

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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JANUARY 1996

In This Issue

- 2 Vale - Edna Garrad
- 3 Fire Rules and Regulations
- 4 Deep Pass Car Camp
Marilyn Sachl
The SBW S&R Response Team
- 5 Going Bush With George
Patrick James
- 6 From The Clubroom
by our clubroom reporter *Jan Roberts*
- 8 The December General Meeting
Barry Wallace
- 11 The Tasmanian Search for Wade
- 12 Leadership. Captain Bligh
Geoff Grace

Advertisers:

- 6 Willis Walkabouts
- 7 Alpsports
- 10 Mountain Equipment
- 15 Paddy Pallin

Vale -

Edna Garrad

On December 1st, the death occurred of one of the most gracious and inimitable ladies of the S.B.W. - Edna Garrad, who was President from March 1945-1946.

Edna was one of my parents' dearest friends and one of many friends made in the Club. Memories are vague now as it is distant past, but one that is strong is that of her visits to my parents' home at Castlecrag. She was usually accompanied by Graham 'Mouldy' Harrison ("The Man From Medlow Gap") by Jim Brown in the November issue). They must have had great fun at those lunches because the ringing of their laughter remains with me.

Sociable as she was, bushwalking was Edna's great love and her walking accomplishments were numerous. Fortunately there are magazine articles to tell her stories, but Edna's amazing memory recalled walking trips from Victoria (now Wonnangatta National Park) to climbing Mount Banks from Bluegum to Border Ranges trips.

One of her oldest friends, Grace Noble, remembers that Edna was quite a daring lady. On a narrow ledge above a Blue Mountains creek, Grace recalled that she was being coaxed along by Edna. To encourage her nervous friend, Edna said blithely, "There's a bush you can hang on to!" Grace said that the bush was quite 18" tall!

During the war, it was common to see Ladies Only walks. Grace Edna and another great friend Rae Page (of Jamberoo) were approaching the ledges on the south coast escarpment near Jamberoo, after walking from The Barren Grounds. The army was about! In particular, a lookout man was watching for submarines. With characteristic verve, Edna asked him, "May we with impunity, pass through here?" Perhaps it was being surprised from behind by ladies which occasioned this retort - "You can do what you bloody well like ladies!"

Edna spent her last few years at "Alloa" nursing home, Arncliffe. On my last visit to see her, one week before she died, the mail was handed to her as I said good-bye. It was the S.B.W. magazine. She said distinctly "Good, I love reading this magazine!"

What a tribute for this wonderful ladies love for the Club!

Christine Austin

(with assistance from Grace Noble)

An excerpt from a note from Graham 'Mouldy' Harrison reads -

"Edna had an extraordinary ability to make friends easily and talk to complete strangers and make them feel quite at home. She spent her closing years in a retirement home and the last two in a nursing home. The funeral service was held in Rockdale on Friday, 8th December with a private cremation afterwards.

Edna had led a very full and admirable life with a quality which was much admired by many friends, both in and out of the walking movement. She was 88 when she died." □

About lighting fires in the Kosciusko National Park

It has been brought to the attention of the Club committee that some members seemingly do not know the current rulings on the lighting of fires in the Kosciusko National Park. The Kosciusko N.P. Khancoban Office advises that restrictions on the lighting of fires apply as follows.

Total Fire Bans

Fire bans are declared when the fire danger is such that fires in the open can pose a threat to life and property.

When a Total Fire Ban (declared by the Minister for Police and emergency Serviced) or a Park Fire Ban (declared by the manager of Kosciusko National Park) is imposed, the following rules apply within the park.

1. No wood or charcoal fire is permitted except within dwellings within the park. This means no wood fires within any hut, picnic shelter or other shelter structure.

2. No gas or electric cookers in the open. These cookers may be used -

a) in caravans, including 'pop up' type caravans.

b) within 20 metres of permanent dwellings where -

i) they are under the control of a responsible adult.

ii) there are no combustible materials within 3 metres.

iii) there is a system for applying an adequate stream of water.

c) in the Sawpit Creek camping area, where the built-in electric barbeques have been approved by the Shire Fire Control Officer. Portable cookers may be used adjacent to those barbeques.

d) in huts and shelter structures which have four solid walls and a roof.

3. No liquid and solid fuel cookers can be used in the open. The only places these cookers can be used are -

a) campervans, mobile homes and caravans, including 'pop up' type caravans.

b) huts and shelter structures with four solid walls and a roof.

c) permanent dwellings within the park.

