

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



Established June 1931

GARIE BEACH

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 at 8 pm at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitroy Street, Kirribilli (near Milson's Point Railway Station). Visitors and prospective members are welcome any Wednesday. To advertise in this magazine please contact the Business Manager.

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DECEMBER 1991

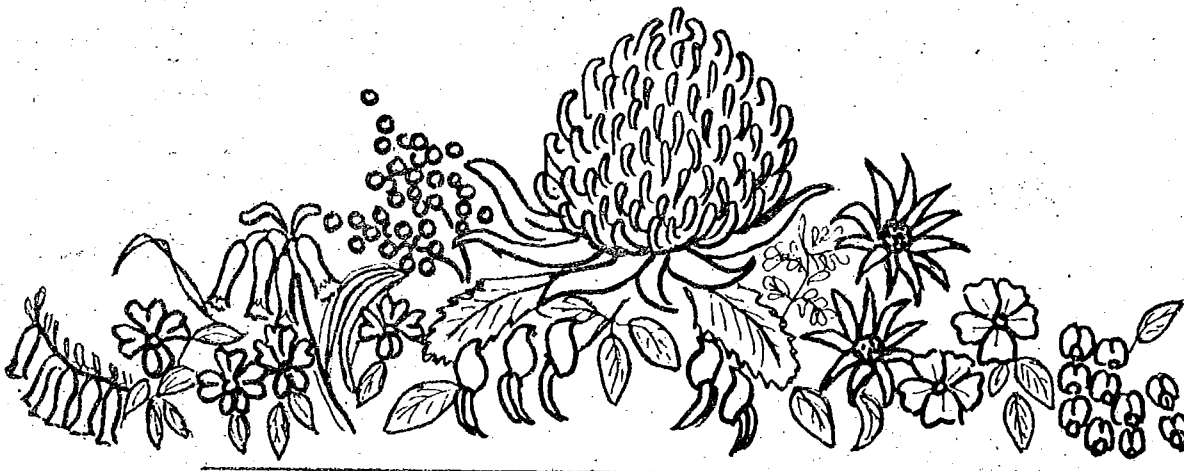
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To all Club Members - Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year - Good Walking!

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SAVING OF BLUE GUM FOREST COMMEMORATED

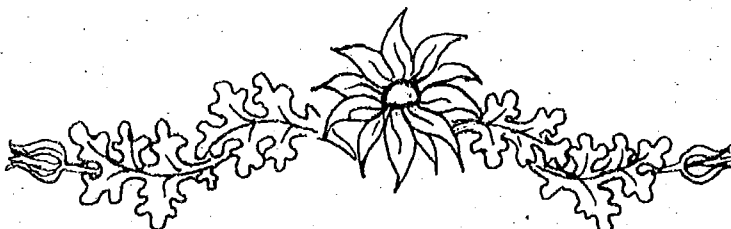
Just over 60 years ago on November 15th 1931, a small party of Sydney Bush Walkers and Mountain Trailers met the lessee of Blue Gum Forest and agreed to acquire the Forest for 130 pounds. The Forest was the fore-runner of Miles Dunphy's Greater Blue Mountains National Park now existing in fact although not in name.

On December 6th this year, Bill Holland, Dot Butler and Alex Colley presented a cheque for \$130 to the Hon. Tim Moore, Minister for the Environment for the purposes of the Wilderness Fund which, though created under the Wilderness Act 1987, was not operative. Mr. Moore was pleased to accept our cheque and announced that \$82,000 would be transferred to the fund from the National Parks & Wildlife Service for the purpose of the assessment of wilderness areas nominations.

It is very appropriate that the Sydney Bush Walkers, having in effect presented the Forest to the people of N.S.W. has now been able to open the Wilderness Fund - two firsts for the Sydney Bush Walkers!

Alex will make a more detailed conservation report for the next magazine.

Any people will have seen the beautiful picture of Blue Gum in the S.M.H. of 6/12/91.



September 7th 1991It's all in a day - Jan's "K to K"

(By Jean Kendall)

Leader: Jan Mohandas

Participants: Morie Ward, Rob Webb, Richard Thompson, Kevin Smith, David Robinson, Henri Foster, John Fan, Tony Crichton, Jean Kendall

It was crisp & cold when we emerged from our tents at 4.45 am; but it promised to be a clear fine day. The bad news comes from Morrie; Jan does not want a fire lit, he obviously fears we might sit around it too long. Am I really going to walk 55 km without a cup of coffee!? Dave saves the day, he has a stove.

I complain to Henri, my hands are freezing as I dismantle the tent poles. "What are you, man or mouse?" says Henri. I feel like a mouse.

There is a subdued excitement as we all go about our packing silently. Its 5.45 am when we start the cars & set off for Kanangra walls car park.

At 6.05 am we start walking, the sun is bright, but it's icy cold. The pace is fast & my legs haven't warmed up yet. Tony is in front of me & his legs are going every which way, he has flu but nothing will deter him from doing this walk.

We are soon urged on from behind by Jan & Michelle to quicken the pace as we are a little behind last year's time.

Mt High & Mighty is the point of no return & Michelle Powell, Tony Manes, Dick Weston & Jan Hodges our support team turn around, we will see them again at Tarro's Ladders.

Somehow I lose the track on the way to Cloudmaker, surely I shouldn't be bushbashing! I quickly find the track & there we are on the top of Mt Cloudmaker. Our names are entered in the book, plus time of arrival 9.05 am & departure 9.07 am. On a subsequent visit to Cloudmaker, we note Milo Dunphy & Bob Carr followed in our footsteps that day & also someone had written a little comment "How did you find time to check your watch?"

