

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



Established June 1931

ON THE AXEHEAD

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers Incorporated, Box 4476 GPO, Sydney, 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening from 7.45 pm at the Ella Community Centre, 58a Dalhousie Street, Haberfield (next to the Post Office). Prospective members and visitors are invited to visit the Club on any Wednesday. To advertise in this magazine please contact the Business Manager.

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NO POWER LINE THROUGH KANANGRA-BOYD NATIONAL PARK

by Alex Colley

When Mount ARMOUR and the Boyd Plateau were added to Kanangra/Boyd National Park following the most strenuous and widely publicised conservation campaign in the State's history prior to 1975, conservationists believed that the Kanangra/Boyd wilderness was saved. Eleven years later, however, in 1986, it was learned that construction of the Mount Piper-Marulan power line through the Park was under consideration.

The Electricity Commission acted with commendable regard to public interest. It commissioned an independent Environmental Impact Study by Kinhill-Stearns and invited submissions from all interested parties. Kinhill-Stearns delineated four possible corridors for the route of the power line, and after prolonged and extensive research and consultation with the Colong Foundation and other interested parties, recommended a route passing west of the park.

In normal circumstances this would have been the end of the matter, but there was a change of Government and grazing interests in the Oberon district sought to have the line put through public instead of private lands. They meant through the Park. This would have necessitated a new EIS at a cost of \$1 million, plus adding \$5-10 million to the cost of construction. No time was lost in requesting the Hon Tim Moore, Minister for Conservation, to afford interim protection to the Park by invoking section 59 of the National Parks Act. It could also have been protected under section 7 of the Wilderness Act. These provisions were in the Acts to counter just such threats. As an additional protection, the Colong Foundation nominated the Kanangra/Boyd wilderness for investigation by the NPWS under the provisions of the Wilderness Act.

In November last year Mr Pickard, Minister for Minerals and Energy, decided to adhere to the recommended route. He made it clear, however, that the decision was not influenced by concern for the integrity of parks or wilderness, but because he was bound by the decision of the previous Government. "Decisions" he wrote, "may have been forced upon the Electricity Commission by their political masters of the day.....Economic argument considered in the environmental debate disadvantaged the local people." He concluded that "Given the impossible position we inherited from the previous Government whose decisions put people last, I have no other option."

The Colong Foundation replied to this letter pointing out that the choice of the preferred route was made on environmental, not property ownership grounds (as stated in the EIS). It pointed out that the Park was available to all the people of New South Wales and visitors from beyond and its preservation should outweigh the wishes of individual land owners, provided they were adequately compensated for any adverse effect on their properties. It is difficult to comprehend how a power line would affect the carrying capacity of a grazing property.

* * * * *



THE CAMPSITE

by Frank Rigby

"At five o'clock we should start to look for a campsite." It was agreed. It seemed we would need lots of time to find one.

The creek was pretty in places but its rocky bed was difficult to walk. I wondered whether we were making good one kilometre in an hour. Probably not. There was no sign that anyone had ever been there before for even where some unpassable obstacle forced us to the banks the bush gave no clues of a previous passage. In hours of walking we had noticed only one possible campsite and that was set well away from the creek. It was also rather gloomy because the rainforest pressed closely on all sides and barely any sky could be glimpsed through the canopy above.

At five o'clock exactly we stumbled upon it. A clear level space, just large enough for one tent, appeared at the edge of a small pool. Why it was clear, apart from some cutting grass, was impossible to tell; there seemed no obvious reason. But the place of our overnight camp was set, there was nothing else. I flattened the cutting grass by stamping on it and minutes later it took its revenge by drawing blood as I put up the tent, one side open to the pool. On some shingle at the water's edge nearby we managed to light a small fire and the customary hot rum and lemon was appreciated even more than usual.

After we had eaten I stood up to look around me in the gathering dusk. What a surprise! Behind our fireplace little flashing lights were flitting back and forth just a few metres away. It was magic. "Just look at this. Fireflies everywhere. Who could have imagined such a thing in the daylight?" In my mind the campsite had suddenly assumed a new status, from something merely pleasant to something rather special. "All we need now are some glow-worms," said Joan, looking over to the opposite bank of the pool. Indeed, it seemed a likely place for the bank rose vertically from the water and was covered with moss and ferns; I remembered how pretty it had looked when we had first arrived. But nothing special was now to be seen so we retired to the tent and must have fallen asleep within minutes.

