committee members range from 1 year (the latest new recruit) to 23 years. The average length of service by the current committee members is 8.46 years. This is the highest it has ever been and it is rising.
- In the past 11 years (i.e. since 1996), there has not been one new recruit who (to date) has served more than 5 years.
- In the past 21 years (i.e. since 1986), there have been only two recruits who have gone on

to serve more than the current average service of 8.46 years. Coincidentally, both were recruited in 1993 and both are on the current committee. One is her 11th year and the other is in his 9th year of service.

Our current rate of recruitment (i.e. [1 new recruit per annum] multiplied by [2.29 average years of service] divided by [15 members on the committee]) is 15% of what is required for sustainability. At the current rate of service provided by new committee members (i.e. 2.29 years) we need to be recruiting an average of 6.56 new committee members every year. (I've never met a "0.56 member" - I hope they don't bite!) This is a permanent and sustained average increase of more than 500% on the recruitment for the years 2006 and 2007. For the club to survive to its centenary, this increased level of recruitment should occur in 2008 and in 2009 and in 2010 and in 2011 and ... up to 2027. This unfortunately is the good news. The bad news is that these statistics are getting worse.

Outside of SBW, experts in management are preaching (perhaps to the converted) that centralised management in a changing environment can lead to disaster. The experts recommend decentralised management structures with the elimination of some or most of middle management.

Inside SBW, our response to a changing environment has been to make the management more centralised and to increase our dependence on middle management. The results speak for themselves.

Eddy Giacomel

COOLANA REPORT December 2007 *Gretel Woodward*

The only activity at Coolana this month is by Scott Hartman who has been contracted to spray the noxious weeds on the Eastern Flat and these are a series of emails between Don Finch and Scott which gives a fairly good picture of the activity.

Email dated 30th October 2007 "Scott Hartman from Enviroquest rang today. He apologised for his recent non communication his only excuse was a broken right hand! A light weight cast is to be fitted tomorrow and he hopes to be able to work with that fitted. He expects that he and his team will start spraying at Coolana on Thursday 1st November and expects to be back and forth over the next month or so. This is to target weeds that are in a growth spurt and hence are more likely to take up the poison. He may leave hose lines run out to the Eastern Flat."

Continued on page 13

TRACKS & ACCESS REPORT

November 2007 - Willy Hilder

KATOOMBA'S MINING TRAMWAYS. Michael Keats (Bush Club) sent me an email on this subject.

Website: <http://www.infoblue mountains.net.au/ra il/ksr/kat tram.htm>. A feature of this article was a map borrowed from Eardley and Stephens "Shale Railways of NSW", published by the Australian Railways Historical Society in 2000. This misleading map was modified to show two long trestles (bridges) over Diamond (Spray) Creek and Corral Creeks on the Nellies Glen Shale Mines Tramway in Megalong Valley (strictly speaking Nellies Glen). This endless cable hauled double tramway which ran from what is now the terminus of the Scenic Railway to the depot below the Glen Shale Mines. At the Scenic Railway end the shale skips were unhooked from the haulage cable and transferred to a self actuating double tramway where the loaded skips running downhill would pull the empty skips on the other side of the tramway, whose cable ran over a pulley wheel at the top.

On being connected to the endless circulating cable which pulled the skips through the Mount Rennie Tunnel under Malaita Point, following the gently rising coal seam to emerge at what is now the Landslide (accessible until the 1961 landslide closed it). On its track to Narrownneck the tramway passed through two short tunnels (now collapsed) fairly easy to find on the Katoomba side of the current walking track to Ruined Castle etc. Just before reaching Narrownneck the tramway ran across a trestle; (see Shale Railways of NSW by Eardley and Stephens page 60 for photograph.) The trestle has of course long gone, but the cut footings to support the trestle poles are still visible in the rocks in the gully.

The tramway then entered the Daylight Tunnel following the gently rising coal seam but unlike the Mt. Rennie Tunnel is little over a metre high and about 4 metres wide. The tramways telephone line insulators are still visible in the tunnel which becomes much higher towards the western end where it leaves the coal seam and is cut in solid rock. The western portal of the tunnel was blown in (blasted) probably before World War 1. It was reopened by the late Dr. John Sutton and myself in January 1966 and has been well used since despite its wet and muddy conditions. Just past the western portal of the Daylight Tunnel the tramway ran over a short trestle to follow an undulating but straight track to the large turning wheels where it changed direction and the skips had to be disconnected and reconnected again as they did at the terminus at either end.

The tramway ran along Megalong Valley - really Nellies Glen - to descend after a short cutting to run across another trestle (a long one) across the unnamed shallow creek which drains Blue Mountaineers Pass (Herbaceous Gully). The next stream the tramway had to cross was Diamond (Spray) Creek. The internet map shows a long trestle over this creek, it was actually a short trestle over the entrenched creek. On the next section the tramway rises (lots of recently fallen trees over this section of the tramway) to a deep cutting about 20 metres in length and 4 metres deep before gently descending to the (men only) Nellies Glen Shale Miners Village on Corral Creek with yet another short trestle across that creek and rising gently across two more trestles to the terminus at the Depot - the stockpile of shale below the self acting tramway that transported the shale from the horizontal horse tramways that serviced the mines.

