



**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.

**August Issue**

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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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# August 1995

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## FROM THE CLUBROOM

*By Jan Roberts*

This month I came across a little verse that I think best sums up why education is the key to saving our remaining wilderness.

*We will only save what we love....*

*We will only love what we understand....*

*We will only understand what we are taught.....*



With this in mind, I thought the two presentations at the Clubroom during July provided more learning opportunities, and, and in relation to the Tarkine threat to wilderness, how we can make a difference.

### **Wilderness Society - Tarkine Tragedy - July 19th**

With the wet season temporarily halting the completion of the gravel road which will fracture the largest contiguous rainforest in Australia, Ross Knowles delivered an urgent appeal to SBW members at his presentation in July.

We sat enthralled as Ross presented his slide to music show which highlighted many of the wild parts of the Tarkine's 350,000 hectares; from it's wild coastal strip and marshlands to the rainforest hinterland. With 4 km yet to be completed the road is referred to by the Tasmanian Government as a 'tourist' road, but according to Ross, Bob Brown and other members of the Tarkine Action Group, it's real purpose will be to support further logging and mining interests in the Tarkine.

Home to the world's largest fresh water crayfish and numerous other endangered species including the Pigmy Possum, the Tarkine has been overlooked for protection under World Heritage by the Federal Government who maintain that the issue is a 'State matter'.

Ross urged us to put pen to paper and write to the Prime Minister, Paul Keating and Federal Minister for the Environment, John Faulkner at Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600.

Letters to Canberra are needed to persuade the Commonwealth Government to use its powers, and to have the Commonwealth institute an

immediate study of the Tarkine's world heritage status, with a view to proposing nomination for World Heritage listing. It seems that politicians believe one handwritten letter equates to 100 votes .....

For more information Ross Knowles can be contacted on 440 8024. Ross has asked SBW to copy him on all letters written, to enable the Wilderness Society to monitor the effectiveness of this campaign.

### **Caving in Borneo - July 26th**

SBW member Sasha Litvak presented a slide show in July taken on his trip to Borneo in 1993. During the night we visited the Gunung Mulu National Park and it's vast cave system, which includes chambers large enough to house a 747! Through Sasha's slides it was not difficult to understand how caves like Abraham Lincoln Cave received it's name, and the slides of the Deer Cave were clear enough to appreciate why it is so popular for caving and diving expeditions. Fascinating too were the slides of the thousands of bats migrating from the caves each evening at 6.00pm to drink salt water from the surrounding ocean according to Sasha, and returning again at dawn.

From the natural beauty of Borneo we moved to the wealth and grandeur of the Bruni Palace home to the Sultan of Bruni, one of the wealthiest rulers in the world. Sadly however, in viewing the deplorable state of the city's harbour, we were reminded that wealth is often not enjoyed by many, and caring for the environment is not always a priority. Thank you Sasha for an interesting view of Borneo.\*

### **SWB at The Vinegar Hill Woolshed Saturday August 26th**

To all the Bush Dancers joining us for the night, the starting time is **6.30pm at Lot 3 Windsor Road, Rouse Hill. ....**

All the dances will be called and demonstrated by the resident bush band, so don't worry about not knowing all the steps... we'll have help on hand!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### End of Winter Barbeque - August 30th

Pack away the woollies (well at least until that walk in the High Country at Christmas) and bring your meat/fish/salad to enjoy in the courtyard of the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre. Catch up on the latest walks (and gossip) with fellow members and prospectives. An earlier start time of 7.00pm is planned, with the club providing the liquid refreshments.

### Walking Good Company and Cancer Prevention - September 20th - Roger French

Join us at Montezuma's Mexican Restaurant at 51 Alexander Street, Crows Nest for dinner at 6.00pm first (drinks at bar prices), and then reconvene back at the Clubroom to meet Roger French from the Natural Health Society. This presentation will explore how good relationships and exercise can dramatically reduce the risk of disease, including cancer.\*

### The 'Volley' Ball Friday 22nd September 8.00PM Petersham Town Hall

Band - The Currency Lads  
\$10.00 each or \$25.00 for families payable at the door.

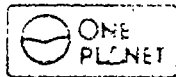
The theme for this year's Confederation Bush Dance celebrates this humble, and still very popular footwear. Love them or hate them, Volleys are still in demand by many walkers. As always there will be a prize for the best table, dress, etc.

