



THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



FEBRUARY 2008





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February 2008, Issue 879

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THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER
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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

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FROM THE EDITOR

Editing the magazine this month has been challenging in that nearly every article has fallen short of filling a full page. Trying to find small snippets of information to fill the gap has been difficult! I think I have managed well though and I didn't have to reduce David's New Zealand photos on page 17.

In the December Magazine I omitted to mention that Greta James received honorary active membership to the club. Greta received the award at the 80th Anniversary Picnic at Manly Dam.

Due to other commitments (study) I will be standing down as Editor at the Annual General Meeting in March. If you are interested in taking on the role please contact me so that I can tell you more about the position. One option is for two people to take turns in producing the magazine so that there is less workload ie one produces November, the other December and so on.

Pam Campbell, Editor

Walls of Jerusalem

27th Feb to 2nd March

View Solomon's Jewels; drink from Lake Salome; mount Solomon's Throne

A trip to the Walls of Jerusalem National Park, the Central Plateau, Tasmania, has suddenly gone pear shape due to lack of fellow walkers, I've already booked my flight tickets courtesy of Frequent Fliers and there is no rebate. Is there any one who would like to accompany me on a private trip to the Walls of Jerusalem? It's a 1 day pack walk to a base camp at Wild Dog creek, 2 days of day walking from the base camp and on the 4th day the walk out - could be stretched to a 5th day. The 1st day involves a steady 500 m climb over 2 km on a made track to the plateau, the rest of the time it is undulating with the occasional peak. Full pack, I have a tent and there are no huts or caves, food for 4 days + emergency, and need to plan for inclement weather including snow. Can arrange transport from Launceston.

Sorry about the short notice
Reply to richardlowson@yahoo.com.au
Richard Lowson
9541 0479

PRESIDENT'S REPORT by David Trinder

Next month we have the beginning of a new SBW year with the Annual General Meeting and the election of a new committee. Some Committee members are standing down and others will stand again and be re-elected if the meeting so wishes. We want to see some new blood on the new Committee, please contact myself or another Committee member if you would like to fill a position. I want to say here that all Committee Members have filled their obligations well and the Club is thankful to them for the work they have done.

We have an interesting year ahead of us. We intend to complete the website and make the Walks Program, the Magazine and the Membership list more accessible in soft copy. We also want the web site to make the Club more enticing to young and middle aged people especially males to increase the number and reduce the age of new members. We have interesting Walks Programs providing lots of adventurous trips; we provide free guided trips that some people pay money for and we take people to places that commercial operators can't take them to or don't know about.

The Google Groups invitations to people who want to receive short notice emails have had only a few acceptances from Members and from Prospective Members, about 20% from both. The Committee will have to decide whether to go ahead with the small number or find another method.

David Trinder

FROM THE COMMITTEE ROOM

A report of proceedings at the Committee meeting on 6th February, 2008.

The meeting opened at 7pm with 10 members present and 2 apologies.

- The minutes of the January meeting were approved. The Secretary thanked Ron Watters for taking the December meeting minutes.
- It was resolved that Eddy Giacomel's report regarding management structure be discussed at the March meeting.
- Shirley Dean addressed the meeting requesting \$1,700 for the publication of 500 copies of the history of Coolana. A move to approve the above request was defeated.
- Correspondence was received from Xstrata Coal about the risk of cliff line and steep slope instability. It was agreed that members be notified of the risk through the Club magazine.

- The President reported that there had been poor attendance on the extended Christmas walks.
- The Insurance return is due on 31 March 2008. The secretary will draft the return and circulate for comment.
- The Secretary thanked the Treasurer for the prompt auditing of the report. The Treasurer's report for the financial years end was accepted. Accounts for payment were approved including Magazine postage \$399.17, Social Sec expenses \$11.50, KNC rent to Jan and Feb \$800.
- Kim Bailey, Kannika Chapram and Richard Shaw were admitted to full membership.
- 331 invitations were sent to members to join the Club's Google email list. Only 75 have chosen to take this up. Re-invitations have been sent and Ron will wait another month before taking action.
- The Photo Competition is currently being organised and two sponsors have offered to donate prizes. The current Magazine Editor will be standing down at the Annual AGM in March. A campaign to find someone else is under way.
- Confederation: the Broken Dam hut has been re-opened. The endangered Brush Tailed Wallaby is thriving in Wollemi NP. This has been attributed to a successful fox baiting program.

General Business:

- Greta James, Patrick James, Pam Campbell and Kathy Gero are not standing for re-election at the AGM. Members are strongly encouraged to stand for these positions.
- The Club's Fax Machine is to be offered for sale in the magazine.

ADVICE REGARDING MINING AND CLIFF LINE INSTABILITY – ADJACENT TO BARGO GORGE

Tahmoor Coal Pty Ltd (Tahmoor Colliery) has identified recreational bushwalking as a key activity in the Bargo River Gorge and as a result suggests that you postpone any planned walks in the area and avoid stopping beneath steep slopes or cliff lines when walking in the Bargo River Gorge or surrounding creek gorges. As a further precaution, the Colliery has placed warning signs at most public access points to the gorge area.

For further information contact the colliery on 1800 037 334. The colliery produces weekly updates on mining progress and subsidence impacts. To receive weekly updates email Dave Clarkson; Community and SMP Co-ordinator at dclarkson@xstratacoal.com.au.

LETTERS TO
THE
EDITOR

Letter to the Editor,

I am puzzled by recent letters from Eddie Giacomel and Chris Dowling suggesting that SBW may need rejuvenating and its future is threatened. Keeping in mind that our membership has been maintained at a manageable 500+ members in recent years; that 20-30 new members join each year (this more than offsets any loss) and that we average around 100 prospective members each year it appears to me that our membership is in a healthy state. Our walks programme has a few problems from time to time but we manage to have two or three day walks and a couple of weekend walks each weekend. Surely, signs of an active and healthy club.

So, where is the problem?

Eddy, writing in the December magazine, sees a "stagnant" Committee and a centralised management structure as stifling new ideas - he would like to see modern management principles introduced. It is worth reminding ourselves that SBW is a Club of volunteers, not business people. In fact, most of us would like to leave business structures and ideas behind us when we bushwalk. The SBW Committee is open to anyone who would like to nominate. All positions become vacant each year but not all positions are filled at the AGM. New members of course are very welcome but the Club obtains good value by at least having some continuity from experienced members particularly in the more onerous positions.

Chris Dowling, in his letter last month, questions the relevance of Coolana and I expect others will reply to this. However, as Conservation Secretary I am very much aware that one of the main objectives in the formation of SBW was the care and protection of the environment. This was one of the reasons for purchasing Coolana many years ago. The other reason was to provide a camping place for members and their families.

He urges us to spend money on advertising for new members and updating our website. I agree that these would be worthwhile actions but with an intake of over 100 prospective members each year our thoughts would be better directed to holding and developing these newer members into full membership. Other clubs don't have our stringent entry requirements and offer a greater variety of easy and easy/medium walks.

Perhaps SBW has become to some extent too self-directed into meeting the requirements of dedicated fit walkers and has forgotten to cater for those new to bushwalking and those of us no longer able or willing to stretch out for a strenuous weekend.

Bill Holland

Dear Editor,

Before I responded to Chris Dowling's letter I first looked up the meanings of sarcasm and vitriol and I have done my best to avoid both.