I was prodded gently in the ribs. I'm sure I would have complained at such treatment but it did me no good because I was prodded again, this time with some vigour. It was pitch dark, surely not time to get up yet. "I'm making no apologies," whispered Joan, "you HAVE to see this. It's like looking at the stars without looking at the sky." "What time is it?" I asked, still trying to figure out what was going on. "About one o'clock. Now stop grumbling and sit up." Slowly I did as I was told and then I understood. Pinpoints of brilliant light shone steadily from somewhere in the inky blackness outside the tent. The mossy bank, of course! Joan was right; it was just like looking up at the stars on one of those clear moonless nights in the bush. It was beautiful, fascinating. Glow-worms in all their glory!

"Well, what do you think of that?" I finally managed to say. "If you remember, I did make a wish for them. This is the fulfilment."

"Remarkable." It was the only word that would come out of me.



WALKING IN ENGLAND AND WALESPART 5

by Ainslie Morris
& Mike Reynolds

OFFA'S DYKE PATH, WALES

Once upon a time, long, long ago, there was a King called Offa. He was the king of Mercia (central England) and reigned from 757 to 796. He built (or rather, he coerced the peasants to build) a dyke to demarcate a frontier between Wales and England. The "marc" or march ran in a fairly straight line 271 km from the Severn River estuary to the North Wales coast, and this is the route of the present-day long-distance path. The dyke is an earth-work, far from continuous even when built, and at its highest is a twelve foot bank above ground level with a ditch of equal depth. It provided the inspiration in 1955 to designate a long-distance path which was finally opened in 1971.

We were first inspired to go on this walk, the "O.D.P.", by a member of SBW, Keith Docherty, who lent us a Heritage magazine with lovely pictures of the scenery. If you want great variety along a walk, the O.D.P. is a good choice; it also has the advantage of being more low-lying than Snowdonia or the Pennine Way or the Lake District, all notorious for their high rainfall and frequent mists. These latter areas also do not have the historic interest of the Welsh border.

Chepstow (CHEAPSTOW - market place) was our starting point, although the purists start a few miles south on the Severn River bank. It is not only a charming little town, but a most convenient one for hikers. You can catch an Express bus at Heathrow Airport, book into the Youth Hostel, or buy your food in the health shop and supermarket, then in ten minutes' walk you are at Chepstow Castle. You may as well spend half-an-hour browsing around these 11th century ruins, impressively perched high above the River Wye, as you'll have to walk a couple of days to see another castle.

We crossed the fine Victorian iron bridge, noting the great tidal drop the river had made since we'd had lunch beside it earlier, and then we were in England. Out came our guide book and route notes, obtained by writing (with an S.A.E.) to:- Offa's Dyke Association, West Street, Knighton, Powys, LD 7 1 E W, WALES. It is best to first ask for the current list of publications which have prices, then send for what you want. We bought:-

1. Offa's Dyke Strip Maps - set for 2 pounds 50 pence.
2. Offa's Dyke South to North Route Notes - 70 pence.
3. Offa's Dyke Path Accommodation List - 70 pence.
4. Camping List - 30 pence.
5. The ODA Book of Offa's Dyke Path by Frank Noble - 3 pounds.

We found this book essential for giving us information on the historical features, for this is a large part of the reason for walking in Britain from the Australian point of view. We also bought "Welsh Place-Names and Their Meanings" so that we would not be frightened of the fford-fawr or pronouncing it.

So off we set on the pont (bridge - Latin influence on Welsh) over the afon (pronounced avon - river) along the ffordd-fawr (main road), soon left for the first of many a fronhenlog (sunny hillside). It was a lovely afternoon, and in fact was building up to a heat-wave over the next few days. Up on the ridge we gained extensive views over the broad Severn River into Somerset in England. A man and his dog herded the black and white cows for milking. This was our first indication that we were to travel through rich agricultural land on many stretches of the walk.

At Wintour's Leap we admired the sheer 200-foot precipice in a great bend of the Wye, and soon after entered woodland which has badgers. Some time would be needed to find their sets then sit and wait for them, but if you have the time, you can enjoy some wild-life still in Britain. This afternoon was warm and still and this brought out the butterflies.

We were rewarded here with our first sight of Offa's Dyke, a bank overgrown with trees. At the Devil's Pulpit rock we had a fine view 600 feet below of Tintern Abbey, which inspired poetry by Wordsworth and paintings by Turner. More of that on the morrow; our first camp site at Beech Farm had to be sought out.

