

Sydney Bush Walkers Newsletter

MARCH 2011

Sydney Bushwalkers
PO Box 431 Milsons Point NSW 1565

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The President Says

Our **AGM** was successfully held on Wednesday night 9 March with 40 members in attendance (which was a significant increase from last year). Michelle Powell won the Raffle for the bottle of fine Red wine, and members socialized afterwards with wine and nibbles. The results of the elections are:

Committee positions	2011
President	Ian Wolfe
Vice President	Margaret Carey
Treasurer & Public Officer	Leigh McClintock
Secretary	Helen MacDonald
Walks Secretary	Tony Holgate
Social Secretary	Kathy Gero
Membership Secretary	Vivien de Rémy de Courcelles
New Members Secretary	Emmanuelle Convert
Conservation Secretary	Pam Campbell
Magazine Editor	Melinda Turner
Skills Enhancement Secretary	Lucy Moore,
Communications Secretary	Karl Miller
Confederation Delegate 1	Jim Callaway ,
Confederation Delegate 2	David Trinder
Non-Committee positions	
Confederation Delegates (2)	Spiro Hajinikitas, Wilf Hilder
Web-master	Lily Ng
Data Base Administrator	Yeok Ken Williams (Ken)
Business Manager	Helen Lalas
Hon Solicitor	Richard Brading
Hon Auditor	Chris Sonter
Coolana Maintenance Sub Committee	Don Finch, Rick Angel, Barry Wallace, Patrick James, Stephen Brown
KHA Delegates	Kenn Clacher and David Trinder

Motions of thanks were extended to:

- Last year's Committee, and especially our Treasurer (Leigh McClintock),
- Our Honorary Solicitor (Richard Brading) and Honorary Auditor (Chris Sonter),
- The Web Team (Lily Ng, Caro Ryan, Karl Miller and Ron Watters) and **especially to our hard working Database Manager (Ken Williams)**

The motion to drop the fees by \$5 for Members who select to take all their communications electronically was debated in detail, and then passed with only 1 vote against. The Membership Renewals will issue shortly. Please: consider electing to receive communications electronically, enter your DOB (as we need it for insurance purposes), supply a long term private email address (rather than a changeable commercial address) and update your activity preferences. Then email your updated form back to the Data Base Manager, and pay your Membership Fee by EFT, or post a Cheque/ Money Order to the Treasurer.

Rachel Brennan has put her hand up to help with the management of the Members database (thanks) and some other have also volunteered to assist with the conduct of New Member nights and communication with Prospectives etc. However, we need to further build up the New Members Team, to give us an enduring capacity to service the large number of Prospectives and the Membership maintenance tasks - so please contact Emmanuelle at newmembers@sbw.org.au to offer your services.

The **members area of the web site** had been enhanced with a range of new material over the last month -so have a look - this includes: a list of Honorary Active Members, lots of additional material on the Coolana page, historical articles on Dot Butler & Marie Byles, and the latest best seller - the "SBW Procedures Manual" (this is primarily for use by the Committee and lays down the "who, what, when and why". If you have mislaid your Password please email Lily, our Web Master on webmaster@sbw.org.au to arrange a new one (feel free to suggest a combination of letters and numbers that is memorable to you, and then put this is a safe place for future reference)

The President Says ^{cont.}

This year a late Easter means it is combined with ANZAC Day to provide a 5 day holiday - the program has a good number of options to select from, and an opportunity to get out into the Bush for an extended period to enjoy a good break.

Regards,

Ian Wolfe / President

Editor's Note

Hello members,

I hope you enjoy this newsletter.

So many great trips are going and so many great trips are being written up. Thank you to all those members that continue to provide us with interesting articles.

Please take the time to have a good look at Bill Hope's article on 'Emergency Communications' and please remember that this will be added to the website should you need to reference the information at a later date.

I would also like to mention that one of our members, Helen Lalas has revealed her artistic streak to us all on a subject that is near and dear to all of us. Have a good look at Helen's poem 'Legless Legends' on page 26.

Melinda Turner (editor@sbw.org.au)

Annual Club Reunion

The Reunion went well at Coolana with approximately 50 in attendance.

The timetable got adjusted for the torrential rain on Saturday afternoon; the Orienteering Course was christened with a team completing the *Wade's Wander* event (5 Markers in 4 hrs) for a score of 90. A number of others utilised the Foot Tracks Map to wander around the various trails - some of the rare Brush Tailed Rock Wallabies were briefly observed. A number of Members also used the newly cleared "Public Road Easement Track to commute between the Top Car Park and the Power Line Easement, where we had "overflow parking". Some Members also paddled in from Bendeela or Hampden Bridge.

Fortunately the rain had stopped by late afternoon and Ian Wolfe, was inaugurated as our new President with the "Bones" at dusk with a large number of past Presidents in attendance.



SBW Presidents past and present: our new president Ian Wolfe, on the right

Frank Rigby (92) our most senior past President attended, and the ashes of Joan, his wife (and a club Member, who was a tireless worker for Coolana) were sprinkled around the Memorial Tree and some suitable words spoken (the Memorial Tree is the magnificent huge Blue Gum at the Western end of the Flat just up the hill a bit).

The concert followed thereafter on Sunday morning and this new timing worked well. Photos of the Reunion are in the process of being uploaded to the Web site.

Coolana Online!



Coolana lookout

The website has had a lot of additional content added over the last few months, in order to provide Members with useful information about our scenic property. This includes:

- An extensive photo gallery showing the sights and setting
- Maps and travel information of how to get there by car, train and bus
- Maps of Coolana - showing foot tracks and the facilities (which includes a large 3 sided Shelter Shed for use in wet weather, Composting Toilet & running water from Tanks)
- A Map and Marker sheet for the **Orienteering Course**
- Information of the facilities in the Kangaroo Valley area - places to eat, mini markets etc
- A Booklet called “*101 things to do at or from Coolana*” which provides information on the vast array of activities to engage in - walks of all types, liloing, canoeing and bike riding etc

Please have a look and then consider having a visit - either with your own party, or by linking up with one of the activities in our Walks Program (Easter - 3 x day trips and 1 overnight trip, *Bush Care* on 7-8 May and an Navigation Workshop over 21-22 May using the orienteering course).

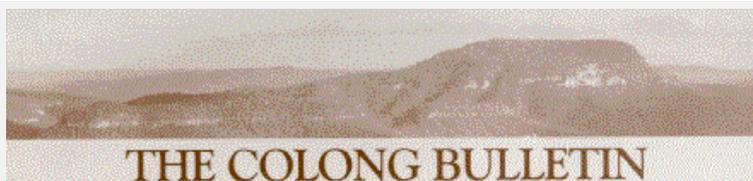
We have also opened up Coolana for use by sympathetic people and organisations outside of SBW. So, please spread the word!

Alec Colley's Complete Collection of SBW Magazines

At 101 Alex is SBW's oldest member. Over his lifetime he has assiduously collected a hard copy of every single edition of our Magazine. Whilst there is a 'master copy with the State Library, its great to also have our own complete back up set which is accessible to Members and Historians. When Alex had to move out of his home a few years ago, Craig Austin stored the collection, but now they need the space, and we need to find a new home! The collection is comprised of 5 cartons of varying sizes, roughly 420 x 420 x 320 ea, approx 0.3 cubic metres in total. Could any Member, with some spare room, please urgently contact our President via ianmcwolfe@hotmail.com or 0413662370.

Colong Foundation

Please note the Information Box below, and select the URL to get to the Colong Web site to download their **latest Newsletter**. The Colong Foundation is NSW's premier conservation action group with a deep level of knowledge and expertise. A number of SBW Members are part of their actions teams and we have been closely associated with them since their foundation. They have had a big win recently with the Labour Government creating a number of new protected areas - this has included part of the Gardens of Stone and the Pagoda country. Please peruse their Newsletter - you will see that they are financially squeezed and are seeking donations and bequests to enable them to continue their work. They are also hosting an “Images of the Wild” exhibition of Henry Gold's photographs on 31 March - 12 June (10am - 5pm) at the Bondi Pavilion. Henry's photos are world class and well worth a visit.



Have you seen the latest Colong Foundation Bulletin?
If not, you can download it from the Colong Foundation website at:
<http://www.colongwilderness.org.au/>

Gingra Creek & 1000 Man Cave / Jan 29 – 30

Vivien de Rémy de Courcelles

The four of us went together to Kanangra on Friday night. We stopped at the Katoomba police station where the fun began:

Me: Could I borrow one of your PLB?

Police officer: Where are you going?

Me: Kanangra

Police officer: Where is that?

Me: South West of here.

Police officer: Have you done this walk before?

Me (not being entirely honest): Yes.

Police officer: Good because we have people who say they are experienced and we have to send Polair to rescue them.

Me: It's OK I am a member of search and rescue so I would have to look for myself! I did not say BWRS; I think he would not have known what I meant.

It was a bit cool when we arrived at Boyd crossing: 14°C according to the car thermometer.

After a good night sleep we were at the Wall at 8 am. Due to the closure of the Kanangra canyons, I had decided to avoid Arabanoo creek and changed the plan to have a look at Gingra creek and sleep at 1000 man cave. We made good time to Crafts Wall that we contoured on the South-Eastern side to add a bit of variety. We had morning tea at Pages pinnacle that we all climbed. The views were great if a bit hazy.

We then followed Crafts ridge to the junction of Gingra creek and Gabes gully. We followed Gingra creek for a little while until it became a bit of a gorge. We then climbed further up to avoid the constriction and found ourselves on the old cedar getters track, still pretty well defined at this point. We rejoined Gingra creek as the track disappeared. Andy tried to keep his feet dry for sometimes but finally joined us in the water as the going was much easier this way. We stopped for lunch on a rock slab adjoining a pool where Emmanuelle and I tested the water. Later, Peter had an encounter with a snake that did not deem necessary to move while we went around. Once we reached our exit point, we spent some times filling up both containers and bodies with water as well as cooling down in the stream.

From then on it was all up for more than 600 vertical metres. The views towards the top are truly spectacular making the effort worthwhile. 1000 man cave is also a reward in itself. Because of the haze the cliffs did not light up with the sunset as much as they did the last time we came to the cave. On the other hand the colours of the sunrise on Sunday were magnificent.

Up on the Ti Willa plateau, we followed the track to the turn off to 100 man cave to which we paid a visit. It was the first time the four of us went there. I have to say that we expected a bit more from it: there is water nearby but not much flat ground and no vista like its big sister.

Morning teas was had on Cloudmaker where Andy reckons someone is swapping log books as there was none of his previous 2 entries in the current book.

The day started to seriously heat up at this point and I was wondering if ridge walking is better than climbing from the Kowmung to the Walls as was the original plan for the weekend. We survived the day thanks to a slight breeze and a series of stops in the shade. Two members of the party decided to re-enact Mark's walk from December by taking the track to Coal seam cave but I thought that considering the weather conditions, it was wiser to head straight back.

Since I felt that we were a strong bunch of walkers, I made everyone walk with their packs to Kalang falls for a refreshing dip. Well, in my mind, you just had to climb down the wooden stairs at the end... I forgot about the 400 steps beforehand in full exposure to the sun! Sorry guys.

We enjoyed the view from the lookout on the way back to the car before making our way back to Sydney with a stop in Katoomba for dinner.



Participants were:
Vivien de Rémy de Courcelles
Emmanuelle Convert
Andreas Ojong
Peter Case

Sunrise from 1000 man cave

Colo River Dinghy Trip / Feb 6 & 7

Richard Pattison

This was an unusual bushwalk, in that it involved a fair bit of rafting in kids' dinghies! What better way to appreciate the Colo than to lie down and watch the cliffs pass you by.

Saturday was 39 degrees in the mountains, a good weekend to be in the water, although the Colo was measured at 27 degrees so not that refreshing. Having toured around K-Mart/Big W/Anaconda/Toy R Us in the previous week we were all prepared with the necessary equipment to raft the Colo. Half with 3 chamber boats, half with the lighter more compact 2 chamber boats. The team managed to remove a stubborn tree from the Culoul fire trail on the drive in, then the leader picked up a puncture. Nevertheless, the walk began on-time, out past Hollow Rock and then along the track to Crawford's Lookout for morning tea, what a magnificent view. The track then took us steeply down through cliffhines and we made a shortcut beeline for the Colo down the south side of the spur off-track, dislodging a number of rocks on the way reinforcing the tactic that a diagonal line is the way to descend a loose slope. The Wollemi/Colo junction was our lunch spot on a large beach under the shade of trees.

