

**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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**June 1994**

## **From The Editor**

Now I'm not a fanatical conservationist even though I do belong to a bushwalking club and regularly enjoy walking in our National Parks. But I seem to be developing a growing concern for future Australians and what we're leaving for them. I feel certain that they would (if we could ask them) want us to leave a little of the older, (pre Europeans) Australia for them. Particularly natural areas and the things that grow and live in them. Not logged or dammed or farmed or mined, or developed or otherwise vandalised.

There is a super abundance of people in this country who simply don't care. And there are plenty of people who don't see anything but the potential for making money in whatever they look at. But most of all it seems that the major stumbling block is the great diversity of view by the various groups interested in the few remaining areas. Just about everyone that has an interest also has a very good argument.

It seems to me that our major voice (and arm), is the conservation movement. But a win for conservation is not a loss for the others, never, it's just a temporary setback. They, like any efficient predator just retreat a little and look for another way to get at you.

Like peace, the price of conservation is eternal vigilance. And you can do something about it. You can write, you can give money to the conservation movement (The Colong Foundation for example), and you can vote.

You can support the Foundation by ordering a copy of: 'Wilderness - The Future'. See page 2.

## Easy Fast Cooking In The Bush With Spices-1

Jan Mohandas

### Tuna with Capsicum and Peas

(for two people)

This is an easy meal to cook and it is delicious to eat with boiled rice

#### Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons Fried onions
- 2 tablespoons Dried Capsicum
- 1 Small packet dried peas (fast cooking)
- 1 Tablespoon Tomato powder
- 1/4 teaspoon Garlic granules
- 1/2 Teaspoon Ginger powder
- 1/2 Teaspoon Coriander powder
- 1/2 Teaspoon Cumin powder
- 1/4 Teaspoon Black pepper powder
- 1/2 Teaspoon Curry powder

Mix all of the above at home and put in a plastic bag. All the ingredients are available either in supermarkets, Health food shops or in Asian Food Shops.

Also take 2 small cans of Tuna (salad style in brine)

Boil 3 or 4 cups of water in a medium size billy, put in the above mix and simmer gently for 10 minutes. Occasionally stir it to prevent it from sticking to the bottom or side. Then open the cans of tuna, drain the brine off and mix the tuna with the cooked mixture. Simmer for 3 minutes. Ready to eat, preferably with boiled rice.

**Boiled rice in the bush:** One cup of long grain rice would be sufficient for 2 people. Boil plenty of water in a medium size billy. Then put the rice in the boiling water, mix with a spoon, and allow it to simmer gently for 15 minutes. Drain the excess water completely. □

### First Aid

18 bushwalkers from 6 different clubs attended and spent an enjoyable and educational weekend participating in a first aid course capably conducted by Grace Matts.

Many thanks to Grace and St John Ambulance and the confederation for organising the course.

## Wilderness - The Future -

Edited by Will Barton

Wilderness conservation has not lost its relevance in the 1990s. Indeed, along with the gains of the last decade have come renewed pressures from governments keen to water down hard-won legislation for the benefits of those who see wilderness as an exploitable resource. And the Marbo judgement has introduced a new dimension to land tenure which sees conservationists having to come to terms with the traditional rights of indigenous people.

Wilderness: The Future has evolved from papers delivered in late 1993 at the Forth National Wilderness Conference, organised by The Colong Foundation For Wilderness.

Divided into four parts: Identifying and Reserving Wilderness; Guarding the Future of Wilderness; The Enduring Values of Wilderness and Wilderness Management, over 30 contributors from all around Australia presents a wide range of wilderness issues, from threats and protection to legislation, tourism, biodiversity and management plans. Writers have also joined the contemporary debates about fire strategies and mechanised access.

294 pages, 210 x 150 mm, 20 maps,  
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### Remote Area First Aid Course

MAURICE SMITH

A confederation run Remote Area First Aid Course is to be held over 3 days on 31 July and 6, 7 August 1994. It will be followed by an examination to test your newly acquired knowledge on 17 August.

The course will be held in Sydney at a cost of \$105 for the three days, or if you have a current St. Johns Senior First Aid Certificate you need only attend the latter two days of the course at a cost of \$65.

Course cost includes the provision of the current edition of the St. Johns First Aid Manual and bandages etc. Inquiry contact is the Confederation's First Aid Instructor David Shepherd  
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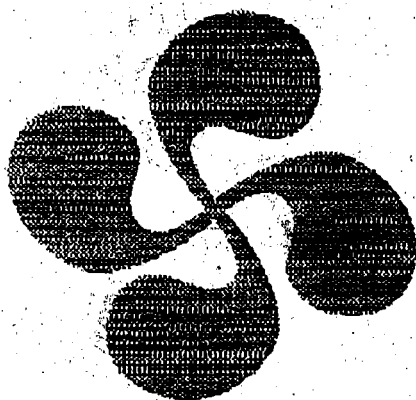
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## **SOUTHWEST TASMANIA 1994 PART 2**

A CIRCUIT OF THE MT FIELD  
PLATEAU. by IAN WOLFE

When last this tale was left off the stalwart adventures were propped up in the bar of the Mt Field Pub engaged in the earnest pursuit of a thorough understanding of the attributes of the hop and vineyards of Tasmania. Having gained a suitable level of insight we exited the pub and, after duly noting the magnificent array of English flowers raised by the publicans wife, we weaved our way back to the YHA for a well earned slumber.

This was subtly interrupted by the awareness of the soft patter of insistent rain on the tin roof. At first light this led to some debate as to the wisdom of once more venturing into the hills. The resolution being that we would at least go as far as the drop off point and have a look, preserving the option to wimp out if necessary. So it was into the 4WD I had organised and up the winding road to the terminus at the ski fields on the plateau. It had stopped raining with visibility being down to 100m in the murk however it "felt" as though it was lifting.