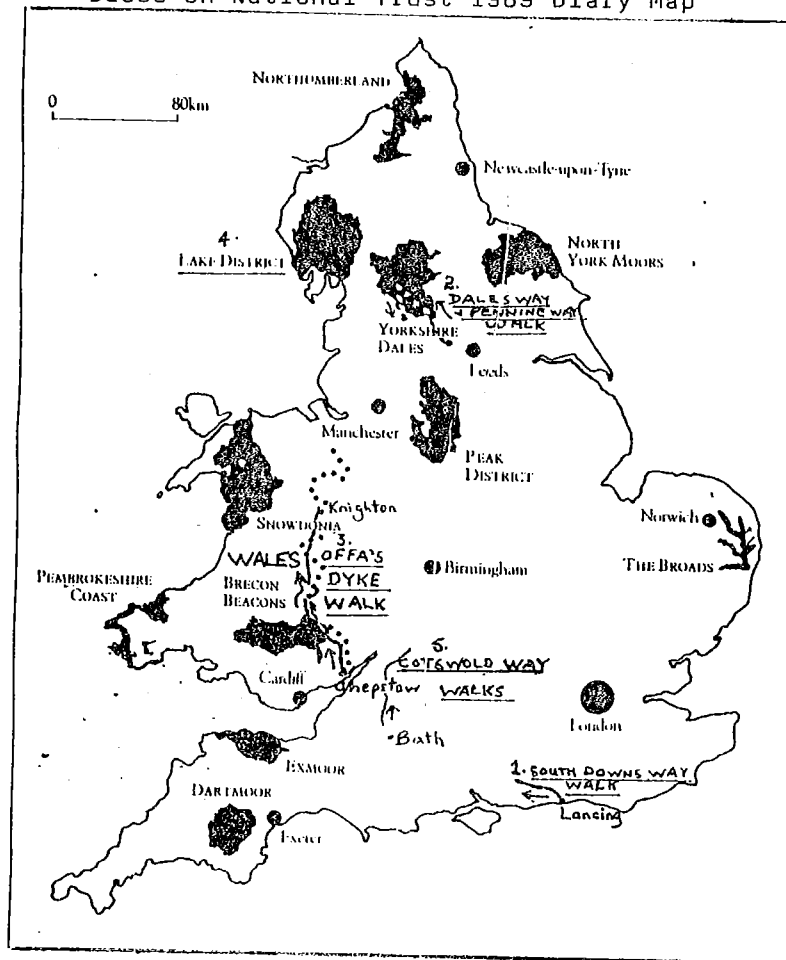
The morning mist far below in the valley was the prelude to a glorious day, which we began by retracing our steps across the farm, through the wood, and down to Tintern Abbey. Ruined

when Henry VIII made the Cistercian monks remove the lead roof, these magnificent stone buildings remind us of the wealth derived from farms or granges developed and owned by the monks. No wonder the king dissolved the monasteries and grabbed their possessions. All of this is explained in an excellent small on-site museum.

From Tintern we decided not to re-ascend to the ODP, but to ramble along the Wye river bank. The river runs cold and swift, and here loses its tidal influence. We saw a couple of men jump in for a swim, swiftly swept down, otherwise the heat may have driven me in for a cooling dip too. A drowsy lie on the grass in the sun, a stroll along by glorious banks of massed pink wildflowers (actually introduced Himalayan balsam), and we arrived at Monmouth. We were back in Wales.

ENGLAND & WALES

Based on National Trust 1989 Diary Map



Here we chose to camp for 50 pence on a soft lawn beneath apple trees in the perfect little garden of a handsome Victorian house. The landlady, seeing how hot (and sweaty) we looked, offered us a hot shower. You could use the camping area just over the old bridge complete with stone gate tower, or the charming old stone Youth Hostel in the centre of this lovely little town. This was the British summer at its best, and the locals were all out in the balmy evening to listen in the town square to a visiting Bavarian band with a backdrop of pubs gaily bedecked with flowers.

A beer garden meal tempted us, so into a pub to order. But how to get into the back garden? There was a snappy spaniel on a runner wire to negotiate. We did it, and settled down among the old beer barrels and kids playing. Over the low back door it said - "Duck or grouse". Mike went back in for drinks, the dog snapped, Mike dashed in the doorway - no duck, plenty of grouse!

We had by now covered 15½ miles in a day and a half, slowed down by the heat, heavy packs (we were carrying seven breakfasts, four main meals and bread), and delightful scenery. The third day also dawned hot, and so we only walked 9 miles of mostly level going across fields and over stiles, through kissing gates (very nice) and along hedges.

Hedges keep much of Britain's wildlife going, as well as being the last refuge of many wildflowers. We had pleasure in identifying many summer flowers, using Collins Gem Guide "Wild Flowers", one of a series of tiny light-weight nature books. Our favourites included wild raspberries, succulent and sweet, and blackberries in the late summer, as well as the fragrant creamy meadow-sweet, dainty blue harebells, violet self-heal and many others. A tree guide is also worth carrying, and by this time Ainslie had become familiar with beech (German - boch - book), sycamore (introduced from America), dainty silver birch, the shrubs holly, alder, hazel, elderberry and the introduced rhododendron (now a pest), Scots pine (the only native conifer), the prevalent narrow-leaved ash and of course, the English oak. Their

varied forms and shades of green make woods and hedges a delight; we were glad of their dense shade this day.