Giff Eardley and Philip Hammon (CEO Scenic World) have pointed out that the necessary tensioning station for the endless cable that hauled the tramway was situated at the Depot. It is pleasing to report that the large turning wheel at the top of the self actuating tramway that serviced the horse tramway is still there. The stationary steam engine which powered this tramway was located at the site of the present Scenic Railway complex.

EPIRBS. John Bennett of Benbro Electronics has donated 20 new GME MT 4106 EPIRBS to the Katoomba and Springwood Police and to the NPWS Office at Blackheath. The police and NPWS will make these units available without charge to anyone for loan (fingerprints Officer?). If you find yourself geographically embarrassed and in Grand Country (11 grand maximum fine) controlled by the Sydney Catchment Authority (SCA) and the NPWS, activating an EPIRB may result in your paying the costs of your rescue and the minimum fine of \$300. In short a "grand" expense will be your reward.

KOSCIUSKO NP. The NPWS are busy finishing the new toilet block at Rawson's Pass. This toilet block will be covered with soil and revegetated to disguise it. The KNP Community Forum recommended it be built underground next to the road but under Mount Ethridge spur - obviously too hard for the NPWS. The Service has announced that the KNP is visited by more than 100,000 walkers each year outside the Winter Season (Skiers take note).

APRIL 2007 WALKS NOTES

Walks notes covering the interval 11 February 2007 to 11 April 2007.

It was reassuring, after so much dry weather, to discover that torrential rain accompanied Ron Watters and the team of 14 as they started out on his Sunday 11th February walk in Dharowal SRA. The program had promised a pristine creek with many swims, to keep cool. It wasn't quite like that, what with flooding in O'Hares and Stokes Creeks, O'Hares weir impassable with thundering waterfall and pressure waves, and continuing torrential rain. The party was down to 6 by the time they came to wade waist deep across Stokes Creek in current. Two subsequent hours of downpour turned the hillside gullies into spectacular waterfalls feeding into Stokes Creek; with the main creek a mass of foam with cascades and 3 metre pressure waves. (One must express serious concern at the level of risk involved even if it was a marvellous sight.) In any case the party found a stretch of water wide but deep with a manageable velocity for a pack swim and accomplished the return, albeit emerging from the water liberally splattered with ground-up fragments of leaf and twig. A brief break in the rain allowed lunch followed by a short-cut up the ridge to the fire trail, with the remnant reaching the cars around 1430. All very well, but Wedderburn road was cut at the Georges River ford with the police holding cars back for around an hour until the river had subsided to a safe level. It all ended (safely) with coffee and cake at a local establishment.

The following weekend saw Kellie Rees and Dennis Trembath out on the Saturday with a party of 9 on their canyoning trip from Mount Wilson fire station. Conditions were perfect with fine sunny weather for the trip down the lower section of Bell Creek and then from the top of Du Fours Creek to Joes Canyon. Sunday 18th February was the day for Richard Darke to conduct his annual walk out from Caves beach into some of the most unspoilt sections of coastline between Sydney and Newcastle. Looks as if the word is out; there were 18 starters. Conditions were perfect, with sunny conditions and temperatures in the high 20s for the interesting small cliff climbs and at least 4 swims, one of which was in a huge deep pool on a rock platform. Vet Bryn assured the onlookers that the 1.5m grey nurse shark they found was either dead or sufficiently moribund to pose no danger despite the impressively sharp teeth that appeared as he prised its jaws open. A rock pool yielded an interesting collection of life forms with sea slugs, a larger than average blue-ringed octopus and some 18 or so SBW pool lovers thrashing about. The pirates cave was unusually easy to access due to build-up of sand in the entrance, a 0.1m tide and a high pressure system. The huge vaulted cave had prior occupants. A large NPA group, led by John Simpson, were exploring by the light of a large spotlight, urged on

by a couple of marine biologists. With this guidance they unearthed an immature Wobbegong in one of the pools inside the cave. The walk ended as usual at Red Ochre beach, followed by a hearty meal at the ever popular Catherine Hill Bay pub. Many of the houses at Catho Bay were plastered with banners protesting the proposed State Government sponsored major development in the village. As one of the last unspoilt seaside villages between Sydney and Newcastle it is not surprising how strongly the locals are opposed to the plans.

