

WOLLOMBI N.P.

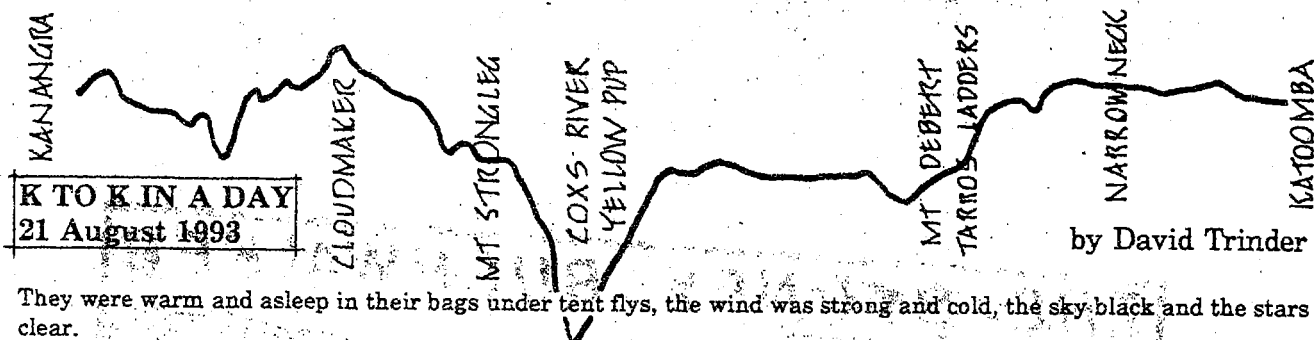
A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bush Walkers Inc, Box 4476 GPO, Sydney 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8 pm at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli (near Milson's point Railway Station). Visitors and prospective members are welcome any Wednesday. To advertise in this magazine, please contact the Business Manager.

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They were warm and asleep in their bags under tent flies, the wind was strong and cold, the sky black and the stars clear.

"Wakey, wakey, we're moving out in half an hour", called the leader. In that half an hour, they ate, dressed, packed and were ready to go, leaving the campsite spotless as it had been six hours earlier. At the Kanangra carpark the sky was lightening and Venus, the morning star, had risen ahead of the sun and was the brightest object in the sky.

The walkers and their supporters grouped and moved off. Across Kanangra Tops, the sky lightened - in front a glow of oranges, reds and purples and above blue - then the dawn, the bright ball of fire being thrown up from below. The party was exuberant, energetic, talking, laughing; starting the walk of their lives.

"Meet at Crafts Walls", said the leader. Little birds chirped and flitted amongst the low, hard bushes. To the north, the Lower Gangerangs and the Wild Dog Mountains appeared to be in rows like waves, each row less purple and mistier than the next in front. At Crafts Walls, a stop, coats were stripped from warm bodies. The women help one another, the men are independent, or appear to be, and are competitive. Another driver/supporter said farewell and left.

On to Mount Berry, Gabes Gap and Mount High and Mighty. "We're ahead of time", he said. At Stormbreaker, the last driver/supporter has gone back. They are on their own now.

"Look at Cloudmaker over there, it's magnificent."

"Look at the ranges to the east, mountains as far as the eye can see, I'm sorry for the people who will never see them."

The walkers are working hard, walking fast, nimble footed on a rocky track, every step different, each controlled individually by eye and brain. Landing on the point of rock, a slope or a log, long steps, short steps, all productive and shoes are gripping well. What do they see? They see around them a perpetual life cycle. Trees, bushes, ground cover, young, old, distorted, dead. Yellow wattle, small purple flowers, white flowers, seeds, birds. Grass trees with shiny green fronds, straw skirts and a rough black trunk. They walk over a carpet of dead leaves and sticks that are returning to the ground as humus. They see the life cycle; life, death, rot, food; the vehicle for this is the mountain. Large rocks that are part of the mountain, separate boulders, stones, chips and the soil, plants living in soil and humus. Another process is occurring separately. The mountain is slowly eroding away.

There is a problem, somebody can't keep up. Concern and sympathy in the party. A few gentle words from the leader, a rest, a drink, some energy food, pass the pack to somebody and "you'll be alright".

Rip, Rack, Roar and Rumble knolls and the problem becomes worse with a twisted ankle.

At Cloudmaker, the highest point of the journey and the place that all clouds come from, they are a quarter of an hour late but the problem has been overcome, relief and "Good on ya!".