Llantilio Crossenny was far enough, we decided, when we saw a scrawled sign "Camping" on a fence post. We had the only tent in a field shared with sheep and their droppings, with a view of a large pond, the home of swans and their cygnets.

The next morning we explored the village; the decrepit manor house of our farm, the pub, the tiny shop/garage, and the interesting ancient church (LLAN = church, the reason that hundreds of Welsh place names start with LLAN). The Church of St. Teilo at Iddon's Cross was founded in the 6th century when Offa's English ancestors were still heathens. So it is pre-Norman but not Saxon, because it was built to celebrate the defeat of the invading Saxons - that is, the English with their "SAXES" or long knives.

This was to be a hazy warm day; the haze could be seen even across a field, and the near and distant hills had disappeared from view. We paid a visit to White Castle, one of the "Three Castles" built as a border stronghold.

Pack walkers had been a rare sight so far; ODP is considered to be the second most strenuous long-distance path after the Pennine Way, and it certainly becomes hillier as you proceed north. After lunch we met a group of Dutch walkers, four adults and two children, pink from the heat. We were pleased in mid-afternoon to come to a large farmhouse when a young lad was being enterprising and selling cold drinks. Down we went to Pandy (meaning fulling-mill, showing how important wool production has been). Here we crossed the London-South Wales railway line and started our climb up the Black Mountains; we collected water in our useful wineskins at the last farm for our camp that night on top.

What a view we had next morning as the sun rose over England far below; after a showery night, all was clear and sparkling again. Up here on the moors the ling (heather) was in bloom; the border follows ten miles of the ridge top. Wales below on our left in rugged hills, England on our right, a patchwork of cultivated fields. An abrupt spur at Hay Bluff offers a magnificent view of the Wye Valley, here a gentle patchwork quilt.

A camp in another lovely Victorian garden and a good meal in "The Granary" in Hay-on-Wye with our Dutch family met the day before, brought another delightful day to an end.

Next morning we just had to have a wander in the largest second-hand bookshop in the world. Mike found a few shelves devoted to Welsh literature, and we bought "Wild Wales" by George Borrow, who walked over much of Wales in 1854. He was an extraordinary walker and an amazing linguist - anyone who can learn to speak Welsh must be!

Leaving Hay-on-Wye the first mile or so of the route follows the river, but then veers off into undulating, intensively cultivated farmland, with many stiles to cross on the way. At each junction and turn, the way is signposted with the ubiquitous "Offa Dyke Path" fingerposts, with the additional legend "Llwybr Clawdd Offa" whenever we were in Welsh territory.

We had known the glorious weather was too good to last, and by afternoon tea time we were wet enough to be glad of finding a house offering tea and home-made cakes at Gladestry. Suitably fortified, we donned the Gortex and set off up the long climb up Hergest Ridge, which is smooth sheep-cropped grass with darker islands of bracken fern, and quite devoid of shelter. So on we plodded through the steady rain, over the old racecourse, and down into the border town of Kington to find a spot for our tent.

After consulting our accommodation guide, we found ourselves for the third time this trip camping in somebody's back garden! Real camping areas are not readily available everywhere, and it seems that the Offa's Dyke Association have persuaded people who run "Bed and Breakfast" establishments to be listed in the O.D.A. accommodation list as taking campers if they have room.

Anyway, we had rung the bell by the front door of a terrace house in the main street, and had been shown through to the back lawn where we pitched our tent. With no sign of a let-up in the rain, we were glad to have the use of the lean-to conservatory (complete with

table and chairs) to cook our dinner in, and later to relax in with a game of Scrabble.

Next day, with the weather cool and windy, but with the overnight rain cleared away, we had a quick look at the quaint (and traffic clogged) streets of Kington, and then headed for the hills again. And the hills were getting bigger! This next stretch of the path took us through typical Welsh border country - big rounded hills with deep wooded valleys between. Sheep country mainly, but some of the steeper hillsides cloaked with dark blankets of conifer plantations.

Here we found some of the best-preserved sections of the Dyke, and often the path runs right on the top of Offa's earth bank, with his thousand-year-old ditch still clearly defined by the side. This is good walking country - a well drained track, dry underfoot even after a day of rain - fine open views, with ever changing vistas of rolling hills and dotted with farms which seem to have grown there, so much are they part of the landscape. If only we had not had a cold south-west wind blowing in our left ears all day!