We huffed & puffed during lunch to inflate our vessels, then put-in for a lovely float downstream under towering cliffs. The water level was quite low, but there were signs of recent flooding. Chris' boat became the first casualty at the first rapid, Marcia's at the second rapid, but fortunately just the floor not the outside chamber. The planned campsite on a beach under pass 6 doesn't really exist anymore (the river has changed significantly in the previous 2 years - see Roger Caffin's flood photos in the confederation's Summer 2011 Bushwalker magazine). Camp was found soon after following good advice from Sue Bucknell, at the next corner. We repaired our boats as best we could and sheltered from the Sahara breeze drifting up the gorge. Happy Hour was had amid swims and lounging on dinghies, it was still in the 30s as the sun descended so we cooked on stoves rather than lighting a fire.

Sunday was fun, running all rapids down to the Boorai ck junction, have a look at this quick clip on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ivnNwrzLKO>. We were grateful for the cloud cover to offer a more pleasant cruise. The first rapid was excellent, a fair flow of water over a two foot drop, Lisa's boat became the first serious casualty with a blow to the main chamber, resulting in a very early morning tea break just 30 mins after departure. Mark's impressive array of repair apparatus did the job. A few more rapids and Lisa's boat needed more care, so we took the official morning tea for a more comprehensive repair.

The floating continued through some easy rapids and to the impressive bend around our exit ridge, we pulled up at the Boorai ck junction with all boats still fully functional albeit with various patches, Mark's 2 chamber Toys R US "Club 200" the only boat of 7 to survive the full trip unscathed. We had lunch in the cooling rain and deflated the boats, Marcia's deflated the quickest with the aid of a Swiss army knife ;o) the leader located the exit track and so began the arduous climb out with water logged heavy packs, the leaders pack turned out to be 21kg when weighed at home afterwards.

An excellent ridge walk back with fantastic views of the Colo area along an overgrown 4WD trail. A fun weekend had by all.



Ready for action!



Action shot!



Beautiful day on the Colo

Participants were:

Richard Pattison
Kate Muir (Visitor)
Marcia Kaye
Peter Hinchy
Christina Day
Mark Dabbs
Lisa McCarthy

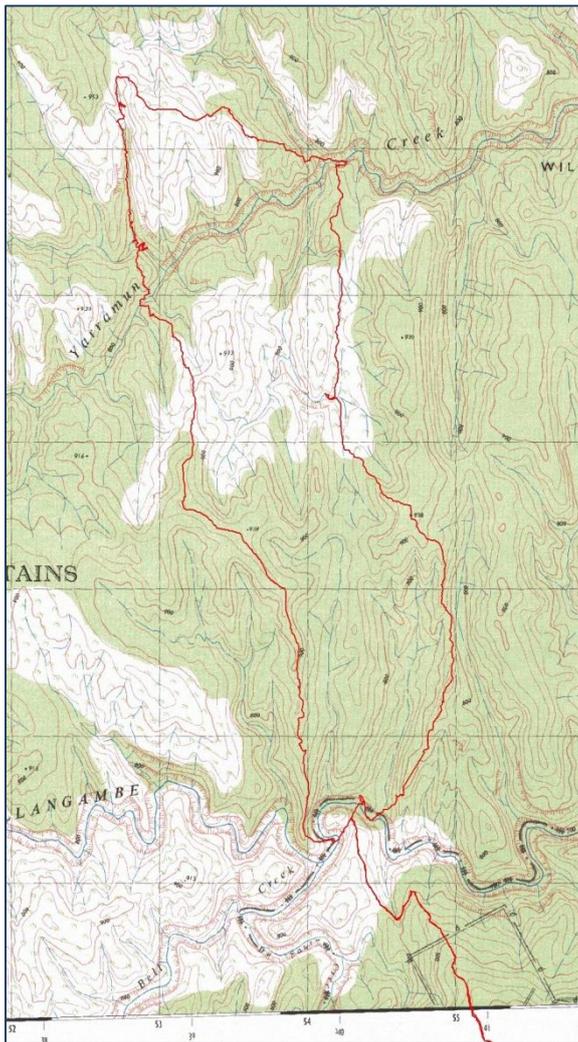
Mount Wilson to Yarramun Creek / Feb 12 & 13

Michael Keats

The walk as originally conceived by Ian was abandoned due to forecast adverse weather conditions, including low temperatures, possible heavy rain and thunderstorm activity. The original plan called for tracking the course of the Wollangambe River east from Wollangambe Crater through a long canyon section with possible full immersion if bank walking proved impossible.

The weather forecast had also seen participant numbers decline from nine with a wait list to just six foolhardy souls wondering whether wet suits would be sufficient to keep out the cold. The change of plan to visit Yarramun Creek, camp in a dry overhang and visit Yarramun Tunnel met with full approval.

After a slightly delayed start, (the leader slept in), the group set off from the Mount Wilson Fire Station at 0847 down the 'canyons' track to the Wollangambe River. A drink stop was taken at GR 548 911. This high point opportunity was used by Ian to point out some of the territory we would be traversing. The ridges immediately north and north west of the Wollangambe River are defined by lots of exposed rock and vertical faces, that are just hinted at on the topographic map. 20m contours conceal so much detail.



Crossing the Wollangambe River, GR 544 916, it was inevitable that wet feet would happen. It was just the beginning of wet stuff that happened all weekend. Near the crossing point the Wollangambe River reveals a dramatic cliff line facing west. It is rich in ochre colours as it is protected from the prevailing weather. Coupled with pristine white sand, and rich, dark, vegetation it is a photographer's paradise. I managed to capture the spirit of the place with two images.

Once across the river a tributary creek system was crossed and a way of route was found up through the cliff line to approx GR 546 917. Here Ian suggested that I do some leading. Nothing like pushing through wet bush uphill! Morning tea was taken at GR 547 919 on an exposed rocky knoll. The cloud ceiling continued to be low restricting our field of vision and with it the opportunity to record photographically. I did attempt a couple of shots towards Mount Wilson but the camera could not capture the serried ranks of ridges with any definition.

We pushed on along the ridge making spot height 938, GR 548 936 by 1220. A gradual descent to the north west through wet, head high scrub followed. Amazingly at about GR 542 945 a cliff line appears that soon developed into a deep, incised 'S' shaped overhang. From being in a sea of rather boring vegetation we entered this special place where there is protection from the elements and room enough to have lunch in relatively dry conditions. Again the topographic map fails dismally to indicate this feature.

At 1335 it was time to resume our northward progress. Weather conditions deteriorated and the mist dissolved into rain from time to time. Our field of vision narrowed. Fortunately leader Ian is familiar with this country and this helped him navigate unerringly to a descent point where we could breach the cliffs and make our way down into the Yarramun Creek. It is a descent

with several slides made just a bit more interesting by being wet. Like so much of this country the rivers and creeks tend to develop narrow, steep vertical sides along sinuous canyons. It can be kilometres in some river systems between access points.

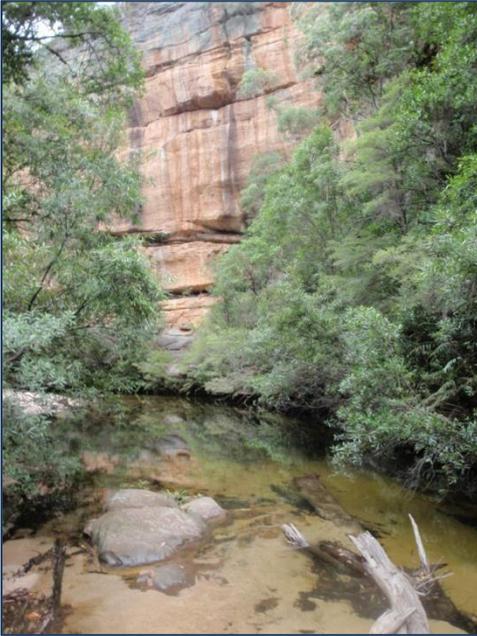
The descent point, GR 542 961 is on a bend and opposite a northern creek junction. There was talk of doing an afternoon exploratory walk without packs but somehow once we settled and watched the rain bucket down there was no enthusiasm for the project. Sorry Ian, it will have to wait for another time.

We had arrived at the campsite disgustingly early - 1500, so there was time to explore the full extent of the overhang, establish a fresh water collecting device, (thanks to Ian Armstrong and his nylon fly), replenish the firewood supply, and to enjoy a contemplative brew of tea. A lot of time was spent drying (or was it smoking?) wet gear in readiness for the morrow.

The overhang is extensive with the dry section exceeding 100m in all. The scale is impressive with massive sandstone blocks overhanging a void up to 10m high. Level areas of any extent were hard to find but there were more than enough for each of us to have our own domain. My position was an elevated one directly opposite the

Mount Wilson to Yarramun Creek / Feb 12 & 13 ^{cont.}

northern tributary junction. A previous site user had constructed a low crude stonewall although I am not sure for what purpose. It is not a spot that you could roll out of bed. I did visit Yarramun Creek to take a water sample for the water sample data bank for Dr. Ian Wright at the University of Western Sydney.



Crossing the Wollangambe River

There was lots of time to talk. Happy hour produced a triple brie cheese and biscuits and a tomato salsa dip. Dinner followed with each member enjoying their own feast ranging from a Thai specialty to sausages. The sharing of a couple of blocks of chocolate rounded off a very pleasant evening. It was just on 2100 when we all toddled off to bed.

I was woken just on midnight with something rustling plastic bags and then a piece of my cutlery was knocked off a rock to the ground. Time to get up and investigate. By the time I had the headlight torch on whatever it was had gone into hiding. A bit later I saw Ian Thorpe's light reflected on the overhang roof. He had had a visitor as well. In the morning I discovered that my bag of almonds had been chewed through and some had been eaten. Vivian also had a suffered a visit, only this time it was not food that was taken, the tube of his Camelback water supply had been eaten through.

Putting together all the recounted experiences we think our visitor may have been a small quoll, (*Dasyurus viverrinus*) on the forage. The quoll is a nocturnal animal that spends the nights hunting and the daytime hours resting. Although the quoll is an omnivorous animal, it has a predominantly meat-based diet, searching for small mammals, birds, reptiles and insects. It also feasts on nuts, grasses and fruits when they are available. Just happened that they were!

We were up and about just after 0600 and ready to move by 0800. During the night the rain had abated and we started off under a cloudy but dry sky. Our way forward was across Yarramun Creek to the west, scale the cliffs and then follow a high ridge before descending into a wild, unnamed creek that in turn flows into another unnamed creek, which contains the Yarramun Tunnel.

Again at Ian's suggestion I led the way up the cliff finding a neat succession of ramps and slots. We gained the 'first' top at GR 541 961 at about 0820 and a second at 0855, GR 537 963. This later high point was on the western edge of a cliff line. Good photos to the south, although low cloud was a problem for seeing any distance.



Navigation

An easy descent followed into the top end of this unnamed creek at approx GR 529 968. Although very little surprises in this country we were awed by the sheer size and scale of the rock wall that materialised as we went down the valley. It was more than 40 m high and continued for several hundred metres before developing a secondary cliff line below.

A well earned morning tea was taken on a large tilted rock, GR 529 967 that had detached from the cliff line millennia earlier. It was an inspiring spot to stop and just reflect on the dimensions of this valley. Saddled up again we plunged into the lush growth and pushed our way downstream. We had not gone very far when a side creek joined in from the north west, GR 528 964. Dropping our packs we went exploring this creek that resolved into a long undercut with several unique hemispherical caves. The fern carpet of *Blechnum wattsi* was one of the most lush I have ever seen. The undercut was not very long so we soon collected our packs and resumed our downstream progress.

If ever there was a time for testing ones flexibility this creek was it - alternately, we were ducking and weaving; vaulting and crawling; leaping and plunging, sometimes in water and sometimes not. Scrambles and squeezes followed each other. Vines tore at us, logs impeded us, and slippery rocks challenged us. This creek had everything.

At 1150 reached the junction of this amazing creek with the Yarramun Tunnel Creek, GR 529 956. The junction point is marked by a small a stepped waterfall about 1m high. A short walk of maybe 100m downstream and we peered into the gloom that is the Yarramun Tunnel. The tunnel is about 100m in length and is almost impossible to photograph. On a dull overcast day forget it. Because the tumble of rocks inside is so uneven it was a case of donning headlight torches to ensure that you did not trip over.

