

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER is a monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers Inc, Box 4476 GPO Sydney 2001. To advertise in this magazine, please contact the Business Manager.

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THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS INCORPORATED was founded in 1927.

Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening at 8 pm at Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitzroy Street, Kirribilli (near Milsons Point Railway Station). Visitors and prospective members are welcome any Wednesday.

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From The Editor

Hello everyone, well our new format magazine is up and running. Or rather-"toddling". There is still a long way to go. As we can now pack a lot more into less magazine space, we need more input from every available source so please let's have your copy.

Modern Communication Systems

No doubt many members will have heard the suggestion that walkers venturing into remote places should carry a mobile telephone. The idea being that the time delay in getting assistance when needed would be greatly reduced. Assistance could be in the form of, for example-Medical advice.- which might be life saving. Or assistance when seemingly lost. There are obvious benefits in being able to get quick response to a call for help for an injured person. Reduced anxiety by being able to report in when overdue, (could be job saving), etc etc. The list of possible benefits could be a long one and I don't doubt that it won't be long before these devices will be commonplace on all walks.

It's not unreasonable to expect that there will be a lot of purists who will argue strongly against them. There is perhaps the greatly increased risk to the idiot fringe who may think "I'm safe, I've got my phone with me" and do things they otherwise would not. What do you think?
George.

Coolana Bird Life

by GEOFF MCINTOSH

I now understand one of the reasons why S.B.W. members appreciate the club's 116 acre (47 hectare) "Coolana" property on the Kangaroo River, in that it is "Sydney Bushwalkers Wildlife refuge No 383", being a virtual extension of Morton National Park.

On February 21st 1994 I visited "Coolana" accompanied by a "birdy" (bird-watcher) from Bendigo, Victoria who was most enthused and identified 12 species of bird between 9am and 1pm. Not bad for such a short period, especially as many other species were seen but not positively identified.

The 12 species which were positively identified were:

- Wedge tailed Eagle
- Brown Pidgin
- Crimson Rosella
- Pallid Cuckoo
- Scaly Thrush
- Eastern Yellow Robin
- Black Faced Flycatcher
- Grey Fantail
- Variegated Fairy Wren
- White Throated Tree Creeper
- Yellow Faced Honeyeater
- Lewin's Honeyeater

No water birds have been included and naturally no nocturnal species were seen. The weather was clear with no wind and 24°C. •

Buy - Swap - Sell

Some of that gear that you haven't used for years could bring you some dollars and perhaps allow some prospective a lower cost entry into our sport. Or perhaps someone has some item of gear that you are looking for. We'll run a few lines for members and prospective's free. copy received up to the first day of the month will be printed in the next issue. Ed.

Saturated and Overloaded

by MAURICE SMITH

There I was, a human version of a spider descending a large vertical rock face, my life depending on what seemed to be a mere thread of gossamer. I was enjoying, no, enjoying is not the correct word, my senses were saturated and overloaded by the incredibly beautiful location. We were in Heart Attack Canyon the Upper Blue Mountains prior to the devastating bush fires January 1994.

Most of the group had already descended the 30 metre plus abseil that gives the canyon its name. There I was making my way down the rock face. I stopped for a moment to take in the beauty surrounding me, suspended in mid air on the gossamer thread. Words are such a poor means of conveying

the beauty of the waterfall and the way the sun filtered through the waterfall, the huge chock stones high above, the sunlight making its way partly down the walls of the canyon, the creek trickling on its way along the canyon floor. Who is that figure far below waving to me?

After arriving at the bottom of the abseil the scene had changed and I was overawed by the spectacle of the canyon.

As we splashed our way down the creek the occasional brave yabby poked its head up to complain about the passage of our party.

The entire party seemed to be stunned by the beauty of the canyon. At the end of the canyon we were like a large group of school children unexpectedly let out of school for the day, full of adrenalin and in high spirits as a result of enjoying the sheer beauty and exhilaration of making our way down the canyon.

This feeling was reinforced when Ian Wolfe our trip leader took us to Rocky Creek Canyon where we swam, walked, waded and talked our way through a second superb canyon in one day. In its own way it was also one of stunning beauty.

What a day that was! It is one that will live long in my memories. Ian Wolfe and the rest of the group for that weekend, thanks for an incredible weekend.

Most definitely my senses were saturated and overloaded that day. •

Have Your Say! Letters To The Editor

I don't seem to get many. Why don't more of you write? We will print your letter in the magazine if we can (and if it seems that it won't do any harm). We don't want any verbal dog fights in our magazine but a little wrangling between a few contributors via *Letters to the Editor* could be interesting reading. Your letters will be very welcome.

A lovely brand new daughter

To Kathleen Zanardo "Alessia" born May 2nd 1994.

Congratulations Kath'

And who are the delighted grandparents?, none other than Helen and George Gray.

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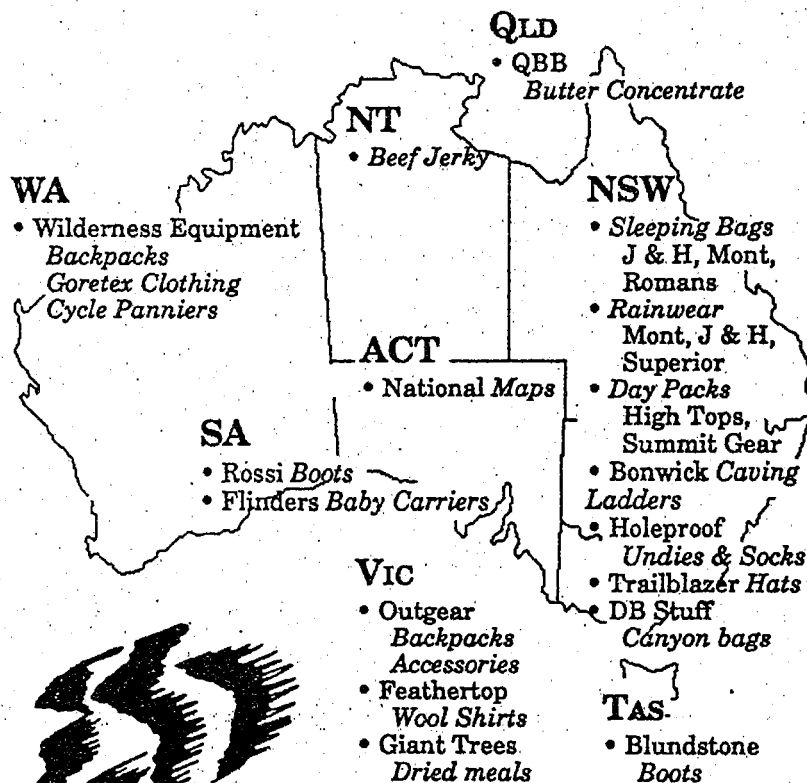
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Taking up the challenge