Michael Bickley led a party of 6 on his walk from Cowan to Taffys Rock and return via Campbells Crater on Saturday 24 February, which he describes as an "OK walk". Sunday of that weekend saw Jim Callaway out on his Bundeena to Otford ramble through the Royal with a party of unknown size other than to say there were multiple prospectives. Rain was a feature, though not quite like Ron Watters' trip earlier that month. It was raining as they approached Bundeena on the ferry and this persisted in an on and off fashion through to Little Marley where conditions improved. There was also a strong wind from the South. This, combined with the very heavy rain that accompanied them from Werrong Point must have made for heavy going. Despite all the rain they were still able to see well enough to declare the fringed violet the flower of the walk. All the prospectives traveled well and showed Jim up, or so he says. There is also a confusing observation that they would not have caught the 4 o'clock train under the old timetable of last year. Whether this means, in a sort of Irish way, that the 4 o'clock train now leaves at some other time is unclear. Whatever the case, they reached Otford with 15 minutes to spare.

Caro Ryan was not on hand to reveal the mysteries of off-track around Mount Solitary when Saturday 3 March rolled around but Chris Dowling, acting in her stead, led the party of 7, all of whom turned up with at least some vestiges of curiosity. The day was hot and the scenery great.

Frank Hartigan led a party of greater than 2 on his overnight walk out from Kanangra Walls into the Kowmung River over the weekend of 10, 11 March. It was an excellent walk, with the good water levels in most of the streams compensated to some extent by warmer than usual water temperatures. These also appeared to have given rise to an increase in the frog populations in Bulga Dennis Canyon and the consequent presence of numerous black snakes. It was a very pleasant and demanding walk for the time of year. Nigel Weaver led a party of 9 on his relaxed-pace

Saturday walk in the Royal from Bundeena to Otford in fine, almost ideal conditions. Nigel had organised things so they were aiming to catch a train 2 hours later than usual, so although they made good time they also enjoyed decent rest stops to take in the views. Lunch, taken at an idyllic spot by the inlet at Curracurong, was also prolonged and served as celebration of Ian Thorpe's birthday. This latter was the justification for the bottle of champagne (oops, sparkling white that is). It also had something to do with the rum-laden chocolates for afternoon tea. All-in-all a great day says Nigel. Sunday that weekend saw Bill Holland with a party of 7 out on his Boudi National Park scenic walk in fine conditions.

The following weekend, 17, 18 March, saw Yvonne and Stephen Brading as part of the party of 4 on a Saturday walk out from Glenbrook causeway to Kanuka Brook. Conditions were fine and warmish with a change to heavy rain for the ascent of the more difficult of the rock scrambles. The party started well, making good time up Glenbrook Creek to the junction with Kanuka Brook. Progress up Kanuka Brook was slower than expected and at times the going verged on off-track conditions. Nonetheless the party were able to locate the ironstone stalagmites/stalactites and 2 metre column near the old campsite along the way. The climb out of Kanuka Brook was accomplished initially in hot and scratchy scrub with some relief when the downpour arrived. It all finished with coffee and conversation at the Glenbrook Café. Sunday of that weekend was the occasion for Ron Watters and a party of 20 to complete his qualifying walk from Burrawang Creek Bridge to Hindmarsh Lookout. Conditions were sunny and humid throughout. With Burrawang Creek deep and fast flowing, the section through the rainforest was a delight with two white-water crossings up to the shorts cuffs and a deep, impressive glade of tree ferns near the cascades. The top of the big falls was solid white and what with giant trees, interesting fungi, a squelching leaf-litter floor and (I think) leaping leeches, it was all go. All stages of Belmore Falls were thundering down and the main crossing was under there somewhere. The ascent to Hindmarsh lookout yielded magnificent tree framed views of the falls, from a safe distance. The party reached the lookout around 1600h and thence repaired to Mittagong services club for yet another convivial dinner.

Ian Thorpe was out in the Wollangambe again on Saturday 24 March with a party of 7. Conditions were warm but the forecast hot conditions did not eventuate. Even the member, missing from the starting point, caught up with the party as they admired the views over the Wollangambe from a handy pagoda rock formation. From here they dropped down into the river and then headed up a ridge that gives access to Yarramunmun Tunnel and The Crater; veering off to the East and using

various other ridges to make their way into Surprise Gully. They lunched there, and having replenished their water from the crystal clear perennial stream that runs through the valley they spent a while exploring down the valley. They left there on an easterly heading to get onto a ridge running south and down toward the Wollangambe River. From here they followed a canyoner's pad for Whungee-Wheengee Canyon to get down to the river and then followed the "Wollangambe One" exit track to get back to Mount Wilson.

Saturday 31 March dawned fine and clear at Budthingeroo for David Trinder and the 10 starters who turned out for his "Explore new areas in Kanangra" overnight walk. The party got away at around 0830h and drove via Dinner Creek and Surprise Creek to the Hollander River. They followed the river down to Chardon Canyon where they clambered part of the way and later climbed around the remainder of the canyon. They saw Tuglow Falls, top and bottom, then progressed down the Kowmung to Box Creek junction to camp the night. The next day they walked on down the river to Gridiron Bends where they left the packs and scrambled up to Tuglow Caves, then descended to the river on the caves road, returning to the packs. It was then a matter of crossing Boss Peak and Black Banksia Falls to return to the cars. One would guess that was a very pleasant way to pass the weekend. That Saturday was also the occasion for a short notice day walk out from Carlons Farm in the Megalong Valley led by Chris Dowling. The party of 6 headed out over Ironpot Mountain and down Ironmonger Spur to the Cox River before climbing Blue Dog spur to Knights Deck and then down Cattle dog Ridge into Breakfast Creek. They seem to have been made painfully aware of the profuse growth of nettles along Carlons Creek following earlier good rains and in fact highly recommend the employment of long trousers, gaiters, long sleeved shirt and gloves when strolling the Carlons Creek track in these conditions.