I also looked up "volunteer"; a very important person is the volunteer. Why, because the volunteer makes it all happen. The large amounts of time and effort put into social functions and Coolana are the time and efforts of volunteers. There are many volunteers putting in large amounts of time and effort to keep the club running and some of them have been doing it for years and years and years. A funny thing about the volunteer though is the fact that the volunteer does what the volunteer wants to do! Nobody can demand the time and effort of the volunteer! The club benefits but it cannot demand.

The current web site was put together by a volunteer; after a while John stopped volunteering. It is still the same web site four and a half years later. It would be fair to say that John was ahead of his time - a volunteer who put in a large amount of his time and effort to achieve a result that stands today as the primary portal to the club via the internet. The website definitely needs an update; it will be a great day for the club when the volunteer/s with the necessary skills and altruism are able to put in the large amount of time and effort necessary to get the job done. It is currently a work in progress. The volunteers are on it.

Large amounts of money: Yes, the 80th celebrations did cost a bit and the money came from the management committee's discretionary income to acknowledge the achievements of the members and the Club as a whole over 80 years.

Money spent on Coolana: SBW owns and is responsible for Coolana; volunteers donate to the Coolana fund and the interest is used to help SBW pay for Coolana running costs. Composting toilet: Volunteers donated large amounts of money to help pay for a composting toilet to be built. It is those volunteers again doing what they want to do and this time it is money that is freely given and the club benefits. The builders of the toilet were volunteers, every one of them.

The Club and Coolana have benefited from large amounts of money and the efforts of volunteers. Did you know that in 2003 Gretel Woodward and Shirley Dean applied for and obtained a grant of \$4,500 for bush regeneration? In the years that followed Gretel kept applying for and obtaining grants for bush care at Coolana - the latest a cheque for \$8,000 was put into the Club's account in September 2007. The total amount obtained by Gretel is \$22,000.00 - that's right Twenty Two Thousand Dollars to help SBW look after Coolana. A volunteer par excellence. And this is just the money; you should have seen the work that this septuagenarian has done.

.....continued on page 6

CONSERVATION REPORT - *Bill Holland*

Every now and again I like to remind SBW members of our proud history in pursuing conservation issues in New South Wales. This is in keeping with the objectives stated when the club was formed way back in 1927. As in the early days there are always conservation problems to be faced and issues to be dealt with. Nowadays we have several organisations dedicated to tackling specific areas of concern but all of these organisations need ongoing support and publicity - such as that provided by our Club. Defining and coordinating the Club's conservation efforts is the responsibility of the Conservation Secretary.

I have held this position for seven years now and although I enjoy the role I have no intention of trying to match Alex Colley's magnificent thirty years or so service in this position.

Therefore, I am inviting one of our members to replace me at the Annual General Meeting in March. The position of Conservation Secretary is not onerous but it does require a strong interest in conservation issues and motivation to pass on this interest to other members of the SBW.

We are fortunate to have a good reputation with other conservation organisations and from time to time we join them in meetings, seminars etc. Specifically, the National Parks Association (NPA) and National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) hold a joint meeting every second month and we are invited to attend. This is a valuable means of obtaining information about park issues and proposals and provides an opportunity to pass it on to our members. Also, we are able to make the NPWS aware of a "bushwalkers view" on park management.

Within the club the Conservation Secretary, as a member of the SBW Management Committee attends monthly meetings and prepares articles for this magazine as means of communicating conservation issues to members.

So, if you are interested in nominating for this position or would like more information about the responsibilities involved please contact me and I will be pleased to assist.

Bill Holland

Environment News and Comment

Bush Alert Plan to Be Rolled Out

THE Game Council NSW says incidents such as the arrests by police of three unlicensed shooters near Condobolin last weekend are thankfully getting rarer but still should not occur.

The trio, from Wagga Wagga, are facing nearly 60 charges in court after allegedly carrying out shooting offences on a dozen properties at Condobolin and Tottenham in the State's West.

Game Council chairman Robert Borsak said yesterday the incident stands out because such events are increasingly uncommon under the strict management conditions now applying to hunting.

Mr Borsak said the Game Council was moving forward with plans to eventually roll out its new illegal shooting control program, Bush Alert, across the rest of the State.

Central Western Daily 1/2/08

Another high country hut being rebuilt

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has started the rebuilding of another of the 19 huts destroyed or severely damaged in the 2003 bushfire which tore through the Kosciuszko National Park.

Delany's Hut was built around 1910 by James Thomas Delany who lived in Aaminaby. He was one of the early snow settlers and built it as a stockman's shelter. It became very well known because of the Kiandra mailman Tom Bolton, who'd often leave his horse at the hut when he travelled

on to Kiandra. He'd need to leave the horse and use snowshoes to cover the last leg of the journey.
ABC Riverina 21/1/07

Anger at Brumbies cull

RENEWED calls for a cull of wild brumbies in Kosciuszko National Park have prompted a former National Party MP to act as a human shield by riding among the herds.

But the NSW Parks and Wildlife Service yesterday said no cull was being considered, and that horses in the park could be effectively managed by trapping and moving some of them.

The former Federal National Party member for Monaro Peter Cochran, who owns a commercial horse riding operation in the area, said he would do whatever it took to stop horses being taken away.

The brumbies are blamed for trampling native vegetation and destroying waterways in the park, and the National Parks Association of NSW yesterday called for a resumption of aerial shooting, which was banned six years ago after a public outcry.

The Parks and Wildlife Service have prepared a draft plan for trapping and managing the horses. It will be considered by the Government. If approved, it will be adopted in March, and trapping would then resume.

SMH 16/1/08

Thinking about leading?

Lucy Moore

For some it's in the blood. Born leaders, they're always out in front. For others it comes on gradually. They know when the time is right. Still others hover for years, held back by a tangle of unasked questions and unspoken fears. You know there's a first time for every leader. You have the skills and the experience. You may even have reflected on the type of leader you might make. Yet still you hesitate.

How might you navigate this ambivalence?

Do you need to address your fears:

- Getting lost: Select a familiar area and plan the route carefully with an experienced leader. Practice the week prior, carefully noting distances, landmarks, rest points and times. Walk with an experienced leader on the day.
- Taking a wrong turn: Unmarked trails are common and can be confusing. Stop as soon as you realise your error, sit down, establish your whereabouts and plan the return carefully. Feel those cheeks burn! Remind yourself that you're learning to lead. Laugh with the others and congratulate yourself for not getting "really lost".
- Losing someone: Limit the group size, conduct a regular headcount and stay in front with your co-leader at the back. Stress to the group the importance of staying together and notifying someone if a stop is needed.
- Finishing after dark: Start early to allow ample time for the unexpected. The pace is often a lot slower than you may have planned. Keep your eye on the clock.
- An accident: Years ago, with another club, I was taking a group of 15 down Tootie Creek. In response to a clamour of shouting I turned to see wildly gesticulating group members 100m behind. My heart sank. I knew there had been an accident. Clambering back up the creek bed I ran towards the circle of walkers. I can still vividly recall the way the whole group silently parted to let me in, then silently waited for me to take charge. I remember feeling terribly burdened by their expectations. I didn't even want to look. I feared I would be sick. An old log had collapsed under the weight of a walker causing a deep penetration wound to the lower leg. At that moment the fundamental requirement of leadership

revealed itself to me - taking control in a crisis. The woman's stricken expression and ashen face was my cue. I took a deep breath and took charge. Firm, calm and reassuring I assessed and treated the injury, planned the evacuation, divided the group, nominated an alternative leader and juggled transport plans.