The fourteen miles to Knighton was a steady day's walk, and we were there just in time to get to the Offa's Dyke Association Headquarters and Information Centre (also a Youth Hostel) before it closed for the night. We were given directions for finding the farm where we could camp, and after recording our comments in the visitors' book, get off in light rain to get our home set up before the rain started in earnest.

It had been our intention to walk as far as Knighton (about half of the total Offa's Dyke Path) and as it turned out, our program went according to plan. We knew we had to be back in Chester in a couple of days for a family wedding, so Knighton had to be the end of the walk for us. Maybe another time we will come back to do the northern half - if the southern half is an indication, it will be worth coming back for.

* * * * *

SOCIAL REPORT FEBRUARY

by Ian Debert

Wednesday 22nd February - "Maps and How They are Made"

We all use maps in our bushwalking but give little thought to how they are made.

Come along to the Clubrooms and find out about this most important process used to produce maps such as topographical maps, tourist maps and street directories.

NOTICE

The Treasurer reminds all members that Annual Subscriptions are due and payable on or after the Annual General Meeting and within six months from the start of the Club year as provided for in the Constitution, viz. 30th June 1989.

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THE JANUARY GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

There were 30 or so members present at around 2016 when the President called the meeting to order. The call for apologies brought no response. Two new members were welcomed in the usual manner with constitution, membership list, badge and applause. Later one Peter Caldwell, from time past, also came forward for welcome.

The Minutes of last month's meeting were read and received, with no matters arising.

Correspondence brought a letter from the South-East Forest Fighting Fund requesting donations to assist in the campaign to save the sensitive forest areas in south eastern N.S.W. which have been included in the area covered by the recent 15-year extension to the wood-chipping license. The Treasurer confirmed that we were in a position to make a donation without becoming insolvent, so an initial motion to donate \$500 was amended to \$1,000 and passed after some debate.

The Treasurer's Report was next. It seems we spent \$1,897, acquired income of \$94 and closed with a balance of \$3631 in round figures.

The Walks Report began on the weekend of December 16,17,18 with Don Finch's wet and wet Morong Deep trip. The party of 8 found a good deal more water than usual, with one member almost drifting over a waterfall and another becoming separated from the main party for around three hours. In view of all that they truncated the walk somewhat and came out mid-afternoon on Sunday. Peter Sharp's birthday walk did not go, but Jan Mohandas reported around 17 on his Otford to Bundeena swimming trip. The weather sounded about right for that sort of thing, hot and steamy.

Over the Christmas period Carol Bruce and John Porter led 6 people on their Brogo/Wadbilliga trip. The river crossings were somewhat more difficult than expected due to recent rains and there was one report of a creek which increased in size as they progressed upstream in steady rain on the last day. The final conclusion was that it was a good trip in magnificent country.

Don Finch's Colo river trip was cancelled. Bob King had 5 people on his Oxley Wild Rivers trip. The initial progress was slow and campsites hard, but all that improved as time went by. They visited the Styx River, the Tambla River and the MacLeay River in generally dull and overcast weather.

George Walton had 9 on his Kosciusko area walk. The wildflowers were good and the weather was overcast but fine. Bob Younger's January 2nd trip in The Royal had 5 starters and no details.

The following weekend, 6,7,8 January saw Les Powell leading a party of 5 on his Nattai River trip. The weather was cool, so to keep the troops entertained Les took them up onto Wanganderry tops to camp. Kenn Clacher's Davies Canyon trip was led by Don Finch and John Porter. Conditions were not suitable for the canyon, what with fog and drizzle, so they all traipsed off over Cloudmaker to Hundred-Man Cave, and, despite various options considered, all came back the same way. Greta Davis led the day walk for that weekend, with 17 or 18 on her Waterfall to Waterfall walk.

The weekend of 13,14,15 January saw Oliver Crawford leading a party of 9 on his Wollongambe Respite. It was obviously no respite for the Wollongambe, they all went to the Newnes tunnel. The Alan Doherty/Bill Holland barbecue marathon saw an initial party of 17 at Bill's place swollen and increased to 28 at Alan's place. We are assured that walking two hours in the morning followed by two hours in the afternoon is not easy. Not with that much refreshment under your belt it's not.

Of the Sunday walks, there was no report of Elwyn Morris' walk to Ku-Ring-Gai Chase but Jan Mohandas had 18 on his Erskine Creek trip, even some survivors of the Saturday walk.

Federation matters are covered elsewhere in the magazine, but there was one item of special interest. It seems F.B.W. will be holding an extraordinary meeting to discuss the questions of incorporation and insurance. Sounds like old times.

Alex Colley presented the Conservation Report. There was a letter advising that some commercial organisation has been urging people to fish the Cox River by helicopter and a report that 550 people recently demonstrated in Bega against the removal of the wood-chipping license in south-western New South Wales.