*Denise Shaw will be organising the SBW table, and can be contacted on 9922 6093 for bookings.*

## Confederation Notes - July Meeting

By Ken Smith

- ① Right of access through private property to National Parks - concern was expressed about ongoing and increasing problems of access to NPs and mountain areas. It was agreed that Confederation write to the BMNP District Manager about access in the Colo and Capertee areas, and that Confederation write to the Minister, Dept of Lands and Water Conservation (Knowles) expressing the nature of the problems.
- ② Search and Rescue training weekend - 3rd weekend in October, to be held in the Newnes plateau area. A practice search will be conducted.
- ③ Andrew Cox is resigning from the position of Conservation Officer due to his acceptance of a position with NPWS.
- ④ Fresh water springs - the public relations firm concerned with Water Week would welcome any information of the whereabouts of springs with the intention that they would be tested.
- ⑤ Confederation gave its in principle support to the nomination of the Grose Valley as a wilderness area under the Wilderness Act - approx 40,000 ha involved, currently trying to define boundaries. This will probably include the Blue Gum Forest on the edge of the area.
- ⑥ Confederation AGM - to be held at Mitchell Park (Cattai). Positions needing to be filled at the AGM include conservation officer, magazine editor, publicity officer, senior vice-president and junior vice-president.
- ⑦ 'Everingham's Footsteps' - concept brochure is available about the proposed bi-centenary activities celebrating the near successful crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1795.\*



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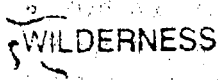
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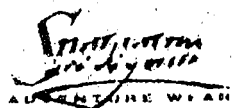
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## To the Editor

*Dear George....*

Recent correspondence in the magazine re safe walking and discussions as to whether the club should have a safety committee or a safety officer, reminded me of the first weekend walk I led for the club, and my experience with a prospective on that walk.

The walk was in the Budawangs but if it had been in a more rugged area with tricky navigation and denser scrub, the particular prospective could have caused serious problems. I therefore consider that the description of that walk, which was printed in the December 1980 Sydney Bushwalker, could be reprinted to show what can happen when insufficient attention is paid to the experience of prospectives and of the equipment carried on their first walks.

*Ray Hookway*

### Shocking !

#### A walk in the Budawangs



*Reprinted from 1980 Sydney BushWalker*

There has been recent criticism that the SBW magazine does not feature enough walk descriptions. There are some walks people would rather forget and some walks one cannot forget.

What makes a walk memorable?

One walk that I remember with great pleasure was a Bimberi trip that possibly could have been held in Centennial Park without detracting from its enjoyment. This was due to the close rapport that existed within the party on that walk.

Another walk, memorable because of its members, or rather because of one member, was a three day walk I led in the Budawangs. The walk was fully organised when the walks secretary asked whether I could take our friend. I thoughtlessly replied "If Spiro can fit him in, OK."

Of course Spiro squeezed him into his VW somehow, all 6' plus and at least 210 lbs. His massive pack, Spiro hung on the rear of his V-Dub where it apparently occasionally bounced its wooden frame on the road.

Our friend claimed to be an experienced European walker and appeared to have the correct gear including a well worn home-made pack with a wooden frame and covered with badges from all over Europe, but he appeared a trifle overdressed for the walk with a heavy jacket, sweater, thick shirt, thick undervest, long trousers, TIE and heavy boots.

We set off from Newhaven Gap for Styles Creek. Talking to David Cotton he asked in his heavy European accent, "Are there any white toilets where we are going?" This question gave David amusement all weekend. At the first creek crossing, where the party paused for a cool drink, it was noticed that our friend was missing. This was to be the pattern for the weekend. George Mawer went back to look for him and found him floundering in the bushes to one side of the well defined timber trail we were following. "They have gone off and left me!" he shouted when he saw George.

We crossed to Mt Houghton. Skirting the mountain on the Wallaby track, he tailed the field, "This is not a bush walk," he wailed, "This is a bush race!" The large party slackened its pace to accommodate him. He seemed to have a fear of the slightest slope, his normal slow pace reducing to a pathetic shuffle. We stopped for lunch. During lunch David asked him "How are you enjoying the walk?" "Shocking!" was the sharp reply.

After lunch he felt the weight of everybody's pack, comparing it with that of his own, and picking up George Mawer's pack he said, 'I'll carry yours, mine is too heavy!' Stunned, George was too surprised to answer before his pack was whisked away. This procedure was repeated with other people with each stop.



Descending the ridge from Mt Tarn he followed George and several others when George realized that they were off course. He advised the others.

**...continued on Page 8 ⇨**

⇐ ...continued from Page 7 (Shocking!)

Immediately our friend became alarmed. "They have gone off and left me!" he wailed. "Shocking!" I then posted David to ride shotgun until we reached Mt. Donjon, but we still managed to lose him twice more after that before we arrived in Monolith Valley.

In Monolith Valley he produced a tent but it was obvious that he didn't know how to erect it. I picked a spot and put it up for him then decided to move it to what I considered a better spot. On inspection he said to me "You will have to move it again. There are lumps on the floor!" I removed the lumps.