Camping

Large numbers of people walking off tracks damage the vegetation and disturb the soil. Camping accelerates this damage. Try to organise your trips as day visits but if you do camp, choose a firm, snow grass site which is well away from watercourses. Do not use soap in streams.

The valleys surrounding the glacial lakes have been popular camping sites for many years but due to vegetation damage, soil erosion, water pollution and degradation of the area by human waste and rubbish, camping is no longer permitted within the catchment areas of the glacial lakes.

Fires are not permitted in the alpine area. Instead, use a portable stove.

There are penalties for breaches of NPWS regulations. □

It is expected that members will obey the various rules and regulations of the various authorities that control the areas where we walk. Be aware of the damage that your fire can do and exercise due care in the siting, use and control of the fire. If you don't have enough water to put it out, don't light it.

Your own common sense should warn you of the probability of a total fire ban. If you think that it's even possible there may be a total fire ban -

*** DONT LIGHT A FIRE OF ANY KIND ***

Wollemi National Park, Deep Pass Car Camp, 14th/15th October

Merrilyn Sach

Deep Pass and the Wollemi again. From the cars an easy stroll down to the "village green" with its own creek of pure crystal water below a wall of dark sandstone cliffs; what a lovely camping spot and a light-hearted, fun-filled weekend it was too. And my first walk with the Club as a fully fledged Member: That honour constituted some hard work I can tell you.

The weather fine and warm as we took off - straight up! (that's a bit tough for starters Maurice). And the bush is alive: flowering Boronia and Tea Tree and the Waratahs bright like distant beacons, bird calls and for the first time we hear Cicadas. The glorious Australian Bush; aren't we lucky.

After morning tea we descend into a dry rainforest canyon which we follow for quite some time - a different, cooler habitat from up top. I linger at the tail end of the walkers (always my preferred spot) gaining knowledge from our botanically-minded Member from Armidale and I imparting ornithological info.

Lunch and lots of fun rock scrambling, up and over, down and up again. And then a not so funny down as we made our last descent; a very deep, tight, awkward squeeze it was with more to come like narrow ledges, a bum slide down a fern and leaf filled gap (I hope there's not just air underneath this lot) and a steep "controlled slide" (Leader's term) down a dirty, damp, narrow log which was stretchingly difficult to get onto in the first place. What a giggle! Mingled thoughts: terra firma; I wish I had longer legs; next stop Happy Hour.

The campfire; dinner, drinks, conversation and always laughter. And with the planet Jupiter in the constellation Scorpius and the call of a Boobook Owl I snuggle down into my goose down.

Sunday; another fine day. On the way to the cave, Maurice shows us The Slot, 200 cool metres long, a squeeze under a chockstone, a short chimney to negotiate and finally the end with a view westward over our camp site. Exiting The Slot, I require the strong shoulders of a six foot tall man. Next, The Cave - head lamps required on a 40 metre crawl, and muddy. I'll stay upstairs thank you.

Sunday afternoon and we take a walk into the River Caves Canyon; a very beautiful world,

new and exciting to me. High above, another warmer world and sometimes blue sky; around my legs swirling icy cold water, wet sand and boulders and gentle ferns. Canyoning - must get a wetsuit and do more abseil training.

That's it. The cars and clean clothes. Smiles all round.

And next dinner at this simply magic Seafood Shop at Windsor; alfresco and groovy music.

Thanks Maurice

Change of Address / Contact Name

Have you notified us of your new address. If you have not then it's unlikely you'll be reading this note. Please keep in mind that after you move house we'll still be sending SBW stuff to you at the address we have for you. This wastes the Clubs money and incurs additional expense.

If you know a member that has changed address recently, please ask them if they've notified us.

The SBW S&R Response Team

Having been involved in a number of recent call outs for Bushwalkers Search and Rescue it has become obvious that we could be a little better organised in this area.

We need a list of members who are prepared to be part of our S&R team. To be on the team you must have a 50% or better chance of being available for a call out for a two day search and be prepared to be ready to go within 24 hours of notification. Twenty persons required for the team list.

Additionally we need a quick response team to be available on short notice. Persons on this list must have a better than 80% chance of being available and be readily contactable.

I have a few names already but need lots more.

George Mawer - 707 1343 - (all hours)

Going Bush with George.