Easy walking across the plateau amongst thin trees; hold on, a distant voice, some are missing. A few "dayos" and five minutes, "eins, swei, drei, vier, funf" counts the lady, and "eleven, good, we're all here, let's go and please keep together". On to Dex Creek, a grassy amphitheatre with signs of old campfires and a dry creek bed. It was also an unenclosed aviary, birds were chirping, flitting and flying amongst the surrounding vegetation. A hundred metres downstream was clear, cold water.

"Fill up, this is the last water."

Down past Mount Moorilla Maloo, Mount Amarina to Mount Strongleg.

"You've got twenty minutes for lunch", he says.

They are one third of the way now and half way through the day. Some more good video footage for the camera carrier.

Mr and Mrs Eagle soured past motionlessly to inspect these alien animals and decided, "They're not for eating, but there is food there, so we will inspect later".

Down Strongleg spur, 600 metres vertical in 2 kilometres on the map. How strong are your legs? How are your old knees? Are your legs shaking? How is your traction? Have you slipped yet? Some excitement - a boulder rolling towards the leader - it stops.

"We should be over here", one says.

"Follow me, please", says the leader, and what a leader.

Some more excitement. A goanna escaping danger, climbing a tree, he is black, like the tree.

"He's a grandfather, you don't see them any bigger."

The trees are different here, some coloured trunks among the ironbarks. Down to the Cox's and the scene changes. Round rocks and pebbles, She oaks and smooth abundant water, glistening and babbling in the sunshine.

Up Yellow Pup spur, 700 metres vertically. They are working hard, the fire starts inside, how are the hamstrings, quads and gluts now? Are they sore? Is your breathing and heart-lung system supplying enough energy for them? Do you have to go slower?

Some race ahead and stretch themselves to the limit. Why do they do it? Do they want to show off their fitness ability? Do they want to take advantage of the hill for fitness training or do they just feel more satisfied if they extend themselves? They all meet at the top, Mount Yellow Dog, and look out past sunlit yellow green leaves close by, to blue green trees in the distance with the same colour leaves. Surprise, the phantom has been there before them and left a note and some sweets.

They are halfway now and it is three hours to darkness.

"We should make it to Narrow Neck before dark", says the leader. They all still feel well and conversation is still fun.

On to Mobbs Swamp, a fast walk on a sandy track amongst thin small trees and a few coloured trunks. A short rest - the last before Narrow Neck. Some foreign bushwalkers pass through headed for the Cox's with very large packs; they compared themselves.

More fast walking on an easy track, fine sand like a dried swamp. Across Kennel Flat to Medlow Gap, then a fire trail for a short distance and another mountain in front, they attacked it, up the nose of Debert and another race was on. At the top of Debert was Tarro's Ladders, a bolt, a steel handle or a foothold in the rock exactly where required by hand and foot, up the rock face.

At the top some of the driver/supporters had come down to give assistance and encouragement, what generous people. More climbing and more generous people with hot drinks and fruit.

The last rest and take off to the end and the final race amongst the first four, or was it one, along the long Narrow Neck road.

The sun was setting; oranges and purples were back, the blue overhead becoming darker until the three day old moon following the sun down was the only light source. The last step was a big one - over the carpark rail, for eleven cold, tired bodies. The walkers were:

Morrie Ward, stand-in leader
Marella Hogan
Tony Manes
David Trinder

Angelika Langley
Peter Christian, the video camera man
Ken Smith
Tom Wenman

Sonya Lloyd
Tony Holgate
Richard Thompson

and they are grateful to their permanent leader, Jan Mohandas (who is hard to beat but was beaten by a tiny germ) and to their supporter/driver/helpers:

Tony Crichton
Carol Lubbers
Margaret Sheens

Greg Bridge
Carole Beales
Jenny Ward

Kay Chan
Michelle Powell
Barbara (Jenny's friend)

CONSERVATION NEWS

by Alex Colley

GARDENS OF STONE NATIONAL PARK PROPOSAL

In the September parliamentary session, Clover Moore M.P. will move an amendment to the National Parks Association sponsored "New Areas Bill". The amendment, if carried, will create the Gardens of Stone National Park. On August 13 and 14, Henry Gold and I participated in an inspection of the area, organised by Keith Muir, Director of the Colong Foundation, for the purpose of familiarising Clover Moore with the proposal.

We left the Wolgan Valley Road near Wolgan Gap, drove part of the way along the Wolgan escarpment, and then walked to Kevin's Watch, a spur overlooking the Capertee Valley. Excellent views of the pagoda formations, which rival the Bungle Bungle, and of the Capertee Valley, one of the most scenic valleys in the State, were enjoyed. On the next day Clover was driven up Mount Jenolan to Col Rebo's diamond mine, from the vicinity of which superb views of the pagodas and the Capertee Valley were enjoyed.