Mount Wilson to Yarramun Creek / Feb 12 & 13 ^{cont.}

Through the tunnel there is a fine sand bank and an open canyon section. On a bright sunny day this would be magnificent. On the day when we were all damp it was chilly and not a place to linger. It was decided to have lunch here, GR 530 955. Several members went for a walk downstream a distance but were disinclined to go further as a compulsory swim section is involved.

A rough ramp leads out of the south west end of the tunnel onto the rocks above the junction with Yarramun Creek. It is spectacular country and we needed to find a way down, cross Yarramun Creek and then climb out on the south side. Again Ian's knowledge was invaluable in identifying the crossing point in this serpentine, deeply incised ravine. In my field notebook that was by now rather sodden, I drew a series of up and down arrows to indicate this progress.

We crested a high point at GR 532 949 and noted that on the eastern horizon ridgeline it appeared to be raining. Already the air at our position was filling with moisture, however the rain held off. By the time we made it to GR 535 943 at 1425 we were enveloped in a total white world where visibility was no more than 100m and often a lot less. At this stage Ian advised we had about 1.5km to go before we could expect to pick up a canyons track that led back to the Wollangambe River crossing point. Near by here there was a small but important flowering of *Micromyrtus* sp. Adjoining was a fine example of the grey lichen *Hypogymnia* sp. with its distinctive fruiting cups with their golden interiors.

The canyons track 'sort of appeared' somewhere near spot height 959. The track is very indistinct and many times we wandered off it only to pick it up again later. This section of the walk was somewhat trying with little visibility and although more or less level with no altitude deviation greater than 60m for several kilometres it was the least attractive section of the walk. At 1540, GR 541 918 we stopped for an afternoon break.

The ridge descent into the Wollangambe River is just below the Bell Creek junction and is steep towards the final descent with a couple of wet rock slides. We emerged onto the sand flat and the big log where so many canyons exit. It was now 1610 and I was starting to feel rather weary. I guess I also was not looking forward to the 400m climb out back to the vehicles. Going up the hill I lagged behind the group, finally catching them up as they waited patiently for me at the Northern Trail junction. At 1710 I was looking for the car keys.

Thanks to Ian we had enjoyed a great adventure that added to my knowledge of this section of the Wollangambe Wilderness.

Table of Times, Locations and Grid References

Day	Time	Location	Grid Reference
12 th February	0847	Mount Wilson Fire Station	GR 555 896
	0918	Drink stop and view	GR 548 911
	0940	Above the Wollangambe River	GR 544 916
	1000	Side creek	GR 546 917
	1020	Morning tea	GR 592 919
	1220	Spot height 938	GR 548 936
	1310	Lunch in cave/overhang (25 mins)	GR 542 945
	1500	On Yarramun Creek and camp cave	GR 542 961
	2100	Off to bed	GR 542 961
	13 th February	0800	Cross Yarramun Creek
0820		First top	GR 541 961
0855		Second top	GR 537 963
0950		On a high point	GR 529 967
1010		Morning tea (10 mins)	GR 529 965
1025		Exploring overhang	GR 528 964
1145		Junction of two unnamed creeks	GR 529 956
1150		Yarramun Tunnel	GR 530 955
1200		Lunch (50 mins includes some exploring)	GR 531 955
1312		Above Yarramun Creek	GR 530 952
1344		On a high point	GR 532 949
1425		On ridge	GR 535 943
1540		Afternoon tea (5 mins)	GR 541 918
1610	Wollangambe River crossing	GR 553 916	
1710	Mount Wilson Fire Station	GR 555 896	

This was a combined walk with members from SBW, NPA and the Bush Club. Participants were:

Ian Thorpe, (leader), SBW, NPA & BC
 Ian Armstrong, NPA
 Emmanuel Convert, SBW
 Vivian de Remy de Courcelles, SBW
 Steve Dolphin, SBW
 Michael Keats, BC and SBW prospective.

Bungonia Creek & Shoalhaven River / Feb 19 - 20

Stephen Brading



Compulsory wet feet here!

Only six people attended this walk which did not go as advertised.

After visiting the Bungonia Look Down and not realizing the significance of the muddy brown water in Bungonia Creek below, we returned to and walked down Red track to bottom of Bungonia Gorge. Bungonia Gorge was a shock. Trees had been snapped like match wood and the normally bone dry canyon was now filled with turbid muddy floodwater. It was 11.15am, was the weekend over? It was overcast and rain was a distinct possibility. We had a morning tea break for 15 minutes during which I took some photos and considered the situation and we decided to go on.

As the dry canyon floor was covered by an unknown depth of turbid muddy water potentially hiding snags, I found the best route was to walk right next to the cliff on the right hand side under the overhang. This was slower but interesting. At one spot we came across stalactites and stalagmites, clear evidence this canyon has been cut through a cave system. Further on I chose a potential up and over back passage instead of what looked like it could become a wade/swim. Of course I was wrong and we lost a significant amount of time trying to find a way though and back down that did not require an abseil. We returned to the water and edged around the base of a vertical fallen rock section for about 100 metres. Further on the depth of water in the Slot canyon was shallow and easily waded. Such is the unpredictability of water in limestone country.

The boulder field at the lower end of the Canyon presented a significant obstacle. It was acting as a natural dam holding back the muddy water filling the canyon and gorge above. Wherever water could get through the rocks it was pouring through under significant pressure. Other gaps in the rocks had been filled with logs and other flood debris and as the water was turbid muddy brown the bottom of all pools were invisible so you could not tell where the deep holes were. This left only the hardest routes over the top of boulders available. Our weekend packs made long slides down rock faces more difficult. Where the party had to cross a fast flowing torrent of pressurized water Tony and I were able to secure footing in the torrent so we could assist others to cross without being swept away.

At the lower end of the field (the last 50 metres) we had to climb under boulders and squeeze through rock gaps that clearly had been submerged by the flood torrent before we were there. After much investigation and consideration a human chain was used to pass packs and then get the party through. It took around half an hour to get through this area. 2pm the tired party had lunch after having emerged from the boulder field. I located a crossing that would get us over the flooded Bungonia Creek. It had taken 3.75 hours to travel about 3.5 km including 1.5km on a tar road.

After lunch we crossed Bungonia Creek and followed the left bank to the lower Red Track and crossed Bungonia creek without anyone being washed off their feet. About 30 metres downstream we climbed to the top of the steep bank and took a shortcut across a flat area of light bush to cut off a corner. Now the sun was out and the temperature and today the humidity became unpleasant. I pushed the group on giving them experience of heat exhaustion until Tony acting as tail end Charlie called for a break. People were so hot they paddled in the uninviting raging brown mud soup that was Bungonia Creek today while I checked out a possible campsite. Incidentally the old foot pad along the edge of steep bank sections of Bungonia Creek have been completely washed away. Now you climb up and sidle along the steep rock slope until you reach the end of the steep bank section. We remained on right hand bank (southern) till we reached the Shoalhaven River at 4.15pm.

Such was the force of the water coming out of Bungonia Creek. The Shoalhaven River had become muddy brown, the same as Bungonia Creek. I decided the Shoalhaven River water depth was too deep to continue the planned walk without fully waterproofed packs (canyon bags) and we would exit via Mt Ayre instead. Meanwhile the party has decided they were staying and had moved back to the old raised island campsite (consensus bushwalking??) that had not been washed away by the floods. Drinking water was not a problem as the sand filtered out the mud to provide running drinking water stream in the back channel and there was a smorgasbord of flood delivered firewood to burn.

Bungonia Creek & Shoalhaven River / Feb 19 - 20^{cont.}



Sunday lunch: Yvonne, Theresa, Rachael, Nicky, Tony

After setting up camp we had a swim in the Shoalhaven River and happy hour and a social evening. Blowing up the lime green plastic lie lows provided a source of entertainment and took a lot of effort and time. If you buy a plastic lie low inflate it before you leave home and drill or use a spike to puncture/ remove the one way valve before taking it on a walk. Sunday morning we paddled the plastic lie lows on the Shoalhaven River. I crossed the river in waist deep and up to chest deep water were we crossed in water below knee depth two years ago. Also I found that the banks of the Shoalhaven River near the river were wet and muddy from flooding and would not have provided particularly good camping.

We started walking up the clear Mt Ayre foot track at 10.45am to 11am. Views on the way up were excellent and wind made the hot climb much easier than it could have been. Yvonne and I reached the ridge top at 11.30am (30min to 45min) and the last party member reached the ridge top at noon (60min plus). We had lunch for 30 minutes under a tree in the breeze and then followed the track up to the Mt Ayre lookout (White Track) where we had another rest. The track soon became a fire trail that we followed to the Lookdown road, having taken a side trip to a lookout without a view on the Orange track on the way.

The Group had coffee at Berrima breaking up the drive back to Sydney.

Participants were:

Yvonne Brading	Stephen Brading
Tony Holgate	Nicky Williams
Theresa Wannish	Rachel Ryan

WILLIS'S WALKABOUTS

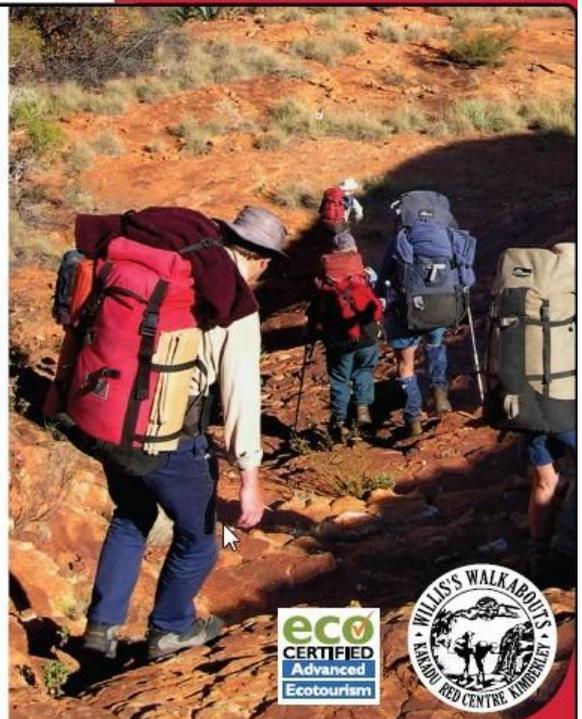
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Nayook Creek / Feb 19 - 20

Tom Brennan

Nayook Creek is a rarely visited and fairly untouched part of the Blue Mountains. Many bushwalkers and canyoneers have visited it in its upper reaches, which hold the pretty Deep Pass Canyon, but downstream from Deep Pass is another matter.



Stephen, Vivien and Brendon scrambling down the canyon

The route as I originally envisaged it was to wander some distance downstream from Deep Pass to the major tributary to the south, exit up this and then walk back along Railmotor Ridge to Deep Pass.

Based on what little information I could find, the section of Nayook Creek just downstream from Deep Pass sounded like it could be messy, slow going, and not particularly interesting. Instead, we would roughly reverse the route, heading in along Railmotor Ridge, descending the north-flowing tributary, and exiting back to the Natural Bridge before the scrubby section via a pass that Ian Thorpe had mentioned. We took rope and abseiling gear as I expected at least one drop in the tributary.

On Saturday morning we all met at North Richmond and car pooled out to the car park at Deep Pass. A couple of cyclists had camped down there the night before and were pushing their bikes out, talking to another couple who were just heading down for a relaxing night. The grassy campground looked in good condition, with little rubbish or signs of vandalism, the noise of the creek trickling in the background. It was tempting to settle down, but exploration called.

I had climbed the pass on to Mt Norris once before, though just a quick up and down, and not for many years. It was fortunate that we were able to locate the short, steep scramble fairly quickly, and we were soon on our way up the spur towards Railmotor Ridge.

As we headed out on to Railmotor Ridge, we quickly picked up a fairly well-defined track, which made the going significantly quicker. With all of the canyons off to the south of the ridge, it wasn't clear how long the track would last, or whether it would even take us where we wanted to go. I wasn't too keen on ending up in Banks or Nosedive Canyon, so kept a close eye on map and compass. The track became more vague - around the point that the ridge to Banks Canyon departed - and we did question the value of trying to stick with it. However, as soon as we diverged from the track the scrub became noticeably thicker, with vines grasping at us and logs hiding in the undergrowth to catch our shins. There were still traces of a track when we finally left the ridge, and headed down into our creek.