An accident may never happen on your watch but if it does perhaps you too could experience the privilege of drawing on reserves of hitherto unused leadership skills and qualities.

Or perhaps it's the practicalities you need to consider:

- Trip planning: Consider a risk management approach. Write down the things that could go wrong. Assess the risk by considering the severity of the consequences and the likelihood of occurrence. Prioritise, then plan how you will manage each scenario.
- Registrations: Draw up a checklist of screening questions and information about the walk to ensure each caller receives all information. Record suburbs and contact details for sharing transport. Expect up to 20 calls.
- On the day: Pack additional supplies for the forgetful few. Arrive early. On the track focus on navigating. In the breaks take the opportunity to enjoy the company of new members and foster their interest in walking with the club.

And as you make your way home remember to congratulate the club's newest leader.

Letters to the Editor

.....continued from page 3

Gretel can no longer focus on bushwalking but she has focused on the things that she is interested in with remarkable success.

Perhaps Chris' letter will galvanize a new group of volunteers who will change the focus of SBW from a preoccupation with our history and Coolana (if that is really the case), but I am sure of one thing, and that is to never tell a volunteer to do something they do not want to do.

Hail the volunteers of SBW.
Don Finch



COOLANA REPORT JANUARY 2008

Most of the camping flat at Coolana is covered by long grass with seed set and maturing. The long grass is doing a great job at suppressing weeds. For the last year a spraying program using Brush off has been carried out by Gretel and Ros. The primary target has been the sloping areas of the camping flat. This in conjunction with no mowing on these slopes has allowed the grass to grow to full height and set seed for the first time in many years. The many trees that have been planted all over the slopes on the camping flat are also inhibiting weed growth with leaf litter and shade. The hope is that with a new grass seed bed and a thickening up of the grass that even more weeds will be suppressed. The areas of the flat that receive constant mowing and hence have shorter grass have very many more weeds successfully competing with the grass. But even here there is some seed set and it should be allowed to mature before mowing, if possible.

As a precaution against bushfire the area around the tool shed was mowed and the build up of leaf litter at the rear of the shelter shed was removed with rake and leaf blower by Glenn. Despite the heat over the January maintenance weekend, Ros and Sharom kept working while others including my self expired in the shade.

Following is an email Ros sent to Gretel reporting on the January maintenance weekend:

Hello Gretel,

Donny intends to do the Coolana report for the magazine, but you might like to see my unabridged notes on the weekend! I hope the garage work was successful and worthwhile. I missed you - your company, your experience and your wisdom.

Things I am happy about: The spraying on riverbank we did last trip just before the rain storm was very effective - little evidence of vines, turkey rhubarb and other weeds. There is hardly a "no go" area on the camping flat - the trees in guards are accessible even in those horror stretches near the creek going down to the river. The lomandra on the slope is still free of creeper & I gave the surrounding area a good spray to knock back the regrown creeper. The eucalypts we treated for borer & dosed with Seasol have fully recovered. Two that were not treated (near the camp fire and near the camp near the river) were stressed and in bad shape so I gave them a tonic of Seasol.

The camping flat looks fabulous. The grass is well grown and the seed set, with just a few tracks & campsites mowed. Most weeds are below the level of the grass.

Not so happy: 6 to 10 little casuarinas on the Eastern flat have died or are dying - most from collateral damage from the spraying. A couple of other well grown trees in guards have been hit & one other tree near the creek is suffering badly - may live but then if it does so will the wild tobacco also showing signs of suffering from the spray. Some of the vines were knocked back by the spray - even moth vine.

What I did: Cut and pasted some wild tobacco missed by the spraying with Sharom (a charming Iranian prospective who said he thought as he had used Coolana he should put something back to Coolana). Sharom pulled down some vines from the trees while I was spraying brushoff on the camping flat and the two of us sprayed over 80 litres of brushoff - mostly on the camping flat but also beside the track over the two creeks, up to the toilet site, the slope from the bend in the road down to the camping flat, the slope by the river and the slope at the edge of the camping flat, mostly targeting cobblers pegs. We only stopped because we ran out of brushoff. We definitely need to buy some more from the Kangaroo Valley hardware shop.

Eastern Flat: This first spraying concentrated on the flat and none of the hillside has been sprayed. Most of the native fireweed was sprayed and is dead, so now the fallen trees are exposed so Donny is encouraged to attack the fallen timber and the Mowers could be very usefully employed keeping the vines under control until we can get a more permanent solution. The Patterson's Curse was dying but seemed to be seeding so Donny mowed that section. The lantana near the end of the property did not seem to be affected, but it may have been missed by the spray.

The grass we planted in the guards has grown & is seeding, so I generally left the guards on even when trees had died. The unprotected grass is "mowed short" by the animals - in contrast to the camping flat. Some of the trees really should be taken out of their guard but I didn't because they will be in the line of fire for part 2 of the spraying.

The weather was a bit oppressive & hot, so enthusiasm for work was lacking - however the river is up & swimming was a great option.

Looking forward to catching up with you some time soon. Cheers, Ros.

Don Finch

SBW AND THE FUTURE

Tony Holgate

The future of SBW is not secure and if we think it is we are being both naive and complacent. We discuss walks and social events separately, but they are very much linked. In the end whether SBW survives or thrives is dependent on our ability to attract new members and leaders and encourage participation in activities.

Walks

While we are still able to present a wide range of walks, we need to expand our repertoire to encourage participation and attract new members. We need new ideas, more walks, new walks, and new leaders. An expanded range of activities could include:

- More traditional walks
- Nature based walks, such as bird watching
- Clean-up walks, maybe in association with events like Clean-up Australia
- Family walks
- Social walks
- Gourmet walks

Social

The old approach is not working; we are often getting few people to the clubrooms and fewer new members apart from when they attend the new members or training evenings. Why is it important that social events should only be on Wednesdays or in Kirribilli or should be targeted at such a small segment of the club? Why don't we consider other alternatives, such as?

- Theatre nights
- Dinner nights

- White water rafting
- Other sorts of weekends or days

No one says that all social events should always appeal to all members and they obviously do not.

Marketing

The future of any organisation is dependent on its ability to plan for its own continuity and the succession of the people who actually run things. In SBW's case that means committee members and leaders and any other volunteers that contribute to the club. This, in turn, means we need to focus on how we see SBW in the future, how we wish to be seen by others, who do we want to attract as new members, how we target new members, how we convert enquires into prospective members, how we convert prospective members to full members, and motivating enthusiasm, energy and participation in our existing membership.

Skilling our members

The future of SBW is dependent on encouraging and facilitating the development of competence and confidence with the membership of the club. We talk of the need to develop independent walkers, but what are we doing to achieve this? We need to work on **Training New Members** and **Training New Leaders** and maybe mentoring new committee members.

The future does not care why or how you got into bushwalking, except as some historical footnote. Never make the mistake of replicating the past just for the sake of it. It is our time to create the future.

REUNION 2008 – SBW ANNUAL WEEKEND GET TOGETHER

Join Us At Coolana on 15th, 16th March 2008

Come at any time for a great time all the time.

Walking, canoeing, or just relaxing.

Features the extended happy hour in the open or under the large tarpaulin. Celebrate the traditional bon-fire and join the "Dampier Competition" for adults and children on Sunday morning.