General Business brought a motion to the effect that the Club indemnify the Club Committee or any member of the Committee or any person acting under direction from them against any actions or claims in respect of anything done by them provided that it was done in good faith for the proper management of the Club. The motion was passed.

Then it was only a matter of announcements, and the meeting closed at 2135.

FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS NSW - Report of January Meeting

by Spiro Hajinakitas

Incorporation: The February meeting will decide date of extraordinary meeting to discuss Insurance and Incorporation.

Wood-Chipping: Roger Lembit reports steps are being taken to establish The Deua National Park as a Wilderness Area. Clubs are urged to do walks in the wood-chipping areas, particularly Tantananglo, Egan J Peaks, Coolangubra, Deua Nat.Park and Diamond Creek areas and report back.

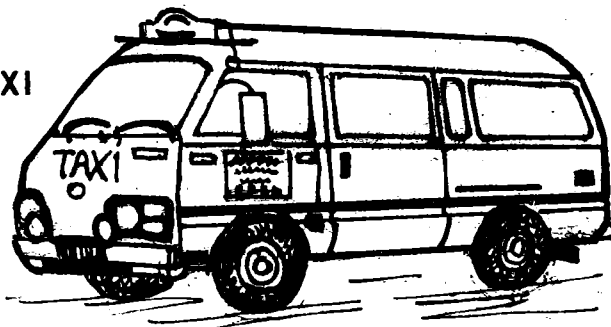
General: 1989 National Sports Exhibition to be held on 4/10 September at Homebush Sports Centre. N.P.W.S. South-East Region will hold meeting on 11/2/89 in Queanbeyan and on 19/8/89 at Hurstville for liason with FBW and Canberra Bushwalkers.

New Premises: The present venue at 39 George Street, The Rocks, is unsuitable and FBW will seek premises elsewhere.

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COOLANA

by Patrick James

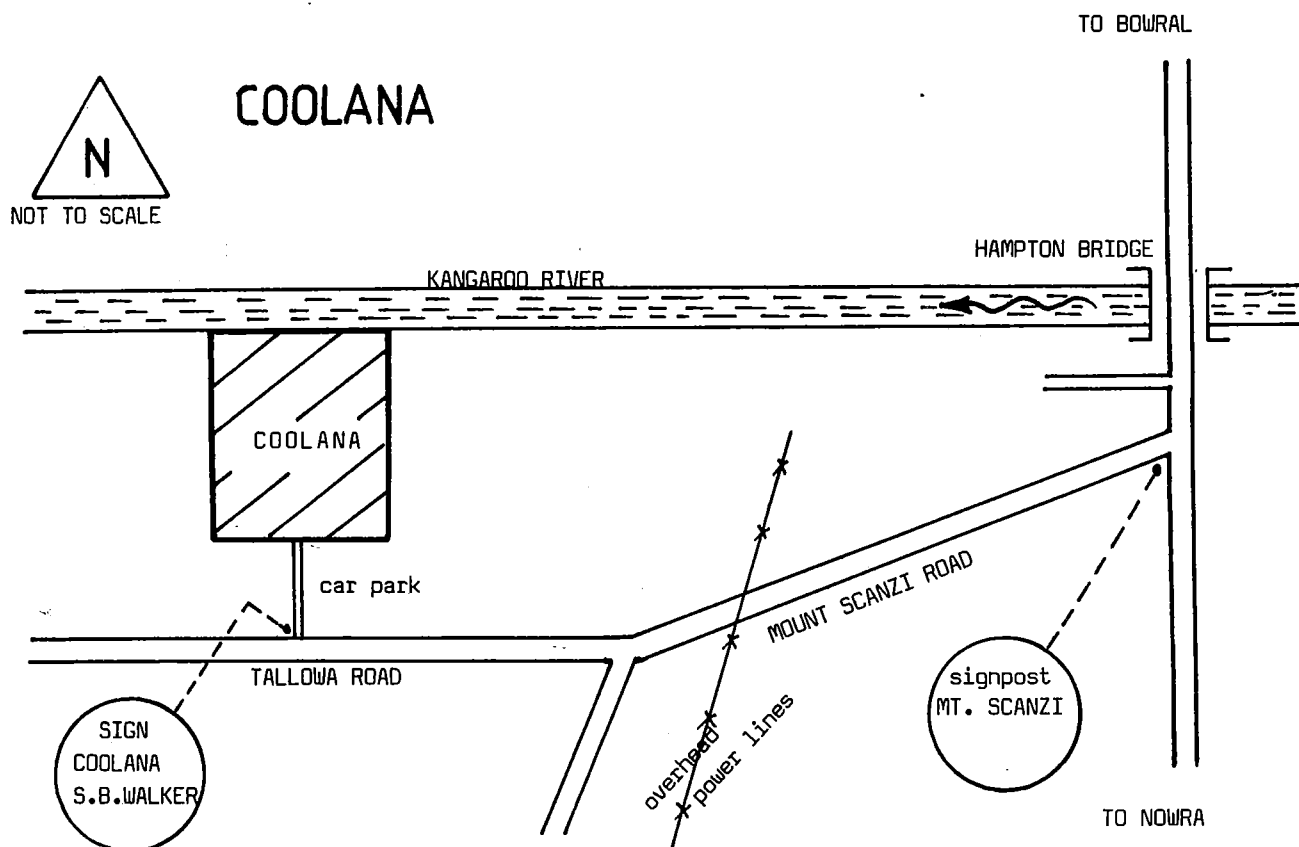
Coolana is the Club's own property on the left bank of the Kangaroo River in Kangaroo Valley. The entrance to the property is located at grid reference 692 513 on CMA map Burrier 8928-2-N. Coolana is actually located close to the junction of three maps; Bundanoon 8928-1-S, Burrier 8928-2-N and Kangaroo Valley 9028-4-S. The main part of Coolana is centred around grid reference 675 517 on the Bundanoon map. The map below should be more than sufficient to find the property.