So it was on with the packs and into the mist along the paved trail we strode. Seal Lookout brought tantalising glimpses of Seal Lake and Tarn Shelf. However, as we climbed over the Rodway Range on the lovely pink dolerite the cloud did lift bringing extended views in all directions. Those of you who have "been high" will know the incredible lightness of being that pervades your persona as the weather lifts in such circumstances, to reveal the vistas, as if for you alone.

This trip was a 4 day traverse as a wind down after our previous 10 day trip on the Wilmot and Frankland Ranges. The walk was entirely on marked tracks, although on the dolerite this meant following the red dots of paint across the scree covered slopes. In other places it was board walking and still, in many places, the traditional Tassie slip and slither.

After contemplating Florentine and Tyenna Peaks, whilst munching a muesli bar, we headed off to K Col to drop the packs. Then unencumbered, we strolled out to Mt Field West for lunch. This was a delightful frolic over a fairly level route. After the rain everything was sparkling and tinkling.

The tarns were glistening and glinting. Cushion grass and mosses of myriad variations carpeted our route providing constant delights. Flowers grew in the sheltered sunny spots, one much like our revered Flannel Flower. Views, of mountain range and valley, of mighty rivers and lakes filled the world beyond our plateau. There was even lunch time entertainment in the form of two Scottish "fell runners" who appeared in their spray on nylon zoot suits over the horizon at a fast jog. Only one minute they spent catching their breath at the summit before rushing back seemingly oblivious to the splendor around them.

As a contrast we leisurely wandered our way back via Naturalist Peak to retrieve our packs before proceeding onto The Watcher. This section proved a trifle tiring as the rockhopping across the scree with full packs was into the teeth of a strong and gusty wind. We thus gratefully attained the shelter of Newdegate Pass to descend down to Newdegate Lake. This is the largest tarn on Tarn Shelf and a delight it was. Nestled

below a towering rim of dolerite columns, the slopes covered with deciduous beech and the camp-site beside the lake midst King Billy Pines.

This area is usually well covered with snow in winter and provides a Mecca for the Tassie XC Skiers. Having seen it I can understand why. To ski over the crest of the cirque rim to behold these pristine lakes clothed in white. Then to swoop with telemark and parallel down through the pines to emerge on the shore and thence to skate across the frozen lake... ah. I Shall Return.

Next day, singing the appropriate song, we wandered down the board-walk past Twisted Tarn, down through the trees to Twilight Tarn. Here there is a beautiful old log hut which was erected by a skiing club earlier this century. The club having become defunct handed the hut over to the National Parks who have thoughtfully restored the old hut. This includes a museum room equipped with old photos, commentaries and a marvellous collection of old ski gear.

The old horse access track provided an nicely graded descent to Lake Webster and then an ascent to Kangaroo Moor. Six different vegetation microsystems being traversed in the process. Again the flowers were out as were the small birds but fortunately the reptiles were elsewhere.

After lunch at Lake Fenton it was up to Seagers Lookout for views to the east across the tamed part of Tassie before heading off across the moor to Mt Field East. For all the world this could be the Ziggurat of Ur, a great pyramid of eroded stone rising from the plateau. The day concluded with a descent past the small Lake Raynor to camp and swim at Lake Nicholls

next day, after Louise had considerably cleared the track of tiger snakes, we visited Beatties Tarn before descending to the Lake Dobson Road. We "bashed" this for a few K to get to the track head on Wombat Moor. Suitable moor like weather accompanied our traverse of this broad expanse with the cloud washing and wisping around us. Then down across the scree and into the forest we plunged to emerge on the banks of the Humboldt River. This we followed upstream past a curiously placed hut to Lake Belcher. Now I have seen, camped beside and swum in many lakes across the vastness of this world and if I had to choose Lake Belcher would be in the top five.

It is a long lake situated in a great horseshoe valley. Far above the Rodway Range soars in columns of subtle pink and across the valley Florentine Peak looks benignly down. The shore itself has forests of pines and glades of fern and grass. The waters beckon with an unexpected warmth flowing from the shallow nature of the lake (I admit the perfection is marred by the muddy bottom but is nice soft mud!). We camped just below VC Falls to enjoy the perfect reflections of the mountains in the lake. The night was clear as well as still and far to the south the glow of the aurora suffused the horizon. In the morning, platypus played. A special place, long to be remembered.

Our final half day was fairly quiet. Back down the Humboldt to drop the packs and then to follow the faint track up to Lake Belton. About this lake all I say is that it is the brother of Lake Belcher. To think that I had nearly decided that climb would not be worth the effort. The words of an old mountain man came back to me

"Whilst the sun shines and there is strength in your legs, CLIMB".

The climb out through the forest, past Mt Mawson and across the moor was one of those quiet times. Remembering, recalling, regretting that every step brought us closer to the end.

The effusive bonhomie of our pick up driver helped blow the blues away. One of the joys of holidaying in Tassie is that you meet Tasmanians - great big friendly people without pretence and a refreshing directness towards life.

After collecting our spare bags from the YHA we once more mounted the Invicta bus for the journey to Hobart. Dinner in the pub, a sleep at Adelphi Court and then on Sunday morn the diaspora. Planes and trains, taxis and buses, back to our lives and all that entails. But the memories linger, of lake and mountain, of sitting on the ridge crest rolling with laughter, of looking over the edge of Mt Secheron and of the quiet times surrounded by wilderness.

IAN WOLFE

## Letter To The Editor

### Modern communications

Since I started walking with the club, I have been concerned about the safety of participating members.

Illnesses, injuries, and bites do occasionally occur, and in most cases access to emergency help can be many hours away, when it is needed urgently. I appreciate that most members like to be separated from the rest of the world, and like to take the risks associated with being isolated, especially from communications. In other risky pursuits, like work, flying and bush fire fighting, safety is the first priority.