Prospective members and guests welcome!

See Coolana at its best.

More Details:

Bill Holland: 9484 6636

Patrick James: 9567 9998



~ Gurangatch and Mirragan ~

Sourced from an article by RH Mathews in a German Anthropological Journal, 1908, as told to him by the Gundungurra in Burraborang valley and retold by Linda Tarran.

I'm going to tell you a story. This is a creation story, of how Bin-noo-mur (Jenolan) and Wam-bee-ang (Wambeyan) caves came to be. And how the river systems of our beloved Blue Mountains came to flow. This is how the Gundungurra, the traditional owners tell it. This is their story.

There was a deep waterhole at the junction of the Wollondilly & the Wingecarribee rivers, long, long, before the Burraborang valley was flooded for Sydney's water, long before the white man came, this story took place in ancient times. The waterhole was a favourite camping place for Gurangatch, a giant eel-like creature, part fish, part reptile, a creation spirit. One day, Mirragan, the tiger cat (spotted quoll), who was a renowned fisherman always in search of the largest fish, saw Gurangatch's eye, shining like a star through the clear water of the pool. As in the traditional way, Mirragan collected special barks to poison the water & make it easier to catch his fish. Of course Gurangatch, being such a large creature, was not poisoned at all, but made very uncomfortable, in fact he was very, very angry. He flew into a violent rage, and rampaged through the land. As his tail thrashed about, it carved out the valleys of the Burraborang & the Wollondilly, causing the water from the lagoon to flow after him and form the rivers. As he raised his head above the water he poked out his tongue which flashed like lightning across the sky. Gurangatch traveled up the Wollondilly and on reaching Jock's creek he burrowed under the range coming up eventually to form Wam-bee-ang (Wombeyan Caves).

When Mirragan came back to the waterhole he saw that Gurangatch had escaped and raced after him, overtaking him at Wambeeang. Here, he went on top of the rocks, burrowed down as far as he could and poked a long stick down the hole, just as the Gundungurra would scare a kangaroo-rat out of a hollow log. This is how the pot-holes on top of the caves came to be formed.

Gurangatch, still enraged, traveled again through the land forming more deep valleys and rivers. When he came to Ked-oom-bar (Katoomba) creek, he rested awhile, forming a waterhole. From there, he journeyed back to the Cox's river, working his way through the land, resting to form Karrangatta waterhole. He then burrowed underground, coming out at Mee-oo-wun (Mouin), forming a deep and narrow spring. Making his way to Koo-nang-goor-wa (Kanangra) he encountered Mirragan again and they had another fierce and violent struggle. (Can't you just imagine that battle from that magnificent landscape). Gurangatch then excavated the valley of Harry's

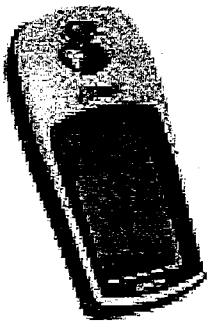
creek til he came to Bin-noor-mur (Jenolan caves) where he met with relatives and rested awhile. Exhausted, battered and bruised from his battles with Mirragan, he was escorted by his relatives, over the ranges, to a deep waterhole called Joolundoo.

When Mirragan reached Jenolan, he saw that his quarry had escaped and from the footprints left behind, that relatives had taken him to Joolundoo. Though himself worn out from his prolonged encounter, Mirragan decided to take measure so that Gurangatch would not escape again and set to work building a precipitous wall of rock between the caves and Joolundoo. (I believe this to be Kanangra Walls). Huge blocks of rock, layer upon layer, are attributed to Mirragan by the Gundungurra people.

In need of assistance himself Mirragan enrolled the help of four of his friends, the waterbirds and traveled to Joolundoo waterhole. Deep within the waterhole, Gurangatch rested after his journey. In search of their prey, two of Mirragan's friends, Gundhreen the black duck and Goonarring, the wood duck made attempt after attempt, without success to reach Gurangatch at the bottom of the waterhole. Next, Gool-a-gwan-gwan, the diver plunged again and again into the water bringing up small eels and fish. "No, that's too small" says Mirragan "I'm after much larger prey". Finally, Billagoola the cormorant dived from a great height into the water and tried to get a hold of Gurangatch, but his head was jammed into a deep crevice and his tail wedged under a huge rock. He succeeded only in tearing a large strip of flesh from Gurangatch's back. When he reached the surface Mirragan cried with delight "That is the fish I was chasing". The five friends then roasted the meat over the fire and had a great feast, after which they returned to their homes.

I don't know what happened to Gurangatch. Perhaps he died from his injuries, or perhaps he lived and still lives today at the bottom of Joolundoo waterhole. I don't know where that is either. If you know, you might look out for him when next you're there. Anyway, according to the Gundungurra, the eels that rest on the bottom of Lake Burraborang are the descendents of Gurangatch.

I know that many of you have walked this country, and now that you know it's story, I hope that you will see it in a new light and that it will come alive for you in a new way. Perhaps, too, you can take a moment to stop & remember the traditional owners, the Gundungurra, who walked these valleys and lived, as a part of this land and it's spirit, for thousands of years. Some of these ancient tracks around Katoomba are still in use today and I hope to walk them and experience the land from a different point of view at some future time.



"Geocaching" Treasure hunting by GPS

Once again there will be a Geocaching Competition conducted during the Coolana Reunion (15th/16th March). This gives you the opportunity to demonstrate your GPS skills and explore some of the relatively unknown areas of Coolana.

The competition will take place over Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. Prizes will be offered to those successfully completing the competition.

What is Geocaching?

Geocaching is the name given to an entertaining adventure game for GPS users. Participating in a cache hunt is a good way to take advantage of the features and capability of a GPS unit. The basic idea is to set up caches (containers) and have these referenced by GPS location coordinates. GPS users can then use the location coordinates to find the caches. Something like a treasure hunt!

It is not our intention to place the caches in very difficult spots or require undue scrambling/ bush bashing to isolated locations. Coolana, with over 50 hectares, has a wide exposure to river and cliffs, with creeks and rain forest so there is ample opportunity for some fun exploration during the competition.

What is in the cache?

A cache can come in many forms but for this competition there will be a log sheet (to be signed) and some tokens/vouchers (to be taken) placed in a plastic box or brightly colored tin. Sometimes a geocache provides the coordinates of the next, or other caches, but for this competition a list of coordinates will be provided to each competitor at the start. Hints may also be provided to assist with locating the next cache as we intend to make this a fun event. The caches may be sought in any sequence in any time during the competition period.

The Coordinates:

GPS 15 digit coordinates and datums will be used and in theory this should give a precise location (to the nearest square metre). However, tree cover may introduce some variation and make the coordinate less precise. Also, some allowance should be made for the hiding place (is it in the tree, near a rock?) and, as stated, hints may be given. Most caches will be near tracks or footpads to avoid trampling of sensitive areas.

The Map:

Although strictly speaking a map is not necessary. It may be advantageous to have one in order to identify the general area of the next cache and know how far to walk etc. The map for Coolana is "Bundanoon". A very limited number of maps will be available at the starting point. Some of you may prefer to enter the locations and use the "GO TO" function to show you the way. Others may prefer to down load the list of waypoints (cache

positions) and trace a map. I can email these to you before the event.