Coolana is about two hours drive south of Sydney via either the Hume Highway or the Princes Highway. The distance by either highway is almost the same. Take the Hume Highway to Mittagong, then via Bowral, Moss Vale and State Route 79 (Moss Vale Road) to Kangaroo Valley. Pass over Hampden Bridge and then take the second road to the right, see the map below. For travel via the Princes Highway turn off at Berry onto the Kangaroo Valley Road and then take the second road to the left before the Hampden Bridge.

Hampden Bridge over the Kangaroo River is an impressive steel suspension structure with sandstone pylons. The turn-off is Mount Scanzi Road which becomes Tallowa Dam Road. Our land is on the northern side of the road. The access track leads from the road to parking area. From there it is downhill on foot to the land.

Coolana is about 32 ha in area and boasts as improvements one corrugated iron shed and a water supply. Coolana belongs to the Club and is open to all members to enjoy. Each year two or three Club functions including the Reunion and a bush dance are held at Coolana. The 1989 Reunion will be at Coolana.

There are plenty of good camping spots under shady trees and good swimming in the river. Plenty of wood for camp fires.



THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

C
&
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THE BUNDEENA TO LITTLE MARLEY EASY WALK

by Errol Sheedy

Twelve walkers assembled at Cronulla for my annual easy stroll from Bundeena to Little Marley on Sunday 4th December.

Some of us had been curious as to the extent of the recent bushfires in the Royal National Park (and indeed, some members who phoned me prior to the walk had asked questions as to whether the burnt areas might prevent the trip going), but Keith, ever a fund of necessary knowledge appertaining to matters outdoors, told us that when he had walked from Otford to Bundeena, the previous week, he had not seen many burnt areas south of Wattamolla, but that the areas north of there were mainly burnt out. So it proved to be, for most of the inland track region from Bundeena to Marley Beach had been burnt, providing a different kind of view of the bush.

Now would be a good time to collect litter in the burnt areas. The number of bottles, cans and, in the immediate vicinity of camping areas, old billys and other camping equipment tossed into the scrub along the tracks is quite considerable. Rubbish that was previously cloaked by foliage is now exposed for all to see. At one place a discarded aluminium can had landed in a banksia bush and the heat of the bushfire had melted and partially oxidised the can so that it hung there, draped in the blackened fork of the branch, looking for all the world like a surrealistically deceased objet d'art. I felt sure that Dali would have deigned to receive the commission to paint it in situ.

The view as we approached Marley Beach showed that, while the fires had been extensively through this area, there were pockets of unburnt bush here and there, such as the north end of Marley Beach and the stretch between Little Marley Beach and the creek. It seemed that the high ground above the track between these two beaches is actually just a southern extension of the Marley sand dune. The flat ridge heads off south at such a slight slope that the conclusion is difficult to avoid.

We had a leisurely morning tea at Little Marley before setting off inland to Deer Pool for lunch, and where numerous swims were enjoyed. Several types of stoves were employed to boil the billy. George had a hexa-something-tablet stove which opened up with serrated jaws upon which the billy sat, and Les had a lot of fun with his new pump-up stove which he was trying to master prior to a N.Z. trip. There seemed to be some problem with the jets or whatever, and while aficionados of the stove looked on, making helpful suggestions, George opined that such stoves were best not dismantled, but should be left in one piece to avoid the entry of dust, dirt, etc into those tricky interstices that give trouble. It was all too much for me so I had another swim.