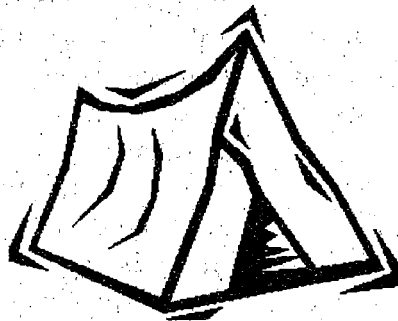
At dinner our friend produced some preserved sausage. "I cannot eat this. It is too hard and my gums are sore." Various people donated food.

This practise was repeated at ever meal stop during the three day weekend. The weather turned suddenly bad. Dense black fog clouds poured into the valley from the coast, rolling along the rocks towards us like large ocean breakers followed by heavy rain. We retired quickly to our tents.

Next morning dawned sunny and bright. "How did you sleep?" I asked our friend. "Shocking!" he snapped back. It seemed that I had unwittingly pitched his tent in a slight natural watercourse, that he had no groundsheet, that his borrowed sleeping bag was much too short, and that he had had a miserable night.

His conduct during the rest of the walk remained the same. We climbed the Castle and inspected the Bora Bora Rings on Quilty's mountain on the way back but he stayed at the bottom in each case, fretting and fuming and greeting us each time on our return with complaints of "Why am I being kept waiting!".

Despite his claims to having gone mountain climbing in Switzerland, I actually held his hand to steady him on the slight slope down onto the saddle at the base of the Castle, so there was no way he could have made it up the first scramble.



The ground around him where he waited for us to complete each climb, was littered with orange peel when we returned belying his claim to having no food.

On the walk back to the cars he somehow talked Spiro into carrying his pack, and raced off ahead with the faster members of the party for the first time in the weekend.

Various people decided to lighten Spiro's load and investigation revealed amongst other items, a heavy change of clothing, a camera, a radio, cigars, chocolates, oranges and biscuits.

The people who had been donating food over the weekend soon lightened Spiro's load considerably.

Arriving at the cars he rescued his pack from Spiro and quickly inspecting its contents and noting the missing food items, shouted, "Shocking! You are not Bush Walkers! You are bush thieves!"

On the trip home he continued to exercise his charm until even Spiro's smile had become badly creased around the edges.

Our friend was never accepted into the SBW, but in another group suffered for his practice of pack swapping by the loss of his camera. Despite, or because of the trouble caused by our friend, everyone considered the walk most enjoyable. His legacy to the club being an addition to its vocabulary. Shocking!

There are several lessons to be remembered by walks leaders from this tale. Check before the walk date not at the cars on the day!

❶ Investigate claims of experience carefully. "Walking in the Snowy Mountains" can mean a Sunday stroll from the car at Charlotte Pass to Blue Lake.

❷ Ensure that the prospective has the right gear and clothing particularly the footwear. Check that their tent groundsheet (and tent pegs!) are suitable, you may end up carrying them if the newcomer becomes tired.

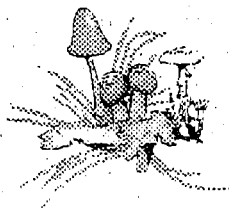
③ Check on what food is to be taken and in what sort of packaging.

④ Check on the wet weather gear. I have met first-time walkers in Tasmania, on a ten day walk who only had a disposable plastic raincoat which lasted one day. (The same walkers had ordinary street shoes and one had a sole tied on with wire after one days walking.)

⑤ Make sure that newcomers fully appreciate the country through which the walk is to take place. If problems are met, assign an experienced walker to shepherd the slow ones, and try to adjust the pace of the walk to the slowest member where possible.

**Remember the old saying.**

**Prevention is better than cure! \***



## HAVE YOU?

*Have you tried to light a fire, with some wood that's rather damp,  
Using wet and sodden matches in a dismal  
rain-swept camp?*

*Have you frozen in a sleeping bag that's two or three feet small  
With the feather down so thin you wonder  
if it's there at all?*

*Have you trudged up hill and valley and discovered in  
the gloom,  
That the leader's gone and lost you and you're miles away from home?*

*Have you ever after such a trip, returned and loudly claimed  
That the country was terrific and you'd like to go again?*

*I can't understand it!*

**Gordon Brown 1958**

## Magnificent Morton

**By Maureen Carter**

We saw the most marvellous view ever of the Budawangs on the weekend of 15/16 July with Jan Mohandas, who led a party of 23 members and 1 visitor, from Porters Creek Dam to Gadara Point and Pallin Pass, to camp the night on Mt Tallaterang and return along a similar route the next day, ending with a walk along the Little forest Plateau.

The fast tramp through long grass and *Banksia ericifolia* was no consequence once we stopped to marvel at the views of The Castle from Ngadyiung Falls during morning tea. The noise of 24 happy people must have frightened away any animals, but high spirits sustained us through some scratchy scrub after lunch. We arrived to find that George M had a modest campfire burning and we soon had the billies boiling.