by David Robinson

Commencing in November 1988, Dick Smith, adventurer and publisher of Australian Geographic Magazine, circled the world in a Twin Otter aircraft. As part of this record breaking flight, Dick flew over Sarawak in Malaysia and saw on the horizon a magnificent spire rising over 2000 metres over the rainforest. So impressed was he that he photographed it and included it in his book, *Our Fantastic Planet* which recorded his adventures. The caption read, On the horizon we spotted this fantastic looking peak and altered course to fly towards it. It's about 2150 metres high and if you want to go and climb it, you'll find it at about 3 degrees 48' North, 115 degrees 24' East.

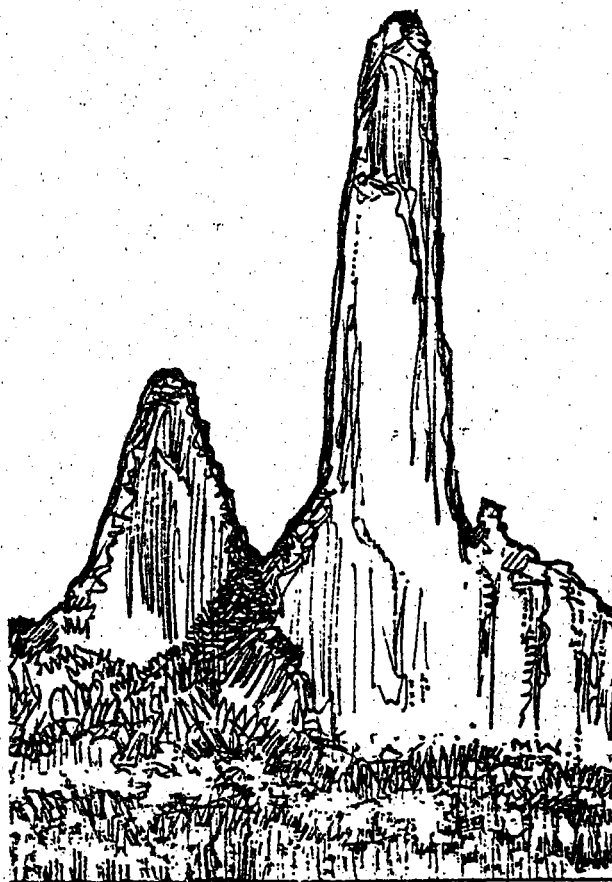
Morie Ward and I from the SBW and a team of four other climbers led by Peter (if it hasn't been done before let's do it), Treseder have recently returned from a successful expedition to Borneo (sponsored by Australian Geographic and Wild Sports) where we took up Dick's challenge and successfully completed what is believed to be the first ascent of "Batu Lawi". According to local history, two previous attempts were made but both were unsuccessful.

The first problem the team faced was finding out exactly where 3 degrees 48' N 115 degrees 24' is! A quick look at the atlas shows it to be on the Malaysian border with Indonesia.

After extensive investigation, planning and training, the team found themselves on their way to Malaysia to climb "Batu Lawi". It was simple. An eight hour plane trip to Kuala Lumpur, a twelve hour wait over, a two hour flight to Kota Kinabalu in Sabah, another day cooling our heels, a four hour 4WD trip over rugged roads to Lawas in Sarawak, a 30 minute light aircraft flight to Ba Kelalan in the highlands then a walk through the rainforest for five days into the Kelabit Highlands, then set up a base camp 1000 metres below the summit. EASY!

The walk from Ba Kelalan was tough going over rough jungle carrying full packs. All members of the team fell victim to the slippery surfaces with numerous falls occurring on the steeper descents. Our guides, natives from Ba Kelalan were better equipped for the conditions, wearing soccer boots with studs to stop them slipping and sliding.

In the way of wildlife, we saw gibbons and silver leaf monkeys high up in the tree canopies. Hornbills and many other smaller birds were conspicuous with their colourful plumage and noisy calls. Leeches of course were in abundance and leeching stops were made frequently during the day!



Batu Lawi

In tropical style, it rained each afternoon just as you began to think that you might end the day with dry feet and campsite. No such luck. After the first three days the steamy tropical jungle changed abruptly to cloud forest with every tree and rock covered with moss. There were literally thousands of orchids and several types of giant pitcher plants. Along with the splashes of colour from Rhododendrons the area around Batu Lawi was a wonderland for nature lovers but made for very poor conditions for rock climbing.

The ascent of the major peak was done over three days, the team leaving base camp before dawn each day to maximise the time available before the rains made the conditions dangerous. Injury to any one of us would have been a major problem due to the remote area and difficult terrain. The climb went without problems and the views from the summit were spectacular though interrupted continually by mist and cloud.

After the climb the mood of the group changed with no-one looking forward to the long trek out of the rainforest to civilisation. ▷ continued on page 14

The Rescuing of Erith

by Maurice Smith

Due to an illness which kept me away from the clubroom for all of April I am unable to provide a report of the April club room events. I would like to thank everyone for their best wishes. I expect to back in the bush in a few weeks time and to bring a clubroom report for May.