Though there are some 33 billion tons of coal reserves in NSW, the proposal is of course opposed by all who expect to benefit from mining part of the area. These interests include the mining companies, the miners, the local Council and most of the locals. This is the usual kind of opposition raised whenever the preservation of some remnant of the natural environment is proposed, but it is possible that the benefits of preserving this scenic asset will prevail.

NATURAL AREAS LTD.

I attended the AGM of Natural Areas as SBW representative. The motion to appoint Peter Prineas as a director was defeated by the Beswick interests, which hold 51% of the shares. The NPA, which Peter represents, hold 25% of the shares. I pointed out that it is usual practice for substantial shareholders to be represented on company boards, and that the representation of the conservation movement would encourage the participation of environmental organisations in the direction of the company, but to no avail. The somewhat irregular management of the company by the Beswick interests appears to be inspired by the desire to retain the Dorothy Phillips Reserve. The chairperson, Judith Beswick, said that the SBW would soon receive its share certificate.

WILDERNESS CONFERENCE

The fourth National Wilderness Conference will be held on 8 - 10 October. Dot Butler and Peter Treseder and many of Australia's leading nature conservationists will address the Conference. Program and application forms were enclosed with the September issue of the magazine.

BEQUESTS

A long-standing Club member has asked how to go about making a bequest for the purpose of nature conservation. My advice is that the best method is to make the bequest to the SBW Conservation Fund, thereby ensuring that it will be used for the purpose of preserving the areas most significant for bushwalking.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

SBW members have reported from time to time the sighting of rare species. The National Parks and Wildlife Service (P.O. Box 1967 Hurstville 2220) will be grateful for any information provided. The Service will provide a Field Data Book to any willing to help. Bushwalkers could play a valuable part in locating the habitat of rare species, because the Service doesn't have the resources to survey the whole State to find them. The Service will provide an Atlas of NSW Wildlife on request. The preservation of rare species is dependent on the preservation of habitat, and such habitat is often the best walking country.

VALE GLADYS ROBERTS

Older members who knew her will be saddened to hear of the death of Gladys Roberts. Gladys had been a member of the Club for over 50 years, and walked continuously with us until her transfer to Non-Active status about 10 years ago. In her earlier years she went on many hard trips, but later concentrated on easy day walks. Until going Non-Active, she led a Club walk on nearly every program. She really loved the bush and bushwalking, and still continued with easy walks with other old friends until shortly before her death. She died on 26th September, aged 86, quietly in her sleep. What a good way to go!

LETTER TO THE CLUB

From P. J. Simpson,
32 Shirley Road, Roseville.

Don't Throw Out Those Old Maps

I am researching the historical geography and settlement patterns of New South Wales using old topographic maps produced generally between 1920 and 1970 at a scale of 1:63,360 and 1:50,000. Most of these were published by the military authorities but some later ones were produced by the defunct Department of Lands.

Whilst I have accumulated a large collection of these maps over the years for my research, they have been out of print for decades, there being no demand for them since their replacement by the much more modern series of large scale topographic maps.

However, they are essential for my research and I am therefore appealing to any of your older members who are now less frequent bushwalkers who may be contemplating throwing out their old maps to contact me first in case they have some they no longer want which I am missing from my collection. Any calls after hours on 416 4911 in this connection would be most appreciated.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR NOVEMBER