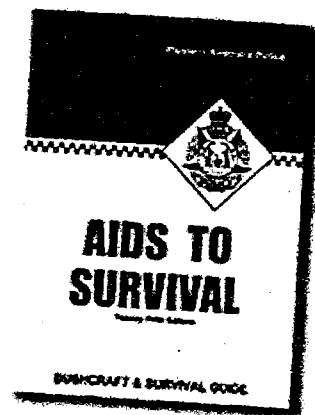
How Do You Win And What Is The Prize?

Depending on the ability of our GPS users and the difficulty in locating the caches, the winner/s will be those who locate the greatest number of caches. The prize/s will be determined on the day.

It would be helpful if those intending to participate could email me so that I will have an idea of how many etc.

Bill Holland (billholland@bigpond.com)

RECOMMENDED READING from Margaret Weaver



"Aids to Survival", is a booklet issued by the WA Police Academy. It can be downloaded as a pdf file. "I don't remember having seen a reference to this in the SBW journal. It appears to be excellent, and very comprehensive. The link is: <http://www.police.wa.gov.au/YOURSAFETY/AidstoSurvival/tabid/1337/Default.aspx>"

Printed copies of the *Aids to Survival* guide are also available from:

Professional Education
& Learning Unit
Joondalup Police Academy
81 Lakeside Drive
Joondalup 6027
Tel: 9301 9500

The *Aids to Survival* guide includes comprehensive information about:

- * Outback travel
- * Outback survival
- * Direction finding
- * Emergency procedures
- * Radio communications
- * Creek and river crossings
- * Bush First Aid
- * Land Navigation
- * Expedition skills and campcraft

A POST-CHRISTMAS WALK IN ETTREMA

It seemed like a good idea on a quiet Sunday afternoon in October 2007. We covered the living room floor with the four maps that cover the full length of Ettrema Creek in Morton National Park and realized that, over the years, we had walked most of the way on 2 or 3 day trips. I wondered then if we would be lucky enough to have the right weather conditions, considering the long dry spell, but the prolonged rain before Christmas ensured that the Park was open and water abundant.

I was dreading the tangled mess that was Bullfrog Creek in 2005, and our starting point, however, many feet since then have cleared a discernible footpad. The group consisted of Yvonne & Steven Brading, Frank Hartigan, Rosemary McDougall, Caro Ryan, the writer and husband David. The afternoon rain did not require us to wear our rain jackets but it did make the rocks slippery to negotiate. Rather than make it a long day we camped in comfort at the camp site, about 300 meters after the junction with Ettrema Creek (Nerriga 420 196 right bank).

As Heraclitus, the ancient Greek, noted: "You can never step in the same river twice". This thought kept visiting me as I compared our Easter trip of 2005 when the water level was far lower. I didn't even recognize the huge pool that greeted us before Sentry Box Canyon, and the small camp site previously used had been washed away. It was on day two that I learned my most valuable lesson for wet walks - do not carry a pack with a lower zipped compartment as every time it is immersed, it fills with water and weighs a ton. After several welcome swims we easily made it to Jones Creek (Touga - 452 247) for another relaxing dinner complete with happy hour.

On day three we again had a hot day of rock hopping with clear skies and everyone, except me, welcomed the pack swims. The pools were deep, clear and quite warm with the best of the day being near where Ettrema Creek meets Tullyangela Creek. We camped here but found the camp sites disguised with stinging nettles and other nuisance weeds. A little gardening gave us another soft grassy abode (Touga - 482 306) but we could not eliminate the flies. We amused ourselves around the campfire by devising activities for aging bushwalkers like myself at Coolana, such as tea

bag throwing. As they say in the classics - 'you had to be there'!

Some of us decided that day four was a 'rest day walk' and so, as there was no need to rush, we kept cool by jumping fully clothed in every pool. We easily covered our usual distance of about 8 kms but the scrub bashing began after lunch. We occasionally found evidence of the 'super highway' that once followed the creek. Eventually our efforts brought us to a luxurious camp site, right next to a very long pool and in the shade (Yalwal - 493 369 right bank).

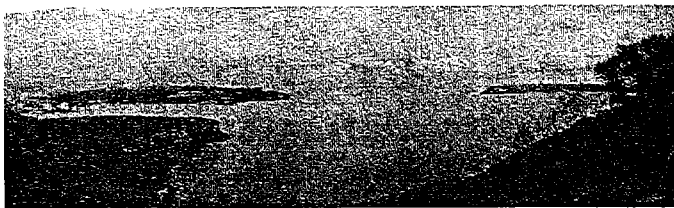
Day five was both New Year's Eve and Frank's birthday and much time was spent pushing through thick scrub and nettles. The pools began to be cluttered with weed and some were black with algae. Pryde's Amphitheatre with its distinctive red rocks was a welcome sight but we saved our praises for the huge pool with the rope. Unfortunately the rope hung over a sunken tree, but, Frank dutifully removed this and we jumped off the rope like teenagers. Our joy subsided as we could not readily find a campsite up to our previous high standards. Finally we made our camp and party site amongst yellow everlasting daisies, but, I won't mention the stinging nettles. (Burrier - 514 391).

On our last day we expected to find the old road early on, but it was not until about a kilometer from the Yalwal Creek junction that we shouted for joy to find the stony 4WD road which led us to where we ascended back to the Brading's car. It is always pleasing to see vehicles in one piece. Some of us had spent a very pleasant evening prior to the walk at a camp site (Burrier 620 417) as the road down to Yalwal Creek is now extensively blocked to prevent access by vehicles.

A fitting ending was the Brading vehicle carrying seven of us and packs strapped to the roof back to The Jumps where we began our delightful journey. We finished our six days in Ettrema with no injuries, many laughs and a meal at the Nerriga Pub.

Note: All grid references are AGD 1966.

Maureen Carter



Spit Bridge to Manly

by Patrick McNaught

I should really introduce our little walk which Ron Watters and I (with several others from time to time - notably Christine Edwards), have been doing almost every week for nearly twelve months. In both cases we do it to keep fit in an enjoyable way and in my case also for relaxing rehabilitation. We thought it would be fun to encourage others to join us and what better night than Summer Solstice (plus one day). I should also say that it has never rained on us during the walk.

We met at the park under the North End of the Spit Bridge - I can never remember the name of it. It was sort of fine weather. Then as we changed and waited, it started to rain, quite heavily, but the forecast was definitely for clearing so eleven of us started walking. In spite of the rain we saw two monitors on the way and Ron and I were able to predict exactly where - maybe we should give them names, and we arrived at our first stop which is a nice lookout. Actually we couldn't see much as it was shrouded in mist and heavy rain so we carried on and in a few minutes it was perfectly fine and virtually windless, for the rest of the walk. So we stopped at the next lookout and I took a panorama including the Harbour Heads (see picture - we do live in a beautiful place don't we).

We carried on and took a longer stop at the lookout on the point above Reef Beach (more than fifteen minutes I suppose and I can't remember the name of it either) but eventually we ambled on for a very long rest (we had been walking very hard of course) at Forty Baskets Beach, where there are tables. I think six brave soles took a swim with David definitely staying in the water the longest (and he didn't even seem cold when he got out), while the rest of us sampled a bottle of Grandvin Brut (thank you Andrew).

We tried to take the shortcut across North West Arm but the tide was against us and we climbed up a nice little track from the boatshed just before North Harbour Reserve and went over the bridge there instead. We considered a little rock climbing up the gully to the bridge and it is probably a good thing we decided to take the long way as we checked out the route from the bridge and it looked climbable but definitely a bit on the 'heroic' side.