Patrick James 4 Jan 1996

On the **second** day of Christmas 1995 twenty of us met at the designated place and the designated time, namely lunchtime at the Jindabyne shopping centre, to start our Christmas Snowy walk. Then Jindabyne was alive with walkers from three SBW Snowy walks. A simple Day-Oo would have assembled a quorum for a general meeting! After a last minute fast-food feeding frenzy we set off in great expectation for the car park at Mungah power station (aka Guthega power station); just down the road about 35 km. At the car park as we changed into bushwalking gear we twenty, that's George M with his nineteen followers, met up briefly with George W with his 10 followers of the other walk.

The paved path gave way to a wooden bridge over the Mungah River. The bridge marked the start of the climb. We climbed and we climbed and we climbed, up and up, the track and then the fire trail, until we reached Schlink Pass where we camped beside the road for the night.

The **third** day of Christmas saw us leave Schlink Pass and the road and head north up a steep hill or a small mountain. We immediately made contact with the scrub. Vegetation the colour and consistency of a pot scourer from calf to waist height which was to be our faithful companion for most of the walk. Up and up we went towards Gungahlin and the Brassy Mountains. We camped on the eastern flank of the Brassy Mountains in a delightful spot with plenty of water for drinking and cooking. Parts of the creek were even deep enough for a quick, breath catching wash.

On the **fourth** day of Christmas a gentle stroll took us to the vicinity of Tarn Bluff. We camped above the Tarn at another quality camp site. The Tarn was large enough to swim in. A highlight of the Tarn was sitting on a rock with ones feet in the water catching March flies and feeding them to the trout fingerlings.

The **fifth** day of Christmas was a delightful day. Fourteen of the party left camp and headed north west on a day walk to Jagungal. Two of the party set off with great expectations to catch a pack-full of trout. The remaining four, wise, weary elders elected to remain in camp and keep the home fire burning. The result of this rest day was that we four solved the problems of the world, the Jagungal party after meeting a small horde of walkers on top of the mount

returned safely, and the fisher folk (Jo and Ron) returned without our trout dinner.

The **sixth** day of Christmas saw us wandering down from the mountain tops through oodles and oodles of scrub. Morning tea was taken at Mawson Hut. At the hut Ron met up with a kindred spirit and they spoke fluent Fishing for about 10 minutes. The day ended with our arrival at the Schlink Hilton hut; a description which does not flatter either the Schlink family or the Hilton family. On the way to the hut the party picked up the New Year food drop in preparation for the next day. That night Owen served his New Year's eve fare much to the delight of the party.

The **seventh** day of Christmas was New Year's Eve. On this day Owen left the party after breakfast as he had to get to Melbourne as soon as possible for a sailing competition and other activities of promise. This day's objective was to get to the top of Dicky Cooper Bogong via the maximum amount of scrub. This we did. The day was overcast and windy and the camp site had few sheltered sites; but we managed. Happy Hour was decreed to begin at 6 pm and New Year at 9 pm local time. In fact we may have celebrated Fijian New Year. As Happy Hour progressed dark clouds gathered and when most of the food had been consumed the rain started. After a short adjournment we re-assembled around the camp-fire. Time stood still until the sparklers were lit and New Year was welcomed with much hugging and kissing and hand-shaking. Just as we were getting ready to tell all the jokes and stories we had collected and saved for the evening it started to deluge. That was the end of it. Off to bed to listen to the rain and wind and to wonder if the tents would survive. They did.

On the **eighth** day of Christmas, that's New Year's Day or 1 January 1996 to those with numeracy skills, George led us down from the Mountain. Up early for an early start we were keen to go. Besides it was wet and miserable. Through the mist and rain, never erring, never tiring, and with great confidence we headed due west. Down off Dicky Cooper Bogong right to the spot where we camped on the night of the **second** day of Christmas. Then we tramped down the road in the wind and rain to the power station car park. Because of the rain we changed in the visitor's section of the power station. Fortunately there were no visitors to be shocked or embarrassed by so many partially dressed, undressed and/or wet and bedraggled bushwalkers. The remainder of this the last day of the walk was spent having lunch and returning home. ▷ cont P

FROM THE CLUBROOM

By Jan Roberts

Start of Summer Sizzle! - November 29

We started off very well with the annual B-B-Que to celebrate the beginning of long balmy summer nights to come. Temperatures were high in the courtyard of our clubroom at Kirribilli, partly due to the weather and partly due to the belly dancing class who decided to perform on the overhead balcony because of heat. The free entertainment was particularly enjoyed by some of our male members who became quite vocal at one stage with their appreciation.

