



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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JULY 1996

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Night Walk on Wirraba Range

by Jim Brown

This will be for obvious reasons my final contribution to the "The Sydney Bushwalker" a journal, -- oh just a moment while I get my tongue firmly in my cheek where I like to have it when I propose to make some ponderous or pretentious remark -- right, a journal which I have tried to support over a good many years.

I am talking about a night walk that I once did in the Northern Blue Mountains. If you look at the maps of the area you will see that Wollemi Range reaches out to the east of the Dividing Range in the Rylstone - Mudgee area, forming the divide between the Hunter River system to the north and the Colo system to south and east. Further east the Wollemi Range breaks down into a series of lesser ridges, one being the Wirraba Range. During the 1960-70s landowners had bull-dozed a trail along the Wollemi-Wirraba divide to gain access to the lush grasses and the rich forests which capped the volcanic soils on several "tops". This trail mainly followed the crest of the ranges but in places it dipped down on the sides, no doubt to reach watering points on side creeks for those times when they herded cattle out on the range. Before long these "sidling" sections of the trail became pretty vague and obscure.

Before the trail was made I had walked the Wirraba-Wollemi Ranges on a couple of occasions with other walkers but I had never been over the bull-dozed track and when I first went over it, late in 1977 on a solo walk, I was surprised how vague it became on several of the sidlings. On this occasion I had gone out from "The Ovens" east of Rylstone, reaching the vicinity of Gaspers' Mountain (previously called Uraterer) at lunch time on the first day. Toward nightfall I came to the area where Wollemi Range divides into several spurs, including Wirraba Range. There followed a night walk of some six or seven kilometres along the rather vague Wirraba crest. This was done with the aid of a half moon which cast shadows of the track-side shrubs on the pale sandy track. Then a sleep under the stars in the tall forest on the basalt crown of Wirraba before going down over a series of rocky humps into Putty Creek. I enjoyed it all, in spite of the poor track and felt quite confident and at ease. In fact it was a cheerful night.

Good walking, and safe walking to all the Bushies.

Jim Brown

As he alluded to in his opening sentence, this is Jim's last contribution to the Sydney Bushwalker. Jim died on 13 June 1996. This report and verse were among

his papers, in an envelope addressed to the magazine. Jim, always a methodical person, had taken steps to ensure that he made a final contribution to the Sydney Bushwalker. Since joining the Club in 1947 Jim made many contributions to the magazine. His skill in prose, verse and song will be long remembered and sadly missed.

Night Walk on Wirraba Range

I had stopped for a snack when the sun was low
and the day had lost some heat,
the western sky was a fiery glow,
a dribbling rill at my feet.

I was walking alone as I'd often done
in our bush I had learned to love,
with the wind, the moon, the stars and the sun
and the blue that arched above.

I know our bush as a friendly place, undisciplined,
untamed,
The pal who greets you at his gate, untidy,
unashamed,
and calls with a grin on his weathered face
"well, come on, come in, mate"

I studied my maps as I sat and ate
and confirmed what I'd already guessed.
I'd lost some time - I was "running late"
getting home when promised my test.

I could make it by walking into the night
on this battered unknown track.
So I stepped out into the failing light ---
I hope I've not lost the knack.

For I knew no worry, doubt or fear
As I shouldered my lightened load:
a growing moon was pale and clear,
bushy shadows spilled on my road.

Then, when my eyes have lost the light,
around me crowds "The Shade"
Let me dream that I walk to my last long night
alone, but unafraid.

Jim Brown, 1996.

JIM, MY FRIEND

Barbara Bruce

Well, I guess the only way I can speak to you now is by ringing you on the Telephone to Glory - now THERE's a good tune we could do a ditty to, don't you think? You remember that tune that Jimmy Little used to sing - probably in the 1950's while you and Kath were out enjoying yourselves on bushwalks and about the time Christine arrived on the scene.