Eventually we staggered into Manly having broken our record for the slowest ever walk to Manly and finished in style with Fish and Chips on the Ocean beach in front of a great surf. The participants were Ron Watters, Andrew Vilder, Ian Thorpe, Glenn Draper, Pamela Irving, Peter Cunningham, Alan Oakey, Melinda Turner, David Trinder, Christine Edwards and myself. We intend to do it again for the Winter Solstice so break out your head torches and if you want to practice, join Ron and I every Thursday at about sunset.

TRIP SECRETARY'S REPORT by Tony Holgate

Leading - are you up for it? What is your favourite walk. Where is your favourite area?

Are there enough walks of the sort you like or to the areas you prefer? If not, you could always organise a walk. Here are some ideas for organising your first walk:

- **Easy day walk** - a good way to start, not too much work, fun and a great way to meet new people
- **Family walk** - a great way to meet other members with children
- **Clean-up walk** - a great way to make a difference, particularly on some of the more popular tracks
- **Gourmet walk** - carry some great food and enjoy socialising in a bush setting

And don't forget, I can find someone to help you if required.

Looking ahead, the challenge is to continue developing the program, increasing the range of walks, helping new members with their transition to independent walkers and encourage, mentor and train new leaders.

See you on the Track ...

Tony Holgate

Walk Secretary

02 9943 3388 (home)

0434 968 793 (mobile)

tholgate@optusnet.com.au



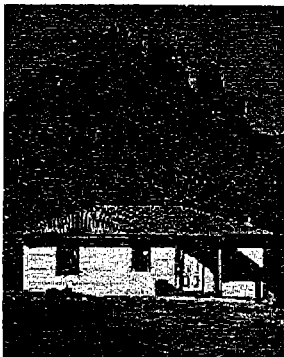
The Mid-Week Walkers

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. The extended walks, usually one per month, attract a good following.

If you would like to be added to our email list please let me know. You are welcome to join us in any activity at any time

The next scheduled event is:

Newnes Cabin Monday 7th - 11th April 2008



This is a very attractive area for a mid-week stay. The old town area has been extensively enhanced. Newnes is a great area for walking e.g. the remnants of the old railway, the Glow Worm Tunnel, Pipeline Pass etc or just exploring the mining town ruins.

We will be there mid-week, away from the crowded weekends. I have booked one cabin. It is in the vicinity of the old Newnes Hotel and sleeps six comfortably. There are two more cabins available if necessary. Also there is room for tent camping adjacent to the cabins - first come, first served with beds.

The booking is for Monday to Friday but you can join for any day/s. If you would like to attend please contact me ASAP on 9484 6636 or by email addressed to: billholland@bigpond.com

Looking past April we are tossing some ideas around but more detailed planning and scheduling is required. This is what we have at present

May, June or August: Don and Liz Wills have invited the Mid Week Walkers for a week at their cottage at Timor in the Upper Hunter Valley. They will advise the best month for good walking during the day and socialising in front of log fires at night.

June or July: At this time of the year we would like to camp somewhere up the North Coast where it is slightly warmer.

September: How about a week at Stanwell Park? We have the opportunity of a house-stay with day walks and/or bicycle rides in the Royal National Park and Wollongong areas. I am told that the track to Garie Trig will be a mass of wildflowers at this time of the year.

October: Perhaps a return trip to the Glass House Mountains in Queensland or another visit to Dunns Swamp would be worthwhile. Another suggestion is for a week at Woorabinda Lodge at Jindabyne late in the month.

November: The start of summer indicates a stay in a beach area such as Berrara Beach, Myall lakes or possibly a houseboat on the Hawkesbury.

Next month I will have more detailed planning to report but any suggestions at this stage would be welcome.

Regards
Bill Holland

PHOTO COMPETITION

8pm ~ 16 APRIL, 2008 ~ IN THE CLUBROOMS

To enter the competition contact Pam Campbell
on 9570 2885 (h) or email pamela.campbell@bigpond.com

There will be a photographer from a camera club to assist with judging.
There will be prizes for the winners of each category

The five categories are:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| *Australian Scenery | *Non Australian Scenery | *Native Fauna |
| *Native Flora | *SBW in Action | |

Bring your photos along, it will be a fun night!

There will be refreshments afterwards

For competition guidelines – see page 16 of the January 2008 magazine.

- An update will be given in the March magazine.

JUNE 2007 WALKS NOTES

by Barry Wallace

Walks notes covering the interval 2 May 2007 to 27 June 2007

The weekend of 5, 6 May saw David Trinder and the party of 4 on his walk in the Budawangs pushing the limits of the available daylight on both days. Not that they arrived in the dark both days, but the observation was made that it is possible to walk the track down Kalianna ridge in the dark, with head torches. The route took them from Long Gully, up Kalianna Ridge, around then up The Castle without packs to see the views of the surrounding lower mountains. They then descended and struck out for the camp cave. Indeed they almost struck out due to navigational difficulties but managed to sort it all out and arrive just before darkness fell. On Sunday they climbed Mount Owen for some exploring, then headed back to the cars with the aforementioned encounter with the forces of darkness.

Nigel Weaver was out there on the Sunday with the party of 12 on his walk out from Brooklyn enjoying a water taxi ride to the starting point as well as fine and warm conditions. After disembarking at Allison Point the party climbed off track to the top of the ridge where they enjoyed fantastic views over the Hawkesbury River from the cliff-tops. They continued off track along the ridge line, finally coming to a glorious lunch spot with yet more splendid views. Lunch done they tracked along the track to Rocky Ponds and then South along the top of Patonga Ridge. Then came more track-work, with nary a railway in sight, to Little Wobby, and the quick ferry back to Brooklyn. It was a great day's walking with many wonderful views along the way.

Wallaga Lakes provided the venue for the party of 10 on Bill Holland's midweek, all-week, sojourn in Regatta Point Caravan Park from 7th to 11th May. Each morning they ventured forth for a walk through to early afternoon at various very scenic locations. For some reason they substituted Little Dromedary for Mount Dromedary; perhaps they had the hump with it, or perhaps it was just easier. Seaweed and discoloration in the lake deterred the canoeists, but there was some late afternoon cycling before they all settled down to happy hour and a group dinner together.

Ian Thorpe was back in the Wollongambe Wilderness again over the weekend 12, 13 May with a party of 7 and perfect Autumn weather. They started out from the cars along an alternative route to the "centre of the universe" and spent most of Saturday wandering along the cliff-tops and pagodas North of December Creek. Over lunch they sighted what appeared to be a "Wollongambe Pine" but after taking an hour to search it out it proved not to be of that species so elusive that it

makes even the Wollemi Pine seem commonplace; or so says Ian. The intended, even advertised, campsite was already occupied when they reached it so they moved on to the campsite inside the crater. Here evening brought rapidly cooling conditions leading to worries of a particularly cold night, but the mist rose to form a protective, albeit somewhat damp layer above them and in the end they had a remarkably mild night.

Next day after breakfast they headed South to look over the gorge section of the river. From there their intended exit gully on the other side looked quite do-able. Alas it proved otherwise, but they did manage to find a handy way through the cliff-line not far away that delivered them to the top of the Wiggly Ridge. Lunch was taken on the highest of The Barnacles, spot height 972m, that gave fine views over the area covered during the previous day. They scrambled over some more pagodas after lunch before crossing the South arm of December Creek, which was flowing very nicely, and back on to the track (now marked on the second edition map) that leads to Bell. All members thence adjourned to the Apple Bar for drinks and dinner with one soul even tackling the Lobster Mornay. Thus ended another great weekend in the Wollongambe area. (From memory it was the salmon mouse that was to be avoided.)