Stephen and Vivien in the canyon

A short while later we were at standing on a small line of cliffs above the creek, overlooking a section of canyon. After a quick, late morning tea, we headed into the canyon which was short and underwhelming, and then out into a scrubby creek for a while. It was not too far to a short drop, a waterfall into a pool which flowed out through a pretty arch. We were able to avoid the pool by climbing up and over the ridge and back down into the creek just beyond. Another waterfall and arch awaited, and while I was able to scramble down part way, I had to pass a rope back up for us to abseil the drop. This was the start of some pleasant canyon, and then a surprise as another drop awaited us. This led into a deeper canyon, which was the highlight of the day, and continued for quite a distance with a short swim or two.

By the time it opened out, it was after 1:30pm, and we were all a bit peckish. After a late lunch, we pushed on down the creek, downing packs to wander up some of the side creeks. One in particular on the left was a canyon in its own right, though we were stopped by a waterfall after the first junction.

Continuing on first through beautiful rainforest creek, then a bouldery section, and then slow scrub, it looked like the last section would be slow going to Nayook. We were again surprised when the creek dropped into more canyon

Nayook Creek / Feb 19 - 20 ^{cont.}

via an awkward downclimb. While not as spectacular as the section further up, it was a bit of a bonus.

Finally we reached the sandy shallows of Nayook Creek at 5 o'clock and I raised my hands in the air in celebration. We had a short break, but as it was getting late, we still had the problem of finding somewhere to sleep.



Stephen and Vivien walking up a beautiful section of Nayook Creek

took a nasty slip on an algae covered boulder and landed heavily on my ribs and hand, needing a few minutes before I could move on again. Luckily it wasn't far to our side creek, and we headed up and had a very early lunch under an overhang. A short scrubby climb led up to an impressive sandstone block perched on a knoll. Hoping to be able to climb it, I went one way and Vivien went the other, but it was well overhung on all sides.



Vivien overlooking Deep Pass

Nayook Creek was quite beautiful, with some long sections of sandy bottomed creek. The walls were close together, and though it was never quite canyon, it felt like one would be just around the corner. I hoped to get about a kilometre of creek under our belts before camping, in advance of the forecast rain for Sunday. The quicksand was a little treacherous in places, causing amusement for those at the rear. The knowledge of where the quicksand was didn't always help the back markers from working out where it wasn't, so sand-filled shoes were the order of the day. After covering a reasonable distance we started looking for camp caves. With the creek still very narrow, there wasn't much on offer. At 7pm we reached the best spot we had seen in quite some distance, a small overhang with a flattish platform below it. Barely enough space for two in the cave and two flies on the platform, but it would have to do.

We had a pleasant evening with happy hour which even Stephen took part in! Given our latish finish, we retired to bed not long after dinner, illuminated by glowworms all around us.

With rain forecast for around the middle of the day, we were away the following morning not long after 8am, with well over 2km of Nayook Creek to cover. There were a couple of very short sections of canyon along the creek, but disappointingly nothing persistent. The creek started off quite pleasantly, but as we progressed, we spent more time scrambling over boulders, fighting river gums pointing downstream, ducking under fallen trees and swimming short pools. I

From there back to the Natural Bridge was slow going, with a scrubby ridge, disappearing fire trail and a deep chasm to negotiate. We took the link track from just past Natural Bridge, that took us straight to Deep Pass with minimal road bash, and good views from the open ridge. With the forecast rain not having eventuated, and the weather still unpleasantly warm, I decided we would exit via Deep Pass Canyon, which was cool and relaxing. The real motive was so that I could have a swim and a wash in the beautiful pool below the waterfall! Despite the final climb up to the ridge at the end, I was feeling pretty clean and refreshed back at the car. A great weekend in spectacular country.

Participants were:

Tom Brennan
Vivien de Remy de Courcelles
Stephen Dolphin
Brendon Anderson (P)

Walks & Other Activities / February 1 – 28

Stephen Brading

Leaders: After an activity please email completed Walks Attendance Form and Activity Report to:

walksreporting@sbw.org.au
brading123@optusnet.com.au
databasemanager@sbw.org.au

This ensures that the 5 people who take action on Walks Reports receive them promptly.
Please keep the signature sheets as these are a legal document.

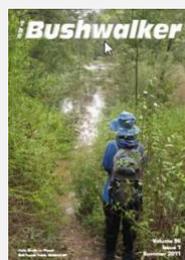
Date, Walk Location & Route	Activity Participants
<p>SAT 5 FEB - Day Activity - 222E Canyon Grade 3 10km +/- 400m Bowen Creek North Branch Canyon: <i>Mt Wilson area canyon, (Entry Level). This is a beautiful canyon, starts with a fire road then down into the valley on track through bush and fern forests to the start of the canyon, 4 to 5 abseils from 3 -20 metres which can have slippery starts. Long swims in the pools in the lower canyon 20+mtr. The exit is up a rough track and climbing and rock scrambling is required.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Trip went</p>	<p>Terry Moss & Others</p>
<p>SUN 6 FEB - Day Activity - 222E Canyon Grade 2-3 Serendipity: <i>Mt Wilson area canyon, moderate level canyon. Long day, many pools, pack floatation necessary, abseil may be necessary.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Activity Report:</p> <p>Changed the canyon to Serendipity (rather than South Bowen) on the day with the agreement of all the participants so that the new canyoners could get more canyon abseil practice. Commenced about 9am, out about 3pm. Glorious day, warm in canyon, cool breeze during exit. Vastly better than the Sydney 40° day. All participants did canyon extremely well, and would be welcome on more difficult trips. No incidents, good day had by all.</p>	<p>Rod Wales Leo Butler Huw ap Rees Sonja Steele Terry Moss</p>
<p>SUN 6 FEB - Day walk - S212 (Easy) 5-8km North Richmond Area: - Grose Vale: <i>Grose Vale - Cabbage Tree Creek - Grose River - Grose Vale.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Walk Report:</p> <p>A party of 9 from 17 starters actually made it to the walk. They were treated to a nice clear rainforest walk in rain showers to keep thing steamy and set the mood with only the occasional pesky leech during the morning. Lengthy morning tea was taken in a pretty canyon like grotto on the Cabbage Tree Creek. At the junction of the Grose out came Glen's fishing rod and he tried his luck but no fish took the lure. We crossed the Grose and had a civilized lunch break of one a half hours giving me time to search for and locate the Engineers Track have a couple of swims in the large swimming hole eat lunch and help Rosemary and Lyn pick up rubbish other less considerate people had left. Glen continued fishing and although sighted a number of fish caught none. After the lunch stop we followed both the Engineer Track and the river flats downstream to an old fire trail which took us back to our cars. Huey provided us with a cold change BEFORE we had to climb up the hill. A lengthy coffee stop was taken in Richmond to round off a very enjoyable day.</p>	<p>Stephen Brading Yvonne Brading Liz McPhee (V) Nicky Williams (P) Rosemary Macdougall Lyn Terry Glenn Draper Rachael Ryan (P) Anthony Ryan (P)</p>
<p>WEEKEND 5-6 FEB - Weekend Walk - M233E Wollemi NP: Colo river (Wollemi ck to Boorai Ck) <i>Hollow Rock - Wollemi creek - Colo junction - paddle down the Colo to camp on the beach below pass 6. Dependant on boat numbers, we may continue the next morning as far as Dooli/Boorai creek and return to the cars via pass 7, otherwise, we'll have an early finish and simply ascend pass 6 (steep and exposed scrambles) back to the cars.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">See article in this newsletter</p>	<p>Richard Pattison Kate Muir (Visitor) Marcia Kaye Peter Hinchy Christina Day Mark Dabbs Lisa McCarthy</p>
<p>WEEKEND 5-6 FEB - Weekend Walk - S111 Q 12km Blue Mtns NP: <i>Six Foot track at Cemetery -Coxs River Camp Ground and return.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Walk Report:</p> <p>The inaugural 'bludge trip' turned out to be more interesting than originally planned. We dropped off the 6ft track in to the Megalong Creek and followed that down to the junction with the Coxs. Here we found the magnificent 'pink granite dyke' that is mentioned in the Michael Keats' book, 'Day Walks in Therabulat Country'; wow' factor ++++ We then travelled down the river sampling every swimming spot on the way. The Coxs down to the swing bridge was full of boulders, lots of slippery pink granite, lots of river crossings, and some scrub bashing. It was a very hot weekend and everyone handled themselves extremely well. A special thank you to Jouni Leppanen and Don Andrews for bringing along a wide variety of their light weight gear to show us all. We were all very impressed!</p>	<p>Melinda Turner Don Andrews Theresa Wannisch (P) Jeannette Kendall (P) John Robb (P) Jouni Leppanen David Trinder</p> 

Walks & Other Activities / February 1 – 28 ^{cont.}

Date, Walk Location & Route	Activity Participants
<p>SAT 12 FEB - Day Walk - M211 (Medium) 12km Heathcote NP: <i>Waterfall - Uloola Track - Blue Pools - Uloola Falls - Karloo Track - Karloo Pool -Heathcote.</i> Walk Report: Inclement weather scared a few participants off but in the end it didn't rain for most of the walk. A nice walk following Uloola Ck which was very dry due to lack of recent rainfall. Consequently none of the waterfalls above Uloola Falls were working. The party enjoyed a very short off track adventure to check out the interesting rock formations, named the whalebacks, beside the track between Uloola falls and Karloo Pool. One member decided to pose, like a model, for a photo in a little one man cave. We all decided that although it was a beautiful cave the member should stick to his day job. Also enjoyed a refreshing swim at Karloo Pool. An enjoyable walk with good company.</p>	Paul Barton Melanie Smith (P) Tim Yewdall Robert Bettis (P) Nicky Williams(P) Tony Holgate
<p>SAT 12 FEB - Day Walk - M231 17km Blue Mountains NP: <i>Golden Stairs - Ruined Castle - Koorowall Knife Edge - Mt.Solitary - lookout on south side - return along track to Landslide - Furbers Steps - Scenic Railway Carpark.</i> Walk Report: After a cloudy but dry start to the walk fog and drizzle soon rolled in. Our morning tea stop was under an overhang near Ruined Castle. The great views that can usually be enjoyed at Ruined Castle and from Mt. Solitary were hidden under a blanket of fog. Due to the drizzle and the lack of views at the intended lunch spot on the south side of Mt. Solitary lunch was consumed in one of the nearby caves/overhangs. At about 2pm the drizzle changed to steady, soaking rain which was with us for the rest of the walk. The wet weather bought out leeches which kept people occupied whenever we stopped. (What did leeches eat before bushwalkers were invented?) In spite of the conditions and being soaked the walkers retained their senses of humour and we were able to have a good stretch. When we completed the walk before 5pm the temperature was only 14 degrees - a bit nippy for the middle of February. Thanks to all in attendance for persisting in less than ideal conditions and thanks to Stephen for being tail for most of the day. Stephens comment: Chris managed to pick a day with mid to late autumn temperatures for this walk. It was interesting that despite the wet year Chinamans Creek on Mt Solitary was not running (on the surface) but I found water downstream in a small pool. The afternoon trip back was true Gortex weather which made a really spectacular display at Katoomba falls.</p>	Chris Dowling Glenn Draper John Kennett Andy Djong Jason Lorch Rebecca Lorch Huw ap Rees Peter Hinchy Stephen Brading Lisa Sheldon Sandra See Steve Arroita (P)
<p>SAT 12 FEB - Day Walk - M222 17km Blue Mountains NP: <i>Erskine Creek Lookout - Jack Evans Track - Erskine Creek - Lincoln Creek Junction - Dadder Cave - Blands Pool - return via Pisgah Rock and firetrail to Erskine Creek Lookout car park.</i> Walk Report: A warm cloudy morning with some rain and a delightful swim in a beautiful remote section with plenty of rock scrambling with fallen trees and flood debris to negotiate. Lovely rock platforms and river crossings made a pleasant approach to Lincoln Creek. The afternoon saw some heavy rain periods as we battled the overgrown bush leading to Dadder Cave. By then we had enough and decided time would not permit going on to Blands Pool. After another great swim we returned to walk out via Pisgah Rock and met a large group with toddlers walking down the exposed sections of the track in heavy rain. We finished drenched but in great spirits at Pisgah car park.</p>	Tony Crichton Jovanka Ajavovic Christine McColl Shelia Zaman Joe Strater
<p>SUN 13 FEB - Day Activity - (Easy) Navigation and First Aid Training: <i>Navigation and First Aid in Centennial Park.</i> Activity Report received: The training for basic navigation, first aid and bush craft was successful with 18 Prospective Members completing their training requirements for full membership. The trainers were David Trinder for basic navigation, Lucy Moore for First Aid and Philip Worledge was called in at short notice to teach bush craft. The 18 people received a good introduction to these subjects but it was demonstrated that the people should carry on and do more learning on each subject. The weather threatened rain all day but none came down until after we had finished, I often organize it like that.</p>	David Trinder Lucy Moore Phillip Worledge Jacquie Yates Christina Graf Jon Bracs Rolf Marsden Judy Tent Theresa Wannisch Mohit Jain Carina Dennis Jo Rhoden Noelene Maxwell Melissa Mole Derek Ledain Gesella Lynette Preston Alex Gould Kevin Liu Anne Zhong John O'Riordan