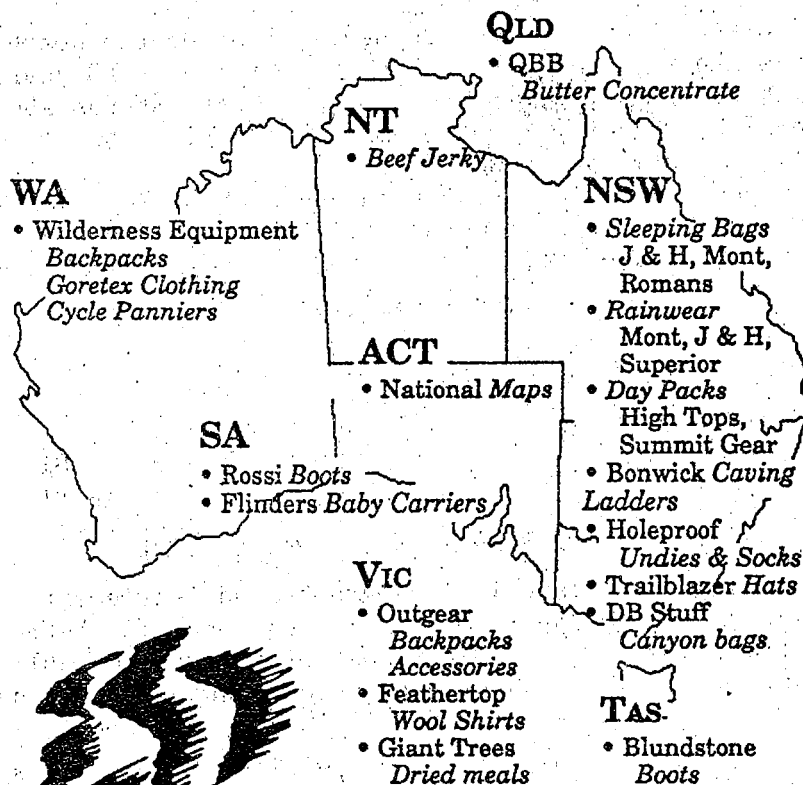
by John Hogan

On November 17th we have a very special visitor in Dan Callison of Macpac in New Zealand. His visit to our Club has been arranged by Paul Klobusiak of Alpsport at West Ryde and this should prove to be a very informative evening. Dan will demonstrate the latest releases of Macpac products including tents, backpacks and sleeping bags. He will also talk about the Company and its commitment to making the best quality gear available. Dan, I understand, is also a very good listener and will be interested to hear our questions and comments.

The restaurant for this evening will be "Pasta Pronto" at 320 Pacific Highway, Crow's Nest, just west of the main Crow's Nest intersection on the left hand side going out of town. We look forward to a good attendance, so I would appreciate a quick call on 725 1890 if you are coming so we have a reasonable idea of numbers. Aim for around 6.30 pm.

Then on November 24th Jan Mohandas will demonstrate the art of cooking with spices at the campfire. This will no doubt be an entertaining as well as informative evening and as a bonus there may be a few morsels to sample. See you there.

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WOLFE WILDERNESS WANDERINGS (EPIC SKI TOURING)

BY IAN WOLFE

THIS IS HOW IT ALL WENT

Three days ski touring Thredbo - Perisher: (8 -11th July)

Blizzard conditions on the first day resulted in an interesting contour around to Twin valleys where we set up camp by lunchtime. Toured the valley taking advantage of the lee of the mountain. Six inches of snow fell overnight giving good cover for our ski to the ruins of Stillwells Restaurant before heading up up to Porcupine and Prussian Plains to camp. A nice ski on the last day in blazing sunshine and returned via the Ski Tube.

4 Day Hut crawl Munyang - Jagungle: (29/7 - 2/8)

Not enough snow down low for original route (Eucumbene Dam) so we went in from Munyang. On Day 1. we visited Shlink Hilton, Orange Hut and camped at Valentines Hut. It rained heavily all night but snowed at dawn (usually the reverse). Skied and walked down to the top of Valentines Falls - they were absolutely raging in the high water. Six inches of snow by lunch provided a beautiful vista for the ski around to Mawsons Hut. A pleasant night looking at the full moon and reading poems by Henry Lawson and Banjo Patterson. An icy crossing of the Valentine started Day 3 before climbing up the Cup and Saucer as well as Mailbox Hill. Continued on via The Brassy's to camp at Tin Hut. More snow overnight reduced visibility on Day 4 to 40 metres or less and made challenging navigation over Gungarten Pass. Weather cleared allowing some XCDing before visiting Whites River Hut and Disappointment Spur enroute to the cars

In all 7 huts in 4 days - quite an acceptable alternative to original plan. Try again next year!

Victorian Odyssey - Southern Alps (27/8 6/9)

Trip 1: Climbed up Mt. Bogong via Eskdale Spur to set up camp below Quartz Knob. Good skiing and touring around West Summit. After dinner that night we skied by the light of the full moon to the summit to enjoy the sights of stars and the lights of towns spread out around us. Next day we traversed the plateau-like top of Mt. Bogong to camp at Cleve Cole hut. This is a huge well built stone hut which provided a refuge through the next two days of heavy rain (much sleeping in, book reading and 500 playing). Finally eight inches of snow fell and allowed us to tour the southern end of the mountain before heading out. This included a worthwhile trip to Howman Falls.