Sunday of that weekend was the occasion for Nigel Weaver to lead a party of 9 on a walk in Popran National Park. Conditions were fine, with a lot of light cloud. They got away from Morgans Road at Mount White at around 1000h, heading off-track through thick bush to the gas pipeline in Popran National Park. The pipeline is buried but has a rough foot track on the surface above it. This they followed through several long ascents and descents all the way to Big Jims Point where they lunched at a great lookout high above the Hawkesbury River. The return to the starting point via a mix of fire trails and segments of the pipeline track. Near the end they again made their way off-track through dense bushland, taking 55 minutes to cover just 700 metres! They were all back at the cars at 1700h.

The only report for the weekend of 19, 20 May covers Chris Dowling's Saturday walk out from Carlons to an old silver mine near Breakfast Creek with a side trip into the lower Jenolan Gorge for variety. The fine sunny weather enabled the group to enjoy the great scenery as they paused for breath on the slopes of Goolara Peak on the way back from what was described as a good day's walk with no dramas.

Bill Holland cancelled his mid week walk in Dharug National Park, scheduled for Thursday 24th May due to illness. Bill Hope did something similar to his overnight walk in the Budawangs scheduled for the weekend of 9, 10, 11 June, but in this case it was down to adverse weather conditions.

Nigel Weaver led a party of 4 out on this easy walk in The Royal on Monday 11 June in fine and mild weather. They headed off from Heathcote by taking the track down Tuckawa Ridge to Kangaroo Creek at the head of navigation. The water here was higher than normal due to recent heavy rains but they managed to find an easy place to wade across the river in water up to 250mm deep. From there they went up to Robertsons Knoll and turned South along Uloola Ridge. The walk along the ridge provided good views of the surrounding hills and valleys through to lunch at Whale Rock. From there they headed off to Uloola Falls which also showed a good flow of water. From there they made their way along muddy tracks to Karloo Pool, and here again the water was up but they managed to find a dry-foot crossing. The rest of the walk, out to Heathcote was a snack. All-in-all a great day with many good views. The Blue Mountains National Park was not neglected that day either.

Ian Rannard and the party of unknown numbers on his walk between Blackheath and Mount Victoria stations did a "to program" in cool and cloudy conditions with the small exception of one member who was struck down by painful back cramping around 1 km into the walk and withdrew at that point. All returned home safely.

Bad weather also took a gurnsey for the cancellation of Bill Hollands mid week whale watching walk scheduled for Thursday 14th June. Conditions were such as to make the cliff-tops inadvisable and whale watching unrewarding. The same logic applied when the same walk, scheduled for Sunday 17th June came around.

There were few, if any, whales for the watching on Ian Thorpe's Saturday walk out from Mount Wilson, but a similar inclemency did prevail. The party of 4 decided to give it a go in any case; but the fact that the track had more water running down it than sometimes flows down DuFours Creek should have served notice of what lay ahead. The planned crossing spot on Du Fours was covered by a 1 metre deep torrent of swirling brown water. The party, given as they were to the interpretation of signs and portents, took this as a sign. They had a quick morning tea under an overhang then turned tail and headed back to Mount Wilson where they changed into dry clothes before

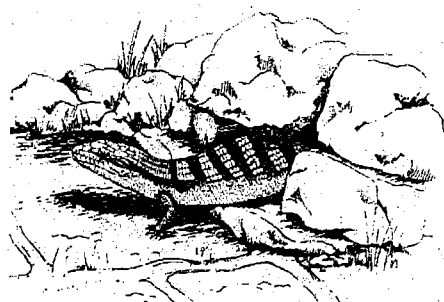
lunching at the Chimney Cottage Café and heading back home.

Bill Hope and a party of 10 were out on his planned qualifying walk from Mountain Lagoon on the Sunday. Due to higher than usual water levels in Tootie Creek the walk was replanned from the original to become a there and back walk to Colo Merroo. Honour, and the qualifying status, were satisfied, due to the distance, rise and fall of 840 meters and some off-track diversions. All the party finished well.

The weather has had turned cool by the time Don Finch ventured out to Boyd Crossing with a party of 7 for his walk out from Kanangra Walls to the Kowmung via Brumby Ridge and return over the weekend of 22 to 24 June. There was snow alongside the road near Edith and a good frost at Boyd Crossing when they arrived on Friday night. They managed a fire in the shelter shed through into the wee small hours and some people used this to charge (aluminium) hot water bottles for the sleeping bag. Saturday dawned brilliant and clear with ice on the tree branches sparkling in the morning light and thick frost in the open areas. Leaving Kanangra at around 0930h they lunched on First Top and reached Orange Bluffs at 1530 to find another group already camped on the flat. The feral pigs had already done some damage in places there as well. The night was cold with frost again in the morning as they set off back to Kanangra. Cloud increased as the day went on with some light drizzle across Kanangra Tops. They departed the Walls at around 1600 and reported fog around Hampton. A pleasant walk in good company was the conclusion.

Bill Hope appears to have led a mid-week qualifying day walk out from Carlons Farm on Wednesday 27 June with a party of 4 in cold and windy conditions. The route went to Blackhorse Ridge, Mount Mouin and return via Bellbird Ridge. All travelled well and finished the walk in good shape. Bill reports snow falling at Blackheath and Katoomba on the way home from the walk.

That is about as far as we go for this instalment.



New Zealand Trip January '08

David Trinder

Fifteen members including three prospective members went to New Zealand and walked the Milford Track and the Kepler Track.

New Zealand has a network of walking tracks on both islands; five of these tracks are called "The Great Walks" and the above two are included in the five. All of the tracks have huts with beds and mats for the walkers to stay in at nights but the Great Walks have stoves in the kitchens as well. The walking is easy in that you only carry food, clothes and a sleeping bag. The land is geologically young and is different to our old but beautiful country. The mountains are steep with sharp ragged silhouettes and in the south-west, where we were, there is an abundance of water; it rains 8 metres a year. The landscape is spectacular and the tracks are well built and maintained. During a four day walk you build up a good social bonding with the other people doing the walk, they come from countries all around the world and you can learn a lot from them.

The Milford Track has been a popular walking track since a scot named Quinton Mackinnon discovered the pass named after him 120 years ago. He liked a "wee drop" too much and didn't like people so he used to go bush for weeks at a time to escape both and also to search for a pass that would take him from Lake Te Anau (200 metres) to Milford Sound (sea level). He achieved all three. The track's popularity is a result of its amazing scapes. For the first two days you walk up the Clinton Valley. The river is pristine and clear. The forest trees are Beech of various species and they are covered by many forms of moss and lichen. The trunks, the branches, the ground and the fallen logs are all covered by green; it is a magical landscape; like the one you see in the "Lord Of The Rings" trilogy. Off-track the bush is impenetrable; I don't know how Mackinnon got through it. In the places where it is too boggy for trees, moss of various colours grows like a miniature forest.