Walks & Other Activities / February 1 – 28 ^{cont.}

Date, Walk Location & Route	Activity Participants
<p>SUN 13 FEB - Day Walk - S211 17km Waterfall-Forest Path - Palona Cave - Waterfall: <i>Waterfall Station - Couranga Track - Forest Path-Palona Cave - Lady Carrington Drive - Waterfall Station.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Walk Report:</p> <p>Walk started under overcast conditions with a mild temperature. After stopping to view the memorial to the fire fighters who died in a 1980 bushfire we commenced the descent to the Hacking River along the Couranga Track. By the time we reached the river leeches had made their presence felt and remained a topic of conversation for the rest of the day. After a short morning tea we reached Palona Cave followed by lunch along the Forest Path. Leaving the Hacking River we returned via the Couranga Track reaching waterfall by mid afternoon. An enjoyable walk in one of the more beautiful parts of the Royal and a leech introduction for some prospectives.</p>	<p>David Bell Helen Lalas Leigh McClintock Tony Holgate Marina Chan Iris Bartula (P) Lisa Sheldon Misako Sugiyama</p>
<p>WEEKEND 12-13 FEB - Weekend Walk - M233 Q A Weekend Getting Wet in the Wollangambe: <i>Bell - Wollangambe Crater - Wollangambe River - Mount Wilson.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Walk Report:</p> <p>The original plan was changed due to cool and cloudy conditions. Instead the walk was a variation of a previous walk to Yarramun Creek. We found a new way north out of the Wollangambe River along a narrow ridge that ran parallel for several kilometres to another close enough to appear that they would join in a number of places. Got to camp quite wet, but we had an overhang so dried out nicely by the fire and got stuck into happy hour. Not much rain on Sunday but the vegetation was very wet. Found an interesting creek descent to Yarramun tunnel. After lunch near the tunnel we headed south across Yarramun Creek then along a series of ridges back to the Wollangambe River then back to the cars at Mt Wilson.</p>	<p>Ian Thorpe Michael Keats (P) Vivien de Rémy de Courcelles Emmanuelle Convert Ian Armstrong (V) Stephen</p>
<p>17-20 FEB - Activity - Coolana Maintenance:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Activity Report:</p> <p>Thursday 17th saw the first arrivals at Coolana to start an ambitious program of work. In the preceding weeks, service and repairs to brush cutters, lawn mowers and chainsaws saw us with a satisfactory line up of equipment for the 16 people who answered the call to help prepare the camping flat for the reunion. The star was a new Honda self propelled mower that lived up to expectations. Unfortunately the motor of the recently repaired 2nd hand Honda failed after about an hour, it is now in Sydney awaiting a decision on its future. Fifty six casuarinas donated by Enviroquest were planted along the river bank. A reduced team continued mowing weeding and tending trees on the Eastern Flat on Monday.</p>	<p>Don Finch Ross Kerrigan (V) Phil Butt Paul Kerrigan (V) Glenn Draper Rick Angel Bill Holland Chris Miller Mae Miller (V) Brian McGrath Elizabeth McGrath (V) Spiro Shahram Barry Wallace Patrick James Ali and Afsaneh</p>
<p>SAT 19 FEB - Day Walk - M212 (Medium) 15km Munmorah SRA: <i>Caves beach - Catho Hill Bay - Timber, Frazer & Red Ochre beaches.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Walk Report:</p> <p>Had to turn away several would-be walkers as the walk was full. 18 of us set out on a hot, humid, sunny day tempered by a cooling nor'easterly breeze. Lots of dolphins & a couple of sea eagles. Great swimming in huge rock platform pool (the bogey hole). Catho Bay the site of a massive SLSC carnival and the welcome source of ice creams on such a hot day. More swimming at Moonee Beach in crystal clear water, then on to the Pirate's Cave. We had an excellent time body surfing in the outer entrance to the cave. The Wybung Head cliff climb was interesting as usual. The vegetation after last year's rain has grown hugely, making the 500m bush bash down onto Red Ochre Beach quite challenging. The nudists there got a bit of a shock when 18 clad bushwalkers emerged out of the bush and onto the beach! The usual car re-shuffle was followed (for 13 of us) by dinner and such welcome drinks at the Catho Pub. Overall, an excellent group and a good day out.</p>	<p>Richard Darke Mike Arnott Ro McDonald Bryn Lynar Kath Lynar Colin Atkinson Cathy Kennedy (V) Renilde Becque (P) Ian Thorpe David Nordon (V) Robert Bettis (V) Frank Grennan Annie Maguire Tim Yewdall Marie Rose Rick Symons Andrew Vilder John O'Riordan (P)</p>



Have you seen the latest issue of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs Magazine?

If not, you can download it at:
<http://www.bushwalking.org.au/mag.html>

Walks & Other Activities / February 1 – 28 ^{cont.}

Date, Walk Location & Route	Activity Participants
<p>SAT 19 FEB - Day Walk - M222 (Medium) 15km Heathcote NP: <i>Waterfall Station - Mooray Track - Bullawarring Track - Woronora River - Boobera Pool - Pipeline Track - - Bullawarring Track - Waterfall Station.</i> Walk Report: A forecast temperature of 31 degrees turned out to be a very hot 34 degrees. A group of 20 walkers including 11 prospectives headed off with the promise of a refreshing swim at lunch at Boobera Pool. Due to hot conditions and overgrown bush along the track a wise decision was made to ditch the plan of walking up the Woronora River and go direct to Boobera Pool instead. After a nice long lunch and swim we battled the heat on the way back to Waterfall station. A great effort by all of the prospectives in the 34 degree heat - a late afternoon swim was a life saver. We finished off with a beer at Heathcote and a top Thai restaurant meal at Sutherland. Thanks to Tony Manes for taking two walkers out at Heathcote (heat exhaustion and sore knee). It's great to be leading walks again.</p>	Tony Crighton Carina Dennis (P) Alex Gould (P) Jackie Yates (P) Gary Barnes (P) Carole Beales Ian Evans Rolf Marsden (P) Sandra See Caroline (P) Barry (P) Inma Suarez (P) Kim Walker Andy Ojong Shelia Zaman Joe Strata Tony Manes Jeff Lovell (P) Neil Cartright (P) Jacinta Peperkamp(P)
<p>SUN 20 FEB - Day Walk - Easy 8km Royal National Park: <i>Garie Beach - Thelma Ridge -Garrawarra -Burning Palms and return.</i> Walk Report: The walk followed the route from Garie to Burning Palms as intended by Bill Holland who was ill. Brian Holden substituted as leader. It was a warm day - and hot when in the open. Track up Thelma Ridge now very feint.</p>	Brian Holden Kevin Liu Anne Liu Lynette Preston Kay Walker Nigel Weaver Margaret Weaver.
<p>WEEKEND 19-20 FEB - Weekend Walk - M232 (Medium) Q 25km Bungonia Karst Reserve & Morton National Park: <i>Bungonia Ranger Office - Lookdown Lookout - Red Track - Bungonia Slot Canyon and Rockpile - Bungonia Creek - Upstream along Shoalhaven River - Camp - Side trip upstream to Blockup Gorge - Camp - Tressel Track - Great South Road Fire Trail - Bungonia Rangers Office.</i> See article in this newsletter:</p>	Stephen Brading Yvonne Brading Tony Holgate Nicky Williams (P) Theresa Wannish (P) Rachel Ryan (P)
<p>WEEKEND 19-20 FEB - Weekend Walk - M223 Exploratory Q Nayook Creek: <i>Head downstream from Deep Pass checking out side creeks along the way for canyons. Depending on progress, climb out via major southern tributary and return over Mt Norris.</i> See article in this newsletter:</p>	Tom Brennan Vivien de Remy de Courcelles Stephen Dolphin Brendon Anderson[P]
<p>21-25 FEB - Extended Activity - Social Midweek Car Camping at Myall Lakes: <i>There are four interconnected lakes with many camping grounds. The area is attractive for kayaking, walking swimming and bird watching. There will be a daily NPWS fee payable and park entry fees. We will camp by the cars.</i> Activity Report: 12 participating. We had a very satisfying time at Myall lakes last week - another five had indicated attendance but had to cancel. We set up our tents and a large tarpaulin on Monday spent the week kayaking, socializing and visiting other areas. The weather was kind to us and we had a long campfire each night under a starry sky.</p>	Bill Holland Jenny Cornell Don Cornell Jo van Sommers Jim Percy Kate Murdoch Barrie Murdoch George Mawer Rick Angel Kim Walker Don Andrews Gerry Leitner
<p>SAT 26 FEB - Day Activity - 222E Canyon Grade 4-5 15km +/- 600m Claustral Canyon: <i>Mt Tomah area canyon (Advanced Level). The Canyons name Claustral comes from "Claustraphobic", this canyon is dark and deep, it has 3 abseils which are spectacular, but if delayed in this section can be extremely cold, so all participants need to be experienced. There are many swims and a difficult rocky exit.</i> Trip went</p>	Terry Moss & Others
<p>SUN 27 FEB - Day Activity - 222E Canyon Grade 4 Yileen Canyon: <i>North Grose area canyon, (Medium-Difficult Level). 1 short day, 4 abseils, to 45m. One short swim and wades. Magnificent canyon sections.</i> Activity Report: Last abseil (57m), 2 club ropes labeled as 6m were well short of the bottom (Approx 5m) Rigger separate abseil from ledge for lost section. Neil Soutar was last down the big drop at the end. He stopped about 5m from the top, attached himself to an anchor and pulled the knot down clear of obstructions at the top. Rope came down easily. Nice work Neil! Trip ended about 2pm. All seemed to enjoy the trip. Some of the group enjoyed afternoon tea at the Apple Bar - highly nutritious desserts.</p>	Rod Wales Neil Soutar Ian Wolfe Huw Ap Rees Sonja Steidle Marcia Kaye

Emergency Communications

Bill Hope

This article provides an overview of the communication preparation for a walk (A), a summary of the communication methods (B) and then details of the operation of the recommended communication devices(C, D, E)

A. Emergency Communications Preparation

For all walks where you will be out of contact for more than a few hours it is recommended you carry a Personal Locator Beacon(a PLB previously called an EPIRB) or satellite phone or mobile phone(if you are sure of coverage). Note that the PLB must be one of the new 406 MHz digital types-the older 243 MHz types no longer operate and are obsolete. If the PLB is borrowed advise the owner of your plan. UHF radios are sometimes used by Search and Rescue and other organisations operating remotely for local communications but are not suited to bushwalking due to their limited range and lack of ability to call directly to emergency services. See figure 1 for a picture of the 5 devices mentioned above.

You will find further information regarding this topic on the Sydney Bushwalkers Website.

Advise relatives/friends you may return home later than planned due to unforeseen circumstances such as navigational errors and over ambitious route planning. Emphasize that, unless they believe there has been an accident they should wait about 15 hours after your expected return before lodging a call with a SBW Search & Rescue contact below-

Barbara Bruce (95466570/0414799195)

Ian Rannard (99581514)

Craig Austin (94841519/0413941775)

Tony Marshall (47843203/0429012484)

The contacts above are experienced bushwalkers and can provide advice on whether Emergency Services should be contacted and they can also assist in contacting club members as required.