The carnivorous amongst us sizzled their dinners happily and everyone had a great time in spite of the skies opening up during the evening. Not to be easily dissuaded, we quickly re-grouped under the narrow verandah surrounding the courtyard, hoping the rain would soon ease but it didn't. As it turned out this was a warning of the type of wet summer Sydney has since been experiencing ever since. At least we haven't had to worry about bush fires!

Annual Reunion - November 4 & 5

Apologies to the winner of the annual swimming contest held last year at Coolana. Sorry Ian Debert, I understand it was a fierce competition and I didn't report it. Belated Congratulations!



SBW CHRISTMAS PARTY

December 20

Determined not to be caught again by the weather, we set up inside the clubroom for the annual Christmas bash. Tony Holgate's

children worked hard on the decorations for some hours before the party, blowing up balloons and draping streamers everywhere. Then the members started to arrive and quickly filled the clubroom to bursting point. Many of us spilled out on to the verandah and into the halls to attempt quieter chats, but mostly we crowded together enjoying the opportunity to catch up with lots of walking friends we hadn't seen for a while.

The tables groaned with delicious platters of every description, and the liquid refreshments slid down dry throats at a rate that was difficult to keep up with, but mostly we had fun.

During the evening the skies burst open again, but this time it didn't matter, and the party continued uninterrupted until close to midnight.

Thank you to the 100 plus who came to help us celebrate the festive season, and as always to those who lent a hand in making it happen.

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You can make a significant contribution to the preservation of this important national park by joining our three week working holiday from March 31 through April 20 1996. To encourage people to take part, we are offering it at a special low price. Do any or all of the four sections, increase your knowledge, help the park and have a wonderful holiday.

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The December 1995 General Meeting.

By Barry Wallace

At around 2012 there were some 25 or so members present so the president called the meeting to order. The call for apologies brought forth responses on behalf of Marie Davidson and Morrie Ward. New members were called legion so we went on to welcome them all by their individual names.

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

Correspondence was comprised of letters to our new members, to our insurance broker questioning the cover provided by our Public Liability policy, to Confederation opposing the proposal to declare the Mount Hay area as wilderness, to Dick Smith thanking him for his generous support of the search for Wade Butler who is missing and overdue on a solo walk in Tasmania, and to Margaret Butler with a donation to defray the costs associated with the search activities. We also received letters from Adelaide Bushwalkers indicating their opposition to the NORLD leadership accreditation scheme as inappropriate for mutual interest volunteer walking organisations, from Lawrence McCain resigning membership due to an upcoming stint overseas, from our insurance brokers clarifying the cover provided by our Public Liability policy, from the NSW minister for the environment indicating that they have passed our letter expressing our concerns about the Sydney Water Corporation Limited regulations on to the minister responsible for NPWS. These items were either read or taken as read and accepted.

The treasurer indicated that we received income of \$270.00 and closed the month with a balance of \$3,119.00.

The walks report was preceded by a mass of statistical detail complete with graphs and predictive analysis.

The walks report itself began as somewhat of an anti climax, with no reports for Ken Clacher's Watsons Crags base camp XCD trip over 10, 11, 12 November, Oliver Crawford's three day trip in the Gardens of Stone and Wilf

Hilder's Saturday start trip from Bell to Newnes Junction. Morrie Ward led 15 on his trip out from The Mountaineer in Barrington Tops that same weekend. Conditions were cool, wet and foggy but the troops are reported to have been happy. This is unsupported by the evidence that they came out early and had afternoon tea at Dungog. Wayne Steele's trip to the Buddawangs went, but there were no details available to the meeting. Likewise everyone believes Allan Donnelly led his trip out from Carlons on the Saturday but there was no-one present who could put details to the rumour. Makes you wonder how Eddie's statistical reports handle this sort of thing, doesn't it?

We were on firmer ground for Alan Mewett's Saturday walk out from Wentworth Falls. There were 10 on the trip and conditions were warm and humid with some relief in the shelter of the trees. Errol Sheedy had 14 on his Waterfall to Heathcote walk on the Sunday. The dawn was wet and windy. Not so the stout party members who ventured out on the track. Their valour was rewarded, and conditions gradually improved to the point where three brave souls went swimming in Karloo Pool. Ron Watters had 17 on his walk in the Robertson area the same day but we have no other details.