We enjoyed two levels of camping with the upper class occupying a cosy overhang that afforded views of Pigeon House and beyond, a few metres from our beds. The lower class put up tents amongst the shrubs and invited us to share their ample campfire. Or did we invite ourselves? In spite of our condemnation of the *le bombe*, no-one seemed to reject a sip of Patrick's Petite Moët & Chandon Liqueur, except Patrick, who slept through everything, including duelling snorers.

One happy camper was glad she had a cubby hole to stretch out in as, after berating herself all day for leaving her tent poles in the car, Jan Roberts discovered that she had actually left her tent in the car and brought the poles with her!

Eating muesli whilst drinking in views of a clear and sunny morning as the first rays hit The Castle, is an experience I will always remember. Equally, I will find joy in recalling the blazing golden candles of the stunted Banksias and the camaraderie of fellow walkers. I will try to forget the knee high Hakea - ouch! Even the Chinese meal in Nowra was more than I expected. And I found a hot chocolate at the ice cream shop.

Thank you Jan for a wonderful weekend which erased the stress of last week, and will carry me through this week until I venture bush again next weekend! \*



## ROCKY MOUNTAIN SKIING

### 10th Mountain Division Trails

By Kenn Clacher



The charms of Aspen and Vail are well-known to members of the SBW and other members of the international glitterati. What

is not so well-known is the several collections of huts spread around the Rocky Mountains in the vicinity of these resorts that have been built for the enjoyment of cross-country skiers. The huts are generally located at a relatively easy day's travel from each other and are, by the standard of White's River Hut or Tin Hut, luxuriously appointed. In April and May of 1995 I had the pleasure of skiing amongst one of these collections of huts—the 10th Mountain Division Huts.

The 10th Mountain Division Huts are named after the 10th Mountain Division of the US Army which was established during the second world war when it became apparent that the US Army might be involved in battle in snow-covered mountain terrain. They trained in the vicinity of Aspen and many years after the war ended Robert McNamara, well-known for his part in the Vietnam war, was one of several people that proposed a system of huts in honour of the 10th Mountain Division. The McNamara hut and Margy's hut (named after McNamara's wife) were amongst the first huts built.

There are currently 14 huts in the system with at least one more being built. The highest is Jackal hut at 11,660ft (3,550m) and the lowest Harry Gates hut at 9,700ft (2,950m). Two of the huts are privately owned but can be booked through the 10th Mountain Division Hut Association. Distances between huts are typically around 11km, with some shorter. Distances to the huts from vehicle-accessible trailheads are also of this order.

The huts are equipped with every mod con you would expect to find in a mountain hut, and then some. Most are of two storey construction with bedrooms on the top floor and living, kitchen and

eating areas on the bottom floor. Sixteen people can be accommodated in the dormitory of each hut. If necessary many times that number could be accommodated in an emergency, as the huts are *large*. Equipment provided in the huts in which we stayed included gas and wood cooking stoves, wood-fired stove for room heating, chopped wood to feed these appliances, solar-powered electric lighting with back-up Coleman lamps, all kitchen needs such as crockery, cutlery, cooking utensils, detergent, kitchen sink, running water (recommended for cooking needs only), but alas, you bring your own chef! Then there was a pit toilet, shovels for clearing the way there, and toilet paper to reward the shoveller. The huts were all well insulated and double glazed. And the views — !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Our trip was intended to be from a trailhead near Aspen to Vail, taking eleven days and covering a distance of around 110km excluding side trips. Pretty easy, we anticipated, following set trails and having the luxury of huts at the end of each day's travel. Because the huts were fully booked for the Saturday night of our trip we would have to ski out to the town of Leadville halfway through the journey. The alternative of camping out on this night would have meant that we would have to start out with eleven days' food instead of the five we did take, as well as some extra camping gear, and that did not appeal. We did however take a tent (Megamid, weighing only 1.5kg with pole and pegs for the three of us) and a stove in case we were forced to camp out for any reason.

A few days' acclimation (American for acclimatisation, not the whistles and applause that were our due) was necessary and we joined in the last two days of the downhill season at Aspen — Easter Saturday and Sunday. It had been a good season and the snow was thick. It began to snow about midday of our first day downhill (using our XC skis) and a few centimetres of fresh powder made for some great skiing. Next day was just incomparable with a clear blue sky, no wind, no crowds and around 20 centimetres of fresh overnight powder. And it was the last day of the season!



David, who had skied Aspen several times at the height of its season, reckoned it was as good as he had ever struck it there, and had to switch to downhill skis to extract maximum benefit. The next day David heard that there was a spread on for the resort employees at the top of Aspen Mountain so he skied the 1,000 metres or so of vertical to crash the party while Wayne and I nursed the soreness that goes with two days of non-stop telemarking on no preparation.