At Dex creek we collect water. My penalty (handicap?) is extra water. Others are carrying such emergency items as sleeping bag, tent fly, & extra food.

We enjoy a fifteen minute break for morning tea & we seem to have caught up on a little time. By now I feel less stressed after all there's nothing I can do now except walk to Katoomba.

So on we go over Mt Strongleg ridge ie., Mt Moorilla Maloo, Mt Amarina & we have our first small lunch stop on Mt Strongleg. By now it is getting very warm & it's nice to sit in the shade for a while.

We begin the steep descent from Mt Strongleg to the Cox river. Everyone had told me about this descent & my bruised toe nails from years of jogging & walking hit the toes of my volleys (Yes, Errol Sheedy, I did walk all the way in Volleys).

We reach the Cox & my legs feel like noodles. The cold water is so welcoming; much different to the freezing cold crossing on the six foot track 3 weeks previously. We are now really feeling the heat & it's nice to wet shirts ready for the Mt Yellow dog climb. I point to a summit towering above & ask Rob if that is Yellow Dog. "Oh no!" says Rob "That's much too small to be Yellow dog". My heart sinks into my Volleys.

I reach the summit just in time for the second small lunch. In 5 minutes we are off again & it's 2.15 pm. Now we are apparently half-way and just before leaving, Jan calmly tells us we have now an ordinary day walk to complete - just an Otford to Bundeena!

The rest of the walk & reflect on what a silent walk this has been; the grim determination on the faces of the walkers & the excitement of knowing that you are nearing the end of a great walk.

Medlow Gap was the last re-grouping - I won't see the rest of the group until the Golden Stairs - they are flying.

What a welcoming group greet us at Tarro's Ladders, with orange juice & chocolates. There is Chris Maher, Anne Davidson, Dianne Mather, Tony Manes, Dick Weston & John Carlson who as I emerge at the top of Tarro's tells me there is a dance on in Katoomba!

Some of the support group will also have walked over 30 km by the time we arrive at Golden Stairs.

Gradually we quicken the pace for the final 9 Km dash along Narrow Neck & I feel every incline. The first person arrived at 5.45 pm & by 6.45 pm we were all back at the cars; tired but all prepared to walk the "K to K" next year.

* * * * *

A TASTE OF KAKADU

by Geoff Grace

An airfare price war, an offer of cheap accommodation, how could anyone resist an invitation of two weeks in Darwin?

My wife and I stayed with our medico son Robert, who found sufficient flexibility in his shift work at the Hospital to drive us to well known tourist spots at Katherine, Litchfield and Kakadu.

Having visited a cross section of the major tourist sights, I was given a leave pass by Reta. I contacted the Darwin Bushwalking Club and by courtesy of Secretary Marj King, became an associate member for a week-end walk in Southern Kakadu not far from the South Alligator River.

Marj, Steve and Russell from Darwin Bushwalking Club, two visitors from Maroondah Bushwalking Club of Melbourne and myself made up the party. Russell is already well known to Sydney Bush Walkers - a regular advertiser in our magazine - Russell Willis of "Willis's Walkabouts". He was on a busman's holiday, relaxing while bushwalking! He is well experienced in Top End Walkabouts and suggests we watch his advertisements for some quite unique activities coming up soon.

The end of September in the Top End is hot and humid. It's entering the "build up" leading to the commencement of the Wet. We set out on Friday evening with temperature 33°C and humidity around 90%. Weather fine and guaranteed to remain so.

To cut a long story short, after travelling 300 km south on the Stuart Highway to Pine Creek, we headed east on the Kakadu Highway 100 km to near the escarpment - a hot dry camp under a starry sky. A curlew wailed loudly during the night (the spirit voice of a dead ancestor says aboriginal lore).

Up early. The plan - walk to Motor Car Creek, climb the escarpment, walk the creek to near its source, then traverse cross country to Kurrundie Creek, then down the creek to a known fine campsite with cool swimming hole. Fantastic.

We travelled at the rate of about one litre of water per kilometre! The water situation is of continual concern.

The bush is fairly open with hardy, straggly trees with lots of spear-grass and dry, open understorey. Watercourses are clearly defined by green foliage. We swam in idyllic pools (no crocs), climbed the escarpment, stirred up buffalo and wild pigs (saw the damage they are causing), flushed kangaroos, snakes, water monitors, lots of bird life, enjoyed views of wild country, ate wild passionfruit, looked unsuccessfully for rock art (but it's there) and generally enjoyed the topography of the ancient landscape. It's a very different place to New South Wales.

. . . . and at night, the wondrous glory of the everlasting stars.

On Saturday night I was awakened by the mystical, haunting, beautiful sound of the wing beats of Magpie Geese as they flew overhead, honking and talking as they winged away into the distance. Beautiful!