The Sunday of that weekend saw Jim Callaway fretting over folk who indicate they wish to go on a walk but fail to turn up for the occasion. Not just one person but two. I trust the date had nothing to do with this wayward behaviour. In any case the party, reduced to 3, got away from Waterfall at around 0920h and made their way to the top of Couranga Brook for morning tea. They rested yet again when they reached Lady Carrington walk then pressed on to lunch at Calala. After lunch they crossed the Hacking River and ascended the ridge to the Audley track and Uloola Falls. No flow in Uloola Brook made for a dry waterfall. Karloo Pool was better, and 1 brave member even swam there. The final climb was out to Heathcote station and the 1528h train, all with a couple of minutes to spare.

WALKS REPORT CONT...

Easter 07 came around 6 to 9 April with Tony Manes leading a party of unknown size (but not greater than 12) on his Cloudmaker Kowmung ramble. The conditions were excellent with low temperatures, overcast skies and the occasional light drizzle. The place was almost empty! They did meet a few people but not as many as would normally be encountered over the Easter period. A good time was had by all with plenty of good food and drink and a surfeit of chocolate. Dinner at Hampton after the walk topped off a great weekend. Conditions were similar, but colder with more wind atop the ridgelines on the Friday walk led by Ian Rennard out from Mount Victoria railway station to Wilsons Gully. The party of 9 had an enjoyable day in the mountains despite the occasional light shower of rain. Down in the Megalong Valley that same day Nigel Weaver and a party of 10 set off from Carlons Farm out to Mount Mouin on a qualifying walk in weather that varied throughout the day. They got away from the cars at 0915h down Carlons Creek to Blackhorse Ridge and then up to Mount Mouin where the clouds parted to reveal marvellous views over the surrounding countryside. The came

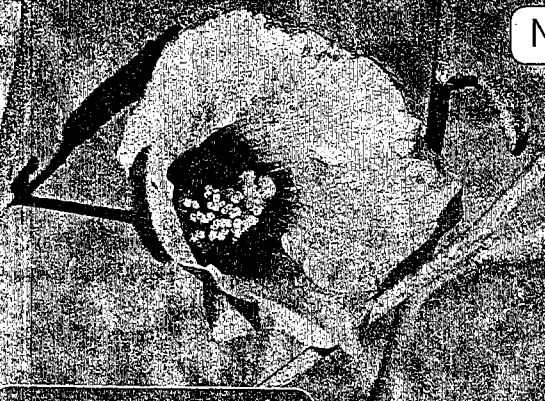
down off the mountain to Medlow Gap and then followed the tracks back to Carlons and the cars. From there they drove to Gardiner's Hotel at Blackheath to finish the day with a fine repast and good fellowship. All in all a great day with many wonderful views of the Wild Dogs Mountains. But wait, there's more! Nigel had not finished with the weekend yet by any means. On Monday the 9th he set off with a party numbering 18 into Garrigal National Park and Manly Dam reserve. They departed Frenchs Forest at around 0915h in fine and mild conditions and walked through to Bantry Bay where there were many attractive views to be seen. Then came the big climb to Seaforth Oval and the Engravings Track leading, as one might expect, to the site of aboriginal rock engravings. Lunch was taken at a pleasant spot in the headwaters of Manly dam and, this done, they followed tracks to circumnavigate the dam and then make their way back to Frenchs Forest. At one stage this involved following a scrubby, overgrown track section. It was generally agreed that it all added up to a good day with many pleasant views.

All of which brings the walks reports to a close for this period.

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Take your time. Enjoy a swim and look at the butterflies. Observe the small birds. Have a break and watch the small lizards. Relax around a camp fire. Soak up your surroundings while your guide prepares you a three course meal.



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

Phone 08 8985 2134 Fax 08 8985 2355

AVOIDING DEHYDRATION - SOMETHING EVERY BUSHWALKER SHOULD KNOW

CAUSES OF DEHYDRATION

- Prolonged physical activity without consuming adequate water, especially in a hot and/or humid environment
- Prolonged exposure to dry air, e.g., in high-flying airplanes (5-15% r.h.)
- Survival situations, especially desert survival conditions
- Blood loss or hypotension due to physical trauma
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

SYMPTOMS AND PROGNOSIS

If you have not suffered from dehydration before the first signs may be a headache and extreme thirst. These symptoms indicate that it is time to start replenishing fluids and rest so that you are not losing fluids through sweat. It is advisable to notify the walks leader so that your symptoms do not deteriorate.