Next morning we caught a taxi to the trailhead which was about 25km distant, but 100km by road. There is a section of 10th Mountain Division trail from Aspen to our trailhead but it would have entailed an extra couple of days' skiing and, as it turned out, there was no snow on the Aspen side anyway. Our first day's travel entailed about 11km and 600m elevation gain, most of it along a well-graded road.

There had been some more snow overnight (as there was every night of our trip), which meant

hard going for whoever was breaking trail. It soon became apparent that I had made a good choice of ski to use.

I had agonised hard and long over which ski to use on the trip — the trusty Karhu XCD GTs which had served me faithfully and well in Australia and on a previous trip to the Sierra Nevada, or the Black Diamond Toute Neiges which I had originally purchased mainly as resort XCD skis. The Black Diamonds have no pattern, so it meant that if I took them I would have the aggravation of using wax and skins. On the other hand the downhills would be easier to handle, and of course they are great for the yo-yoing we would be doing to acclimate. I eventually opted for the Black Diamonds being swayed by the fact that all the Americans on our previous trip in the Sierra Nevada had used skis similar to them. When in Rome, do as the Romans!

☆ To be continued in the  
September SBW Magazine...

## W READ THIS! W

### And discover what makes Build Up Bushwalking such a special experience.

As the year progresses, the hot, dry weather of September turns into the hotter, humid weather of October and November. All but a few creeks have completely disappeared. Major rivers are reduced to a series of isolated waterholes. The land lies brown and parched, waiting, still, silent and sweltering.

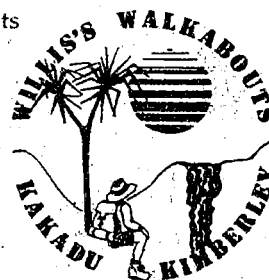
Suddenly, a wind springs up. In a matter of minutes, the temperature drops five or even ten degrees. The first few drops of rain turn into a torrent as lightning flashes and thunder roars. Then it is over and still once more. The frogs began to call and the birds begin to sing. The land turns green again, almost as you watch. All nature rejoices in the change.

Even in this, the hottest time of year, there are a few beautiful, cool, shady creeks and gorges where the bushwalker can relax and watch the birds as they come in for a drink or listen to the cicada chorus which announces the coming change. Knowledgeable locals head bush at every opportunity, leaving the ignorant to swelter in the city. Our routes have been chosen with relaxation, swimming and shade in mind. Walking will generally be restricted to early in the morning and late in the afternoon. The hot middle part of the day will be devoted to taking it easy and soaking up the sights and sounds of the environment around us. On our final walk of the year, we finish with an overnight stay on a houseboat on the Mary River, allowing you to experience the wetlands wildlife at its concentrated best.

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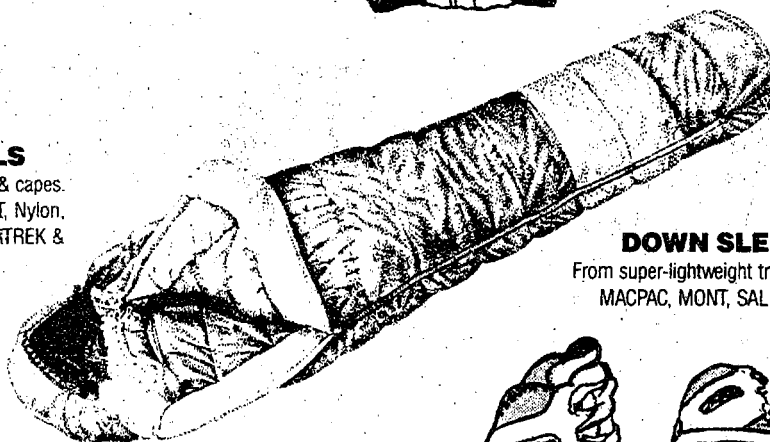
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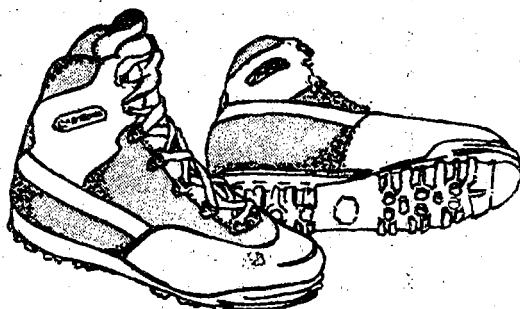


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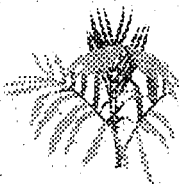
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## THE 1995 GAMMON RANGES EXPEDITION

By Bob Duncan



Though he was non-committal, rumour had it that David Rostron had his heart set on the Gammon ranges in the Northern Flinders ranges of South Australia for this year's mid-winter walk. However in May he rang to say that, because of severe drought, the Gammon National Park ranger advised against the trip, and that we would therefore go to the McDonnell Ranges again, and to this end he had tentatively booked seats to Alice Springs with Ansett.