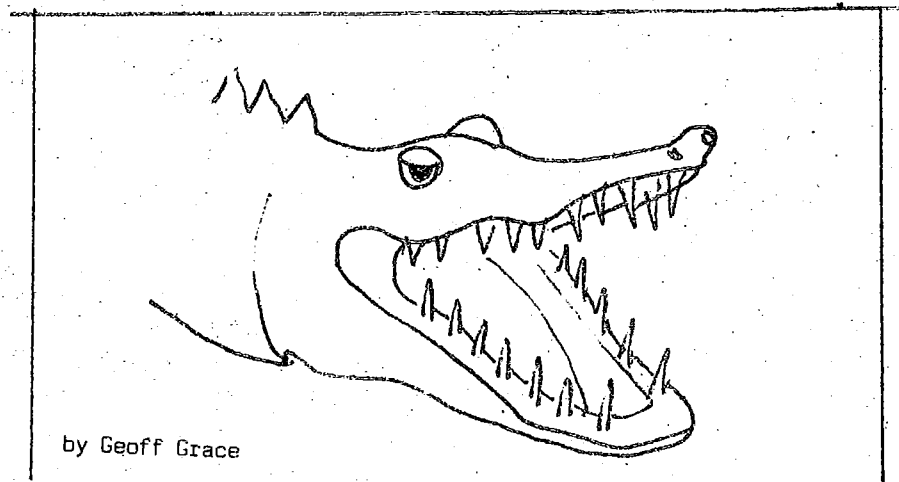
I should mention that in northern Kakadu at a wetland called Mamukala, I had the experience of seeing around 25,000 Magpie Geese all at the one time, and all happily feeding along with other birdlife on the products of the wetland. A fantastic sight.

Sunday, more great swims in fantastic rock pools with mysterious gas bubblings. A few hot scrambles to get down from the escarpment but then, at the bottom, more swimming in shady pools!

The walk back to the cars was interrupted with - guess what - a lengthy dip in a huge natural rock pool fit for a five-star hotel!

Thanks to Darwin Bushwalking Club for the hospitality. An easy, interesting weekend - actually a bit of a bludge - but for me - new country and a new experience. Kakadu is different. I also enjoyed getting away from the tourist crowds.

* * * * *



SALTWATER CROCODILES ARE HIGHLY DANGEROUS

Fortunately, they can't climb the escarpment !

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PLEASE NOTE - The clubroom will be closed for three weeks over Xmas - New Year period. The first meeting for 1992 will be on 15th January.

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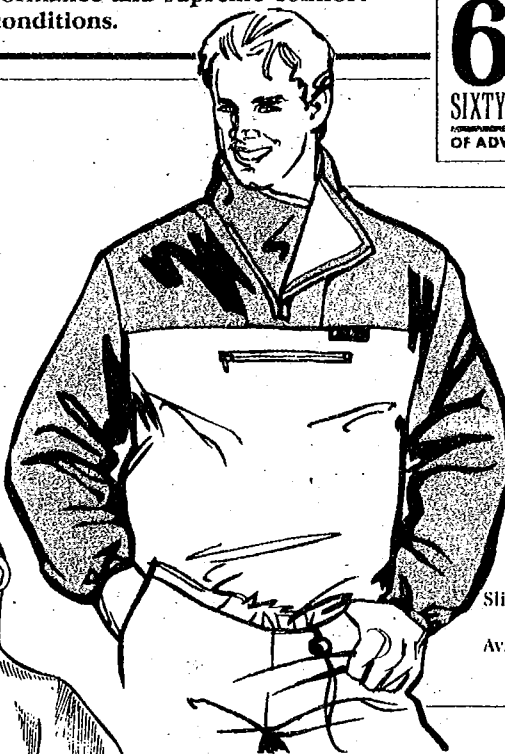
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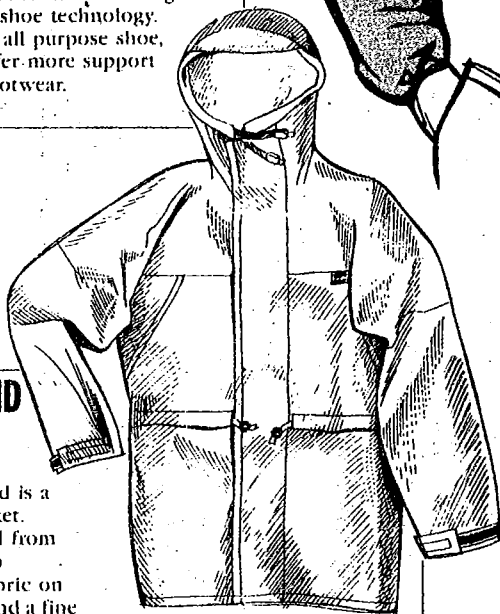
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FOUR WHEEL DRIVING ON FRASER ISLAND

by Brian Holden

12/20 October '91.

Participants: Maurie Bloom, Geoff Bradley, Jan Hodges, Tony Manes, Jan Mohandas, Col Towner, Geoff McIntosh, Robin Plumb, David Robinson, Jennie Ward, Morrie Ward & Brian Holden.

Women were not meant to understand a lot of things and the buzzy red-blooded male gets with four big wheels underneath him is one of them. One of them told me that when I get behind the wheel of my own 4WD I step into Marlborough Country. Garbage! This was not escapism. This was the real stuff. This was the famous Fraser Island. Man and machine in a remote place. And it was to be an all-new 4WD experience for me - sand!! This time I was not driving but was, nevertheless, able to experience the buzz.

* * * * *

"Let the wheels spin and you will simply dig a hole for yourself". The good oil from a savvy young man in the party. He was game too - at Gympy he risked going cross-eyed devouring two adjacent breakfasts simultaneously. Come to think of it - all their mouths seemed to be merely funnels leading into cavernous bellies. Alec Guinness and his poor skinny boys had to build a bridge on less than the quantity consumed by the group of a mere twelve people in only eight days. Enough about food. I'm on about 4-wheeled adventure.

I learned that to this young man's warning could be added another; you must always keep the vehicle moving when crossing a sandy creek. As an extreme example of what can happen: a spanking new Range Rover stopped in the course of one of the numerous creeks which emerge from the dunes to cut across the beach to the sea. That vehicle submerged almost as fast as Glen Ford took down the Tiger Shark - the sons of Nippon right on him. So what happened here? If you were to stand at the surf's edge you would notice that your feet will rapidly sink as each wave that moves over them cuts the sand from underneath. The same process completely buried the vehicle in minutes. The sad remains re-emerged in the surf some months later - probably looking much like how the owner felt.