However, we do rely on the outside world in the form of

emergency services and their machinery when we are in trouble. It is not often that club members are in trouble in the bush, but when we are, we are ill equipped to handle it safely. In some cases a long delay to emergency help can cause a more serious medical problem, death, and/or more trouble to our helpers.

As you will know, we were in trouble on 27th March when Erith Hamilton broke some bones in her foot on Mount Sturgess in the northern Budawangs. The party performed First Aid capably and decided that Erith could not be carried to help because of the climb down the cliff to Hidden Valley, and Maurice Smith, the leader, decided that he would stay with her and that the remainder of the party would walk out and procure a helicopter rescue. We left at 1.30 PM and at 5.15 PM we found John Doonan at a property called Pine Springs at Sassafras. He had a CB radio and he indirectly put a message through to Police, but not before it was too late for a rescue to go out that night. The mountain was covered with fog early on the Monday morning, but they were lifted out by a helicopter later in the morning and Erith arrived at St George Hospital at about midday, twenty four hours after the accident occurred.

At the risk of being a new member upstart wanting to change systems that have been operating for many years, I would like to make some suggestions on how we could be better prepared for similar emergencies. If there is some support out there, then let's make some changes.

Current technology can let us communicate with emergency services. A UHF CB radio weighs and costs about the same as a mobile phone, and can be bought second hand cheaper. >

< UHF can only be transmitted from and received at high points in the topography. By definition it is not beyond the able bodied members of the party to walk to a high point to make contact. Correct radio procedure should be followed. These radios have about forty channels, some are emergency services frequencies, but the channels most likely to be helpful will be the CB channels, because somebody is always listening and waiting for messages like these, and the listeners are very reliable and capable of passing emergency messages on. If the technology frightens members the leader can keep it switched off and in his/her pack and the others don't need to know it is there. They shouldn't be concerned because they already carry watch altimeters, automatic cameras, and video cameras. Mobile phones do not have access to their grid in remote areas, (Information from phone call with John Trinning of Belgrave Two Way Radio Centre 565 1882)

We were lucky that the accident occurred on a clear mountain top, the only helicopter landing place that we passed in the two days of the walk. If we had had to carry her on a stretcher, we were not equipped to build one, we had nothing to cut timber with and only one five metre tape amongst us. A lightweight saw blade and a few more tapes would have been useful.

I support the use of these items of emergency equipment for walks in remote areas, to assist with the safety of ourselves and the convenience of our helpers, who incidentally expect us to have them.

DAVID TRINDER

Peter Miller has moved to:  
Number 7 Blue Ridge Crescent  
Berowra Heights 2082  
Phone: 456 5326

## Don't Rubbish The Bush

The last thing we want to see or smell in the bush is other people's garbage.

This is the basis behind the concept of minimal impact bushwalking and it makes good sense. If we don't follow the rules of MIB we might as well spend the day at the tip, because if we don't, they'll look pretty much the same anyway. Here's a quick rundown on the rules...

**Keep to the track:** Avoid damage, erosion and scarring to the bush by walking on the tracks wherever possible. Where there is no track, spread out rather than follow each other's footsteps. Avoid sensitive vegetation, don't cut new tracks and don't mark tracks with cairns or signs. Avoid the peak times of year - December to February, you'll miss the crowds and spread the impact. Keep your party small - under eight people is a good idea. Plan your route so that you camp at recognised camping spots.

**Pack to minimise rubbish:** Don't take bottles, cans and excess wrapping. Don't burn or bury rubbish - you've carried it in, you can carry it out. If you come across other people's rubbish, pick that up too.

**Fires:** Observe fire regulations. Open fires and fuel stoves must not be used on days of Total Fire Ban. Don't light open fires during hot, windy weather. Keep the fire small and use a safe, existing fireplace rather than make a new one. Use only dead fallen wood. Dead standing trees are a home for wildlife and are a valued part of the scenery. Be absolutely sure the fire is out. Put it out with water not soil.

**No Trace Camping:** Minimise your impact by taking the following items: fuel stove and

fuel for cooking, good quality tent with sewn in floor and poles and a hand trowel for burying toilet wastes.

### Washing:

Don't wash in streams or lakes. Detergents tooth paste and soap harm fish and water life. Wash 50 metres away from streams and lakes. Use sand and a scourer to clean dishes. Don't throw food scraps into streams or lakes

### Avoiding Gastro:

When in areas of high use or low water flow, boil water for at least five and preferably 10 minutes. Cover all food. If there's no toilet, bury your faecal waste at least 100 metres away from campsites and watercourses. Dig a hole at least six inches deep and bury faecal waste and paper, mixing it with soil to help decomposition. Carry out all sanitary pads, tampons and condoms.

This info is part of the Minimal Impact Bushwalking Code, originally developed for the alpine areas of Tasmania's World Heritage Area. Ask your local National Park Rangers office for a brochure and more details on individual regulations and requirements in individual National Parks and State Recreation Areas. □

## Down the Shoalhaven

A trip report for the weekend of 4-6 March 93 down the Shoalhaven River. Six participants, two beautiful spring days. Walked down the river by the spectacular little Horseshoe Bend. Drifted down the river in low water levels. Nice rapids, camped on a sandbank. More of the same on Sunday (really hard to take). Climbed out opposite Talwong Mine after exploring Fordham Canyon. In short - perfect, idillic, relaxing.

IAN WOLFE



## In Memoriam

By DOT BUTLER

Frank Duncan, a foundation member of the Sydney Bush Walkers and second president (1929-31) died at the age of 93 on the 31st of May this year at Bulli Hospital where he had been admitted a few weeks earlier with a broken leg.

He was born in Manchester (England) where he and his wife Anice had both been interested in walking and camping. They arrived in Australia in 1927 and Frank obtained work as an electrician with the County Council.