Trip 2: After a night in the pub at Harrietville we caught the bus to Diamantina Hut to ski/walk along the Razorback Ridge in thin snow conditions to MUMC hut. Next day up the steep ridge to enjoy magnificent views from the top of Mt. Feathertop. Unfortunately the thin snow conditions limited XCDing quite severely leading us to shift camp to Federation hut that night and walk out via the Bungalow spur next day.

In all, nine days of cross-country skiing with a mix of snow levels but great scenery.

Additional guide notes for people interested in skiing or walking in Southern Alps:

Trip 1. The track from Trappers Gap to Mountain Creek Saddle requires 4WD due to deep holes. 1½ hours from saddle to Mitchell's Hut. Small, not well finished, sleeps five on bunks. Very active native rats. Continue for 300 m. to pleasant campsite, partially sheltered from wind on Eskdale Spur just before treeline. In West Summit the most sheltered campsite is Bogong Creek at G/R 224 330. Cleve Cole Hut can sleep 12 on bunks, is large and well finished.

Trip 2: Accommodation in Bon Accord Cabins from \$20/night + \$5 for large hot country breakfast. They also run bus service up to Mt Hotham, with pickups and dropoffs by arrangement. fares \$22 one way \$31 return. Secure parking also available. It takes 2/3 of a day to ski Razorback with a full pack. MUMC Hut is a large geodesic bowl, sleep 15. No stove, a cold hut. Design lets in moisture causing drips and puddles unless doors and windows are left open to dry out hut when you arrive. It is big enough for a dance, has great songbooks and best Alpine views in Australia. Federation Hut has a loft sleeps six and space downstairs for more. Bungalow Spur track is 10.1 km long and was made for horse and carts. Benched and well graded. Makes a lovely walk through Mountain Ash. 2-2½ hours downhill, 3-4 hours uphill with a pack. My recommendation for visits to Feathertop is to ski in via The Razorback and exit down Bungalow Spur for your first trip. Subsequent trips should go in and out via Bungalow Spur.

Getting there and back:

The increase in dual carriage way and the town bypasses have greatly reduced travelling time from Sydney. Excluding stops Liverpool to Mountain creek is 7 hours.

THE CONFEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS NSW INCORPORATED

Ettrema Access

Tony Parr
Senior Vice President

Quiera clearing, on the Tolwong Road west of Ettrema gorge has been used as a parking area by bushwalkers for many years.

The clearing is held under freehold title by the Rolfe family. Despite rumours to the contrary the ownership of the clearing has not recently changed. Until now there has been no problem with bushwalkers parking along the roadside in the clearing but recently an increase in the amount of rubbish being left behind has angered the owners. They, quite justifiably, are concerned about the danger to their stock posed by this rubbish which includes glass as well as metal and plastic.

I have assured the owners that it is most unlikely that bushwalkers would have been responsible for this littering. However, the only way that we can prove this and, once again, restore a cordial relationship with the local land holders is to ensure that our members leave their vehicles in the park rather than on freehold land. Perhaps if we do this we will prove that the allegations being levelled against us are unfounded and that the real culprits will be found.

For those heading into the gorge via Myall Creek an alternative parking area that I have used for many years is on the Tolwong Road near the high point 764 (GR 407240 on the Touga 1:25000 map). There is parking for at least ten vehicles off the road at this point. From this location there is a good ridge leading into Myall Creek as well as easy access to Sentry Box Canyon via Churinga Head. There are other possibilities both before and after Quiera Clearing for off road parking. The boundaries of the clearing are accurately marked on the Touga map.

There is, potentially, a similar problem at Tullyangela Clearing which is held under freehold title by the Crisp family. I have heard of no such problem to date but our members should bear in mind that they may alienate locals by unauthorised parking on private property and to be sure that they practice MIB principles at all times.

Details of any vehicles or persons apparently acting in such a way as to lead to us being blamed for these acts of littering should be passed on to Confederation or to the National Parks & Wildlife Service office at Nowra.

* * * * A MESSAGE FROM YOUR WALKS SECRETARY * * * *

The Summer Walks Programme is now being prepared. Even while I am away on leave throughout October the late night lights still burn as TONY HOLGATE takes over organising the programme during my absence.

Like me, Tony would welcome your phone calls advising new, and exciting walks in December, January and February. Swimming, liloing and canyoning. Also the walks in familiar areas. Don't forget the extended walks over Christmas and New Year.

Tony Holgate's telephone numbers are 428 5294 (h) 922 8792 (w). You can fax walks to him but please phone first. Also, as I will be back late in the month any faxes to me will be okay as they will be held until my return.