While travelling at speed to suddenly sink into deep wet sand causes the same physical sensation Randolph Scott must have felt when his horse dropped dead under him - a Comanche arrow through its heart. In dry sand stomach sink is the emotional type. It gradually increases as the awareness increases that the vehicle's struggle to keep up momentum was failing.

One of our group's \$50,000 lushly curved raspberry coloured poetry-in-motion investment became bogged four metres from a rising tide. We were able to get him out by means of a snatch strap while he still had his stiff upper lip. This was high drama. The women were placed out of harm's way and the men swung into action. The strap is a long thick tape which has enough elasticity to jerk the high-revving trapped vehicle into getting a roll on. The driver gunned his engine, stuck up both thumbs signalling all systems go and took off when the strap snapped tight. I experienced the same tingle I felt when I saw Charlton Heston roar off from the Yorktown's flight deck.

Another bogging was in a long incline of dry sand so a sudden jump into a roll on was not possible. When in a jam one has to calm down to give the male logic free rein. Everything possible has to be thought of to ensure success before the next attempt is made to break out of the trap. Sand was scooped away and bits of timber laid down in front of the wheels. Once the vehicle got moving a heavy bloke clung onto the roof rack and bounced like a bronco-buster on the back bumper. This gave the back wheels more bite until clear. The 4WD was an American vehicle with the obligatory 300 horses under the bonnet, a few of which had apparently turned to glue since the date of manufacture. The American wisdom that there was no substitute for cubic inches was shown up for what it was worth. The reality is that there is probably no substitute for Japanese design.

When Preston Foster was pursuing his man over snow he strapped onto his boots those things which look like tennis racquets. When we find the going tough in sand we spread our

feet by letting out more air. We aimed to keep down to 15 psi. This pressure rises with the temperature of the sand and friction. From time to time the driver has to ask himself if the going appears to be getting tougher and, if it is, does the pressure need further reduction. If too much air is expelled minor adjustments upwards are by means of a compresor plugged into the cigar lighter.

The engine works very hard in soft sand. Overheating is a constant threat - especially in warm weather. Now that is another source of drama. You know you have been travelling in sand for too long and you watch that damn needle move on its inexorable climb. It is like a re-run in reverse of Jimmy Stewart's Bl7's home run from Berlin - needle falling and still a long ways to go. If black smoke is being blown out of the exhaust of the diesel in front, he is working hard - and so must you be.

One of our vehicles had a dual system of petrol/gas. Tuning such a combination is a compromise. Performance was not brilliant and there were numerous stoppages due to vapour locks when running on petrol. While on the subject of performance; no vehicle should come onto the island in less than 100% condition. You might not feel as uncomfortable as William Holden did when he struggled to get his P51 to kick over while watching the Commies close in, but you would have a palpitation or two at the sound or feel of a serious illness in your chariot with the image of a costly tow back to a mainland garage looming up in your mind.

The lowest fuel cost was associated with a diesel-powered vehicle with large enough tanks to fill up on the mainland where fuel was 30 cents/litre cheaper. I thought the price of fuel was a rip-off but we were in isolation and we could no more expect a fair deal than Gary Cooper could when he was south of the border and the bandidos controlled the water supply.

The barge round trip costs \$30 for a car and \$15 for a trailer. In addition there is a \$15 entry permit. Food, ice, fuel and alcohol are available on the island at several points. As a holiday venue the popularity of the island is on the boil. Enough toilet paper to attend to over 300,000 bums makes the one-way trip each year and the island's environment is groaning under the weight. Something has to be done but I am not sure what.

Sitting in the queue to get onto the two barges during a holiday period must give all waiting the screaming heebies - nearly all. The love of the mere company of their 4WD would be sufficient to sustain a few in the queue. During the summer holidays driving on the beach would be like white water rafting with frustration replacing the exhilaration. Two opposing streams of vehicles zig-zagging to avoid depressions, soft sand, people vaguely wandering about, lines of mesmerised fishermen - and themselves.

Some of the single-car-width inland roads are two-way. As a crest has to be charged at there would be a big bang if somebody was charging up the other side. And when two vehicles meet on a narrow level road, one does not simply back up to let the other pass if there is no firm ground to back onto or when one has a trailer in tow. Situations open to head on smashes should be eliminated but I do think situations which simply increase the odds of an altercation should be preserved. There is far too much simpering wimpish pleasantry in this country. We need more good old-fashioned biff.

Our two trailers made 4WD movement in sand a lot harder than what might otherwise have been. They added the kind of hard-to-define drag you feel in your innards when you have been driving for some hours with your mother-in-law in the back seat. A fourth vehicle without passengers would have been a better idea to remove the need for one of the trailers.

Travelling solo is asking for trouble and, when in convey, CB radio is handy. The system must be of high quality in all member vehicles. Repeat requests for clarification or failure to contact at all in a tense situation was vaguely like the frustration a man feels trying to reach his boofhead solicitor after the postie has delivered a bombshell from the sinister stirrer representing his wife.

A 4WD man might be tough but it does not follow that ^{he} is insensitive. When exposed to nature - and the island was really something - hairy-chested four-wheelers can wax poetical in mood as much as anyone.

I had a dream after I returned from the island.

I saw an orange morning sun rising above a glassy grey horizon.

The cool birth of another balmy day.