The return track from Deer Pool along Marley Creek to Marley Beach was interesting because we found a repetition of the same minor difficulties we had earlier encountered while following the inland track from Bundeena. After the fires had burnt all the ground-level foliage, and the leaves fell from the singed gums, covering the bare track, it was no longer a matter of just following the tunnel of the track through a wall of bushes on either side. It wasn't a great problem but the track no longer looked familiar and it was a lot easier to walk off the track without realizing it. It just took a bit more care. Actually, at this point, it would not, after the fires, have been all that much more difficult to walk over the hill to the coast track. However if we had done so we would have been able to go straight into a performance of our own version of the Black and White Minstrel Show - without any whites in sight!

We followed the Coast Track back to Bundeena enjoying a good N.E. breeze which made walking very pleasant, although we did miss the display of wild flowers which normally adorn the edges of the track. The process of regeneration is in full swing after the fires. Most of the casuarinas we saw were dead but the seed cones on the burnt branches have opened up, discharging the seeds, and there are myriad seedlings already growing. The most obvious new growth is on the grass trees (Xanthorrhoea). The new leaves, growing out of the top of the blackened stumps, were about 40 cm long with the tips browned from the fire which doesn't seem to have bothered the plants much. Tea-trees (Leptospermum) are sending out new shoots from the lower limbs and trunks. Banksias may be slower to renew (ericifolia is killed by fire and regenerates from seed; other banksias put out shoots from lignotubers). The next few months should be very interesting.

The fires had made our usual walk much more memorable.

Participants on the walk: Errol Sheedy (Leader), Keith Docherty, Margaret Waver, Nigel Waver (V), Geoff MacIntosh, Les Powell, George Walton, Elaine Walton, Jutta Dubiel, Ray Franklin, Peter Dyce, David (prospective). Apologies for incorrect names.

FOOTNOTES

° Last month we were well represented in the media, on radio (see below) with a report on Bushwalking in the Thirties, and in the press with one of our older members, Bert Whillier, expounding on the sport of SAND SKIING.

° SBW members listening to National Radio at 1.30 pm on Saturday, 14th January, heard four familiar voices, as Dot Butler, Edna Garrad, Paddy Pallin and Alex Colley discussed early days in the walking game around Sydney. Dot explained how simple and cheap it could be if you used a pillow-slip for a pack, slept in an overhang or in a hollow log wrapped in a blanket, and walked barefoot. Paddy and Alex told how specialised gear for walkers began to be produced, and of the origins of the Conservation Movement amongst people who looked on the bush as a friend, not a hostile environment to be subdued. Edna added notes on the amicable but determined people who got bushwalking going in Sydney. It was almost like hearing Isaac Newton himself tell how an apple fell on him, and we all know what resulted from that.

° Alex Colley has sold over 50 copies of the Wilderness Calendars to Club members which provides a welcome boost to conservation funds and helps to disprove the belief that bushwalkers cannot count. Copies of the calendar are still available and make a handsome gift. A few minutes with some liquid paper will convert Jan 89 to Jan 90. Alex also has plenty of Henry Gold photo postcards.

° Next month is the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. All positions are open to members subject to Clauses 23 and 40 of the Constitution. So if you have a burning desire to be on the Committee here's your opportunity. Voting is of course democratic, perhaps capitalistically democratic because Clause 40(4) says you cannot vote if you owe the Club money. A good example of putting your money where your mouth is.

° On the weekend following the AGM, thus on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th March, the ANNUAL REUNION will be held at Coolana. The weekend revolves around the inauguration of the Club President, plus associated campfire activities of singing, sketches and supper. The Club supplies supper organised by that skilful cake-maker, Spiro Hajinakitas (also coffee or cocoa). On Sunday morning a damper-making competition is held (only S/R flour, salt and water to be used), followed by the Annual Swimming Carnival for serious and non-serious swimmers.

° To help you find our own piece of bush this edition has a map. Coolana is at the junction of four CMA maps just to make it difficult. Keep in mind that a working bee clean-up will probably be held prior to the Reunion and your labour will be most welcome. Keep in mind also that the newly cement rendered floor in the hut is ideal for the Palais Glide in Volleys. So here's your chance to impress that someone who needs impressing with inter alia your dancing skills.

° Ian Debert has agreed to be Transport Officer until the next AGM. This means that anyone requiring a lift home after a meeting should talk to Ian who will try to arrange transport. It seems sensible to talk to Ian early in the night whilst there are plenty of people present.

° However if you require transport to Coolana for the Reunion Helen Gray is the one to talk to on 86 6263 - also if you can give anyone a lift in your car.

° Reports are that all the Christmas walks returned safe and sound.

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