While I was laid up I had a visit from Erith Hamilton, complete with a large plaster cast on her left ankle. Erith expects that her plaster cast will be removed by about the middle of May. Then starts the process of regaining strength and mobility in the ankle. We wish Erith well.

As a follow up to my article on how Erith Hamilton became a member of the Bushwalkers Broken Ankle Society I would like to relate

how that event was reported in parts of the print and electronic media.

The Daily Telegraph Mirror of 29 March, 1994 reported that we were rescued by Police after we had spent the night at the base of a cliff. In fact we were "rescued" by a Westpac Surf Life Saving helicopter after we spent the night of 27 March on the top of Sturgiss Mountain a long way from any cliffs.

The Illawarra Mercury of the same date is somewhat more sensational in its treatment of the event. It reported "the woman's friends left her with two non-prescription headache tablets and warm clothing as they walked out of the park to get help. a doctor and paramedic were winched to the woman." The facts are that I stayed with Erith the whole time and we well extremely well equipped with tents etc as we were on a weekend walk and although Erith did in fact have some non-prescription

headache tablets we also had enough food for at least another day. The Westpac helicopter set down on the top of Sturgiss Mountain no more than 30 metres away from us without the need for anyone to be winched up or down. The helicopter that picked us up from Sturgiss Mountain landed near the car park at New Haven Gap to drop me off and then continued to transport Erith to hospital. It had to refuel at Nowra before it could return to Sydney. During the refuelling a reporter from Wollongong's WIN TV station interviewed Erith while she was sitting in the helicopter. The interview that went to air was quite factual and showed a cheerful Erith, even though her left ankle was strapped and splinted. She also showed that she was a typical dedicated bushwalker who thoroughly enjoys her forays into the beautiful Budawang's.

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Cycling the Great Ocean Road

by BARBARA BRUCE



Well, how did it go then??

Did I get a sore backside? Let me tell you, it seems no amount of training will stop you from getting a sore seat! The only cure seems to be having a rest now and again because the soreness seems to go fairly quickly. There may be some expensive technology that helps, but apart from that - nuh.

I might as well get the bad bits over with first; well that's what happened on the trip, so I might as well repeat the sequence here. You see, the coach ride from Melbourne was cool but dry, but as soon as we reached Port Fairy and commenced to get organised, the heavens opened up. And they stayed opened while we were queuing to get our passes and Great Ocean Road Bike Ride lunch bumbags and while we ate lunch and retrieved and reassembled our bikes. Could not have been much worse, actually. No sooner had we set off on the 37km scenic ride to Warrnambool than the weather settled into the odd light shower which was to accompany us for the next couple of days; it felt good to be on our bikes and on our way.

Our first night at Warrnambool was an interesting experience as I accustomed myself to the ride routine and location of Information, Catering, Cafe de Canvas, Massage, Medical, Bike repairs and so on.

All our meal times were flexible but a queue would form at the opening time, dilly bags holding eating gear over shoulders, ready to

have passes clicked before moving into a quickly moving queue to have plates filled by the friendly volunteers in the catering tent. There was certainly plenty to eat, because in addition to the meal there would usually be supplied for the grabbing extra bread rolls and fruit.

Those in the know brought something to sit on as well, or pinched one of the crates in the beverage tent. By the way, the coffee was AWFUL; maybe that was their way of encouraging you to buy one of the delicious cappuccinos from the Cave de Canvas...

From the first morning I set my routine of rising promptly at 6am to get myself ready, break camp, have breakfast and deliver my gear to the truck before riding off at about 7.45am. This way I would give myself the maximum leeway for any lingering at attractive spots the day had to offer. It would also allow me to go at my own relaxed speed. It seemed that a large proportion of the ride were racers, or were the sort who did 70km before breakfast on Sunday. They certainly took their cycling a lot more seriously than I did! My motivation was generally to be at the next camp by about 2-2.30 pm so that I could choose where I wanted to set up my tent. An hour or so later and it would be take the best spot you could find. Wow!

The first couple of days set the tone of most of the trip as we travelled peacefully through quiet rural countryside with cattle and sheep for company as we passed.

As an example of the attention to detail that went into the organisation of the ride, on the night of our second camp at Port Campbell we had the opportunity of listening to a local historian talk on the story of the Shipwreck Coast. His detailed tales of the shipwrecks had me shuddering later, especially

when I visited Loch Ard, where they used to fire ropes attached to rockets to floundering ships at sea.

Well worth it too was the bus trip at sunset to view the Twelve Apostles.

We passed all this scenery again next morning and enjoyed some easy riding before our first major hill climb of 11km. Then my strategy was to get into the lowest gear when necessary and just keep going. It worked. And what a fantastic downhill ride to the campsite on Johanna Beach! A wild night it was too ... lots of people had problems of one sort or another, particularly with tents. The combination of exercise and comfort meant I slept well, despite the thoughts for long lost shipwreck victims in such conditions.

The next morning the weather changed completely and we had continuously splendid weather from here to Melbourne. Today we had to contend with the second and last major hill climb. Except for the steep incline of the first 2km I enjoyed every turn of my wheels, because it wound through the rain forest of Cape Otway National Park with its attendant sights and smells. Once at the top these sights and smells were overtaken by the magnificent scenery leading down to the beach at Apollo Bay and the smell of the sea. I'm sure everyone enjoyed long sojourns here at the sidewalk cafes in reward for having completed the hardest parts of the trip.

From now on the ride consisted of undulations of varying degrees as we meandered our way past many beaches to pretty Lorne and our rest day. It seemed like a good idea to get my washing out of the way the afternoon I arrived and this was rewarded by a relaxing but eventful day when I enjoyed the sights of Lorne and took a bus trip to adjacent areas and the >

< pretty Erskine Falls. (These actually reminded me of the Zoe Creek Falls on Hinchinbrook Island.) I closed the day enjoying in luxury a delicious crayfish (lobster to us) salad at the Lorne Pier Restaurant.