I saw those early rays stream down through the soaring trees,
Shafts of thin white in the rainforest.

I saw tranquil lakes with banks of gleaming white sand,

And a sand that returned those rays back through crystal clear water.

I saw a beach becoming more golden under their warming caresses,

A beach which seemed to go on forever, lapped by a glistening surf.

I saw myself on that wonderous gift of a morning -

I was wading barefoot through a palm-lined creek.

I stopped where there was a snow-white cockatoo perched in a palm.

It displayed its sulphur crest and sound suddenly filled the morning air.

"Calling Peter White, calling Peter White".

And the dream was gone.

* * * * *

Fraser Island 12/20 October '91.

Days overly warm, nights just right, no insect problem. Ground very dry. One day of stiff walking - otherwise as campers/tourers. Squall hit on second last evening cutting stay by one day. No mishaps. Great company - great trip.

* * * * *

KIMBERLEY EXPEDITIONS

Willis's Walkabouts is offering special advance purchase discounts on two of our 1992 Kimberley Expeditions.

The Moran River: April 19 - May 9

This is one of the most incredible wilderness areas we have ever visited. It is also one of the least accessible, even more so early in the year when the rivers and waterfalls are still flowing. We are going to overcome this by using a combination of helicopters and light aircraft from Kununurra. This will also allow us to put in a food drop at the half way point.

Drysdale River National Park: May 23 - June 15

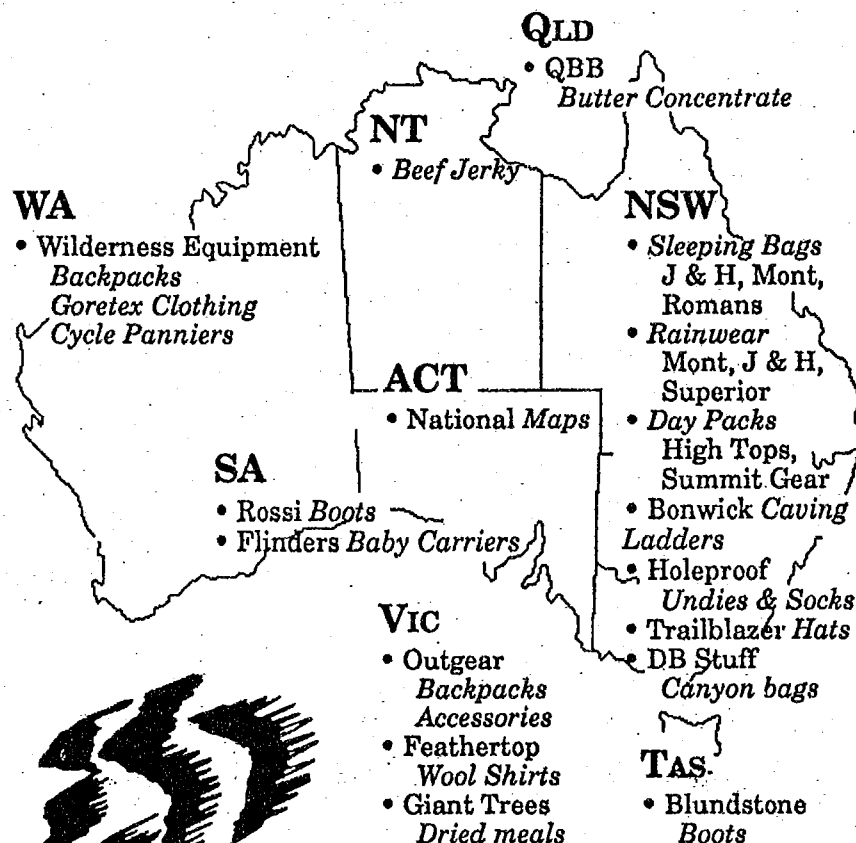
This is the largest and perhaps least known of the Kimberley parks. It contains a variety of landscapes and a wealth of aboriginal art. This will be our fourth and longest visit. We will use our Moran helicopter to put in a food drop allowing us to get further into the back country than we have ever done before.



For details of these (please specify which interests you) and our other trips contact

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(Over the last 8 or 9 years, there have been periodical Club walks incorporating "Beloon Pass" - the gap in the cliff line between the Nattai and Wollondilly Rivers near Beloon trig point. Every time I see the name it stirs up old memories - all of them dating from a time when an excessive amount of blue paint had NOT been daubed on trees and rocks to depict the 1988 Bicentennial "Barallier Trail" - along a route that Ensign Francis Barallier's exploratory party of 1802 followed for a short distance only - and certainly NOT over Beloon Pass. J.B.)

GETTING OVER

First published June 1984.

by Jim Brown

Back about 1937 - some ten years before I became enslaved by SBW - I bought my first copy of the Blue Mountains/Burraborang Tourist Map and brooded spellbound over it. At that time the primitive black and white map drawn to a scale of 2 miles to the inch, was the only passably accurate diagram of most of the huge area between Oberon and the Nepean River, and from Bell's Line of Road to Wombeyan Caves. Later I was to learn that the dotted lines indicating "negotiable routes" had been added from the knowledge of early bushwalkers, supplemented by some information from farmers and other local bushmen.

Since my early walking had included some trips into the Burraborang Valley I was especially intrigued to see a "negotiable route" through the cliffs between the Wollondilly and Nattai Rivers, about a mile south of the trig point named "Beloon". I immediately wanted to investigate it, but it was only after I had leagued myself with the Club that I became bold enough to try it. In a way, I trapped myself into it, when one of my closest Club friends became Walks Secretary, and I volunteered to lead a trip reading "Mittagong - Burnt Flat Creek - Wollondilly River - ", here I paused and in a moment of inspiration added - "Beloon Pass - Nattai River - Little River - Couridjah".