B. Summary-Emergency Communications Usage

As mentioned figure 1 shows the various communication devices mentioned in this article. In the event of an emergency then the priority for using the various devices is as follows-

1. If possible use a mobile phone-dial 000 or 112 if there is coverage from ANY network. Most phones work even if locked or there is no SIM. If the signal is marginal from the home network SMS uses a different channel so it may still get through to a contact who can then call 000 for you. Get them to advise the 000 operator of your situation and request help.
2. Use a satellite phone if you have clear sky in the required direction. Dial/SMS as per the mobile phone instructions above. Satellite phones have voice call and data transmission capability in remote Australia where no mobile phone coverage is present. Australian phone providers offer a variety of satellite phones which include Thuraya and Iridium satellite systems. Both of these have Australia-wide coverage. As a more or less clear line of sight between your satellite phone and the sky is needed for successful communication the quality of a satellite call may be affected by atmospheric conditions and the local environment (vegetation, landforms).
3. A PLB is a device carried by a bushwalker which, when activated, transmits a message which is received by satellites orbiting the Earth, and is then relayed to emergency services. In the case of activation by a bushwalker the usual response will be the dispatch of a rescue helicopter. The helicopter goes to the coordinates the beacon transmitted (or uses radio direction finding to home in on the beacon) and can then rescue the distressed bushwalker.

The rescue services will attempt to contact the registered PLB owner so if it is borrowed let the owner know your plan. Leave it on until rescued.



Figure 1
From Left to Right :
Obsolete PLB
UHF Radio
Current Model PLB
Satellite Phone
Mobile Phone

Emergency Communications^{cont.}

C. Making Emergency Calls from a Mobile Phone

1. Reliability of triple Zero (000) from a mobile phone

Mobile phones enable individuals to call the Emergency Call Service from most places in Australia. However mobile networks are generally not as reliable as calls from the fixed network.

Problems that may be experienced when making a call from a mobile phone to the Emergency Call Service include:

- bad reception,
- limited or no network coverage being available;
- running out of battery; and
- a lack of precise location information about the caller's position.

Mobile phones are designed such that when calling Triple Zero (000) out of your service provider's coverage area but in another carrier's mobile phone network coverage area, your call will be carried on the other carrier's network. However, it is important to realize that if there is no mobile coverage, you will not be able to reach the Emergency Call Service via a mobile phone, and alternative devices, such as satellite phones or PLBs should be considered.

2. Location

If you dial 000 from a mobile phone the Emergency Call Service can only locate you within a large mobile service area and this is unlikely to assist them to find you. You will therefore need to provide the operator with more precise information about your location.

3. GPS on a Mobile Phone

Australia's mobile networks cannot automatically transmit GPS data from a handset to an emergency service call-taker at present. If you do have a GPS enabled handset, you can however verbally convey your estimated geographic position to emergency services and this will assist them to locate you. You should be aware that many phone GPS applications are very battery intensive which may result in a flat battery.

4. Mobile Coverage

Mobile phone service providers provide notional coverage maps online and from their point of sale locations. All the carriers (Optus, Telstra and VHA) have good coverage in the major population centres, but in regional areas they can become marginal.

If you are away from population areas (as will be the case most often) do not rely on mobile coverage unless you know it is there.

5. Using 000 versus 112

112 is the GSM international standard emergency number which can only be dialed on digital mobile phones. 112 is accepted as a secondary international emergency number in some parts of the world (including Australia) such that when 112 is dialed in areas of GSM network coverage the call is automatically translated to that country's emergency number.

112 should work on all phones regardless of their date of manufacture and in all countries to provide access to emergency services. Mobile phones manufactured since January 2002 also provide these capabilities when dialing Triple Zero (000) to call emergency services.

6. Calling 000 or 112 from Fixed Line Phones

Dialing 112 from a fixed line telephone in Australia will not connect you to the Emergency Call Service. It is only available from digital mobile phones. You need to use 000.

7. Text Messages (SMS)

It is not currently possible to contact Triple Zero (000) or 112 using the SMS text facility on your mobile phone. If you use this method then you will need to send the SMS to a person who can then contact emergency services for you.

8. Dialing from a Locked handset

You can call Triple Zero (000) or 112 from most mobile handsets without having to unlock the phone. However, you should check your handset manual for information regarding emergency call dialing.

Emergency Communications^{cont.}

D. Making Emergency Calls from a Satellite Phone

1. Overview

Satellite phones are the best all round device for communicating since they have coverage all over Australia (and most of the world) thus enabling 2 way conversations in the event of an emergency. The new generation of satellite phones are also light (around the weight of a 'normal' mobile phone). However they are more expensive than a PLB, require a subscription plan whether they are used or not. When used their cost per minute is also several times that of a mobile service provider.



*Figure 1
Satellite Phone with
Antenna Extended*

2. Usage

Satellite phones need clear sky access so they have line of sight to the satellites. The satellite phone comes with instructions on how to point and hold the phone and how to make calls.

When calling emergency services all the above information for mobile phones applies to satellite phones with the sole exception of coverage. E.g. you call 112 or 000 to make an emergency calls, if GPS is fitted to the satellite phone it is not transmitted when you make an emergency calls, you cannot send text messages to 000 etc

E. Using a PLB

1. Overview

When a PLB is activated, it transmits a signal on dedicated world-wide frequencies for distress beacons. The signal could be from a ship, an aircraft or a bushwalker - it all goes through the same system

The signal is received by satellites and sent to ground stations known as Land User Terminals (LUT). There are three LUTs of relevance to Australians, in Perth and Brisbane and Wellington, New Zealand.

The LUT forwards the message to a Mission Control Centre (MCC) which collates the information from all the LUTs in Australia and shares it across the worldwide network. When a signal is received and identified to be a distress call from Australia the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) in Canberra is alerted. Their job is to then activate the appropriate emergency service for the distress call. In the case of bushwalkers this is a land rescue and therefore the Police are the responsible authority. The Police will activate emergency services as required to locate and rescue the walker in distress - usually a rescue helicopter. Figure 5 illustrates the various aspects of the system. The beacon may also be picked up by over flying aircraft who recognise the signal and who would then report the hearing to Air Traffic Control and then on to the RCC Australia.

On the new digital 406MHz system the signal transmitted from the beacon contains a brief message which contains the country the beacon originated from, an ID code, a code indicating which type of craft the unit is fitted to (for bushwalkers it would just say it is a PLB), the GPS location of the beacon (if fitted), and whether the beacon has a 121.5MHz homing signal. This message allows rescue authorities to know straight away what beacon has been activated and what type of rescue is likely to be required and, if the GPS is fitted an accurate position can be determined.

*Figure 3
The front of a Current
Model PLB*



*Figure 4
The Back of a Current
Model PLB Showing the
Activation Instructions*



Emergency Communications ^{cont.}

2. The New and Old Systems

Analog 121.5MHz/243MHz Analog Distress Beacon System

This is the older of the two systems and is no longer for sale new. Some second hand units have been seen for sale. Don't buy them!

406MHz Digital Distress Beacon System

This is the newer system which has a number of upgrades over the older system. The 121.5/243MHz system was a simple analog system using low earth orbiting satellites(LEOs), but the 406MHz system is digital and therefore allows more information to be sent when a beacon is activated and it enables more precise location detection. All digital PLBs on 406MHz transmit a unique identifying number and can be correlated to a database of registered owners of beacons. This means if you get a 406MHz PLB you should register it with AMSA so the authorities can start the rescue process with more information.

Although the 406MHz system relies on the same LEO satellites used by the 121.5MHz beacons, there are additional satellites in geostationary orbit that also receive signals from 406MHz beacons enabling a faster response time as there is no need to wait until the LEO satellite is in range.

The digital beacons also transmit on 121.5MHz to ensure that aircraft can continue to easily locate the beacon by using radio direction finding techniques.

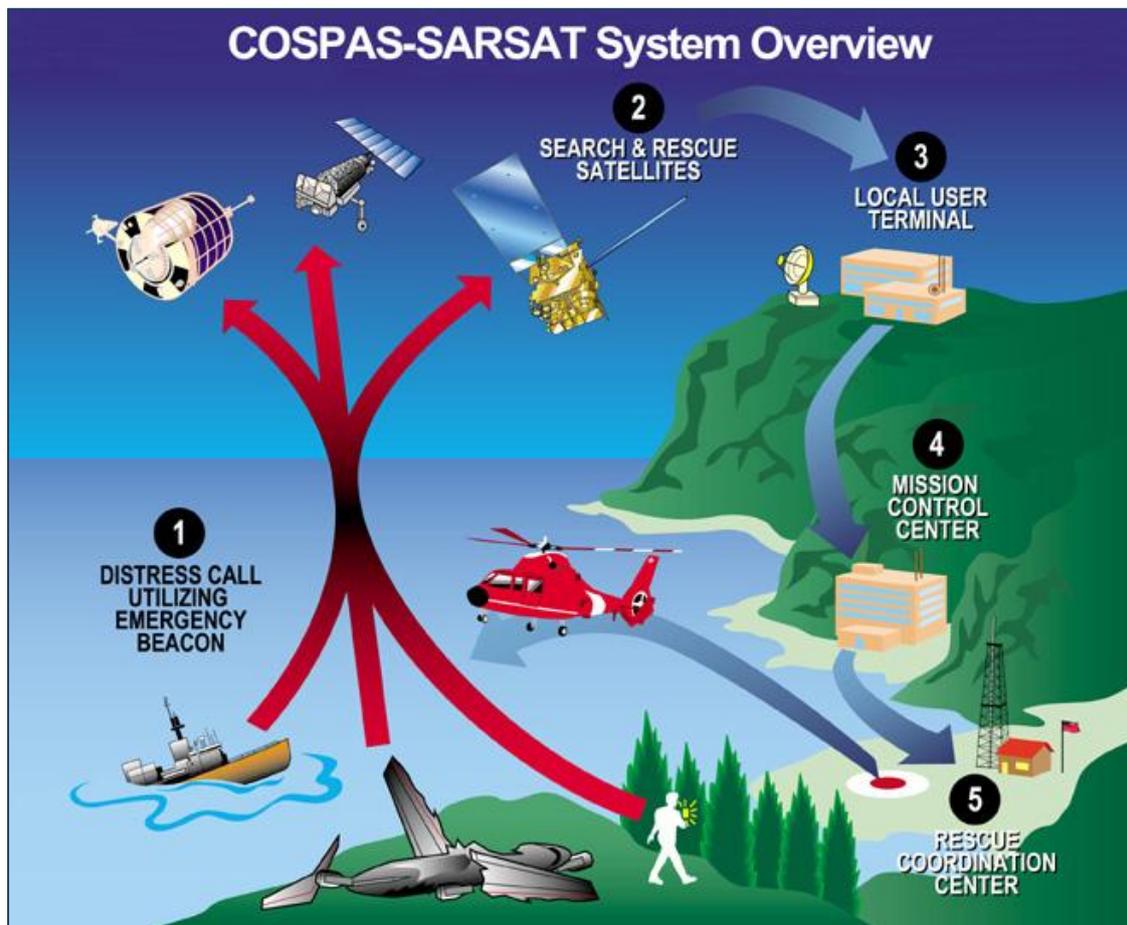


Figure 5 The Emergency Beacon Satellite System Overview.
Original Source US Govt NOAA, Current Source Wikipedia.

3. Acquiring and Maintaining a PLB

Buying a PLB

PLBs can be purchased at most quality outdoor stores and ships chandleries (such as Whitworths). It is recommended that a GPS capable PLB should be purchased.

Hiring

SBW has 2 PLB which members can use for free. In addition PLB's can be hired from a number of locations including Blue Mountains Police Stations. See the SBW web site for more details.

Emergency Communications ^{cont.}

Maintenance and Storage

Generally all beacons have a test button to confirm that they are operating correctly. As a minimum, test the beacon before your trip and note the battery expiry date. When storing or packing the PLB, make sure that the cover or case for the PLB is correctly fitted and nothing is bumping the activation switch. All PLBs are waterproof.

4. Activating a PLB

The PLB system is to be used as a last resort only. Your initial distress alert should still be made by telephone, radio or other direct communication if possible. Direct communication will result in a faster and more appropriate response as you will be able to explain the situation to the emergency services. If you are near your vehicle you could consider sending somebody to walk out and drive to summon assistance.

Before activating a PLB, if possible move to an open area, as high as possible with a clear view of as much of the sky as possible particularly to the north (for the GEO satellites). You want to get your signal out as clearly as possible and give the helicopter when it comes to you plenty of room to see you and get somebody to you. Have something highly visible ready so you can signal the helicopter and help it find you.