"Yes," I can hear you say, "I do believe we could do something with that -"

Jim, old mate, it's more than 25 years since I first met you. You were leading a walk through Palm Jungle down Otford way and I was doing one of my first day walks with the Sydney Bush Walkers. I can still see the scene: about 35 bods (as you would say) alighting from the train at the old concrete slab that served as a station at Lilyvale, with the golden early morning sun playing through the tall trees. Little did I know then that this was the start of a valued life long friendship.

Being as young as I was then I was soon off onto the weekend walks and most of our contact occurred at the Wednesday night club meetings at the various venues

Somewhere along the line - and this part I can't remember specifically - you invited me to participate in one of your campfire skits - the chronic operas - possibly at the first of the Coolana reunions.

I remember being absolutely delighted, because one of the

things I admired about you was your clever imagination, along with your prodigious memory. I confessed that as much as I would have loved to have been skilled at writing these skits myself, I was more than happy to do it vicariously through performing them with you.

So commenced the close bond between us.

We have enjoyed a good few campfire reunions since then and I especially treasure the one where you officiated at my induction as President of the Sydney Bush Walkers in 1985 - a poignant moment for both of us.

Yes, we shared some good times.

I also valued your wisdom, Jim, which I sought on a few occasions, especially with respect to Club matters. We all know how much the Club meant to you. Your loyalty to it was unquestionable and rock firm. You and Kath - who I considered Club icons - seemed to have belonged "forever" and you had held most of the positions at one time or another, so I found you a fountainhead of information and help.

You were certainly instrumental - often behind the scenes - in ensuring that anything relating to the SBW went as smoothly as possible. That quiet wisdom again.

We have agreed on many occasions how joining the Sydney Bush Walkers was one of the best things that has happened in our lives.

Jim, I have many little memories of you -

- your craggy bushman's visage;
- your tall, spare frame clad in buff coloured shirt and shorts;
- the volley sandshoes you were responsible for bringing into popular use;
- and your old frameless pack hanging limply from your shoulders as you walked along a bush track;
- your measured way of talking and making a point;
- the way you smoked your pipe;
- your croaky laugh;
- the melodic prose of your magazine articles;
- our exchange of telephone calls to keep in touch;
- and your love of Mozart's music.

Jim, you were a gentleman through and through.

You confided to me not all that long ago how you and Kath believed you'd had pretty good lives all up, especially because of your two families. Firstly, Chris and Geoff and their three lovely children - Alex, Ross and Sian - of whom you were justly proud and secondly your bushwalking family.

Jim, friends like you add to the richness of life, but now it is time for us all to say 'goodbye'. It has been nice knowing you.

SEE YA - MATE.

xx

This is a reprint of the eulogy presented by Barbara Bruce at Jim Brown's funeral

Kanangra to Katoomba - Queens birthday Weekend, June 1996

by Peter Miller

If you weren't there you missed one of the great club trips - the whole weekend was just fantastic. Even though we 'lost' three people on Friday night and Tony arrived back in Katoomba with only half the original party it was still a great weekend. But I anticipate.

There were three walks all starting from Kanangra on the Friday night. Ken Smith was leading a small party of stalwarts down the Gingra Track and over to Kowmung mountain and Kooricone Ridge; Eddy Giacomel was doing Kanangra to Katoomba in two days with a party of six while Tony Holgate was doing the same trip with a party of nine in three days.

We all met in Katoomba on a brisk Friday evening and after a meal at the Woodstack Cafe we boarded a bus for Kanangra Walls. There were 18 of us in the whole group; Denise Shaw, Dick Weston, Jennifer Trevor-Roberts, Jan Roberts, Paul McCann, Linda Mallett, Paul Haines, Owen Kimberly, Bill Hope, John Paton (v), Kenn Chlacher, Edith Baker, Eddy Collins, Kendy Maclean, the three leaders and myself.

There were numerous cars at Kanangra Walls car park and we opted to go down to the Dance Hall Cave for what remained of the night. Ken Smith and his party of two went off to sleep in Coal Seam Cave and we settled down near the cave under a clear sky and slept until the call came to rouse ourselves and get ready for the long day down to the Cox.