Their first walk was with Mary Byles and Jack Debert (two more "Pommies") and they discussed forming a "mixed" club, that is, open to both sexes. There was already Myles Dunphy's Mountain Trails Club, but this was a bush brotherhood and not admit women, mainly because it was thought that the gentler sex could not carry the heavy packs the Trailers considered necessary. Frank, used to the Bergen ruck sacks and light weight tents of England was amused by the heavy swags carried by the Trailers clad in their leather leggings and hob-nail boots - guns, axes, trenching tool, griller, bowie knife, gunny sacks hung on in front and billy in the hand.

In November 1927 The Sydney Bush Walkers was formed, with Jack Debert as first President. The second President was Frank Duncan. His name is on early programs leading walks to the Duck Hole - McCarrs Creek - Narrabeen; Lumeah - Bushwalker's Basin - Heathcote. With a party he found his way down off Narrow Neck in the Blue Mountains. And his name is perpetuated in Duncan's Pass.

The house in which the Duncan's lived in Castle Crag, built

by his friend Walter Burley-Griffin (the designer of Canberra) is now preserved as a heritage item.

The Duncans were Vegetarians and there was much campfire banter between the Vegos and the Carnivores (who's leader was Ernie Austin, a meat inspector at the abattoirs). A club Debate was even held on the subject. (I forget who won).

The "Pommie" accent of Debert and the Duncans was a source of great amusement to the early bushwalkers. Frank had a great sense of humour. The story went around that they were being educated in Aussie speaking. Billy tea is about to be poured - "Give me your moog" says Debert. It isn't "moog" you moog - It's "moog!" says Frank.

At one of the concerts organised by the club to raise funds to buy out the lease of Blue Gum Forest Frank and I were starred as acrobats and put on an act, Frank clad in Leopard - skin leotards and myself in white tights. There was much leaping and balancing and back - flips and the like, then we withdrew to deafening acclamation. Behind scenes we hastily swapped clothes then returned to the stage, and repeated the performance in reverse - I (5 ft nothing) was now the strong man in leopard-skin, supporting a simpering 6 ft Frank in white flimsies. It brought the house down.

Frank and Anice were often to be seen at the bushwalker's favourite summer venue, Era, with sons Ross and Barry. Following an accident, little Ross developed cancer of the bone which necessitated the amputation of his leg. Bushwalkers, sharing the anguish of the parents with the little boy facing life with only one leg, contributed towards the cost of an artificial leg, but sadly Ross died. The parents offered the money back but the donors said to put it into a

fund towards the buying of our own reunion site.

Eventually, some 40 years later, this went towards the cost of buying "Coolana" our clubs 90 acre property on the kangaroo River.

During the 1939-45 war Frank worked with the Volunteer Defence Corp. After the war ended a number of Bushwalkers bought adjacent land at Jamberoo - the Pages, the Duncans, Paddy Pallin, Dorothy Hasluck, the Kirkbys, the Colleys who later sold to the Nobles. Frank spent much of his later years in their cabin at Jamberoo with son Barry.

Barry spends much of his time at Jamberoo, and the thoughts of his friends are with him there at this time of loss. At Frank's request there was no funeral service. He willed his body to the University.

His spirit lives on in our memories. □

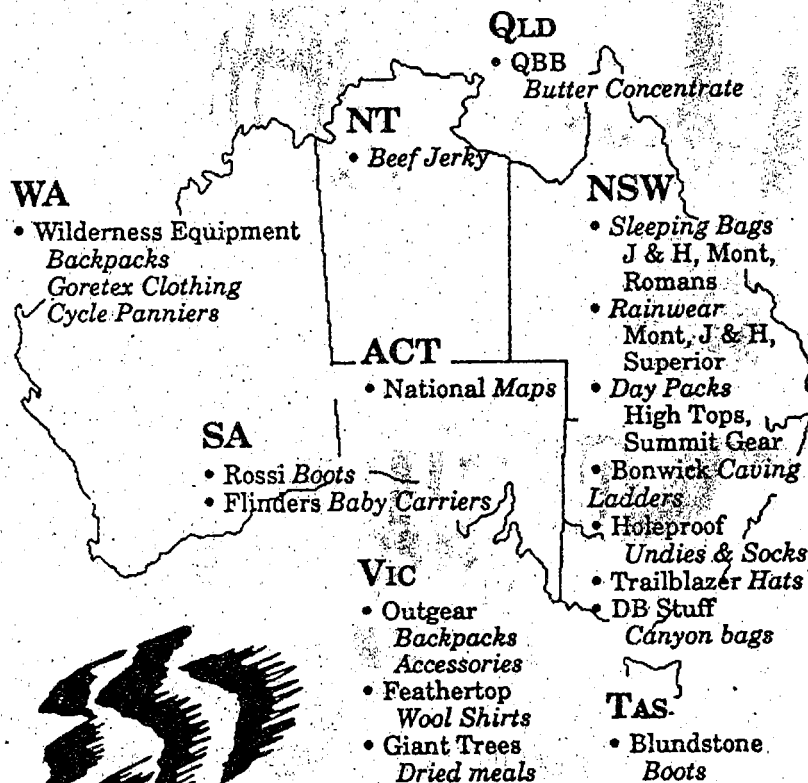
## Changed Walk

Greta James has moved her Blue Mountains NP week end test walk which was originally on 28, 29 May to the first weekend in July (2nd, 3rd). The walk details are Carlon's Farm - Black Horse Ridge - Mobbs Soak - Splendour Rock - Cocks River - Breakfast Creek - Carlon's Farm. The maps are Jenolan and Kanangra and Greta's phone number is 9538384. Weather permitting there should be panoramic views from the top of Splendour Rock!

Greta also has a walk on in Wollombi NP on 13, 14 August. Since it can be hard to find water in this area, if there has not been enough rain in the area, she will relocate the walk to the Kanangra area. This will also be a weekend test walk.