Dehydration symptoms generally become noticeable after 2% of one's normal water volume has been lost. Symptoms of mild dehydration include thirst, decreased urine volume, abnormally dark urine, unexplained tiredness, lack of tears when crying, headache, dry mouth, and dizziness when standing due to a sudden fall in blood pressure.

In moderate to severe dehydration, there may be no urine output at all. Other symptoms in these states include lethargy or extreme sleepiness, seizures and fainting, and sunken eyes.

The best treatment for minor dehydration is drinking water and stopping fluid loss. Water is preferable to sport drinks and other commercially-sold rehydration fluids, as the balance of electrolytes they provide may not match the replacement requirements of the individual. To stop fluid loss from vomiting and diarrhea, avoid solid foods and drink only clear liquids.

When dehydrated, unnecessary sweating should be avoided, as it wastes water. If there is only dry food, it is better not to eat, as water is necessary for digestion. For severe cases of dehydration where fainting, unconsciousness, or other severely inhibiting symptoms are present (the patient is incapable of standing or thinking clearly), emergency attention is required. Fluids containing a proper balance of replacement electrolytes are given orally or intravenously with continuing assessment of electrolyte status; complete resolution is the norm in all but the most extreme cases.

AVOIDING DEHYDRATION

Dehydration is best avoided by drinking plenty of water. The greater the amount of water lost through perspiration, the more water must be

consumed to replace it and avoid dehydration. Since the body cannot tolerate large deficits or excesses in total body water, consumption of water must be roughly concurrent with the loss (in other words, if one is perspiring, one should also be drinking water frequently). Drinking water slightly beyond the needs of the body entails no risk, since the kidneys will efficiently remove any excess water through the urine with a large margin of safety.

A useful rule of thumb for avoiding dehydration in hot or humid environments or during strenuous activity involves monitoring the frequency and character of urination. If one develops a full bladder at least every 3-5 hours and the urine is only lightly colored or colorless, chances are that dehydration is not occurring; if urine is deeply colored, or urination occurs only after many hours or not at all, water intake may not be adequate to maintain proper hydration. *Pam Campbell, Editor*

COOLANA REPORT.....from Page 8

Email dated 28th November 2007

"Scott Hartman from Enviroquest has advised that they have several tanks of water down on the camping flat for mixing with poison into the tank on the spray vehicle. The tanks are clearly marked and labelled not for drinking water, please do not touch them.

Due to heavy rainfalls during the past month access by vehicle has been limited, they have slowly been filling the tanks from a lighter vehicle, however they now have enough water for the work in storage and with a window in the weather opening up they intend to start spraying tomorrow or Friday. They intend to take the heavier spray vehicle down the hill and leave it there for up to a week as they fully expect that the road will be too slippery to get the vehicle out until after many drying out days.

One good aspect of the delay is that the weeds are now in full growth mode ideal for spraying".

Email dated 1st December 2007

"Scott must be tearing his hair out 11mm rain on Thursday last, 133mm on Friday at Hampton Bridge." If any members go to Coolana over the Christmas/New Year break could they please sent us an email and let us know what has happened after all that rain.

The last email from Scott mentions: We have finished spraying. We will now wait till April/March to do a follow up spray.

Gretel Woodward

CAMPFIRE CLASSICS AT THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY

Don Matthews

In the Beginning.....

"The SBW Annual Reunion was introduced in 1932 in order to bring together Members with differing views in the friendly atmosphere of the Campfire, and soon developed into a pleasant way to introduce the incoming President and Committee, and to celebrate another year of good fellowship. Early episodes of introspection, or "misplaced earnestness", as we like to call it, indulged in by those who take themselves rather too seriously, were soon overcome by "fun and frolic", as a writer in 1941 described the mixture of spontaneous and organised entertainment thought up by imaginative and talented members.

Reunions became a stage for self expression, for gentle satire, and indeed for a measure of self-mockery, which is a healthy sign in any society.

From 1935 until the mid 1960's about half the Club's members attended the Annual Reunion. Among them were a number of "gifted entertainers" as Dot Butler described them, and the well organised Concerts which were presented at the Savoy Theatre and similar venues in the 1930s are illustrated in "The First Sixty Years."

Campfire entertainment, naturally enough, was a different thing altogether; a mixture of the spontaneous from those with a real talent for story telling, or the singing of songs and ballads, or performance on musical instruments; and of items written for the occasion, sometimes whimsical sometimes boisterous, sometimes obliquely satirical, but always entertaining. The variety has been enormous, the talent prodigious. Although much of the written material is lost for ever, there is enough detail in the Magazine coverage to give a good idea of the performances, and later scripts can be found in private collections.