The following weekend, 17, 18, 19, November saw Maurice Smith leading a party of 6 on his trip down the Ettrema Gorge. Saturday was hot and humid but the weather turned cold and wet on the Sunday. Ian Wolfe's two one day canyon trips saw their share of incident with the leader suffering injury on the Saturday and one other member succumbing to the ever present falling rock hazard. They all thought that was bad enough until the storm turned up on Sunday. There was no report of Morag Ryder's Faulconbridge to Glenbrook trip programmed for the Saturday but Rosemary MacDougal had 10 on her walk from Waterfall to Heathcote the same day. Conditions at the start were warm and humid with a few spots of rain at one stage. Peter Miller led 15 on his Sunday walk from Cowan to Brooklyn. The low cloud threatened rain most of the day, but they all seemed to think the timing impeccable when it poured rain as they sipped coffee in the cafe at Brooklyn. Did we say all? Yes, all but one resolute soul who opined that ▷

< the walk had not been hard enough and set out to walk back to Cowan a little before the deluge began. There was no report for Wilf's stage 3 of the circumnavigation of Port Jackson although there was a suggestion that there is a touch of heresy in the use of the term "circumnavigate" to describe the activity. We leave it to others to argue that case.

The weekend of 24, 25, 26 November saw Allan Donnelley cancel his programmed walk to Monolith Valley. Jan Mohandas reported 15 starters on his Colo River gourmet walk enjoying not only gourmet food but also a longer than expected walk in hot conditions. Brian Holden cancelled his trip to the Shoalhaven River from Bungonia reserve. Zol Bodlay cancelled postponed his Marramarra National Park trip on the Saturday. Maureen Carter's Saturday trip from Waterfall to Otford went but no details were available. Ken Clacher had 20 for his Sunday abseiling instructional at Wahroonga, Jim Calloway led 7 (plus George Mawer at lunchtime) on his Engadine to Heathcote trip, Geoff Dowsett had a party of 13 out in the rain on his Barren Grounds walk and Bill Holland led 18 in overcast conditions on his sortie onto the tracks of Middle Harbour from Lindfield station

Bill and Fran Holland hosted another first aid instructional weekend over the 2, 3 December while Geoff McIntosh led 5 brave souls in wet conditions on his walk in the Buddawangs that same weekend. Ian Debert's gourmet weekend out from Yalwal was cancelled. The deferred version of Zol Bodlay's aboriginal workshop walk went that Saturday, with the party of 12 weaving hither and thither about the landscape to visit the various sites. Morrie Ward had 22 out on a day described as magic for his Birrabang gorge trip on the Sunday. Greta James cancelled her Waterfall to Waterfall walk and there was no report of Rudi Dezelin's swimming trip in Bouddi National Park.

Ian Wolfe's two days canyon trip over the weekend of 8, 9, 10 December remains a mystery to us all. There was no report. Jim Percy's trip into Wentworth Creek wasn't much better. We know there were 3 on the trip but there are no other details. Greg Bridge's Erskine Creek trip went, there being no Federal election that weekend, but there was no report. Dick Weston led 6 on his Katoomba to Wentworth Falls

Sunday walk. Two of these were wise enough to drop out early. Those who didn't were treated to an extended leech jig in the stormy weather that turned up that afternoon. Ken Smith had 7 on his Box vale circuit enjoying a delightful walk in warm humid conditions. George Mawer's trip out from Mount Banks went all right until an afternoon deluge forced a re-routing to avoid the party being flushed out of Explorers Brook. All of which ended the walks reports for the month, and the year.

Conservation report saw receipt of a letter from the relevant minister regarding the Sydney water Corporation Limited regulations. General opinion is that fires will still be permitted in the National Parks areas of the Blue Mountains but the debate is not over, so don't look away. The deer in the Royal will remain but their numbers will be restricted to limit the damage they do.

Confederation report indicated that the photo image maps have not met with general acceptance so the department will print maps double sided with topographic maps on one side and photo image on the other.

There was no general business but the meeting was informed of the passing of Edna Garrard, an early member of the club. Kath Brown is ill in hospital but has requested no visitors.

The meeting closed on that somber note at around 2139.

Going Bush With Gearge

continued from page 5

Except for the last night and the last day we had perfect weather. The happy group of walkers that George Mawer led into and out of the wilderness and showed how to *go bush with confidence* were Zol Bodlay, Nuri Chorvat**, John de Coque, Bev Giles*, Denise Green*, Brian Holden, Erith Hamilton, Ron Howlett, Greta James, Patrick James, Owen Kimberley, Pamela Leuzinger, Ainsley Morris, Keith Perry, Mike Reynolds, Jo Robinson, Denise Shaw, Maurice Smith** and Peter Yardley.