I was not to know at the time that some earlier SBW had gone that way, and had provisionally called the gap in the cliffline "Travis Pass" after Jean Travis, one of the party. If you look at the Nattai 1:31680 map, first published about 1963-64, you'll find the creek leading down from the gap to the Nattai River is shown as "Travis Gully". Nor did I know at the time that locals called it "The Get-over". The name I used "Beloon Pass" was something plucked out of the air simply to identify the gap for the Walks Program.

Having once put the trip on the program, I had to do something about finding the pass on the ground. I enquired at Paddy's shop and in his archives he had some photographs showing what it looked like from the Nattai side. Next I organised a private reconnaissance walk and went off with five friends one bleak August weekend in 1947, taking a car out from Picton to the top of the road down Sheehy's Creek. We prowled up the Nattai and climbed into the various ridges and water courses and eventually became convinced we were on the right path, but with insufficient daylight left on the Saturday to go on up to the divide. Our tents had been left back along the Nattai, so we retreated.

Most of my nearest Club cronies were studying Diploma Courses at Technical Colleges and were unlikely to be walking in September/October/November during the hectic run-up to the annual examinations. Furthermore, I had had the last of my natural teeth extracted and had to wait about a month before the false fangs would be available; a good time to shun human company it seemed. I decided to be ruthless with myself as well as toothless, and walked out from Picton one Friday night in September, reaching the Nattai River at Sheehy's Creek about midnight.

Saturday's stage was up the Nattai, into the ridges we had explored a few weeks earlier - and - a piece of cake - at 11.15 am I was on the gap. There was an empty brandy bottle right on the pass proving that someone had been there before. Then down to the Wollondilly for a toothless lunch of bread and milk, and that night a toothless dinner of stew in a tumbledown hut at Burnt Flat. Sunday's stage was the ascent of Burnt Flat Creek, then the trail across the paddocks to the Wombeyan Caves Road, and a weary 15-mile roadbash into Mittagong.

Two months later, now complete with teeth, I led the official walk. Since many of my mates were still examination-bound, we were a small party of four, and a taxi spared us that

trudge along the Wombeyan Caves Road. Saturday saw us bolting down the Wollondilly, to make the top of the GET-OVER from the western side at about 4.00 pm, and we camped that night as soon as we reached the Nattai. To get back to what passes as civilization we walked up Little River and Blue Gum Creek to Picton Lakes - this was a bit longer than the Sheehy's Creek route from the Nattai and compensated to some degree for our taxi ride on the Friday night.

Having now "got over" from both sides, I still found the pass beckoning me, and in August 1950 with another party of four came down from Couridjah, up the Nattai and over the pass. This was a more modest journey, however, and we were content to go down to Upper Burragorang to catch the Sunday afternoon bus back to Camden.

I now gave The Getover a rest for a few years, but in 1961, after the flooding of Burragorang, could not resist the temptation to see if it was still there. This time it formed part of a trip involving a certain amount of trespass, so I went solo and walked a lot of the distance on bush roads by a summer full moon. For the crossing of the Getover I left the Wollondilly at 5.00 am to "get over" before the February day hotted up.

Shortly afterwards the new 1:31680 maps of the region became available, and I was startled to see the name "Beloon Pass" on the Nattai sheet. It looked as though the name I had coined had stuck. Not far away on the Nattai River also appeared "Colley's Flat" and "Brown's Flat". Well, I suppose Colley's Flat could be named for our Alex, but I'm pretty sure Brown's Flat has nothing to do with me - never even camped there. Of course, there are too many Browns, aren't there? But then, if you think about the late "Snow" Brown, his wife Clarrie; his brother John (Charlie) and wife Margaret; and more recently Roger Browne, why maybe we really haven't had too many of 'em.

The next time to the Getover was Trip Number 4½ - the half because I approached the pass along the divide between the Wollondilly and Nattai valleys, and dropped down on the western side only. I remember the date - October 1966, because it was the weekend US President Lyndon B. Johnston visited Australia and the then PM invented the slogan "All the way with LBJ".

Finally, I went over the gap in February 1981. I won't tell you where I had been, because I shouldn't have been there. This time I crossed from the Wollondilly side, and had great bother in finding the pass. You'd think that, knowing what it looks like, one shouldn't have much trouble, but the notes on my Nattai map read "Wollondilly 12.45 pm - Getover 3.30 pm (hell, 2¾ hours!) - Nattai River 5.15 pm". I remember floundering around in quite dense scrub just below the cliff line for almost an hour before I spotted the gap - which was just where it ought to be....., just where it always has been....., just where it still is.....

So I'm not entirely surprised that some bushwalkers, without a detailed map of the locality, may not be sure if they could find Beloon Pass, a.k.a. Travis's Pass or THE GETOVER.

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IT HAD TO HAPPEN ONE DAY....

Forget about the map and compass; a Japanese electrical company is now marketing a battery operated Global Direction Finder. Named PYXIS, (any relation to pixies?) the manufacturers claim it will - "tell you the distance and direction to your destination..... display your path from point of departure to current position. It is accurate to within less than 100 metresweighs 590 grams and has a detachable antenna unit."

It seems all this is achieved because pixie, sorry - PYXIS, is linked to 24 satellites worldwide, and has a 4 channel receiver which uses the nearest 4 satellites to give you a position reading. Just enter the required data and away you go! The price wasn't mentioned - it might be an inhibiting factor....