As we cycled past Anglesea we could see all the new homes which replace those completely burnt out in the Ash Wednesday fires 11 years ago. At Anglesea too we came across the first of the cycleways that Bicycle Victoria has managed to have constructed in that state. What a difference these make to both cyclists and motorists. It was about here we first noticed any traffic.

An overnight stop was at pretty and historically interesting Queenscliff, where next morning we queued for our 40 minute ferry ride to Sorrento. Many of us then took the side trip to Portsea and Nepean National Park before heading for our last campsite in Mornington Park. I will always remember the serenity I felt as I wandered along the pier at Mornington and watched the sun set into the sea.

From the campsite we could also see in the distance the end of our ride the next day, Melbourne, 55km away around Port Phillip Bay. I would have loved to have taken two days to do just this leg, there were so many titillating places to turn off. I hear that a lot of Melbourne cyclists ride Melbourne to Mornington and return as a run of a Sunday morning. I'd hate to go so fast!

Once at Catani Gardens in St Kilda my biggest concern was getting back to the airport - this was when I had my one and only lift in the "Sag Wagon" which during the ride had picked up people unable to make it to camp under their own power.

It's hard to believe that it's all

over, but largely on account of the excellent organisation by Bicycle Victoria, I now have some warm memories and a great sense of achievement. ☺



From Dot Butler

An Invitation To All S.B.W.

to help celebrate the

AUSTRALIAN ANDEAN EXPEDITION-1969

SILVER ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

FRIDAY, 10TH JUNE 1994

An evening to celebrate Australian mountaineering will be held at Australian Geographic Headquarters, Terry Hills on 10th June 1994 at 7 pm. Slides, supper. Admission \$30
Proceeds to Nepal Eye Program Australia (NEPA) and Peru relief fund.

JANUARY 1994

by Errol Sheedy

When fires flowered at night
She had a room which radiated light
From a scene which she always
feared to see,

And said, "Look, can you explain
can you explain
why it is the land should be so
ravaged?"

(Quietly watching a burning tree)

"The life now drains from here, you
see it drain;

And can nature's plan make the
bushland thrive,

And then be green and grow and
bloom like yesteryear?"

Lets have a drive, to the bush that's
quite near.

Wilderness Rescue

by Jim Rivers

Govetts Leap Search

At about 6.30pm 29 March 1994 Keith Maxwell received a call from Katoomba Police requesting assistance in a search for a 38 year old male, overdue since Sunday. Police had spent all Monday searching in deteriorating weather, but without success.

Wilderness Rescue, where possible, called on clubs that had attended the recent practice weekend and would like to thank members from the following clubs who were able to attend the small call-out of thirty walkers:

- Central West
- Springwood Bushwalkers
- Sydney Bushwalkers
- Sutherland
- Upper Blue Mountains

Police command sent bushwalker groups in from Perrys Lookdown, Victoria Falls, Lockleys Pylon, Grand Canyon and Rodriguez Pass. They were to meet at Junction Rock and then sweep the bottom half of the slope under Fortress Hill towards Govetts Gorge. The Police and National Parks swept the top half below Fortress Hill.

At about 3.00pm, just before bushwalkers were going to sweep the area, the Polair helicopter spotted the missing man near the landslide at Govetts Gorge.

Careflight airlifted the man to Nepean Hospital. He was suffering from a fractured skull, major abrasion of the back (fly blown) together with total confusion and disorientation possibly due to his diabetes.

All walkers were out of the bush by 5.15pm.

Greta James, Bill Holland, Jo van Summers and Jim Percy showed the flag. •



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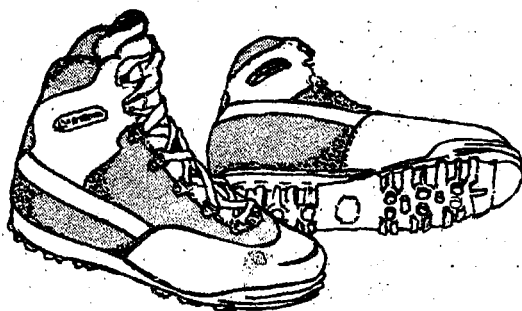


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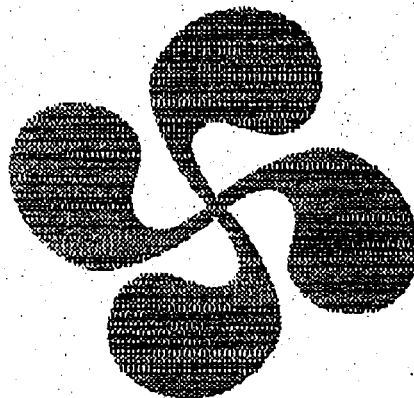
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SOUTH WEST TASMANIA 1994 PART 1

A TRAVERSE OF THE WILMOT AND FRANKLAND RANGES

The party of six gathered at the Adelphi Court YHA on Sunday morning to meet the Invicta Bus for the journey to the Serpentine Dam. After a last sampling of fresh food at the Maydenna Cafe it was on to view the dam wall at what used to be the Gordon Splits. Where mighty waters roared and rushed all is now quiet, except for the moaning of the wind as it caresses the flanks of this monolith of concrete and steel. By comparison the Serpentine Dam is a minor affair yet the empty river bed downstream beckons just as poignantly. Yet one must be grateful in part to the dams and accompanying roads as they give access to these magnificent ranges. So it was on with the 10 day packs, across the dam and into the teatree to commence the climb up the steep track. This climbed out of the trees firstly to Sprent trig to provide lovely views of Sprent Basin and Lake Pedder to the south. The day being slightly overcast was ideal for climbing the 600ms up the open button grass covered ridges on the flanks of Mt Sprent. We made camp in a lovely saddle before climbing up to the summit of Mt Sprent for after dinner views and a blood red sunset. Away to the west was the misty sea, to the north the quartz block of Frenchman's Cap, to the south the line of our future traverse down the range with the fang of Federation dimly perceptible. To the north east stood our friends from the previous year: the Denison, Spires and King William Ranges. Even to the east Lake Pedder ceased to be obviously man made. Increasingly were able to take

delight in the vista of island nestling with headland, bay with shore and the play of the wind upon the water.