* Sutherland Bushwalkers. ** SBW and Sutherland Bushwalkers.

Patrick James



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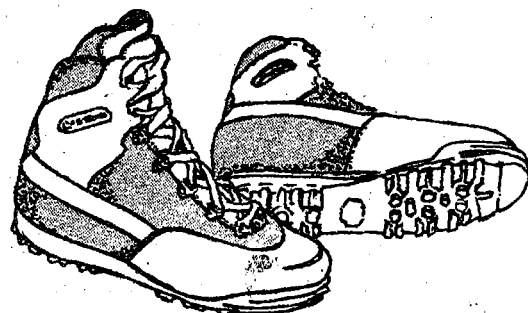
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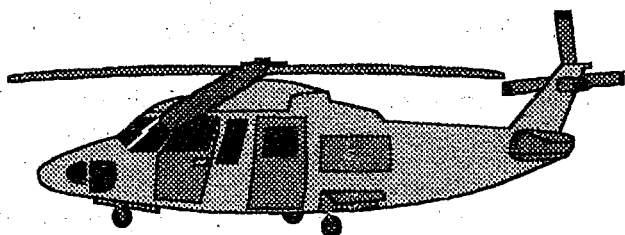
The following is a reprint from the Wilderness Rescue newsletter for December 1995:

On the 29th November, 1995 ten bushwalkers from Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue flew to Tasmania to assist in the private search for the missing son of Sydney Bush Walker (SBW) Dot Butler, Wade. Wade had not been seen since leaving on a solo six day round trip to Precipitous Bluff (PB) via the southern ranges and return on the South Coast Track.

PB is an imposing long mountain, beside a coastal lagoon, that seems to rise out of the ocean to 1220 m high. The side paralleling the lagoon has outstanding cliffs of dolerite columns that give the mountain its name.

An extensive official search had retraced Wades footsteps and found a very definite footprint at PB low camp. This is the last camp before going up, over and down PB to New River Lagoon. The South Coast Track crosses the mouth of new river Lagoon.

As the official search was ending, it was thought that a voice was heard near a helipad beside Limestone Creek. Thus the private search concentrated on the immediate area of "the voice" and other possible ways off PB. Our radios were able to establish radio communications to the nearest town. Mixed teams with a number of Tasmanian Bushwalkers were able to comprehensively search a number of areas.



Limestone Creek, which is a natural funnel that several ridges feed into, was line

searched down to New River Lagoon on both sides. All the false leads at the bottom of the usual ridge were checked. Some of the Karst country at the base of the mountain was searched. The search around the area of "the voice" was thorough but found no trace of Wade.

Saturday afternoon, 2nd December, 1995 all volunteers were airlifted out. On Monday fresh teams of Tasmanians continued the search until Friday 8th December 1995. The private search was well led and organised by the Tasmanians and added extensively to the area searched officially. All ways off PB have been fleetingly to extensively searched. The Karst country with its sink holes has had some searching but would need many more bushwalkers to completely search it. The Southern Ranges and the South Coast track have been checked. No extra evidence of Wades Movements has been found.

Wilderness Rescue was all the time working behind the scenes organising flights, budget details, updating information to all concerned. Wilderness rescue is extremely grateful for the opportunity to assist fellow bushwalkers in Tasmania. Wilderness rescue would like to thank Dick Smith for his sponsorship. His planned budget was increased to assist the Tasmanians in their second private search.

A Heritage To Be Saved

Nearly every tree, shrub and animal a visitor from abroad sees in the Australian landscape is new, save for a few like the eucalypts which are widely planted across the world. Australia is a continent with a unique collection of plants and animals organised in ecological communities that are found nowhere else. This is a heritage to be saved for all time.

**Professor Charles Birch in
Confronting the Future**

LEADERSHIP

by Geoff Grace

The following contribution from Geoff Grace is about leadership. It's about the epic voyage of Captain William Bligh in an open boat from Fiji to Timor in 1789 and Geoff has pointed out that "It is relevant to Club activities as it is a story about leadership. When the objective is to get from A to B there must be a leader. Bligh proved himself an extremely competent and disciplined leader".