Morag Ryder

THE NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

It was a cliff-hanger, there we were, 15 of us, just a quorum, and to tell the truth in all the excitement I forgot to write down the start time. Oh sure, the numbers grew to around 25 as the meeting went on, but it was touch and go there at er- - - after 2000 when the meeting began with the President in the chair and Patrick James standing in as scribe. There were apologies from Michelle Powell, Helen Gray and Rob Webb.

There was present in our midst one Garry McDougall who wished to address the gathering on "The Heritage of Australian Walking", a project he has in mind. Mr McDougall has three degrees and has published a book "The Great North Walk". He is also owner/manager of the "Great Australian Walks" company. He intends, it seems, to examine the "artistic and literary connections" and place walking "in a cultural perspective". There is no actual estimate of how much this will all cost but Mr McDougall feels that if he could raise \$1.00 per head for every walking club member Australia wide it would be a good start. Bill reassured him that we will consider the proposal and let him know.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with the only matter arising being a note that the painting being raffled is now on display in the club rooms.

Correspondence brought a letter from Telecom Australia telling us that June Bhattacharya, who recently qualified for Club membership, has been diagnosed as having leukaemia. The letter urges that members add their names to the National Bone Marrow donors register. All other correspondence is with the Secretary. We do know that we sent out letters of thanks to our speakers of recent times.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we received income of \$204.00 and spent \$2,109.00. We also re-invested \$2,900 from the Conservation Account.

The Walks Report was next, with Carol reporting. Over the weekend 11,12,13 October George Walton's 100-Man Cave trip did not go, but Ralph Penglis reported 26 on his Otford to Bundeena walk. Of the other two walks, Carol's Pantoney's Crown/Tyan Pic walk and Dick Weston's Wentworth Falls to Katoomba, we know not.

Over the weekend 18, 19,20 October Bill Capon's Budawangs trip had two starters and, lacking Bill's steadying influence, went to the Kowmung River. David "fairweather" Rostron's Main Range base camp ski-tour had 9 starters and a written report. Les Powell struggled gamely to decipher the scrawled message all about harsh privation and a severe tea-drought and so on and so on. This performance soon elicited a query as to who had written the report that was causing Les such difficulty. It turned out that Les wrote it! He did get the details of David's second-last-day-homing--frenzy fairly right. Errol Sheedy's walk had no report. Greta James struggled through a fog of amnesia to report that her trip to Blue Gum Forest went, and it was a hot, pleasant day. There was no report of Greg Bridge's Blue Mountains day walk.

Over the weekend 26,27 October there were no details of the Confederation first-aid course, but Jan Mohandas reported 24 people having a good time despite some rain on his Gourmet Weekend. The abseiling weekend attracted 26 who progressed to overhanging abseils in the course of the day under Kenn Clacher's guidance. Alan Mewett reported that due to a problem with timing (that doesn't sound like Alan) there were few wildflowers on his Dharug National Park trip. The 6 starters enjoyed a fine, warm day despite the scratchy scrub. There was no report of Morag Ryder's Grand Canyon day walk.

November 1,2,3 saw Tom Wenman leading a party of 16 on his Gingra Creek, Kowmung River trip. It was reported as a good walk even if Ainslie did sprain an ankle. There was no report of Denis Gardener's Shoalhaven walk, but of the day walks, Mark Weatherly led a party of 7 in the Maroota Forest area on an overcast day with sunny breaks, Jim Callaway had 7 starters and train problems on his Engadine to Waterfall walk and Maurie Bloom led 20 on his Barren Grounds walk.

The weekend of 9/10 November saw Bob Younger leading a party of two along easy fire trails and through thick scrub in Morton National Park. Brian Holden had 6 on his Barbers Creek, Shoalhaven River walk which Les insisted on describing in rather more detail than we felt we needed. There was no report of Errol Sheedy's Royal National Park walk, but Victor Lewin's Loftus to Heathcote walk saw 16 people enjoying a fine mild day with some scrub and ver-ry little water.

It was with some difficulty that we persuaded Carol not to report on the walks for the coming weekend.

The Conservation Report brought news of Terry Metherill delivering a good speech in the N.S.W. Parliament in support of the Nattai National Park. There was also mention of the State Government's Wilderness Fund, set up some years ago for the funding of activities associated with the preservation of wilderness areas. By some curious oversight no funds have ever been allocated to the fund. The Club supported a motion from the Conservation Secretary that we donate \$130.00 to the fund as an encouragement to the government to vote funds to it. The Metro-mix Company is planning to hold a conference on offshore sand extraction, off Sydney.

The Confederation Report indicated that Stan Cottier has written warning that the owners of huts in the Royal have proposed that the huts be given Heritage Listing in an effort to preserve them and the associated leases.

The meeting closed at 2134.

A WORTHY CALL

The Club has received a very sad, yet inspiring, letter from John Poczynek, a prospective member, written on behalf of JUNE BHATTACHARYA, another prospective member who, in a very short time, made many friends and became a popular walking companion on many SBW bush walks.

Sadly, June has developed acute myeloid leukaemia, and is in need of a bone marrow transplant. According to John, "Our Girl June" as she is affectionately known among her workmates at Telecom, sought help from her brother, sister and some long lost cousins living overseas, but all proved incompatible donors. Her only hope now lies in being matched with one of the 12,000 registered bone marrow donors in Australia. Tests have been carried out, said John, but so far a suitable donor has not been found.

June, who is married with two children, is not seeking sympathy or compassion for herself but is making a plea to her workmates and fellow bushwalkers to consider registering as bone marrow donors.