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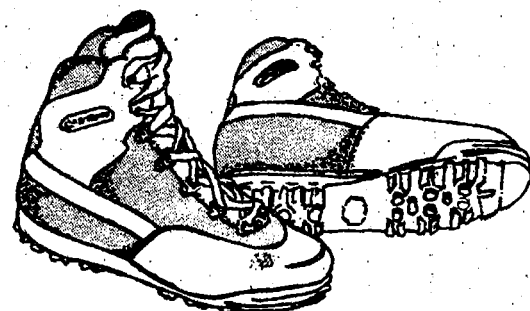
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## KNOLL AFTER KNOLL BUT DRY

Exploring Bylong Labyrinth

ANZAC Long Weekend 1994

by TONY HOLGATE

Cox's Gap lies on the watershed between the western and eastern flowing rivers between Denman and Mudgee. From Cox's Gap the ridge rises one knoll after another to the south until it disappears among a maze of ridges and knolls. All around there are rocky ridges and cliff lines with great blazes of yellow and red on the sandstone and conglomerate rock. It is very beautiful but such dry, very dry country.

Friday night we slept under the stars at Honeysuckle Creek. Saturday morning we lay in our sleeping bags listening to lyrebirds serenade us for an hour. After breakfast we decided the country was bone dry and we needed to carry more water. After looking at several creeks we end up at Bylong where we filled every available wine skin with water at the community hall. Back at Cox's Gap we set out with now heavy packs (I was carrying 8 litres of water). The ridge heading south is spectacular, narrow with knolls every few hundred metres, some interesting scrambling, sometimes very large loose rocks, fascinating conglomerate, sometimes the rocks are honeycombed and pagoda sculptured, other times rounded, other times stacked like huge building blocks. The vegetation on the ridge tops is typical of dry ridges in the Flinders or Macdonald Ranges with small patches of thick scratchy scrub. The old Callitras Pines (Cypress Pines) twisted and weatherbeaten stand as testament to the severe conditions on the ridge tops. You are never far from spectacular vistas.

Lunch atop a large cliff looking east. One ridge after another into the distance, each with its own spectacular profile. This is excellent country for interesting skyline traverses. The ridge we were following sweeps in a "U" around the top of Bird Creek. We climbed along the ridge toward the top of Bird Creek. At 3pm we were faced with a dilemma, we could head for the creeks on the western watershed hoping we would find water (it seemed unlikely) or head for Bird Creek and back to the car. We decided that Bird Creek was the safer option. A little explore satisfied us that we could find a way down the 40m cliffline on Sunday. So with this and a small but comfortable campsite we set up camp after chasing off a black snake. Happy hour was enjoyed as the sun settled behind the western ridges. To the north we could make out the Barrington plateau. The night was mild, the moon nearly full, we dined, talked and admired the ridges all around us, very clear in the moonlight. Another night without tents.

Sunday morning from our high camp we could watch the pre-dawn glow spread across the sky while we listened to the lyrebirds echo up from the valleys surrounding us. The rosie fingers of dawn skimmed across a thin carpet of mist covering the valley floors to the north.

After breaking camp we headed down to the saddle, typical of many here a rocky causeway dropping steeply on both sides. We managed to zig zag our way down through the cliffines to Bird Creek. The creek was dry. We followed the creek down with the tops towering over us passing through a coal seam and some interesting vegetation. Lower down there was mud indicating that with more rain there may be water in this

creek. Getting to the flats with plenty of time to spare we looked for somewhere to have lunch. Looking across the valley we saw another interesting ridge and theorised how we could make our way through one cliffline, to lunch on top of a knoll, and down another to a ridge to the bottom. Up we went, not too difficult, and lunch with a view. Only 50m after lunch we realised the way down was not so easy. A strategic retreat and back to Bird Creek. Skirting the grazing country we made our way back to Cox's Gap. Headed for Bylong for ice creams and water, the shop was closed but got water.

We decided that on Monday we would explore the western watershed around Wattle and Stockyard Creeks. Obtained permission to camp next to the Bylong River (dry) on private property adjoining the National Park. Another great camp under the stars, our lowest camp yet, a little cooler, but still mild. Awoke to the sounds of flocks of cockatoos up and down the valley.

Walking up Wattle Creek you soon leave the cleared country behind. The lower reaches are narrow and cool with vegetation indicative of moister areas. At two separate points the creek flowed on the surface for about 100m before sinking back into the sand and gravel. Excellent water. Most of the cliffines between Wattle and Stockyard Creeks are very large. Headed up an unnamed creek that carved its way through the ridge between Wattle and Stockyard Creeks. This side creek was quite beautiful, very much like some of the canyons of the Wollangambe but dry. There are patches of residual rainforest and patches of basaltic soils. Following an obvious side gully

- continued page 13 >

## From the Clubroom

By Maurice Smith  
Walking in the Pyrenees

Our guest David Best on the evening of 18 May came along to a clubroom packed with members. Our members displayed a keen interest in opportunities for walking in the Pyrenees Mountains. For the readers whose geographical knowledge is as rusty as mine, the Pyrenees Mountains are found on the border between France and Spain. The mountain range runs for the entire length of the border, about 450 kilometres between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. The mountains have a highest peak of about 3,500 metres. In the area where David operates the highest peak is a bit over 2,000 metres.

David and his partner originally hail from England. A few years ago they bought an 18th Century dilapidated farm house and spent a

great deal of money, time and effort on the house. They have developed an "up market" guest house catering for a small (10 to 12) number of guests.

The property is located about an hour's drive from the Atlantic coast. The area in which David lives is populated by Basque speaking French farmers. By European standards the region is quite lightly populated and is not often overwhelmed with tourists.

The farm house is used as a base by guests who undertake day walks or extended walks in the mountains. The region offers year round walking opportunities, with there being many forests where camping is permitted. There are many well defined tracks in the Pyrenees.

To illustrate his talk David showed us some slides of the local village scenery, as well as of the mountains and forests. The mountains are quite reminiscent of

some of our Great Dividing Ranges, there being many folds and deep valleys.