Next day dawned with balmy breezes and clear skies. So after reascending Mt Sprent we headed south across the open ridges of the main spine. This provided a day of rollercoaster walking up and down and round little knobs and undulations providing constant variation and new vistas as we strolled along. The mounting heat of the day and the unusual dryness of the range was alleviated by the discovery of a fortuitous stream in a labyrinth of boulders. Whilst afternoon tea was taken the "way" was scouted around the towering spire to our front.

This involved a traverse on a pad around to an old moraine wall before a descent through mountain rain forest onto the plain below Islet Lake. The lake itself lived up to its name with a beautiful islet gracing the lake nestling in its cirque of quartz cliffs. With the accompanying Pencil and King Billy Pines the only thing missing was the Torii gatehouse. But not being Japanese we could cope with the pristine camp-site on the lake shore especially after a cleansing dip. Again an after dinner stroll capped a lovely day of walking seemingly suspended between the sky above and the world below.

A shower in the night brought mist next morn. This proved no problem initially as the first part of the day was up an open valley to an exquisite saddle graced with moss and fern to connect to another broad valley. After morning tea however it was back to the ridges in an out of the mist. For the most part we kept to the "route" but the occasional variation in this Kosciuszko like terrain was entertained. The sidling of a number of rocky ridges brought us clearing

weather and views to the south of the route. Before us was a saddle marking the junction of the Wilmot and Frankland Ranges and beyond a knife edge rocky ridge curved away to meet our days destination in the form of Coronation Peak. So it was down and up and scramble round in a great frolic of rock. A good track aided the process and allowed us to appreciate the views away to the west. Below us were a series of broad plains interspersed with parallel ridges and far in the west glittered the sea with sparkling beaches. The only negative was a brief "discussion" with a small tiger snake who saw no reason why he should give up his sunning spot to allow our traverse.

The end of the ridge brought us to a stunning view with Orb Lake, Lake Ampula and Sceptre Lake encrusting the slopes below Coronation Peak. A short descent brought us to the camp-site, Coronation Shelf which is a large flat grassed area. An unusually strong wind from the east fortunately dropped that night to give us all a well earned and uninterrupted sleep.

The morning was clear as well as still and thus inspired I could not resist the temptation of the peak. So I didn't, and yielded to seduction. A concerted push took me up through the bushy gully and onto her rocky flanks to caress the wonderful texture of the rock on the final climb to the pinnacle. The denouement of the summit was worth the effort. Sky, rock and lake blended into a seamless magnificent whole to fill my entire existence. To stand in the midst of such splendor is to understand, with every atom of your existence, why man has been, is now and ever shall be, drawn upwards, unto the hills.

The rest of the day continued in this vein. Double Peak was climbed for morning tea (5 stars +). We sang

the appropriate songs as we descended Madonna Ridge to gaze down into Sanctuary Lake. The platform of car sized rocks atop Redtop Peak provided the venue for lunch. South the range extended past the Cupola and the Lion to reveal the Companion Range further on. Quartz, especially when some gargantuan process has turned the layers end on forms spectacular ranges. Spires as well as buttresses abound to be interspersed by Gendarmes and pinnacles. These provide a delight to traverse weaving in and out and sidling past. Sometimes however it is up and over and down steep gullies. The next section was one of these with two mighty buttresses having to be traversed. However the track was clear and the cairns were numerous!

The conclusion of this adventure brought us to a knoll over looking our camp-site for the next three nights. This special place is called Citadel Shelf and it is the best camp-site on the range. It is comprised of a series of interlinked, broad, grass covered quartz terraces. These lie 80m below the crest of the range and the entrance is through a section of quiet moss covered mountain rain forest. We strolled down and passed some chat with three young walkers who were about to leave, before quietly considering the tent site options. After some deliberation a site looking down to the Moat and across to the Citadel was agreed upon. Thus passed a beautiful night under a starlit sky in which the Milky Way streaked like a band of white across the firmament.

The next two days were rest days. Now some people of limited vision have said that my rest days are merely a rest from carrying the pack. Well I am humble enough to acknowledge that there is some truth in this and thus the first day was truly a relaxed day. We merely

climbed the towering rock pinnacle called so appropriately the Citadel. Now, the rope wasn't really necessary but there is nothing wrong with psychological crutches. Certainly the view blew away such minor feelings of remorse.

Here truly the third dimension was with us, there being a multitude of up and down all around us. Rock and spire, view and vista, where to look, where not to be filled with the aura of time. To stand on a pinnacle 400 million years old, to look at a billion years of weathering to think of the glaciers that were here but a mere 40,000 years ago.

Then of course down a gleaming quartz ridge, virginal in its whiteness unto the Moat. This lovely lake hanging below the towering cliffs. To strip off on the grassy bank and then to feel the kiss of sun and water. To stroll around the foreshore, to converse with pine and beech, this truly was a rest day.

To preserve my reputation the next day was less relaxed. Down to an open saddle empathising in the first person with the intervening kilometre of 3m high dense scrub. But it was worth it for this allowed us to follow the open terraces up to an ancient moraine ridge to view Croaking Lake. A swim for momos refreshed us for the climb up to Remote Peak. For truly it is remote with probably less than 200 people ever having attained its summit before us. 840m directly below us the Frankland River cut like a knife through the Long Ridge before winding across the most isolated plains on this earth unto the sea. To the south the unmistakable pyramid of Mt Rugby rose majestically above Bathurst Harbour and the jagged rim of the Arthur's scrapped the sky to the SE.