Many of the reunions were recorded by some of our best writers, among them Kath McKay, and in 1949 the Magazine devoted six pages to the Reunion, and there was a page of photos as well. A rich resource for later Historians! Sadly, as this brief history will reveal, not all eras have been so well served....."

(From an unpublished "Concise History of Reunions" on the bookshelf at Frog Hollow.)

Our highest attendance was in 1960, with 155 adults and 55 children, from membership of around 300. In more recent times, the highest has been around the 60 mark, plus varying numbers of children, as at the Anniversary Camps in 1997 and 2002.

Nevertheless the Annual Reunion has survived, and there is still plenty of talent waiting to be tapped. In 2003 we advertised that "this year we have some new material as well as old favourites, aimed at involving as many of the audience as are willing. By popular demand "The Cross-Eyed Bull" will

make a second debut. An entertaining evening is assured. For nervous performers treading the stage for the first time, a relaxed atmosphere and generous applause are guaranteed."

So, to the 80th Anniversary Camp and:

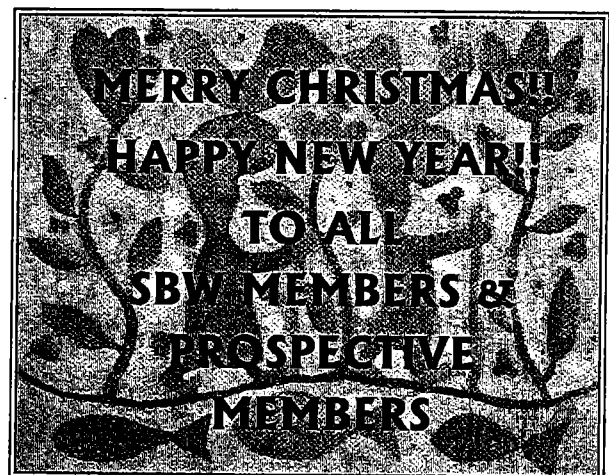
"The Frame Up"

The first performance of this gem, as far as we can tell, was by Dot Butler at the Reunion in 1992, though we suspect that it may have been put on in earlier years by Dot, at a time when reporting lapsed. It appeared again in 2002 with Ros Kerrigan as Narrator and Denise Shaw as Sonia, and remains a crowd pleaser.

We have not been able to ascertain its origin. We should have asked Dot years ago! Don Finch took on the role of Casting Director for this and for Dr Dot's Clinic, and his judgment was spot on! Our actors threw themselves into their respective roles with great enthusiasm. "The Frame Up" relates the story of Sonia Snell, who finds herself stuck to the freshly painted seat at the railway station, and of the willing helpers who try to rescue her from her predicament.

Stage hands Mai and Chris Miller provided a backdrop with strategically placed sleeping mats. Jodie Dixon was marvellously believable as Sonia. The porter and the railway staff were portrayed with dignity by Spiro Haginikitas and Bob Hodgson and Rick Angel was the calmly confident carpenter who freed her, complete with seat still attached. Bob and Peter Stitt played the sympathetic Ambulance men, and Bob Younger the Surgeon faced with the problem of detaching the seat. Spiro handled the punch line with suitable aplomb. Don Finch, having cast himself as narrator, put it across as Dot would have expected of one of her star performers of earlier days.

It was great fun!



SBW 80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS - MANLY DAM - 21 OCTOBER 2007



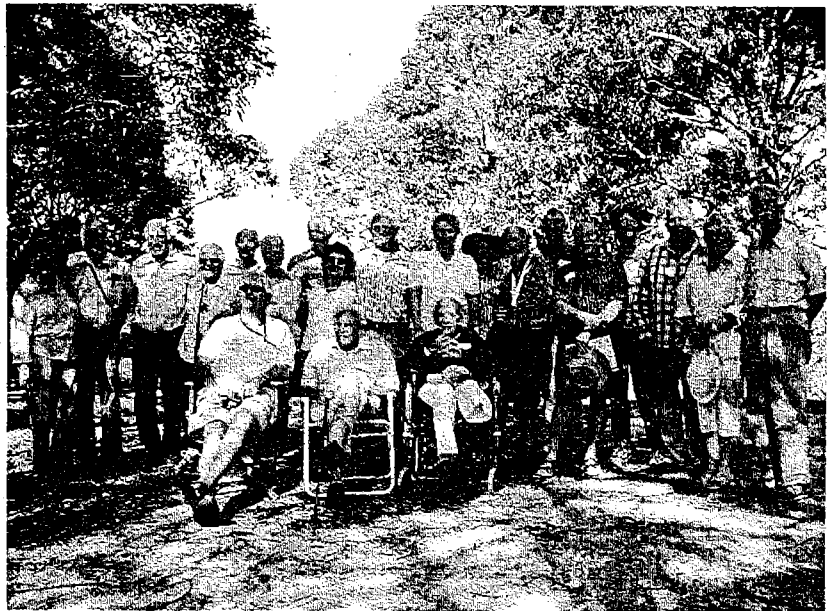
Eddy and Jennifer Giacomel



Rick Angel with SBW friends



George Mawer and Grace Martinez



Melinda Turner



Rosemary MacDougal



Tom Wenman



YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN GOOGLE GROUPS

Ah! The wonders of modern technology.