Remember, early bookings get the best choice of dates.

Bill Holland

* * * * *



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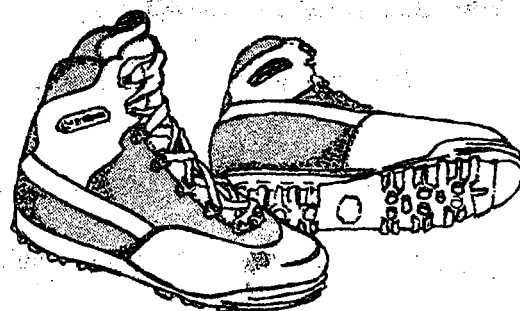


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ON BEING "GEOGRAPHICALLY CORRECT"

by Jim Brown

As one who usually reads the "Letters to the Editor" in the Sydney Morning Herald, I found a period about two months ago when a vast amount of comment was being made about being "politically correct". This term, which still pops up from time to time, evidently refers to people making public statements that conform with the broadly accepted opinion on certain topics - and not "rocking the boat". Some of the Herald's correspondents maintained that this practice has a stultifying effect on free speech, and anyone should be allowed (without being accused of being "politically INcorrect") to make public pronouncements that are sometimes highly bigoted and outrageously partisan - such as some of the opinions expressed on the "Mabo Question".

Bushwalkers, of course, are not much concerned about being "politically correct". We are more likely to see if the issue is "Geographically correct". No, I don't mean simply ensuring that walking parties are not led into perilous situations, or mislaid (because, of course, bushwalkers are never "lost", just "mislaid"). By "geographically correct" I mean conducting a major part of the walking in the region favoured, or "in vogue" at that time.

Has this occurred? In the past? Oh, my word, yes, and it did for a good many years. About the time (1946/7) when I was "serving my apprenticeship" as a prospective, ever so many of the weekend walks incorporated Splendour Rock. I think it would be fair to say that, at least every second weekend, appeared the familiar formula "Katoomba - Clear Hill - Splendour Rock - something or other 'Dog' or 'Pup' - Cox's River", then back to Blackheath, Katoomba or Wentworth Falls for the Sunday night train home. Well, of course, we had few cars, and even if you did own a car, not enough petrol for that sort of travel.... Oh, dear, oh dear! - almost in the Dark Ages, weren't we?

Later other vogues and crazes came to the fore. In the late 1950s, the Budawang Mountains around The Castle and Mount Owen were the flavour of the year. Ten years on it was Danjera and Bundundah Creeks, north of the Sassafras/Bráidwood Road.

When this notion flitted into my mind, I deliberately dissected a couple of recent Walks Programs, tallying the trips under several headings - (1) Budawangs/Shoalhaven, (2) Southern Blue Mountains, (3) Central Blue Mountains, (4) Northern Blue Mountains and (5) Other Northern. Amazing! - no particular region came out markedly in front. Can it be we no longer know what it is to be Geographically Correct?

If this is so, if we no longer have some regions that we favour above all others, that have to appear repeatedly in the Walks Program, then I think we've done all right, got the sensible signals. I've since looked back through Walks Programs covering several years and all tell a similar story - we spread our walking and no longer focus on a restricted bit of ground at any one time.

Naturally, there are a few regions that aren't receiving the attention they may deserve. From my cursory examination, I felt the Grose River (apart from Blue Gum Forest and a few kilometres upstream from that feature) was largely ignored. Perhaps we are being wary of the reported polluted state of the Grose. Also the Southern Blue Mountains - the region south from Kanangra and extending over to the Blue Breaks, Yerranderie, Tomat and Middle Wollondilly - gets only sketchy attention.

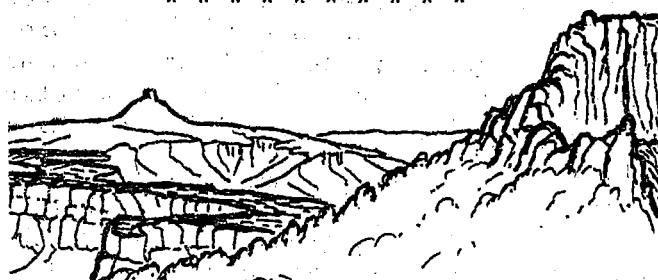
To my surprise the area I will call the North-North Budawangs - the big creek system draining north from the Sassafras Range towards the Shoalhaven, with streams like Ettrema, Boolijah, Danjera, has few mentions. There was a period in the 1960s/1970s when that country had a real vogue, and of course

SBW members were very much involved in the original exploration - as evidenced by names such as Colley Plateau, Putt Flat and Leyden Creek.