The clubroom seemed to have a large number of members who displayed considerable interest in walking in the Pyrenees. For those club members who are thinking of spending some time in Europe and are willing to pay, what seems to me to be, a very high price (about A\$750 per week), David Best and his farm house would be a very pleasant means of seeing some lightly populated areas of southern France. Iain Findlay, the host of the Australian television series "Beyond 2000" and his wife are frequent guests at the farm. So if you want an endorsement I guess Iain is it.

If any of our club members take up David's hospitality we might then have another slide night of walking in the Pyrenees. Our thanks go to David for his time and slides. □

## FINKE GORGE AND WATARRKA NATIONAL PARKS

Although thousands of people visit Palm Valley and Kings Canyon every year, only a tiny handful take the time to walk more than a couple of kilometres from their vehicles. Fewer still put packs on their backs and head out into the wilderness.

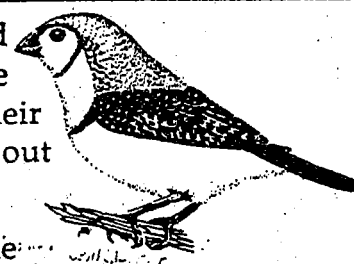
Our expeditions allow you to explore these areas in the company of an experienced guide who can show you the hidden delights which might be hard to find on your own.

Departures July 17 and August 28.

For full details contact:



**WILLIS'S WALKABOUTS**  
12 Carrington Street  
Millner NT 0810  
Phone (089) 85 2134  
Fax: (089) 85 2355



## Rebecca's Bicycles by Maurice Smith

Rebecca from the Willoughby Bike Shop came to the clubroom on 25 May to talk about bicycles. To illustrate her talk she brought along two moderately priced bicycles. Both of the bikes had 21 gears. One was a mountain bike and the other a hybrid mountain and touring bike. To add to the display and the sales opportunity she also brought along a considerable range of accessories.

She had an extremely attentive audience who listened with considerable interest and asked a great many questions. These she answered with aplomb and detail to suit the audience.

At the risk of showing my age (as if the grey hair doesn't provide a clue) when I was a young boy my pride and joy was a bicycle. This bike which had been restored by my father was single geared and I was envious of the owners of the then new fangled three speed centre hub geared bikes. I now own a very low tech 10 speed touring bike that gets hauled out of the garage occasionally. Rebecca, we thank you for your time and enthusiasm. □

## From Carlons Head

R. Knightly. SBW

The broken rocks, and scrape of sliding nails,  
a final heave, and then the mournful wails  
of crows protesting that I thus intrude  
their high demesne, disturb their solitude.  
They call again with dismal, wailing cry  
as, turning, I watch eagles soaring high  
above the sloping and majestic heights  
of Guouogang, with distant cliffs of white.  
Kanangra Walls, upon the southern rim;  
and on the left, the ramparts fierce and grim,  
The manes of further mountains clear and blue  
In distant splendour; and I sense anew  
The joy that only open ranges bring  
To lonely hearts in lifelong wandering.  
A sun-scorched valley lies below the land  
on which detached alone I make my stand;  
Detached alone at peace on timbered range  
With memories of scenes that never change  
Of sunlit valley and of silent hills  
So far from clamoured haste and petty ills  
Of city life; the quiet scene sinks deep  
Within my thoughts; I feel the silence creep  
Into my very soul, a sweet release, in lands  
where even hills themselves breathe - peace.

\*\* \*\* \*

◁ K after K etc. continued.

100m before sinking back into the sand and gravel. Excellent water. Most of the cliff lines between Wattle and Stockyard Creeks are very large. Headed up an unnamed creek that carved its way through the ridge between Wattle and Stockyard Creeks. This side creek was quite beautiful, very much like some of the canyons of the Wollangambe but dry. There are patches of residual rainforest and patches of basaltic soils. Following an obvious side gully we easily found our way through 30m cliffs to a lovely pass to Stockyard Creek. Before heading down we scrambled up to another knoll for lunch. From here the country looks very much like the Wollangambe area except there are more Callitris Pines.

After lunch we headed down to Stockyard Creek. There are some beautiful campsites along this creek beneath groves of lilly pillly but we did not find any potable water. At the lower end of the creek you pick your way among house size boulders. Back to the car, a wash, change of clothes and headed for dinner at the Imperial Hotel at Maitland.

This country is well worth walking but water is an issue. The points of flowing water in Wattle Creek are probably reliable; the area had had no rain since January. There is a lot of loose rock (sometimes quite large pieces) and scrambling is essential in many places. A rope is recommended. Gaiters are useful in the patches of thick scrub. A very enjoyable and successful exploratory trip.

The Group: Craig Austin, John Hogan, Tony Holgate (leader), Fasely Read, Morie Ward. □

## BUSH FIRES IN NATIONAL PARKS

The NPWS Summary of Fire Facts states that:

At least 80 percent of National Park fires were believed to have been started through negligence (eg. camp fires) or by arson.

Over 670 of the NPWS' 850 staff were involved in the bushfire fighting effort.

The services record in containing fires is very good, with less than 7 percent of fires leaving national park boundaries in the past four years: 942 fires occurred in national parks, but 342 came from neighbouring lands onto parks

from The Colong Bulletin

## The May General Meeting.

It was around 2003 when your not-humble-enough-to-refuse-the-offer scribe tapped a pen on the table and started proceedings by getting the 20 or so members who constituted the meeting at that time to agree to the imposition of having him as chairman. This done without dissent, we moved to the apologies. These there were from Ian, Joy, Patrick, Greta, George Mawer and Denise Shaw. New members Frank Sander and Raphael (Rafe) Byron were welcomed into full membership with applause, constitution, badge, handshake and warm greetings. The mob were a little slow on the applause. We could always threaten them with a cheer leader. That should reduce them to whimpering obedience if nothing else will.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and, with one minor correction, received and accepted as a true and correct record. There were no matters arising.