To activate the PLB, follow the instructions on the device. The GME MT310 PLB has the following instructions and other devices are likely to be similar:

1. Remove the PLB case or cover.
2. Activate the PLB according to the directions on the device. For the GME 310 this means you push down the yellow button and slide it to the on position. This will break the device safety seal.
3. Check the red light is flashing to ensure it has activated.
4. Fully extend the antenna. The GME MT310 antenna has 4 sections and is 450mm long when extended.
5. Place the PLB in an upright position in an open space so the antenna is clear of surrounding objects. The antenna should not be leaning against anything if possible. Do not touch the antenna with your fingers while it is transmitting as it will reduce the signal strength.

Now the PLB is active prepare for a long wait. If you are near a major city a one or two hour wait is normal, although several hours is possible. If you are well away from major centres the wait is likely to be at least several hours.

Do not turn the PLB off until directed to do so by the emergency services. If you have not been located yet then leave it on until the battery goes flat.

5. Accidental Activation

If your beacon has been activated accidentally then turn it off and phone 1800 641 792 as quickly as possible to let the RCC know that it was a false activation.

6. If There Are 2 PLBs

If you have two or more beacons in the party then only have one beacon active at a time. When the first beacon's battery goes flat then turn it off and activate the second one. You will not get a stronger signal by activating two beacons at the same time - the signals interfere with one another and make it harder to find you.

7. When PLB's May Not Work

There are some times when a PLB either will not work or you will have to wait a long time before rescue. They include:

- **Canyons** - A signal from a deep canyon may not be detected. If it is detected it may be difficult for the rescue helicopter to track.
- **Night** - The satellites will pick up a PLB signal at night, but a rescue helicopter may choose not to fly immediately and wait until first light the next day.
- **Bad weather** - The rescue helicopter will not fly in weather risky for the aircraft such as fog or in high winds. Either ground crews will be sent in or the helicopter will wait for the weather to improve and you may have to wait a long time.

Consider these factors before activating a PLB. It may be more effective to send somebody out to raise the alarm instead.

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness and The Blue Mountains Conservation Society announce Genowlan Mountain and Mt Airley reserved at last

Some excellent news - After a 30 year campaign, two dramatic plateaus (Genowlan Mtn and Mt Airly) in the Capertee Valley have been reserved as the 3,600 hectare Mugii Murum-ban State Conservation Area. This scenic and biologically diverse area is a key part of the Gardens of Stone reserve proposal and was initially proposed for intensive coal mining that would have caused the ground to collapse 1.8 metres, but the mining intensity has been wound back.

For those who have the GOS Tourist Map, it is the brown shaded area between the Gardens of Stone and Capertee National Parks.

For those that don't have the GOS Tourist Map it is available: <http://www.bluemountains.org.au/sales.shtml>

Or via the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc: www.bushwalking.org.au

Timely victory for the Gardens of Stone National Reserve

Authors and bushwalkers Michael Keats and Brian Fox welcome the 4th March 2011 announcement by the NSW Government of the 3,600 ha, Mugii Murum-ban State Conservation Area - a new name and improved status for the previously unprotected Mount Airly - Genowlan Mountain Mesa.

Significantly, Michael and Brian are producing a major, 8 book, 4,000 page, full colour work on the Gardens of Stone National Park. The Mugii Murum-ban State Conservation Area is central to the content of book 1 that is planned for release later this year.

This is the first time that a work of such magnitude on NSW most magical sandstone featured National Park has ever been attempted. This work is unique. It sets a new benchmark for books on our National Parks.

The eight informative volumes will include over 150 new walks as well as comprehensive insight on the Geology, Geomorphology, Climate, Aboriginal history, Historical Maps, the major Rivers and Water Pollution, Regional History and the Origin of Local Place Names, Flora and Fauna, the Last Three Centuries of European Settlement, together with information on threatened species and environments.

Book 1 detailing 24 walks, the regional geology and geomorphology together with book 2 detailing 22 walks centred on Newnes including regional climate will both be released during 2011. Books 3 to 8 will be progressively released during 2012 and 2013

An opportunity to purchase the full set of these books at an unbeatable pre-publication price will be released in the next few weeks.

For more information contact: Michael - email mjmkeats@easy.com.au or Brian - email, brianandelaine@aapt.net.au

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The Midweek Walkers

Bill Holland

About a dozen of us had a very satisfying time at Myall lakes last week - another five had indicated attendance but had to cancel. We set up our tents and a large tarpaulin on Monday spent the week kayaking, socializing and visiting other areas. The weather was kind to us and we had a long campfire each night under a starry sky. Although Violet Hill was an excellent location for kayaking it had little to offer for other activities such as cycling and walking. With this in mind we visited other locations by land and water.

Korsman Landing, with a cottage and camping ground offers walking and cycling opportunities as well as kayaking so I have marked this for later in the year.

During the month I made a booking for Yarrangobilly Caves in May - see below - and paid a substantial deposit. Already there is strong interest and I would like those planning to attend to send me a \$50 deposit. I will contact those who have already responded with my bank account details and if you would like to be added to the list please contact me ASAP. Numbers are limited so first to pay go to the top of the list. If you do not receive a separate email from me with bank details it means you are not on the list and you should let me know without delay.

Here are the details of coming activities:



A Visit to the Colo River (April :Monday 11th to Friday 15th)

“Bielany” is a 40 acre Semi Wilderness recreational, picnic and camping ground located on the Banks of the picturesque Colo River, approximately 80km north west of Sydney. It was established and is managed by the Polish Community of Sydney. Bielany is opened to picnickers and campers throughout the year and is also available for group bookings such as 4WD Clubs, Scouts, church groups, social gatherings, and other occasions. Cost range from \$10/night for a camping site to \$50 for a room -however the latter cost can be lower for a group



Yarrangobilly Caves (Monday 9th - Friday 13th May)

The Yarrangobilly Caves are located in the northern part of the Kosciuszko National Park, just off the Snowy Mountains Highway between Tumut and Cooma. Come and discover Nature's wonders inside the Snowy Mountains, providing tickets for guided and self-guided cave tours and access to a natural thermal bathing pool, barbecue facilities, picnic areas and a number of short walks. While the caves are some of the most beautiful in Australia, the landscape above ground is truly awe inspiring and well worth taking the time for a wander, you never know what you will come across".

The East wing of Yarrangobilly Caves House sleeps up to 9 people in separate rooms. When we were last there a few short years ago we had a great time with VIP treatment and exclusive tours of the caves. The cost will range from \$20 per night per head if we can get the maximum booking of 9 people. As I have made a firm booking I would like you to let me know ASAP if you would like to be included in our group

The Mid Week Walkers are an informal gathering of people in SBW who find the time to enjoy walking, cycling, kayaking during the quiet times of the week when others are working hard to support us.

The range of activities caters for all abilities with emphasis on a more relaxed style of walking. Some even prefer to spend at least part of the time back at base reading, bird watching or just relaxing in the outdoors. In most cases you can join us for all or any part of the Monday to Friday events, but we need to know you are coming.

If you would like to be added to our Midweek Walkers mailing list please let me know by contacting Bill Holland 4296 3084 or by email to billholland@bigpond.com

Coolana Report

The lack of mower capacity at Coolana was addressed after the January maintenance weekend. A budget submission was approved that allowed the Coolana Committee to purchase a new Honda HRU 260 mower. The second hand HR214 was put into the mower shop for repair. The chain saws were serviced and cutting chains sharpened. The two brush cutters and the three older mowers were serviced ready for the team on the weekend 19th 20th February to prepare Coolana for the reunion.

Phil and Don arrived about 8:30am on Thursday morning with a trailer load of gear and the car full as well. A chain block ropes and tackle were carried down to the Eastern Flat to pull down the top section of a dead tree that was hung up in the top branches of another. This top section threatened the area around these trees and prevented chain sawing at the base of them. The pull down approached worked and with the top section on the ground the rest of the dead trees were then able to be cut up with the chainsaw.

Paul, Barry and Ros arrived early on Friday with Brian and Elizabeth arriving mid afternoon followed by Rick, Spiro and Glenn, with Mae and Chris arriving late evening. The mower shop had rung on Thursday to say the HR214 was ready to be picked up and Ros with help from the mower man was able to get it into the back of her Forester. So we now had a lineup of four mowers for the work on Saturday. The fifth mower is the small domestic Rover that ran out of sump oil last month; this was serviced and with a new plug ran fine but is to be reserved for cutting swamp dock or grass seed. This mower has been modified and is permanently set to a high cut it has a grass catcher which is used to catch swamp dock seeds or grass seed. It is not robust enough for heavy going. Most people had let me know that they were coming and I was expecting fourteen to help with the work on the camping flat over Saturday and Sunday. By Friday evening we had quite a gathering under the tarp in the car park. Ian and Paul joined us as well; they were down to put the finishing touches to the navigation course.

An early start was made on Saturday morning with Chris using the new mower on the flat areas and it performed very well, it is without a doubt a great asset. Bill was using the repaired HR214 which started out fine but after an hour was giving a lot of trouble and it appears that the valves have failed, it is now back in Sydney awaiting a decision on what to do with it; we were now down to three mowers. The brush cutters were used to cut down the two meter high cobbler's pegs and other weeds on the slopes while the utility mowers followed up to mulch the weeds. This is not ideal as the seeds of the weeds are not removed but given the circumstances there is no alternative. We really needed to do something about these weeds before they had set seed, either spraying or mowing while they were small back in December. Phil and Barry worked for four days cutting up logs and Brian and Glenn stacked up the cut logs into neat piles all over the camping flat. Elizabeth, Ros and Rick planted twenty three trees by Saturday night and with Shahram and his friends Ali and Afsaneh the team planted thirty three on the eastern flat on Sunday morning. Spiro stacked logs and tended trees. Patrick sorted out the water supply. At the end of Sunday the Coolana camping flat was ready for the reunion.

Some people were at Coolana on Thursday, Friday and Monday and they concentrated on the Eastern Flat on those days. Rosie was tending trees pulling out weeds and spraying with herbicide in selected areas. Again she missed Gretel's company, council and team work. Trees planted last September to Don Aiken's memory are doing well. There is a plan to increase the rate of new plantings this year. Phil and Barry cut up logs and Spiro stacked them up. Paul brush cut a swath of weeds along the river bank where some of the casuarinas were to be planted. Rick using the old brush cutter cleared the weeds along the creek from the river to near the old bridge. The new mower was taken under its own power across to the Eastern Flat and all of the area cleared of weeds in January was mowed, the weeds of course had started to spring up again to about 30cm. The area was extended at the edges and the mower made short work of weeds up to about 50cm high. Weed infested areas if not sprayed need to be mowed every four weeks during the growing season. During January Paul had brush cut lanes through the one meter high weeds at the eastern end of the flat these lanes were also mowed between the now two meter high weeds. A lane two meters wide was forced through the last 30 meters of high weeds to the Quakers gate, allowing access to the east for any walkers.

Don Finch

Can't think of a walk to lead?

There are well over 1000 overnight and extended trips outlined in the Historical Walks Database.

This can be found by logging in to the Members Area on our website:

<http://www.sbw.org.au/>

Then follow the link "Historical Walks Record".

Here you will find a list of all the overnight or extended walks run by the club from its inception to the present day. Look at the region you are interested in and see what walks have been done there in the past! Use this wonderful resource to help plan your next walk!