The chances of finding a matched, unrelated, individual is somewhere around one in 15,000, according to John, and as the Australian Bone Marrow Donor Registry has only 12,000 volunteer donors registered at present, they obviously need a lot more help.

For more information for this very worthy cause contact NSW Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (Linda Guzowski, phone 229 4318) or ring John Poczynek on (047) 21 2995 for more details and encouragement.

On behalf of all SBW members, we wish "Our Girl June" success in finding a suitable donor and greatly admire her selflessness in thinking of others at a time like this.

EDITOR.

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A DAY AT THE CIRCUS - A PHANTASY

by "Theydon Bois"

"I'll get youse bastards!" screamed the belligerent circus owner. Janla recoiled from the obscene abuse and seethed with rage. What had been a peaceful protest against exploitation and ill treatment of circus animals had provoked a violent response by the circus owner. The five protestors led by the Botsleigh sisters retreated but were firm in their resolve to carry on the battle on another day, perhaps in another way.

Janla was seething and boiling with rage and resentment over her experience and sought the best cure that she knew. She was soon out in the wild bush and off the track to arrive at her favourite tree. Sitting down, Janla leaned against the tree which seemed to have grown to fit her body and laid her cheek against the smooth creamy bark. The soothing effects of this and the background sound of the bush soon soothed and fortified her and she went into a trance-like doze.

Janla awoke suddenly. It was early evening and Jupiter was winking at her from the western sky. The bush creatures were calling. Janla stiffened. What was that terrible struggling and sound of animal distress back towards the bush track? Quickly Janla was on her feet and hurrying towards the sound without any fear for her own safety. Pushing through the bushes Janla found a young dingo caught in a cord snare. Janla reached into her pocket for her bush knife and opened the blade. What a shock! The blade glowed in the dark. The animal quieted and stopped struggling! Janla cut the cord from the dingo. Instantaneously a number of large dark shapes emerged from the bushes, sniffed around Janla and vanished into the bush with the young dingo.

Janla was exhilarated by her experience. She also realised that her knife, a gift from a bushwalker friend, had been given special powers for survival. Janla returned home and was soon in a deep sleep.

Janla thought she was having a nightmare! There was a loud knocking sounding as if it was coming down a tunnel. Half awake she struggled to the front door which sounded as if it was banging in the wind. Fearful of bad news she opened the door. She knew no more as she was grabbed and a pad soakedⁱⁿ ether shoved over her face. Janla came to on the back of a truck with the cold night air rushing over her and the jolting caused by the truck passing over a rough bush track. She was bound hand and foot! Suddenly the truck stopped. Two figures emerged from the front and one said, "You will be joining your mates here. I'm not killing you but I don't fancy your chances of survival."

Janla was dragged from the truck and down into the bush. A dark shape came hurtling through the air straight for the jugular of the leading abductor. The second one went down under a snarling pack of dingoes and was soon still. Janla was amazed at the unexpected rescue. Before Janla could ponder on her predicament she noticed that her knife was lying beside her hand and glowing in invitation. Janla quickly wriggled about to cut her bonds. Her rescuers had vanished!

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FOR SALEBOOKS OF INTEREST TO BUSHWALKERS - SECOND HAND "CLASSICS".

"The World of Olegas Truchanas" - by Max Angus

"Nepal" - by Toni Hagen

"The Brendan Voyage" - by Tim Severin

"Colo Wilderness" - by Henry Gold and Peter Prineas

PRICES TO BE NEGOTIATED - Please phone CHRISTINE AUSTIN - 484 1519

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FIRE BANS

As we know, all weather predictions for the coming summer are for a long, dry summer, which means frequent fire bans and potentially dangerous walking conditions.

SBW walks leaders and members have always acted responsibly and sensibly in fire ban conditions, but it is the feeling of the Committee that, in the event of a fire ban, serious consideration should be given by individual leaders as to whether the walk should go ahead. Given that, when there is a fire ban, the government and fire authorities warnings advise people NOT to walk in the bush, we, as a responsible bushwalking club, should consider aligning our program to match these warnings.

EDITOR.

SOCIAL NOTES

by Fran Holland

I hope to see you all at the Christmas Party on the 18th December. Traditionally, this is one of the Club's special nights, so come and join us. Bring a plate of food, the Club supplies liquid refreshments, but your own glass might be a good idea.

Keith Sherlock has been invited to draw the winning ticket for a lucky bushwalker to receive his painting. If you haven't already purchased a raffle ticket this will be your last opportunity.

The Club will be closed from after the party until the 15th January. But don't forget to add Obelisk Beach on the 8th January to your list of social engagements.

Later, in January The Wilderness Society will talk to us followed the next week by a Safety and Leadership Workshop for all members to attend.

JANUARY 1st Club closed - New Year's Day

8th Club closed - BBQ at Obelisk Beach, off Chowder Bay Road, Mosman from 6.30 pm. BYO food and drink. Contact Fran Holland (484 6636) or Ian Debert (982 2615) for details.

15th GENERAL MEETING - Preceded by short Committee Meeting

* 22nd WILDERNESS SOCIETY - talk and slides

29th SAFETY & LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

* We will be meeting for dinner at Maharaja Palace, Indian Restaurant, 1 Broughton Street, Kirribilli at approx. 6.30 pm (22nd Jan). NOTE: This month it is the 4th Wednesday.

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DON'T GET LOST!!

The new membership list will be printed in January. Would all those people who have changed address or phone numbers (or got married with a new name) PLEASE LET THE CLUB KNOW, either in writing to Box 4476 GPO Sydney 2001, or by phoning Fran Holland (484 6636) or Barry Wallace, Membership Secretary (436 1313 during business hours).