Incoming correspondence was composed of three letters concerning Erith's breaking of an ankle on a recent walk and a rates notice for Coolana from Shoalhaven council. The three broken ankle letters were from Erith the leading lady, Maurice Smith the walk leader, and from Carol Lubbers who led the remainder of the party out after the accident.

Outgoing correspondence saw letters to the new members, to Ann Brown, and to Confederation. The letter to Confederation expressed our concerns on the decision to contribute to the cost of legal representation for an organisation to appear before the coronial inquest into deaths during the January bushfires. There was also a

letter to Ann Ravn accepting her resignation and expressing our best wishes.

The treasurer's report, presented out of turn due to the late appearance of the treasurer occasioned by pressure of work, indicated the following state of affairs. We received income of \$3,094, spent \$1,005 and closed the month with a balance of \$4,952.

The walks report began at the weekend of April 15, 16, 17 with the cancellation of Jeff McIntosh's trip in the beautiful Buddawangs. Morag Ryder's walk from Katoomba station to Leura station by way of the Devils Hole went at a fast clip with 13 walkers and fine weather. David Trinder led a party of 16 on a totally rerouted version of his walk from Victoria Falls to Evans Lookout. Wilf Hilder led a party of 12 on stage 4 of the Great South Walk from East Hills to Macquarie Fields, deferred from an earlier weekend, in ideal weather. Bill Holland led a short notice easy day trip, that attracted 16 participants, along a section of the Grosvenor Track. It is unclear whether Morie Ward was so self effacing as new walks secretary that he managed to not cover his walk from Kanangra Walls to Kanangra Gorge and back, or whether your scribe missed it. Either way watch this space. We know our readers have a *right to know*, for we are constantly reinforced in this belief by the public media.

Anzac weekend saw perfect walking conditions. Peter Miller's walk out from Springwood is generally believed to have gone, but there were no details. Tony Holgate's walk in the Bylong Labyrinth went, with a party of 5 who endured waterless conditions for the first two days before retreating to the cars for more water and a day trip on the Monday. Bill Capon had 6 out on his walk to

mounts Buddawang and Currockbilly. It appears that both the boiler suit and sense of humour recommended on the program were necessary items. The scrub was described as horrendous.

Jim Rivers' walk in Morton N.P. over the weekend of 29, 30 April and 1 May had a party of 6 enduring a long day on the Saturday. Tom Wenman led 10 starters on his walk from Kanangra Walls to Kanangra Walls via Cambage Spire, Kowmung River, Bulga Dennis Canyon and Hughes ridge. It was described as a pleasant weekend. Ron Watters had 11 walkers out on a nice day for his Wentworth Falls to Leura walk on the Sunday and Wilf Hilder led an all male (Bronny where were you?) party of 6 on stage 5 of the Great South Walk in perfect weather.

Maurie Bloom's Meryla Pass walk over the weekend of 7, 8 May did not go. Jim Percy led 6 on his Lawson ridge area walk the same weekend. There are no other details save that the going was rough. There were also no details for Ken Smith's weekend trip from Heathcote to Otford. Eddy Giacomel led 8 starters on his Katoomba to Mount Solitary and return walk on the Sunday. Conditions were misty at first but the day fined as they progressed. They also reported some signs of what they took to be a recent hazard reduction burn along the way. Geoff McIntosh reported a party of 8 and pleasant conditions for his Narrow Neck Plateau walk the same day to conclude the walks reports for another month.

It was at about this time that the inadequate lighting in the meeting room was joined by a deficiency in chairs, as the neophytes from the court of the New Members Secretary filtered into the room to join the meeting. >

< We covered it all up by telling them it was a punishment for arriving late. No seriously folks, if you arrive early check the available chairs in our area of access. If there is less than say, 60, try to obtain more from the smaller meeting rooms. We are advised that they are sometimes stacked in these rooms as a result of other (unspecified) activities.

Conservation report saw mention of the NSW government having taken steps toward the declaration of some 600 hectares as parkland at Jervis Bay and the allocation of funds for repairs to the extensive damage to the area due to vehicle use and subsequent erosion. There is also some indication that they are looking at acquisition of some of the private holdings in the area. Alex suggests not holding your breath for the acquisitions. We received a letter advising us that our letter regarding access problems at the Sassafras end of the Buddawangs will be carefully considered. A letter from Mr George Souris, the relevant NSW minister, indicated that the problem with closure of the Benowie track in the vicinity of Hornsby Rifle Range is still being resolved. General rumour seems to be that the range will be relocated once the various hoops have been jumped through. A Lucy Harodney, who is researching the matter, wrote asking for our recommendations as to which old growth forests should be saved from woodchipping. The one thing Alex loves is Dorothy Dixers. He consulted with Jeff Angel of the T.E.C. and sent off a map showing the areas under threat. The NPWS have agreed on boundaries for the proposed Gardens Of Stone N.P. It seems that the coal mine at Airly Mount will still go ahead despite extensive protests.

Confederation are to write urging completion of the plan of

management for the Blue Mountains National Park. It has after all been under consideration by the various arms of government for around 20 years so one might perhaps feel that completion should be near. Confederation are also going to produce a leaflet about the plans to change the height of something or other at Warragamba Dam. It will be interesting to see what is known about this.