When we have something to say to our club members we used to simply send an email. The trouble is that an email sent to over 400 members is often viewed as spam - and rejected. So we thought the answer would be to use Google Groups!

Google Groups is like a discussion board for people with a common interest. It has the facility to send emails to the addresses of all group members while maintaining the privacy of individual email addresses.

Membership of the SBW groups is by invitation only. Invited members are required to accept the invitation and after acceptance are able to receive regular notice of events and possibly short notice walks. Separately, an SBW Forum is being developed on our website for discussion of matters of common interest.

Two groups have been set up; the SBW Members Group and SBW Prospective Members Group. Invitations to join the group have been sent to all the members (and prospective) who have lodged email addresses with us. But so far only about 20% have responded. What's the problem?

There have been many queries and it is obvious that people are confused by the lack of advance notice of what Google groups was about and what was meant to be achieved. There was not enough understanding of what was involved and clarity of explanation was severely lacking in Google's invitation.

When you received an invitation to join the SBW Google Group the invitation requested you to reply directly to the invitation by clicking on the URL in the message. Your message probably was "You

can accept this invitation by clicking the following URL".

After you click on the link supplied in the message you arrive at a "log-in" area and are requested to create a password in order to join Google Groups (the total body). This is a prerequisite to joining the SBW Group. After you have logged in with your new password you will be connected to the SBW Group and can explore the site and other Google Groups of interest to you.



If you have received an invitation and thought it was all too difficult please try again. If you do not want to receive these notices or would like to advise a different email address please let me know. And, if you would like to be added to the group and have not received an invitation I will be happy to add you directly to the list.

A separate group, the "SBW Leaders Group", will be available very soon. Invitations will be issued shortly and when operating this group will assist communication between the Walks Secretary and leaders.

I hope this helps your understanding of what is involved and if there are questions to be answered or problems solved just send me an email addressed to billholland@bigpond.com. My involvement in this arises from having the membership data bases for both members and prospective on my computer and therefore being best placed to administer the groups.

Bill Holland

CONSERVATION REPORT

Well here we again at the end of another year. Surely, this year should be seen as the year that 'climate change' became widely recognised as a major problem, requiring concerted action by all countries. Now, Australia can take its place amongst other nations prepared to take action to limit carbon emissions and slow down the effects of global warming.

Global warming has been the theme of much of my contribution to the Club magazine this year but I also reported on the Directives for Walking and Camping in the Budawang Wilderness, The 50th anniversary of the National Parks Association; a move by the Federal Government (now replaced) to offer business "a slice of the action" in national parks with "eco-tourism" to be encouraged; extracts from matters covered in the "Colong Bulletin" such as long wall mining and grazing in the high country national parks; "bio-banking" and voluntary conservation agreements.

But on both the state and federal level we cannot afford to relax. Conservation issues continue to emerge and pressure needs to be applied. To this end, I have written several letters, some personal and some on behalf of the Club, objecting to some proposals or asking for changes to be made.

As we prepare to enter the New Year the old fashioned New Year's resolution may still have a place. Let's resolve to take personal action to preserve our environment, assist in reducing carbon emissions, save water and do other all those things that will make this world of ours a better place for our children.

Bill Holland

Environment News and Comments

Really Inconvenient Truth: Divorce Is Not Green:

The data are in. Divorce is bad for the environment. A novel study that links divorce with the environment shows a global trend of soaring divorce rates has created more households with fewer people, has taken up more space and has gobbled up more energy and water. A statistical remedy: Fall back in love. Cohabitation means less urban sprawl and softens the environmental hit.

Science Daily 7/12/07

Land Rights Recognised at last

The Githabul People are set to have their native title rights recognized in nine national parks and 13 state forests in northern New South Wales in an historic consent determination. Justice Branson of the Federal Court of Australia is scheduled to make the consent determination at Woodenbong, recognizing the Githabul People's native title rights and interests over 1,120 sq km just south of the Queensland border.

Today's consent determination will finalize the Githabul People's native title claim in NSW, which was first lodged in 1995. It will be one of the most significant consent determinations in eastern Australia, and the first determination that native title exists in NSW in 10 years.

The Githabul People's non-exclusive rights to practice their traditional laws and customs will be recognized, including the right to access and camp in the areas, as well as to hunt fish and gather plants for personal use and protect places of significance to the group.

"Snowy Brumbies under Threat"

Last week National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) placed their Horse Management Plan Draft (HMP) for Kosciusko National Park (KNP) on public exhibition.