David always books with Ansett just because he is in their frequent flyer scheme. he doesn't seem to care a damn that I hold a Qantas frequent flyer card, and last year lost 6000 points by flying to Darwin and back by Ansett. This time I was determined to fly by myself with Qantas, and arrange to book a seat. But sad to say all the cheap tickets had gone.

A little later, the party met at David's house to arrange details for the McDonnell's trip. There, he told us that 9mm of rain had recently fallen in the Gammons and that as it was currently raining in Sydney and Vladivostok there was a chance that they might get more. Once again therefore, a Gammons trip was his favoured option. I quietly thanked my guardian angel for preventing my buying a Qantas ticket to Alice Springs.

We were apprehensive, but obediently agreed to go to the Gammons if David rang the ranger again and was assured that the waterholes were no longer dry. Next morning he rang around and told us that the Gammons trip was on and to pay our money to Ansett immediately. We later learnt that he hadn't rung the ranger; he had just decided to go.

The (Ansett) plane left Sydney at 06:25 on **Saturday the 3rd June** and carried the whole party, David Rostron, Spiro Hajinakitis, Bill Caskey, Stephen Ellis, Geoff McIntosh, Wendy Lippiatt, Kerry Norris, and me to Adelaide. There we hired a Commodore and a Camray and drove the 550 km of bitumen and 120 km of dirt to the eastern side of the Gammon Ranges. We arrived

in good time to make camp in daylight Weetootla Creek: a broad dry-river red-gum studded stream-bed which here left the ranges and, after joining Balcanoona Creek, went eastward through rocky foot hills to the salt pan of Lake Frome.

The next morning (**Sunday 4th**) we left the cars and walked up Weetootla Creek. almost immediately this narrowed and to our great joy we saw pools of recent water. David's forecast had proved correct; since the fateful Sydney meeting a further 12 mm of rain had fallen. As it cut through a rocky range, the creek narrowed further and became a red-walled gorge. Then the country opened out again and we came to the historic Grindell's hut spring, where we had an early lunch.

Now we could see the lie of the land ahead. Ahead, to the north-west, lay the main spine of this part of the Gammons - the Blue Range. the top of this was by repute flattish and extremely scrubby, but this flank was heavily dissected, and it was this dissected area of gorges and peaks which we would traverse during the next 8 days.

We approached by continuing up Weetootla Creek. As we followed this back towards the range it became an ever deeper and more imposing gorge, and finally it split into two chasms, the apparent right of which was Bunyip Chasm. This was a listed water source so, though it was still early afternoon, we choose a campsite, dropped our packs, put nibbles and wine-skins into our day packs and entered. After scrambling and climbing up rocks and dry waterfalls we came to a slot containing a few pools of darkish water. We pushed on until temporarily stopped by an 8 metre wall presenting oozing water and wet rocks. But our leader demonstrated that it had sufficient dry footholds and everyone followed. After further scrambling we reached an even bigger wall which led almost to the top of the range, but which only David climbed.

On the way back drizzle and consequent fear of wet rock caused us to hurry. But we had no trouble, and at the lowest rock pool we filled our wine-skins, and then made our way down to our campsite for a lazy late afternoon.

...continued on Page 14 ⇨

⇐ **continued from Page 13 (Gammon Ranges)**

Kerry and Geoff went bird-watching and recorded six birds in their log book including a rare pie-eyed tit.

The next day (**Monday the 5th**) we planned a summit camp on Mt. John Roberts. We filled our wine-skins and walked back down Weetootla Creek a short distance, before climbing a steep ridge onto the tops and the mountain. Mt. John Roberts is at the end of a narrow divide between Weetootla and North Italowic creeks, and drops abruptly on three sides. To the east we looked over our starting point, Weetootla Gorge and Grindell's Hut, and in the far distance Lake Frome. To the south-west we looked across to our destination: Cleft Peak and McKinley Bluff. The night was extremely windy, but fortunately not unduly cold.

In the morning (**Tuesday the 6th**) we set out in the wind south-westward along a ridge and down a steep gully to North Italowic Creek. Here we found the Guide Book's reliable waterhole to be dry. But on walking upstream until the creek became a gorge we found a good pool, where we dropped our packs before continuing. The creek became a steep narrow chasm, Shelf chasm, which led almost to the top of the Blue range. It reputedly contains a formation called 'The Old Man of Italowic', but there were so many bluffs and rock towers that we were unable to identify it. We retraced our steps and made camp at the pool.

Our program for **Wednesday the 7th** was Rover Rockhole via Cleft Peak. As always, Spiro arose at 4am, cooked breakfast, and fed us at dawn. Then taking a little boiled water for lunch, we walked back down North Italowic Creek to the Wildflower Creek junction and then up Wildflower Creek to the Cleft Creek junction.