Tiring, eventually of this vista we explored the summit to find tenches carved into the ground, some 30 m long radiating from a

central knob of blasted rock. And, then unbidden into our minds came the answer. This is a place of the Gods, that Thor frequents and leaves his mark for mere men to marvel at.

It being a beautiful sunny day we had no fear of Thor dropping in unexpectedly with his bolts of lighting and thus we took a different route back to the lake via a knife edge ridge. In all a lovely day of wandering over hill and dale.

Then, on the morrow, a tearful farewell to the flowers of pink, white and purple that carpeted the grass of our lovely camp-site. Instead back to the ridge to feel the hills slide beneath our feet. Murphys Bluff, Cleft Peak and Geycap disappeared under our strides. Then down sliding, whooping on the steep button grass to Frankland Saddle for lunch. Then the climb we had come for, the long winding ridge to Mt Frankland itself, at last. The camp-site was dispersed. Louise and I behind a rock pinnacle with bursting waves in it, Karen and Ian on a little saddle and Paul and Wendy hanging above a pristine lake far below.

The summit itself is a unique place. There is the rock portal that frames that immortal photograph of the original Lake Pedder that Olegas Truchannas took during his solo wanderings in these mountains. When I found it the remorse of progress was strong upon me. For no matter how I strived I could not see, beneath the waters of the new lake, those white quartz sands that had gleamed for eternity. Yet these sombre thoughts were blown away by the summit. It reminds me much of Federation as on three sides there are the shear walls of gray quartz plummeting into nothing. As I was trying to find the way down I had a delightful couple of hours hanging from crag

& knob, swinging from pinnacle to tower. And then, in companionship, to enjoy the going down of the sun, to see the world fade into purple and gray, and then slowly, the creeping in of the stars to carpet the sky.

The next dawn was a decision point. If the weather was bad then, as Chapman puts it "down the demoralising ridges very thickly covered with towering scrub" to Jones Pass. Or, only if it was sunny and dry, the awe inspiring descent of Mt Frankland and Mt Secheron. Yet again the gods smiled on us and the dawn threw out before us the challenge of the high and rocky road. Given that I had been carrying 53 m of 9mm rope for the last seven days I was not against being given the opportunity to employ it to good effect. Certainly we did so. After an airy scramble down to a knob we abseiled 17ms down to a knife edge saddle.

Having done it I concede that it would be possible to down rockclimb this section if you knew where you were going. All I can say is "Better man than me Gunga Dinh".

Some airy ledge walking then led onto Secheron Saddle and an easy climb to the summit. A short walk led to the sheer north face which was supposedly the way down. Well, cognisant of the 100m drop I took my pack off as I approached the edge to survey the possibilities, thinking "this looks really interesting!". What I saw shows that fortune really does favor the brave and that an optimistic "the lord shall provide" perspective on life is warranted. For there, in the midst of the wilderness, at the most opportune time, showing precisely the route to follow was a party of 10 tassie walkers completing the ascent. I use the word "route" some what loosely for it was like something out of Ridder Haggard.

For the cliff was not quite sheer, instead it had a network of interconnecting narrow ledges up which the other party was proceeding like flies stuck to a wall.

From my eyrie I was able to guide them up the last section of the climb before sharing morning tea with them. They were from the Melaleuca Walking Club out of Hobart and they specialise in "hard" walks. Certainly their proposed future route made me shudder! After a time we bid them farewell and commenced our descent which went fairly well except for a pack which proved somewhat impatient. Not content to be handed down the tricky bits it decided to go its own way, bounding end over end down the mountain. This produced some consternation amongst the onlookers and especially the owner. Fortunately the Bolter was brought to brook by the vegetation in the gully and after some hasty field repairs was once more wedded to its owner.

Well, the rest of the days walk down to the lake was supposed to be "fairly easy on open ridges". Well it was, except for the intervening cliff lines. But having descended Frankland and Secheron these other bulwarks were but minor matters. Nevertheless it was a weary group that slid down the slopes of Terminal Peak to wash their bodies in Lake Pedder. We camped on a shingle beach looking at Mt Solitary and Mt Anne as slowly we grasped that we were once again part of the world "below".

We utilised our reserve half day and the following day to make the walk along the lake shore a leisurely affair. The new lake abounds with trout (no I didn't have my line), has a low and muddy shore in most places, steep eroded banks in others and in rare spots small scale whitequartz beaches have formed to

remind us of what had been before.

The trip concluded at the terminus of the Port Davey track at Scotts Peak Dam. Before climbing onto the bus we chatted amicably with three Victorians who had been walking the SW for 38 days!. Surprisingly they seemed quite human although very eager for company. After a stop at the Maydenna Cafe to reacquaint our taste buds with the likes of meat pies, chips and ICE CREAM it was into the showers at the Mt Field YHA. Thence unto the THE PUB we weaved to sample a dram or two and to eat strange crunchy stuff called SALAD.

Thus fed, washed and lubricated we reviewed the trip. A mighty, infrequently visited range. Where the mark of man is slight. A place of timeless grandeur comprised of marvellous subtle mixtures of the elements of nature. A privilege to have traversed it in such fine weather and in such good company
Ian Wolfe



HIBBERTIA BRACTEATA
(Little Gold Bush)

Reminder

First aid course -

A chance to obtain a St John First Aid Certificate, and at less than half price. \$53 instead of the usual \$120! This is also an opportunity to revalidate your out of date certificate.

Club coordinators are Denise Shaw 922 6093 and Judy Mehaffey (042) 263589.

A DEEP EXPERIENCE

by Tom Wenman

The inky blackness of night surrounded us, the parameters of our world delineated by pinpoints of blue green stars, their intensity matched by their obscurity when exposed to torch light. An equally inky black pool flowed silently towards an exit, and then disappeared, leaving us to grapple thrust and gasp our way through a narrow gap which threatened to confine us forever within its grasp. Once through however and around a corner, the blessing of sunlight appeared with warmth and the chance of a respite from our endeavours. We were about halfway through the 'Hole In The Wall Canyon'. Whilst we ate our lunch we contemplated the delights and surprises which were to come.