Fiji to Timor. 29 April to 14 June 1789.
No map. Distance: 7,000 km by open boat.
Grade: Hard beyond belief. Leader:
William Bligh.

On the morning of 29 April 1789, with 18 loyal members of the crew of the *Bounty*, Bligh was forced by mutineers into a 23 foot open boat and supplied with the barest essentials for life. Under the most extreme circumstances, he navigated from Tofoa (Fiji) to Coupang in Timor. The near 4000 nautical mile journey (7000 km) took 45 days. Without Bligh's strong leadership, his discipline, seamanship and navigation skills, they would never have reached Timor.

They were at sea, crammed in a small boat with insufficient freeboard. It required continuous bailing. They suffered from exposure, thirst, starvation. There were frequent storms. Hostile islanders menaced. Notwithstanding all, Bligh kept a meticulous log. It is still in existence and makes absorbing reading.

Bligh was leader both by rank and by virtue of his knowledge and ability. In the frightful circumstances of the journey, the discipline necessary both to keep order amongst the men and at the same time, to keep such a remarkable log, was outstanding. The log was not just an occasional record of events but a detailed navigational aid - the key to their ultimate survival.

The log is also a gripping adventure story. A few days after being set adrift, there was a hairsbreadth escape from total massacre by natives on Tofoa -

".....I was no sooner in the boat than the attack began by about 200 men, this unfortunate poor man was first knocked down and the stones flew thick and fast like a shower of shot - many men got hold of the stern fast and were near hauling us onshore, and would certainly have done if I had not had a knife in my pocket to cut, we therefor hauled off to our grapnel with everyone more or less hurt. In the course of this I saw five of the natives about the poor man they had killed.....they filled their canoes with stones and 12 men came off after us....."

The man killed, (Mr Norton, Quartermaster), was the only person lost throughout the whole journey. The murder made such an impression on those remaining that -

"I was solicited by all hands to take them towards home, and when I told them that no hope of relief for us remained but what I might find at New Holland until I came to Timor, a distance of full 1200 leagues, (1 league = 3 nautical miles) where was a Governor, but that I had no idea of the part of the island the settlement was at, they all agreed to live on one ounce of bread per day and one gill of water." (4 Gills = 1 pint. 1 Gill = 0.118 litre).

Bligh had no doubts as to his own authority. He wrote always in the first person:

"... it was about 8-o'clock at night when I bore away under a reefed lug sail, and having divided into two watches and got the boat into a little order without a single map, and nothing but my own recollection and general knowledge of the situation of places assisted by an old book of latitudes and longitude to guide me ... "

Bligh's "own recollections and general knowledge of the situation of places" was considerable. Amongst other notable experiences, he had been an officer on Cook's third and final voyage which ranged the length and breadth of the Pacific. Bligh mentions Cook a few times in the log, including Bligh's personal involvement in an attack by natives following Cook's death. ▷

◁ "I once before sustained an attack of this nature with a small number of men against a multitude of Indians (after the death of Captain Cook) on the Morai at Owhyee (Hawai)."

In Hawai, with the benefit of firearms, Bligh repelled the attack. At Tofoa, with only a few cutlasses for defence, he managed to get off the beach with the loss of one man. Without Bligh's quick thinking and knife to cut the stern rope, the Tofoa incident could have been the end for all of them.

Bligh had a compass and quadrant (Sextant). The overloaded boat had sails, oars and could be steered. Bligh was therefore able to follow a course and make observations of latitude. He obviously knew the longitude of Tofoa near where they were set adrift and the position of Timor, so there was a start point and an end point for navigation purposes. Apart from observations of latitude, navigation had to be by dead reckoning.

"3rd May - At noon I considered my distance from Tofoa to be 86 miles WBNW, my Lat 19 degrees 27 min South and Longitude 183 degrees 52 minutes East."

Bligh had certain knowledge of Torres Strait - the vital narrow gateway leading to Timor. He also knew that Cook had discovered a passage through the Great Barrier reef south of Torres Strait.

A danger for Bligh was that the eastern extremity of New Guinea is further south than the tip of Cape York. Coming from a westerly direction, unless Bligh's course was well to the south of the latitude of Cape York, there would have been uncertainty as to whether their first landfall was Australia or New Guinea. To follow the north east coast of New Guinea rather than the north east coast of Australia would have led to oblivion. Bligh aimed his course to a latitude which turned out to be about two degrees further south than Cook's Providence Passage through the reef.