Cleft Creek is indeed a cleft. The ridge on its apparent left leads directly to Cleft Peak; the Guide Book said it was hairy, and it was David's first option. The ridge on its apparent right led to a subsidiary peak joined to the main peak by a saddle; the Guide Book said it was easier, and it was the rest of the party's option. When we got to the top we had to admit that David was right;

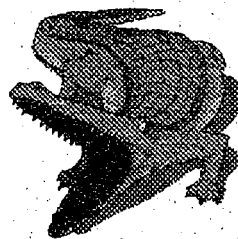
both ridges were negotiable and the left ridge would have led us more directly to the peak.

After lunching on the peak, we retraced our steps back to the subsidiary peak and part of the way down the climbing ridge, before descending a westerly side ridge which led to Rover Rockhole Creek. Here we made camp before taking our wine-sacks and climbing the dry waterfall which guards the rockholes. The water was coffee-coloured from dissolved goat knoblets, as usual, and our leader expressed concern that many of the tadpoles were lying belly-up. Some of us walked further up in search of better water. It was a wide deep canyon with horizontal rock strata and shelving steps. We found other pools but not of significantly better quality; anyway by this time we were used to drinking boiled goat knoblet water. In one of these pools, while Wendy vainly tried to locate a protesting frog, David, Bill, and I had a frigid (soapless) bath. We returned to the main rockholes, filled our wine-skins, placed them in string bags, and lowered them by rope to the campsite below.

★ **To be continued in the September SBW Magazine...**

### Expressions of Interest

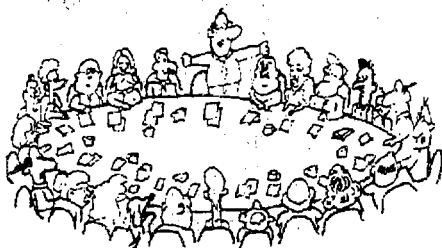
Do you have a body  
and some money  
and a yen to do Kakadu?  
me too!



I am looking for expressions of interest from club members who would like to join me in May 1996 walking in Kakadu National Park.

Please phone **Ione Dean** 9982 9866

## The July General Meeting



*By Barry Wallace*

There were around 26 members present by 2006 so the president called them to order and began the meeting by calling for apologies. These there were for Ian Debert, Joy Hynes and Bill and Fran Holland. The minutes of the June general meeting were read and received with no matters arising.

**The welcome to new members saw a total of 8 new members come forward. They were:**

NAME	ADDRESS	HOME	BUS.
MS JANICE (JAN BROWN)	1 MALAHIDE RD PENNANT HILLS 2120	484 3696	687 2366
MS MARYSLA (MISH) DEREWLANY	35 GLEBE ST EDGECLIFF 2027	363 0234	228 5829
MR STEPHEN LILLIOJA	5/9 CHELMSFORD RD WENTWORTHVILLE 2145	688 1727	828 4577
MS CATHRYN OLLIF	8/43 ASHBURNER ST MANLY 2095	9977 0990	285 7839
MR CHRISTOPHER POLESON	165 EASTERN AVE KINGSFORD 2032	663 2927	752 1980
MR JOHN POLESON	C/ S.H.N.P. GREYCLIFFE AVE VAUCLUSE 2030	337 5511	
MR MICHAEL SCHWARZ	296 KISSING POINT RD TURRAMURRA 2074	44 2106	547 2217
MR ROGER TREAGUS	5/2 QUEENSCLIFF RD QUEENSCLIFF 2096	9905 1139	795 5218

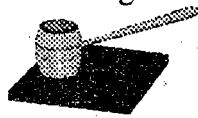
**Other members who have recently joined are also welcomed, with their details as follows:**

MR PETER DALTON	56 EUROKA ST WAVERTON 2060	9957 4907	9955 8244
MR FRANK DAVIS	167 KARIMBLA RD MIRANDA 2228	524 2661	
MR ALLAN DONNELLY	6/36 ARTHUR ST NORTH SYDNEY 2231	9955 2957	217 3179
MR TED KELLY	11 RAGLAN ST TURRAMURRA 2074	44 2854	
MS MIRIAM KIRWAN	1 KURRABA RD NEUTRAL BAY 2089	9966 1662	
MR SANDY LARSON	4/8 CURZON ST RYDE 2112	809 4525	749 1488
MR PAUL MC CANN	4 CENTENNIAL CLOSE ARMADALE 2350	067 726156	
MS GAIL SICCARDI	10 TONGA CLOSE GREENACRE 2190	759 1208	
MR JOHN SICCARDI	10 TONGA CLOSE GREENACRE 2190	759 1208	502 2633
MR BILL SMALLWOOD	43 ROSEDALE RD GORDON 2072	418 1446	9979 7999
MS LYNNE YEAMAN	23/16 CARR ST WAVERTON 2060	9956 8886	391 9268
MR WEIMAR TENG	3 ORCHARD RD CHATSWOOD 2067	411 8212	417 6733