The story really starts however two weeks previously with Ken Clachers abseiling instructional in the relatively warm sublime atmosphere of the cliffs in Lady Davidson park Wahroonga. Ken guided some twenty or so novices and not so novices through the mysteries of abseiling so that by the end of the day we were quite happily launching ourselves over the edge of the cliffs with a confident surety that was markedly absent at the beginning.

Thus assured, a number of us together with some more established veterans gathered on Saturday 27th November on Waratah Ridge, preparatory to descending into Hole In The Wall Canyon.

As we paddled our way through the beginning of the canyon I, as I'm sure the other novice canyoners did, wondered a bit about the first

abseil, and how we would acquit ourselves.

Well, here at last it was, and with some apprehension we donned our wetsuits or thermals and tied ourselves up in the appropriate fashion with yards of tape (no this wasn't the Houdini test) or clambered into mysterious contraptions rather exotically decorated and called "harnesses".

With a clink and a clip carabinas were secured and before long it was my turn to say "abseiling". A tricky start, as so many of them were, but the instructional paid off handsomely and in more or less control I descended with confidence.

Thereafter the twists and turns of the canyon, the exhilarating descents, the sudden spotlights of sunshine, all combined to make a memorable, and thoroughly enjoyable if tiring experience. Cool pools swum or waded, extended until we reached once again the delight of sunshine, sun clear water and the steep, but open sky questing cliff, bedecked with the delicate tracery of tree ferns.

Saturday night being a car camp, enabled those of us who were so inclined to indulge in the luxuries of decadence. The wine and conversation flowed well into the evening before all retired to a well earned rest.

Surefire canyon on the morrow proved to be another truly exhilarating experience. Commencing with a series of abseils which plunged us into the very heart of the canyon. Some starts were a bit difficult, squeezing through holes and crawling between log jams before disappearing down waterfalls with deepwater finishes. All members however acquitted themselves well, and we finally emerged from the stygian gloom, like the voyagers in Jules Vern's

"Journey to the Centre of the Earth", into a sunlit open creek junction.

Lunch was taken in a sunny section of the canyon beneath towering and overhanging cliffs, with the spray of small soaks floating sparkling pearls of water down to us, whilst the smoke of a lunchtime fire climbed slate grey up the shafts of sunlight to the very tops.

Finally the way out and then actually achieving it, proved quite demanding, but then we were all up and away through the bush once more in the glorious sunshine.

What a splendid way to spend a hot weekend, and full marks to ken who had inducted, instructed and conducted us through this adventure and into a new world and dimension to bushwalking.

The cast of thousands included Brian Bevan, Chris Wong, Kay Chan, Tony Maynes, Joan Kerr, Andrew McLay, Ian Wolf, Carol Lubbers, David Trinder, Patrick Trinder, Steven McKay, Jim Oxley, Colin Atkinson, Allen Wells, Maurice Smith, Bob Horder, Doreen Provan, Tom Wenman, Michelle Powell, Morella Hogan, Edith Baker and Geoff McIntosh. •

Batu Lowi

◁ Continued from page 5

The highlight of the expedition was not the climb but the people of the highlands. It was saddening to see from the air the logging that was happening. Roads are being cut further and further into the magnificent wilderness, an act that will affect forever the lives of the forest dwellers. These are changes the people do not want and perhaps this is the next challenge. •

Footnote: Peter Treseder will be presenting a slide programme of this trip at a forthcoming club meeting.

The April General Meeting.

It was around 2010 when the new president called the 18 or so members and Peter Miller (recently driven from his sumptuously appointed park bench, or so he said, but we saw no chauffeur) to order and started proceedings. There were apologies from Jim Callaway, Patrick James, Maurice Smith and Margaret Niven.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with no matters arising.

Correspondence saw mention of a letter of congratulations to the club from Confederation S&R on our participation in a recent search.

There was a letter from Anne Brown advising us that her husband Neil, who walked with the club and served for some time as club treasurer, passed away on 25 February this year after being partially disabled by a stroke in 1992. Ann and some family friends have planted a silky oak tree at Coolana as a memorial to Neil. She wrote seeking assurance that we had no objections to this. A letter will be sent expressing our sympathy in their bereavement and indicating that we agree to the tree planting.

Alex Colley, the conservation secretary, sent a letter to the Prime Minister, Paul Keating, addressing the matter of the ACF's coastal campaign and the urgent need to preserve Beecroft Peninsular from further damage. There was also a letter from Alex to the NSW premier John Fahey regarding the wilderness act and the need to protect wilderness areas from damage by 4WDs and horses. Each of these letters was published in last month's magazine.

The treasurer's report indicated that we spent \$156, acquired income of \$1,137 and ended the month with a balance of \$1,857.

The new walks secretary led off his first walks report with the combined walk/canoe trip to/on Lake Yarrunga led jointly by Ian Debert and Bill Holland. After all that lead-up it was a shame to hear that due to high winds the canoe part of the event was a virtual non-starter with only Mike and Ainslie braving the waves. There were 7 or so people on the walking segment enjoying fine but cool and windy conditions that made swimming less attractive than they may have expected for that time of year.

Tom Wenman reported a party of 11 on his Breakfast Creek, Galong Creek trip on the Saturday. The weather was pleasant and sunny, in contrast to the cold wet conditions which greeted the 9 starters on David (fairweather) Rostron's walk in Morong Deep. As is traditional, the walk ended up going to Hundred Man Cave. They made a virtue of this particular necessity however, by doing a trip down Compagnoni Pass and up Gingra Creek when the weather improved on the Sunday.