"I cannot recollect what latitude Providence Passage lies in but I consider it very near to where we have come in."

Very early in the journey Bligh commenced logging the speed of the boat - an essential for dead reckoning calculations.

"...a line marked and practiced at counting seconds..."

Every hour, the number of seconds to run out a measured line astern were counted. Traditionally the line was marked with knots, which is how "knots" came to be the nautical term for speed. Entries range from 1 to 16 knots with many records of four knots. A 24 hour run of 100 nautical miles or more was recorded on 17 occasions. (100 nautical miles = 185 km).

A progressive total of distance run was kept. How individual hours were measured is not quite clear however, Bligh could have used sun and star sights to divide the time.

An observation of the sun (when visible) to determine latitude was taken each day at mid-day. Compass course and changes of wind direction were recorded. Course and distances, coupled with observations of latitude, allowed dead reckoning calculations.

Soundings were taken. Because the record never exceeds six fathoms, it can be assumed that six fathoms was the length of line available. Reefs were encountered with soundings of two metres. Speed was logged meticulously every hour. Was the same line used for both sounding and measuring speed?

After the first few days of writing the log as a running journal of events, on the 6th May, when the journey had started in earnest, Bligh commenced a formal log with separate columns for Hour, Knots, Fathoms, Remarks and Journal. Below those columns are places for Course, Distance, Latitude - (both observed and dead reckoned), Longitude by dead reckoning and a small space for remarks. The facing page ▷

< contains the main journal. Each "day" of 24 hours commences at 12 mid-day.

After 25 days at sea, on 27th and 28th May, the log records their passage through the Reef. The observed latitude for 28th May is 12 deg 46 min - only 9 minutes difference from the position of Cooks Providential Passage. Seven days later, on the 4th June, in Torres Straight, Bligh's observed latitude is 10 deg 48 min, again, only 9 minutes difference from the latitude recorded by Cook.

27th May - "... range the reef until I found an opening..."

"From my recollection of Cooks survey of this coast ..."

28th May - "... I have already mentioned my reason for making New Holland so far to the Southward for i never doubted of numerous openings in the Reef through which I could have access to the shore and knowing I could range such a barrier of reefs until I found a passage ... "

Bligh stringently eked out their starvation rations and supplemented it with a few small birds caught by hand and other morsels of food. Rain at crucial times helped save them dying from thirst. On occasions when matters were at the lowest of low ebb - "Served a teaspoon or rum to each person".

The journey ended on 14th June at Coupang, Timor. A terse entry:

"At 9 got everyone on shore."

Bligh would have felt a great sense of achievement. He alone was responsible for the success of the voyage. He would also have rejoiced that the first step towards bringing the mutineers to justice had been completed.

Bligh had a bad temper and a sharp tongue however, the highly objective log of that remarkable shows that under the most extreme circumstances, Bligh was a resolute and competent leader. □

The Good Thing About Bushwalking is - by *George Mawer*

There were a few happenings on my Snowy Mountains Walk over the Christmas New-year period that caused me to think about the attractions of group walking. Particularly on overnight and extended walks. It seems that almost from the moment we pick up the back pack and walk away from the cars we each take our place in a little tribe. A small self contained cooperative unit with a goal and a purpose. We have a leader - which frees us from most responsibilities - and we belong. We seem to look forward to the small challenges that lie ahead and know that they will be tackled as a group and we have that subconscious confidence that everything will work out OK no matter what.

I believe that we always gain a little more of the quiet self confidence that comes from having tested and perhaps extended ourselves a little.

This particular walk was planned as an extended pleasure trip and I'm sure that that was how everyone found it to be. However it was interesting to see some of the 'people' interactions within the party. There were twenty of us so there was plenty to see and hear.

Each seemed to have at least one area of expertise to contribute as need be. Maybe simple physical strength endurance and speed - very handy at times. Perhaps navigation skills or local knowledge. Experience and training in first aid. Optimism and joviality.

There were the peacemakers and calming ones. The early risers, the ones that get up early and get the fire started. The sleepy heads. The ones that pitch in and help others to set up and to pack up. The motherly (and fatherly) types. The weather forecasters. The leaders advisers. The comedians and jokesters. The noisy ones and the quiet ones and those with bushcraft and camp skills.

Just how twenty people can be so close together for seven days and get along so well is remarkable in itself. It can't be that we're all such nice people. Maybe it's because we're close to nature and subconsciously we know we must.

What do you think?