Correspondence saw a letter of thanks from Kath Brown (hi Kath) for the flowers the club sent her during a recent bout with some hospital or other. The Department of Gaming (or some entity with a name vaguely resembling that) has written demanding that we either take up or refuse their offer of an authority to hold games of chance for fund raising purposes. We have written declining the offer. We also received letters from the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre (KNC) regarding building security and a change of location for our cupboard, and from the Department of Mineral Resources responding in a passing way to the concerns we have expressed about damage to Bungonia Gorge by nearby mining activity. They responded in terms of our concern for the walking track rather than the gorge. Interesting!

We sent letters to our new members and responded to the KNC letter. There was no business arising from the correspondence so in the absence of the treasurer we moved on to the Walks Reports.

**The Walks Reports** began with a couple of ring ins which had arrived too late for inclusion in last months report. Jim Rivers had 14 on his long weekend walk in Myall Creek, Jones Creek, Bullfrog Creek area. They enjoyed a diverse range of weathers and conditions but we have Jim's solemn word that they all enjoyed themselves. Errol Sheedy's day walk from Heathcote to Otford went with a party of 23 in sunny but breezy conditions.



The weekend of 16, 17, 18 June could not be described as sunny but it was breezy, and quite cold. So much so that Bill Holland's Coolana training weekend for prospectives was relocated to Bill's place out of the wind. Numbers varied over time but all agreed it was a marvellous tent for the conditions. Zol Bodlay is reported to have had 16 on his orange grove walk in Marra Marra NP on the Saturday but there were no other details. Tony Crichton had 22 starters on his Pierces Pass walk and Geoff McIntosh reported 14 on his Waterfall to Otford trip galloping along in sunny but breezy conditions and coming out early as a result.

Tom Wenman led a party of 10 in cool but fine conditions for his Megalong Valley Saturday morning start walk over the weekend of 24, 25 June. There were no details for stages 17 and 18 of Wilf Hilder's Great South Walk the same weekend. Of the day walks, there were no details for Morag Ryder's Blaxland to Glenbrook Saturday walk, Ian Debert had 17 on his Victoria Falls to Perrys Lookdown enjoying fine sunny conditions on the same day, and Greta James led 14 on her Evans Lookout to Bluegum and return walk on the Sunday. Maureen Carter cancelled her beach bludge weekend scheduled for 30 June, 1, 2, July. Greta James led a party of 9 on her trip to the magnificent Red Rocks of Newnes. They reported a scarcity of water but good days for the walk.

On Saturday Ken Smith led a party of 5 on his Jack Evans track walk and Eddy Giacomel conducted a hard to medium hard version of his Hornsby to Brooklyn and return cycle trip. It seems there were headwinds whichever way they were heading. Sunday saw Tony Crichton leading

a party of 21 sprinters on his Otford to Bundeena trip. Some of the party even caught the 1600 ferry. There was a rumour that Steve Ellis's Sunday walk out from Carlons went, but there were no details. The exploration weekend at Coolana attracted 8 or so walkers over the weekend of 8, 9 July. Maurice Smith led the walks and reported the discovery of various natural wonders on the block. He also remarked on just how little of the total area we use on trips to Coolana. John Hogan's Saturday walk in the historical Parramatta precinct went with 15 starters and perfect weather. There was a minor problem with one of the attractions being closed on the Saturday but a well disposed guide who was in catching up on some paperwork solved that for the mob. Errol Sheedy's Sunday walk from Cronulla to Waterfall went to program in good weather with a party of 20. Alan Mewett reported a lovely day and some signs of fire damage to tracks for the 12 starters on his Mill Creek walk in Dharug NP. Ken Smith's sprint out along Narrowneck and back had 7 starters and was reported as a wonderful day.

The treasurer had arrived by this time so we took his report next. It seems we received income of \$234.51 and closed the month with a balance of \$6,876.

Alex was away so we skipped the Conservation report and went on to the Confederation report. This brought some puzzlement over NPWS announcing they had cleared horses and cattle from the Bluegum Forest just the weekend before a party from the club encountered the usual numbers there on a walk. There was also mention that the service is attempting to clear the deer from the Royal and have asked walkers to report sightings. (A recent newspaper report seems to indicate that private enterprise is attempting to participate, with reports of a deer's head being found when rangers went to investigate reports of gunshots in the park.)

General business saw mention of a recent clean up of the hut at Coolana. Just personally I felt the reference to "leprous frypans" was a bit of an exaggeration but I guess you just had to be there.

Then came the announcements and the President closed the meeting at 2100. \*