Coolana – SBW's Bush Retreat and Wildlife Refuge

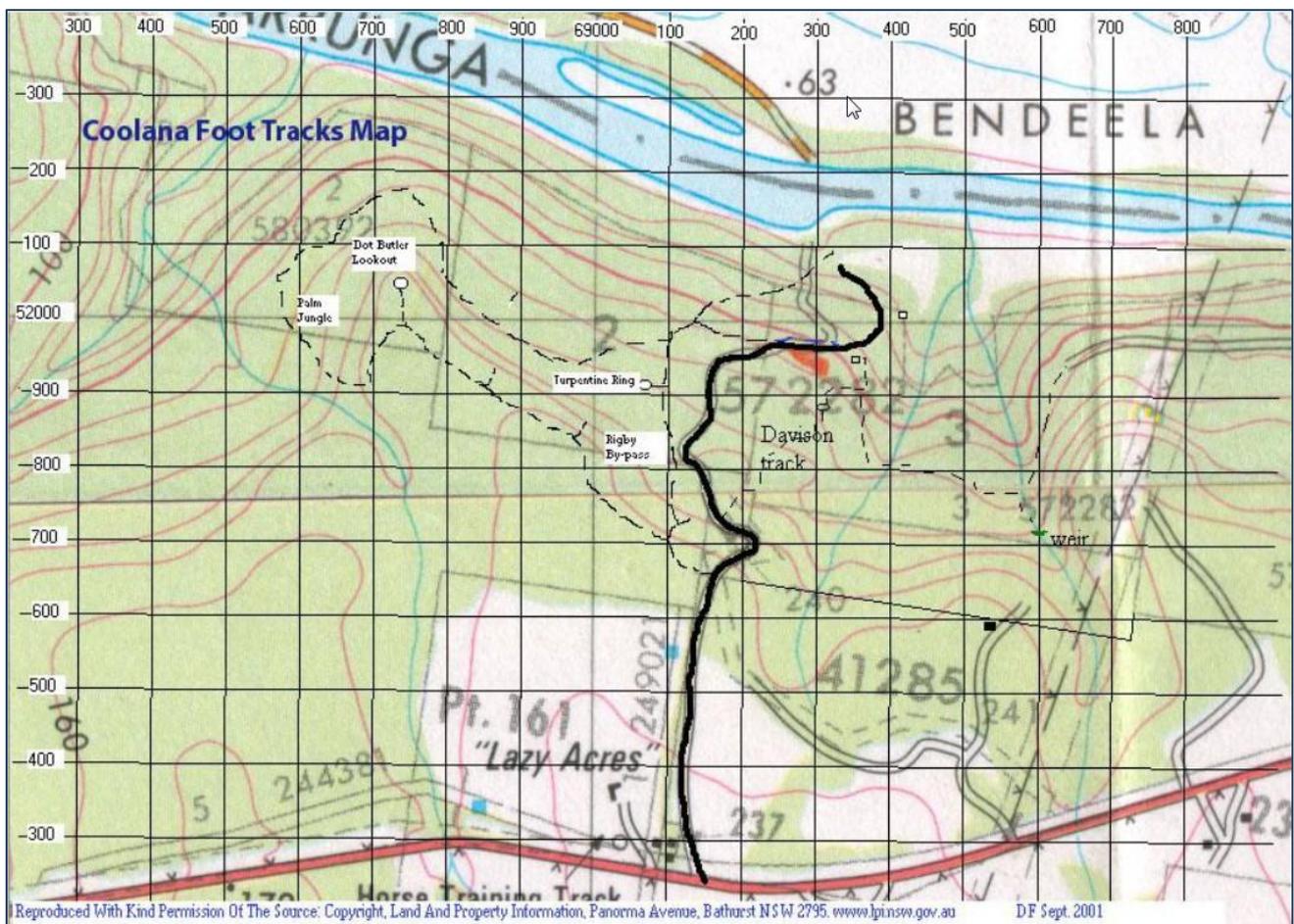
“Coolana”, an aboriginal word which means “happy meeting place of the future”, is located in the scenic Kangaroo Valley south of Sydney. Refer to our web site to view our Pictorial Gallery http://www.sbw.org.au/content_common/pg-our-very-wildlife-refuge.seo

It is a scenic 53 hectare Bush block which flows from a rugged Escarpment down through burrawang terraces to grassy banks beside the tranquil Kanagaroo River. It is surrounded on all sides by other bush blocks and to the west by a 4 sq km State Recreation Reserve.

This idyllic venue is available for recreational activities including:

- bushwalking, swimming, canoeing, fishing, orienteering, navigation training, leadership training, flora and fauna watching, abseiling, bouldering, endurance event training, “Bush Care” work, meditation, group and private camping and just plain “getting back to nature”.
- Usage periods can be day, weekend or extended visits (for groups up to 100 or more)
- Part of the conservation ethos is that people “walk in” 600m down the hill from the Car Park, in order to create a mental break from civilization & to ensure the tranquility of the experience

We have set up a 20 Marker Orienteering Course and laid out a number of foot tracks traversing our land and the adjacent blocks. We have also developed a Booklet called “101 Things to do at or from Coolana”, which outlines the large number of activities that can be engaged in at Coolana, as well as in the adjacent scenic Kanagaroo Valley.



Facilities:

There is a large open three sided Shelter Shed, 2/3 of the way down the 4WD track, and a Composting Toilet just up from the Camping Flat. Untreated water from our creek (which has a pristine catchment area) is piped to a tap near the Shed, and to a tap on the camping flat. Tank water from the Shed supplies water to a sink by the toilet. There is no power (the lights in the toilet and the exhaust fan are operated from a storage battery and a solar panel).

Coolana – SBW's Bush Retreat and Wildlife Refuge ^{cont.}

Donations:

Coolana requires focused ongoing attention to maintain the facilities as well as to preserve the flora & fauna. This work is primarily conducted by volunteer SBW Members, with materials funded by SBW. Coolana pays rates and other charges from Member funds. SBW therefore requests that attendees assist in the up keep, with contributions determined on a “cost recovery” basis:

- ✿ \$5 per non SBW Member per night
- ✿ \$20 per Vehicle per visit/5 days (paid by electronic deposit to the SBW Bank Account in advance)

Prior Bookings: by email to: activities@sbw.org.au

The Kangaroo Valley Village has a number of facilities: a Pub, Mini Super Market/Service Station, Stores, Cafes, Tourist Shops and activities etc, refer: <http://www.kangaroovalleytourist.asn.au/home/>

Details of the Birds & other Fauna can be found at: <http://www.kangaroovalleytourist.asn.au/dir/wildlife>

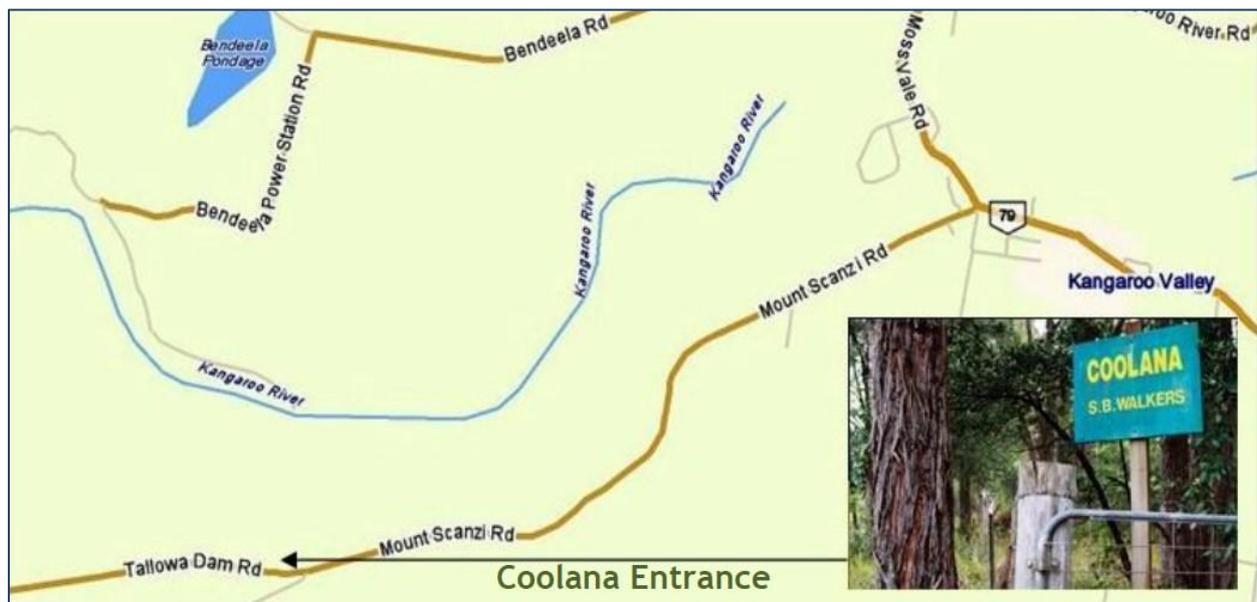
Adjacent National Parks include:

- ✿ Barrens Grounds: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/NationalParks/parkHome.aspx?id=N0401>
- ✿ Budderoo: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/NationalParks/parkHome.aspx?id=N0069>
- ✿ Morton: <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/NationalParks/parkHome.aspx?id=N0022>

Directions:

Drive down either by the Princes Highway via Berry, or the Hume Highway via Mittagong. Then drive to the historic Village of Kangaroo Valley. Total distance is 185km via the Princes Hwy & 175 km via the Hume Hwy i.e. 2.5-3hrs, dependant on traffic conditions and breaks.

Just N of the village (see Map), turn W onto the Mount Scanzi Road, and drive for 5 km to the intersection of the Mount Scanzi Road and Tallowa Dam Road (just past the Power Lines). Turn right onto Tallowa Dam Rd and continue W for 100 metres to the signposted entrance to Coolana. The entrance is located at grid reference 692513, on the Burrier Map (8928-2-S), on the N side of the Rd.



Then drive 400 metres along the dirt track to the car park. It is possible to camp near the cars (however, this is near the escarpment, so please take care at night). The primary camping area is on the flats beside the river, which is 600 metres down the hill following the 4WD Track.

Trains and Buses can also be used to get to Kangaroo Valley Village.

SBW Committee
15 March 2011

Legless Legends

When walking in the Aussie wild
beware a creature meek and mild:
a slender thread, small, sleek and black
lies waiting there beside the track.
Go careful then, lest you're in reach
of being host to the humble leech.
Take note: the male's of no concern -
he'll let you pass beside his fern,
but not his lady wife, I fear:
she'll hitch a ride once you draw near.
She'll find that hole astride your shoe
and unbeknownst she'll wriggle through
and then she'll call her friends around,
"Come quickly, girls - look what I've found!"
Before you blink, they're everywhere:
between your toes, under your hair,
in the little crease behind your knee
and always one somewhere you cannot see...
To get them off you'll prod and push
these legless legends of the bush,
or with a stick mount an assault,
or sadist-wise attack with salt.
But spare a thought when next you see
a leech that latches on your knee:
for them it is survival's creed -
a necessary step to breed.
So while you trek the wildness through,
think! they deserve to be there too.
With many things you should take care
when in the bush: you must beware
of spiders, snakes and fallen trees,
of biting ants and stinging leaves,
beware of fire and raging flood,
but the leech just wants to suck your blood.



Helen Lalas (Title courtesy of David Bell)

BUSHWALKS WANTED FOR SBW WINTER PROGRAM 2011

What bushwalking ideas do you have?

We are so lucky in Sydney. We can easily walk in the mountains close by, in parks that thread their way into the suburbs of Sydney, along beaches, through rainforest covered mountain ranges or our awe inspiring Alps.

Those walks you have always wanted to do, those walks others would love to do, SBW needs your help! We need all trips; easy through to hard. There is also room for trips that look at history, cultural or environmental issues. Or maybe a gourmet walk!

**The Winter Program is now being compiled;
get those walks to Tony as soon as possible.**

Tony Holgate
02 9943 3388 (h) / 0434 968 793 (m)
tholgate@optusnet.com.au

Autumn Social Program

Kathy Gero

ALL MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE KIRRIBILLI NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE
AT 8pm UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED.

March 16
8pm

Canyoning - Everything You Might Like to Know

Three of our most competent canyoning leaders - Tom Brennan, Ian Wolfe and Kenn Clacher will show you the delights to be savored once you know how to canyon. An extensive question time is part of the agenda.

April 6
7pm

Committee Meeting

Observers welcome

April 13
8pm

New Members Night

Introduction to SBW for intending Prospective members

April 20

There s no social night due to Easter

May 4
7pm

Committee Meeting

Observers welcome

May 11
8pm

New Members Night

Introduction to SBW for intending Prospective members

18 May
8pm

Ecotraining (Australia) with James Hutchison

The aim of Ecotraining Australia is to raise the standard of knowledge and awareness of Australia's cultural & natural heritage by reconnecting people to nature through positive experiences with our land. This is done with courses in Tourism and Green Skills. Come and learn about this fascinating initiative.

COME AND SUPPORT OUR GUEST SPEAKERS!

Why not come along and meet for dinner at Kirribilli before one of the social evenings?

Our Social Secretary, Kathryn Gero has changed her email address.

Her new email address is: kathymg73@gmail.com

If you would like to organise a social event for club members contact Kathy and share your ideas with her!

Paddy Pallin



PART OF THE JOURNEY FOR 80 YEARS

"The **only** trips I
regret are the ones
I **didn't do.**"

Paddy Pallin
1900-1991

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