From Mackinnon Pass (1,070 metres) we looked back over the valley we had come through and over the valley we were heading for. There were other dead end valleys that went off in various directions into the distance. The jagged mountains towered above us, small glaciers in valleys above us were ready to slide down, and we saw waterfalls leap over an edge and drift off in the breeze before they arrive and little cloud drifts slowly past a rocky peak. Valleys with a carpet of green disappeared into the distance. We descended on the Arthur Valley side and had a close inspection of the Sutherland Falls, with a total leap of 600 metres, the biggest in New Zealand and bigger than anything we see here. The Arthur Valley has different vegetation but still good and the river was also clear.

After the Milford Track we took a boat cruise of the Milford Sound. We saw the "U" shaped valleys formed by glaciers and now filled with water. The sea water lapping against steep rock walls that continued up to form snow capped mountains. The Milford area gets only a few days a year without rain, we enjoyed four of them.

The Kepler Track was built by earth moving machinery twenty years ago to take the load off the Milford. It follows a zigzag track up Mount Lismore from Lake Te Anau at 200 metres altitude to 1500 metres. Then it follows the jagged mountain tops from where you can see the ranges of mountains on both sides in the distance. The day we crossed was our only day on wind and rain. At that altitude the wind drove the rain hard enough to blow us off the track. We huddled together in small groups for safety. The day was exciting, a contrast with the other clear days and the best day to find wild weather. On the walk out there was another clear river and more beech forest. The river was clear, deep, you could see the bottom, wide, moving at running speed and silent. The beech forest was green with mosses and lichens covering and hanging from the trunks, the branches, the fallen logs; a community of life forms. The small leaves make horizontal tufts, fresh in contrast with the old life forms below them. We walked past the beaches of the lakes and the beeches of the forest.

After 130 km of walking the group finished fast and fit and grateful that they were able to enjoy such beautiful places.

The walkers were Maurice Smith, Pamela Irving, Lisa Ochs, Rick Angel, Caroline McKinnon, Jeanne Klov Dahl, Stephen Bradbury, Edith McCauley, Rosemary McDougal, Mary Liu, Melinda Turner, Yvonne Brading, Virginia Riley (Milford only), Kim Bailey (Milford only) and myself.

POSITION VACANT

EDITOR - 'The Sydney Bushwalker'

The position of Editor becomes vacant at the Annual General Meeting on 12 March.

It is essential that you have a good working knowledge of MS Word and access to a current model PC with email and internet access. The club provides a printer and scanner and will reimburse you for paper and postage costs.

The role involves researching, soliciting (seeking reports from members) and editing articles. You are required to liaise with the printers to deliver the magazine on time for printing and assisting with collating is optional.

This is an opportunity for someone to have input into the electronic copy of the Magazine which is being managed by the Electronic Sub-committee.



Luxmore Hut on the Kepler Track



View from Mackinnon Pass towards the Arthur Valley

Kakadu

Kakadu is bushwalking at its best. It is Australia's largest national park. It contains thousands of rock art sites, dozens of beautiful gorges and spectacular waterfalls, uncountable swimming holes you need share with no one but your walking companions.

The dry season weather is as near to perfect as you can find anywhere in the world – **it's paradise!**

I've been running bushwalking tours in Kakadu since 1984. Unlike many tour operators, I spend as much time as possible out bush, leading trips myself. Why? Someone else put it better than I can.

"What we get from this adventure is just sheer joy. And joy is, after all, the end of life. We do not live to eat and make money. We eat and make money to be able to enjoy life. That is what life means and what life is for."

George Mallory, 1922

Join us and share that joy.

Russell Willis

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WILLIS'S WALKABOUTS



Do it yourself or with a guide? If you do it with a guide:

- We handle the hassles of organising permits and transport.
- You relax and enjoy while we cook you three course meals.
- You see rock art sites you'd be unlikely to find on your own.
- You get the best possible camp sites and swimming holes.
- You get a walking reference to explain things about the art, flora, fauna and environment.
- In a small group, you may spend little more than you'd pay to hire transport and prepare all your own meals.



SOCIAL NOTES

Hi Everyone,

Yet again, as I sit and write, summer rain is falling. Maybe good for "the land" but it does get one down especially if you are walking.

For the January social evening, Peter Christian gave a most inspiring presentation on The Royal National Park. Unfortunately he only had 8 people as his audience. Where was everyone?

The Balmoral Picnic also had fewer attendees than usual despite the pleasantness of the evening.

The March Social evening will be focussed on New Zealand - in particular, David Trinder's trip there over Xmas and New Year 2007/08.

The SBW AGM is scheduled for March 12 at 8pm when a new committee will be elected. All positions are available with some members resigning their posts. The weekend following the AGM is the SBW Reunion at Coolana which always has many fun activities scheduled.

Patrick James promises a fantastic outdoor cinema experience.

Bye for now,
Kathy Gero

CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP CONTACT

DETAILS:

Would you please make the following changes to your 2008 Membership List (sent out this month) to keep your list up to date.

- Gretel Woodward's new phone No. is 9337 2643
- Change of address for Chris Lockwood to 21 Kingsley Close, SOUTH WINDSOR 2756
- Jason Kennedy to 66 Cook Street, BAULKHAM HILLS 2153
- Add a phone No. for Wilf Hilder 9587 8661

In February we welcomed three new full Members into the club please add them also to your list:

- Mr. Richard Shaw, 14/50 Aubin Street, NEUTRAL BAY. 2089 (Hm) 9908 8670 (Wk) 8344 1850 Mobile 0433 232 093
- Ms Kannika Chaupram, P O Box 49, CHATSWOOD 2069 Mobile 0407 278 713
- Ms Kim Bailey, 9/17 Cambridge Street, GLADESVILLE. 2111 (hm) 9816 4773 (wk) 8858 3783 Mobile 0419 411 916

Frances Holland,
Membership Secretary

AUTUMN 2008 – SOCIAL PROGRAM

All meetings are held at the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre at 8pm unless otherwise indicated.

MARCH

- 5 March Committee Meeting
7pm Observers welcome
- 12 March New Members Night
8pm Introduction to SBW
Annual General Meeting
- 15-16 March Coolana Annual Reunion
See Walks Program for details
- 19 March New Zealand - David Trinder
8pm will give a presentation on his trip here in January
- 26 March New Members Training Night
8pm Please check with New Members Secretary for details

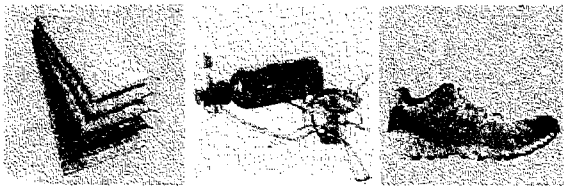
APRIL

- 2 April Committee Meeting
7pm Observers welcome
- 9 April New Members Night
8pm Introduction to SBW for intending prospectives
- 16 April Photographic Competition
8pm Bring your photos to the club rooms for judging. Prizes will be given to winners of 4 categories

- 23 April New Members Training Night
Please contact New Members Secretary for details

MAY

- 7 May Committee Meeting
7pm Observers welcome
- 14 May New Members Night
Introduction to SBW for intending prospectives
- 21 May Walking in Spain & France
8pm Our guest speaker is Garry McDougall. He is the co-creator of the GNW & founder of Great Australian Walks and a tour leader for European walking holidays. He will tell us about the Santiago de Compostela, outer Scottish islands, Brittany coastal paths, The Picos de Europa and others
- 28 May New Members Training Night
Please contact New Members Secretary for details



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