Of general business there was nought. Announcements there were some, and the meeting closed at 2101 or thereabouts. □

## Photographic Competition

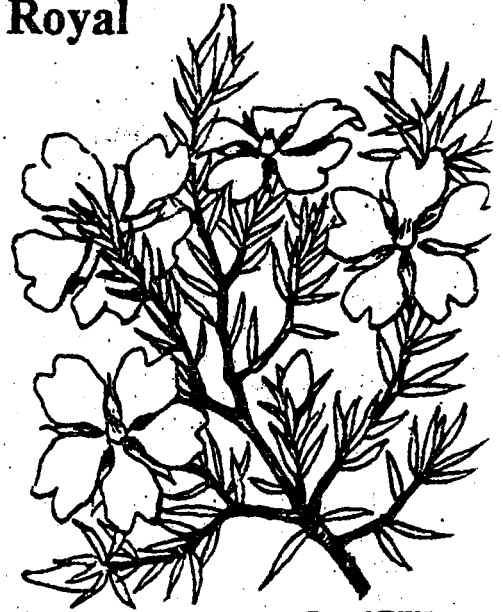
The Blue Mountains World Heritage Committee has convened a photographic competition for 1994. The competition is open to anyone, and aims to promote community awareness of the area's World Heritage qualities. All entries must illustrate the Blue Mountains unique variety of natural flora, fauna and landforms.

Exhibition of the competitor's works at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts is planned for the week beginning August 27th. The competition will have three divisions of entrants, embracing primary and secondary school students and an open section for adults. Prizes and operating costs are being sponsored by local business outlets and government bodies.

Entries can be black and white or colour prints, but must be 8" by 10" in order to fit in the frames that will be used in the exhibition. All entries must be submitted by Friday July 22.

If you would like to make an entry, please contact Mr Keith Muir on (02) 247 4714 or Ms Bev Dodd on (047) 58 6247 so that an entry form may be mailed to you.

## Flowers Of The Royal



From NPWS

### DILLENIACEAE

*Hibbertia riparia*  
(formerly *Hibbertia stricta*)  
Erect Guinea Flower  
Family Dilleniaceae

This species is very variable depending on its environment. Usually it is a small erect shrub up to 60 cm high, widespread in heath on dry sandy soils.

The narrow blunt leaves are about 8 mm long and spirally arranged. The leaf margins are curled under.

The yellow flowers are stalkless with 5 broad spreading delicate petals, about 20 mm across.

Flowering May - December.

There are several other species of *Hibbertia* common in the Royal National Park. Many walkers would be familiar with the climbing or trailing plants with the large yellow flowers, up to 5 cm across. *H. scandens* has thick shiny leaves and can be found near the coast twining over other vegetation. The less conspicuous *H. dentata* has serrated leaves and often trails along the ground in sheltered forest areas. Both are commonly called Golden Guinea Flower.

JM

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## Letter To The Editor

from The Green Bean

### Modern Communication Systems.

I refer to your comments under the above title on page one of the May issue of SBW's newsletter. I offer my view - which are Modern Communication Systems - **have no place in the bush, leave them at home.**

In making these comments I enjoy the bush because it is a great means of getting away from civilisation and its pervasive technology. Mobile telephones carried on a bushwalk would certainly be a strong reminder of that technology.

From necessity bushwalkers have had to be self reliant and they have always taken pride in showing this trait. This was particularly so when bushwalking as we know it today was in its infancy around the turn of the twentieth century. Bushwalkers have always had to rely on their ability to plan ahead, and to demonstrate that they did not need saving. This is one of the challenges and pleasures of bushwalking.

I enjoy the socialising that is such an important part of bushwalking. Surely the presence of the mobile telephone will detract from that socialising if users of the mobile telephones are tempted to ring whomever to have a chat while on a walk.

If mobile telephones are to become common in the bush it doesn't take too much imagination to contemplate when they might be misused, for example, an overnight walk that doesn't take enough food, do they ring a national pizza chain and ask for delivery within the advertised time. Or, what about a walker who develops a blister on

his heel, do they ring NRMA Careflight. Then there is the walker who is "too tired", do they ring to organise a ride home?

While you have cited the situation where medical advice in the bush could be obtained by telephone. No self respecting bushwalker should be in the bush if they do not have a good knowledge of first aid. Medical emergencies in the bush are quite rare. When was the last time that a medical emergency occurred in the bush? Accidents are not all that rare, but it is quite rare when those accidents are life threatening. While the injured walker might be uncomfortable for a little while longer than if they were able to "whistle up a medical helicopter", the walker will not be in danger.

Even if mobile telephone technology were so advanced that they could be relied upon in wilderness areas, I believe that they could easily encourage a foolhardy attitude to risks. You rightly call them the "idiot fringe". It may well be the case that if there was a reliance upon a mobile telephone, then if its batteries failed, a life may be lost. It might also be relied upon in the event of becoming geographically embarrassed.

Readers will be aware that one of our members suffered a broken ankle recently on a walk in the Budawangs. From reading the newsletter's articles about the incident it appears that a mobile telephone wasn't carried by the anyone in the group. So I asked myself whether having a mobile telephone would have been of benefit to the group. Maybe Erith might have been picked up earlier by the Westpac helicopter. I question whether she would have benefited from being picked up earlier. I doubt it, as a broken ankle isn't a "time critical" injury.

As with any modern innovation one has to weigh up the potential benefits versus the costs. The costs are monetary (even if it is your employer's money and not your own) and weight. The benefits are likely to be so rare that it simply isn't worth the effort to carry them

So George, if any reader cares to consider me a purist in rejecting the presence of mobile telephones in the bush then I take the greatest pleasure in pleading guilty to that charge. No, no a thousand times no, mobile telephones have no place in the bush. □

## Walks notice

### Cross Country Ski Trip

3 days in the Snowy

3rd to 10th July

Thursday to Sunday

medium grade

Maps Kosciusco & Threadbo

Threadbo-Twin Valleys-Stillwells

Resturant-Prussians Plain-Moon

Rock-Perisher.

Ian Wolfe

H 9093370 W 3788172

## Jervis Bay

The Federal Government's welcome announcement that it had dropped Jervis Bay as a preferred site for the Navy's armaments complex was followed by the further good news that an additional 6,000 hectares north and south of the bay would be included in the new park.

The State Government will negotiate to buy 3,600 hectares of privately owned land and has allocated \$5 million to repair land that has been damaged by such activities as four wheel driving and to build low key visitor facilities. It is to be hoped that the new parklands will adequately protect the bay. □