Our review confirms that this plan is extremely biased in its presentation and we highlight that it fails to mention the cultural heritage value of the Snowy Brumby

The Brumbies have a legendary and iconic status in the eyes of the Australian public. These Brumbies are the descendants of a large contingent of horses that were shipped overseas and faithfully served our troops in the Sudan Campaign, Boer War, Great War and second World War and were never allowed to return

The Brumbies give tourism value and subsequent contribution to the economy. There are positive benefits of the Brumby grazing native grasses with the resultant fuel load reduction and sweeter grass for all wildlife

Other critical deficiencies exposed in the plan include the failure to provide analysis of and weighting to the major threats to the environment within the park. We contend that any alleged horse impact would not be of a serious or irreversible detrimental nature. At worst any impact would be temporary and would pale into insignificance when compared to the long term impacts of bushfires, predator feral animals, weeds, roads, dams, powerlines, ski resort development and natural occurrences.

Extract from media release

Snowy Mountains Bush Users Group Inc.

SOCIAL NOTES

Hi Everyone,

Christmas Greetings!!

It's time to party! Come and celebrate the end of 2007 at the annual SBW Xmas Party on Wednesday 19th, December from 18:30 onwards, at the KNC rear courtyard (inside if wet). Please bring a plate of nutritious food to share. The club supplies everything else - beer, wine, soft drinks, hot beverages and all eating utensils. It is another great opportunity to catch up with others - especially if you missed out on the 80th.

Last month, Leigh McClintock and others who accompanied him, gave a wonderful presentation of their walking trip in Japan earlier year. Saki and sushi sustained us both before and during 'interval'. Leigh is considering another trip to Japan for 2008 -keep an eye on the Walk's programme for details.

There are several social activities in January. The annual Balmoral Picnic, an evening stroll with our New Member's Secretary, Jodie and the Social Evening featuring an audio -visual by club member, Peter Christian on a walk with Nigel Weaver in the Royal NP from Bundeena to Otford. Please see the Social and Walks programmes for details on these activities. The AUTUMN social programme needs presenters/ideas. PLEASE contact me ASAP if you can help out.

I shall probably be standing down as Social Secretary at the March AGM. If you would like to take on this rewarding Committee position, please contact me or David. I look forward to catching up with you at the Xmas Party.

Enjoy your walks.

Kathy



MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

The Membership List for 2008 will be printed mid January, 2008. Would you please look at this years Membership List and **MAKE SURE** your contact details are correct. If there are any changes that you have not already informed me of, please email: fernband@bigpond.com or a letter to Fran Holland, 216c Quarter Sessions Road, WESTLEIGH. 2120 so I can make the changes before the print run.

A MESSAGE FROM GERHARD RUHL.....

Hi everyone,

Some of you may remember me from our walks a few years ago or the lovely Xmas 2001 with David Trinder and the gang at Smiggin Holes lodge. Lately I haven't been as active with the club, as I found new opportunities to travel with family and friends.

As some of you have probably heard, I have been seriously ill for the last 2 months with pancreas cancer. Unfortunately my tumour is inoperable and therefore there is no cure for me. It looks very much, as if my 94 year old mother will outlive me.

On 2 October I had left Sydney for a trip to the Middle East to have a look at the old archaeological sites in Jordan, Israel and Egypt. Almost immediately after touching down there, I started getting abdominal pain which increased every day. Initially I just tried to ignore it, and thought, it might just go away, but when the pain got so strong that I couldn't sleep any more I admitted myself to an Emergency Dept in a large Jerusalem Hospital. I was hoping it might be gallstones or something like that at worst, but when the CT scan revealed a tumour, I was stunned by the gravity of my condition.

At present I am still in shock. I cannot believe that all of a sudden all my retirement plans should have come to nothing and my devoted wife of 30 years could be a widow at this time next year. I am feeling terrible thinking that I never will know what will happen to Karl and Andrea (my children currently in their 20s) in their later stages of life.

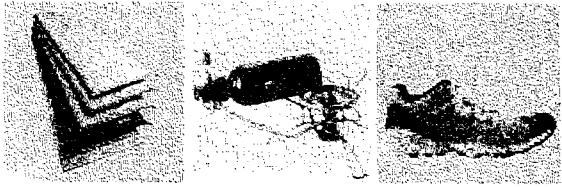
I have chosen to participate in a Clinical Trial where they will be experimenting with new drugs, as well as different kinds of chemo- and radiotherapy. I am not confident that it will bring me benefits, but then who knows. It could prolong my life by a few months, is the promise. If that happens with a good quality of life, I'll be happy.

If it just ends up meaning I spend the rest of my life in hospital corridors waiting for yet another medical procedure, I may decide to leave the trial.

If you would like to send me a message of encouragement, please do! At present I find phone calls difficult to handle, as the pain often interferes with how well I can articulate things, and I tire really quickly. I would love to get some personal messages from you, something handwritten, maybe a post card with a nice photo on it that might cheer me up. Even though I have wonderful family support, I often feel rather hopeless and defeated.

My address is: 18 Towers Street Arncliffe NSW 2205. Let me wish all of you and your families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Cheers Gerhard Ruhl



the bushwalking specialists



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