Come to think of it.... back in 1947 I must have been one of the outrageous "free speech" advocates. The first walk that I conducted for the Club was in the then unpopular Southern Blue Mountains, including a passage over Beloon Gap: next, a 1½ day walk on the Illawarra Escarpment, along a spectacular bit of the Unanderra/Moss Vale Railway, and soon afterwards a "crossing" of the Blue Labyrinth from Burragorang to Glenbrook. Oh, well, I enjoyed every minute of it all, both the new bushland areas and the best people I had ever met going along with me.

So, walkers, enjoy your "Geographically INcorrect" Walks Program, which really is delightfully varied. What's more, we have been seeing programs like that for about seven or eight years now. Lovely. Let it continue!

* * * * *



Walk Statistics

Patrick James

On a recent walk in Morton National Park in August 1993 the following statistics with respect to the people on the walk were noted.

number of walkers	8
number of members	7
number of prospectives	1
number of leaders	1
number of visitors	0
number with beards	1
number of teachers	2
number wearing glasses	3
number of men	4
number of grandparents	2
number of women	4
number without beards	7
number of different brands of packs	6
number of assistant leaders	7
number of torches	9
number of mathematicians	3
number of navigators	1
number of co-navigators	9
number of casting votes	1
number of metallurgists	2
number righthanded	8
number lefthanded	0
number ambidextrous	not recorded
number of wet feet	3
number wearing tramping boots	1
number of supplies of rum	4



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THE SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

It was around 2015 when the President in the chair gonged the gong and called the 20 or so members present to order. There were apologies from Margaret Niven, Lorraine Bloomfield, Spiro Hajinakitas and Zol Bodlay.

New members Don Brooks and Ray Symons were welcomed to membership and the Minutes of the previous general meeting were read and received with no matters arising.

Correspondence brought a letter of thanks from Kath Brown for the get-together for her birthday, from Margaret Sheens regarding the Six Foot Track from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves, from the Blue Mountains for World Heritage listing committee, from Leila Kulpass requesting that members who wish to discard old series topographic maps 1:63,000 and 1:53000 do so in her direction as she is researching the publications of that time, from the Chief Secretary's Department regarding fund raising activities, a notice of A.G.M. from Natural Areas Ltd, and a letter from a bushwalking club at Ulverstone, Tasmania, requesting information on the conduct and administration of a club such as ours. Matters arising saw Kath Brown's letter passed to the magazine editor for publication. (See Kath, if it was a word processor you wouldn't have to type it in again. *Not so, Barry, my "thank you" notice for my party was printed on page 16 of the September magazine. K.B.*) Alex Colley also provided some details of the Natural Areas Ltd meeting and we will be writing to them again requesting that they issue script for our shares.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we earned \$1,066, spent \$3,023 and ended the month with a balance of \$7,285.

Next came the Walks Report, with the weekend of 13,14,15 August being first off the rank. Bill Capon cancelled his Mittagong to Katoomba in two days dash while Bill Holland led a party of 13 on his Meryla Pass-Yarrunga Creek stroll. Jan Mohandas's Saturday day walk from Lockleys Pylon to Perrys Lookdown and return saw a party of 14 including Bill Capon huffing and puffing to be at the cars early. There is a rumour that Bill Capon opted out of the side trip to Perrys Lookdown, but you know we don't publish rumours, so we won't mention it here. Ralph Penglis had a party of 9 out in perfect weather for his Harbour foreshore walk and Margaret Reid reported wattle in abundance and a pleasant day for the 9 starters on her Porters Pass walk.

The following weekend, 20,21,22 August, Bob Hodgson's soft Three Peaks walk attracted 3 starters but there were no other details. Ian Debert's Megalong Valley trip was cancelled due to lack of starters. Margaret Niven and Maurie Ward reported cool but fine weather and a pleasant outing for the 18 students who attended their combined mapping, first aid and equipment Instructional Weekend at Belanglo State Forest. Jan Mohandas's Kanangra to Katoomba sprint went to program led by a substitute leader with 11 starters. There was some mention of Dick Weston (not on that walk) leaving caches of sweets along the route. There was no mention of a great-coat so it's probably all OK. Bronny Niemeyer led a party of 23 on her Loftus to Bundeena walk on what she described as a beaut day.

There was no report of Ian Wolfe's extended cross-country skiing trip from 27 August to 6 September.