Bronny Niemeyer's day walk from Homebush Bay to Botany Bay had around 20 starters but was lacking in the all important details. We were left to speculate as to the exact number of ice cream and cappuccino stops and so forth.

The 18, 19, 20 March saw the confederation S&R training weekend attended by an undisclosed number of SBW personnel. Maureen Carter described it all as a good exercise and George Mawer published an article about it in last month's magazine. Morie Ward was out there enjoying the leeches in the Barrington Tops area with a party of 16, and Peter Christian led the 4 or so starters who came on his Gloucester tops canyons trips to Gular canyon for a bit of variety.

Errol Sheedy led 10 on his trip

from Waterfall to Heathcote along the Bullawaring Track. They reported spending some time swimming along the way. There was no report of Eddie Giacomel's Colo walk but Peter Miller indicated that the 6 or so people who went on his trip in the Berowra Bushland were pleased to discover that the fires had mostly spared the area they walked through and lounged upon during their long luncheon break.

The weekend of 26, 27 March was all a bit more dramatic with Erith Hamilton breaking an ankle on Mt Sturgiss during Maurice Smith's weekend in the Buddawangs trip. You probably read about that in last month's magazine too. Just for the record there were 6 on the walk. The instructional weekend at Coolana attracted a legion of students (well around 10 of them) but instructors were a little thin on the ground. Bill expressed his disappointment that the students didn't get to be tested on their acquired knowledge during the weekend. Greta James took the party of 10 who turned out for her Walk In the Royal to Kanuka Brook because of closure of The Royal for fire damage recovery. Ione Dean's Great Boudi Coastal Walk saw the party of 21 staggering somewhat under the load of champagne and chocolate dispensed at the start for some celebration or other that Ione dreamed up for the occasion. (The anniversary of her first walk as leader, someone said.) The walk was described as delightful by the ones who could remember and they enjoyed sobering swims at Lobster Bay and Maitland Beach on the way. Peter Christian's walk to Banks Canyon went, with a party of 4 and not much other detail.

The Easter weekend saw a variety of weather conditions. Ian Rennard reported fine conditions >

Change of address

Ainsley and Mike Reynolds tell us they intend moving to the South Coast June 7th.

They will set up temporarily at No 13 Allambee Street South Durras for a few months until their new house at No 18 Allambee Street is ready to move into.

Phone number later.

general meeting notes continued.

< and pleasant going, mostly on fire trails and tracks around farm lands, for the 16 (less 2 at an early stage) who attended his Hume and Hovel Track walk. Ian Debert reported some showers, numerous mosquitos and, due to an injudicious siting of the fly net tent that kept the mossies at bay for happy hour, an abundance of bull ants. The bull ant problem was solved by relocating the tent, but the mossies persisted it seems. The party also went for day walks to and swims at Box Head beach and Lobster Bay. They reported Lobster Bay as overrun by boats and water skiers. Tony Holgate, in the most northerly location, reported rain overnight on each night in the rainforest. The party of 17 also enjoyed leeches, ticks, and lawyer vines, with a few navigation problems thrown in for good measure. To add polish to their adversity training it also contrived to rain on them for most of Monday as they climbed out up the ridge. Tony described the walk as pleasant. Peter Miller took the 5 starters for his Leura to Mt. Victoria walk to the Megalong Valley. They had some rain on Friday evening but otherwise

conditions were pleasant with the water level in the Cox surprisingly low. Peter is still impressed by the black snake that brushed past his leg at Kanangaroo clearing. He was less impressed by the helicopter that shared the flat with them. If anyone out there has hard information on the use of helicopters in this way could they please advise our Confederation delegates. John Hogan got into the act over Easter as well, leading a party of 5 to the Blue Breaks area, over Axehead range down Butchers Creek and up Roots Ridge. David Rostron's extended walk from The Cobberas to Thredbo went, led by Kenn Clacher. The party of 6 was serenaded by dingoes, saw brumbies, emus and made the acquaintance of a rat at one of the huts. The weekend of 9, 10 April saw John Hogan cancel his Six Foot Track In Two Days walk. It would have been a bit of an anti-climax after the Blue Breaks. Peter Christian, in a change of form that will keep the punters guessing for a while, led the party of 4 who came on his Glen Alice canyons abseiling trip to Banks Canyon and Crikey Canyon. Greg Bridge had 17 starters out on a hot day on his Megalong Valley Sunday walk and Wilf, (remember Wilf)? deferred stage 4 of the Great South Walk to the following weekend. All of which brought the walks report to an end. Amen! Conservation report saw mention of a letter from the Prime Minister's Department acknowledging ours regarding Jervis Bay. We also heard of a letter from the Buddawangs Committee to the NSW minister, Chris Hartcher, asking about access to Newhaven Gap and Quilty's Mountain. It seems the plan of management for the area is still being stalled after 15 years of

preparations. The latest manoeuvre on the wilderness declarations has been to refer them to the Surveyor General for comment. This could look like a delaying tactic if one were the least bit cynical about it all.

Confederation report was largely concerned with the question of whether there are plans to raise the Top Water Level (TWL), or the spillway height at Warragamba Dam. These are two distinctly different possibilities. If anyone has any information could they please put us out of our mystery. General business saw a decision that the reunion be held on 15, 16 October 1994 at Coolana. We also resolved that in future we will hold the reunion on or immediately before the first full moon after the 15 October. If any mathematical genius out there can see a problem with this, please let us know. A working bee will be scheduled at Coolana in the near future. Contact Ian Debert if you can assist.

Announcements saw a plea from the walks secretary for more easy day walks for the walks programme. The archivist is also seeking contemporary photographs for inclusion in the archives. Any takers?

The meeting closed at 2152.

Erith's Ankle

We are told that the plaster is due to come off Erith's leg soon and no doubt by the time this issue goes to print this will be so. Erith, those of us who have "been there and done that" know that the real work will now begin. We wish you a speedy and complete recovery, and remember the old saying "don't let your limp become a habit". Good luck, George.