The weekend of 27,28,29 August saw no report for Kenn Clacher's ski trip from Dead Horse Gap, but Sev Sternhell's "Best of the Budawangs" trip went, without Sev, who had been laid low by some mysterious ailment. The party of 14 was reduced to 12 when two members turned back at the first rockline of The Castle as levels of fitness and wetness were assessed by the individuals.

concerned (there had been showers throughout the weekend). Some difficulties with the route off Mount Cole led to the party returning to the cars about two hours after dark. Zol Bodlay led a party of 11 on his Saturday trip in Marra Marra National Park through cold and overcast conditions. With no incentive to stop and lounge they were at the cars by 1700. Laurie Bore reported early rain clearing to a fine but windy day for the party of 9 on his walk along the cliffs and beaches of Boudi National Park.

The weekend of 4,5, September brought the working bee at Coolana which saw the completion of a new er.... facility and an enjoyable weekend for all who attended. Of the day walks Errol Sheedy reported a party of 15 enjoying cool sunny weather on his Cronulla to Waterfall walk, and Victor Lewin's walk off the Mount Hay Road went, with a trio of leaders none of whom were Victor. They reported lacerated legs and had to modify the programmed route somewhat to complete the walk on time. Wilf Hilder reported a party of 3 on his Great West Walk segment trip deferred from a previous program. The weather began overcast but cleared to a fine day and they were all back in time to catch the 1600 train.

Confederation Report brought news of the Federation Annual General Meeting with 40 in attendance, only 1.5 of whom were SBW delegates. It appears that the insurer for Confederation's personal accident policy wants everyone in the organisation to be covered by the policy rather than making it optional. There was also some discussion of Search and Rescue operations and the future of the Confederation.

There was a complete dearth of General Business so after the announcements the meeting closed at 2124.

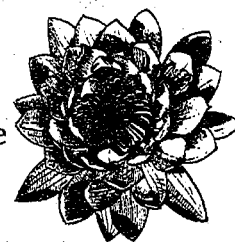
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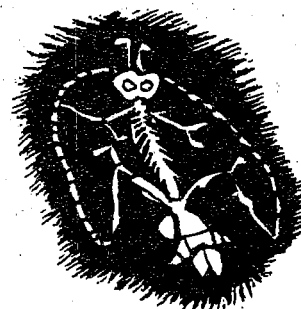
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FROM THE CLUBROOM

By Maurice Smith

ORCHIDS, ORCHIDS AND YET MORE ORCHIDS

Did you know that Australia has over 700 varieties of orchids? I didn't and I suspect that I am not the only member of the club in that state of ignorance. However, Ron Howlett, one of our newer members is on first name terms, botanical and common, with what seems like every last one of them. Ron grows prize winning orchids when he is not out there bush walking. While walking Ron is reportedly a veritable fountain of knowledge on most things in the botanical field.

On the evening of 15 September, Ron brought into the club some samples of his native Australian orchid collection as well as a sizeable number of slides of orchids in their natural habitat, as well as some of those orchids which he and his fellow members of the orchid society have grown. The variety of orchids which are native to Australia is nothing less than astonishing. Among those which Ron showed us were some with delightfully engaging names such as, Tangler, Tree Spider, Lady Fingers, Flying Duck, Bridal Veil, Antelope, Orange Blossom, Queen of Sheba (from West Australia). The sizes ranged from the very small, (five cent size) hiding down in leaf mulch to the very large ones which can almost be used for swinging on through the trees.

In addition to the slides Ron took quite a few questions from the audience, including explaining how an orchid differs from an ordinary flower. At the end of the question and answer session Ron was very happy to talk with club members about the orchids. Ron, the audience were certainly appreciative of your showing us some of our native orchids.

Thank you for spending the evening with us, and good fortune in your orchid growing contests. I look forward to walking with Ron and benefiting from his information. From now on I suspect that any flower on which I walk will be carefully scrutinised to see whether it is one of the 700 varieties of orchids which are native to Australia.

WELCOME BACK JUDY

The club's barbecue on the evening of 22 September saw a sizeable number of members enjoying the chance to socialise while enjoying the bushwalkers traditional past times of eating and drinking, in moderation of course.

Among the members present was Judy O'Connor, whom readers will recall, recently wrote an article describing her experience when she broke her leg. Judy is now very mobile, and well on the road to recovery. With any sort of luck we might soon see Judy out on some walks as she gets back to bushwalking. Welcome back Judy, and keep up the work on the recovery road.