Saturday morning was a cool 0 degrees and we didn't waste much time over breakfast. We went off at the usual SBW canter across the tops stopping briefly to admire once again the majesty of Thurat Spires and the waterfalls plunging down into Kanangra Creek. The sky was perfectly clear and we had wonderful views all the way back to Katoomba, our ultimate destination,

and across to Mount Colong and the Axe Head Range. Inevitably the conversation ranged over other trips to those mountains and who had been where and with whom (we waved to Spiro who was leading a walk to Mount Colong but he didn't wave back). It was then down the well worn path across the Kilpatrick Causeway and past Craft Walls to the turn off to Crafts Ridge and the lovely Gingra Creek. By this time we had all warmed up and jumpers were stowed in the packs but the temperature was quite low and out of the direct sunshine it was distinctly cool. We didn't waste much time standing around and it was off again to follow the track over Mount Berry and then the steep 170 metre drop into Gabes Gully and straight up the other side to face the 200 metre climb to High and Mighty. Looking back from Stormbreaker and Rack, Roar and Rumble we had magnificent views to Kanangra Walls and Mount Colong (but Spiro still wouldn't wave to us) and we started to get a sense of achievement in having covered so much country in such a short time. There were several other parties in the mountains and the top of Cloudmaker was a general meeting point. We decided to go on to Dex Creek for lunch which we had to share with another group on their way to the Cox. The weak winter sunshine at Dex was very welcome but we had to put on warm clothing as soon as we stopped walking.

From Dex Creek we set off for Strongleg meeting a small party who had just spent five hours on the wrong ridge looking for it. By now it was 1.30 pm and they had decided

to give up and return to Kanangra Walls instead of going to Katoomba. We commiserated with them and set off confidently for Strongleg which our two intrepid leaders found with no problems. Strongleg has a well defined track along it and we followed the ups and downs in the ridge until we came to the really steep drop to the Cox. Mount Strongleg is 787 metres and the Cox a mere 150 metres and the first drop is accomplished in just two kilometres and is very, very steep. By this time we were running out of daylight and Denise and I brought up the end of the party and arrived at a camp spot on the Cox just as it got dark. We were a few hundred metres downstream from Kanangra Creek where several other parties of walkers were camped. I was pooped and forgoing the delights of dinner and campfire conversation I gratefully went to bed in my brand new sleeping bag and passed a very snug and comfortable night happy in the knowledge that the next day would be an easy one.

On Sunday morning Eddy and his party of eager hopefuls were up early for the long haul back to Katoomba in one day. They set off across the Cox while those of us who were camping at Splendour Rock lazed about and drank more cups of tea and idly speculated on the other walks that were on that weekend. Eventually it was time to go just as the sun reached the river. It had been a very cold night and those of us whom didn't camp under the casuarinas found our tents covered in ice. My fly normally rolls up into a neat cylindrical shape but as it was completely iced over I

could only fold it into an ungainly square parcel and carry it under the flap of my pack which made the whole thing top heavy. The river was very cold but luckily quite low so there was not too much drama crossing it but nevertheless our one remaining leader came in for the usual bagging about getting our feet wet and cold at the start of the day.

We trudged up Yellow Pup following either the horse track zig-zags or the steep walking track as we felt inclined and made our way up to the top of Boot Hill. It was too early for lunch so Tony decided to walk across to the base of Splendour Rock where we sat like lizards extracting the tiny amount of warmth from the weak winter sunshine. After lunch we climbed up to Splendour Rock and wondered again at the fantastic views. We could see all the way back to Kanangra Walls which we had left the day before and could pick out the entire route over Cloudmaker and the steep ridge running off Strongleg that we had slipped and slid and cursed our way down in the fading light the day before. Our closest water was Mobbs Soak so five of us set off with packs and wine skins to bring enough back for the party. We set off along the track across the tops over the delightfully named Dingo's Playground on the old sketch map and down 300 metres to Mobbs Soak where we filled up and carried the water three kilometres back to our campsite at Splendour Rock. There were now only nine of us left in Tony's party and we found a comfortable spot a few hundred metres back from the rock and after watching a rather splendid sunset we settled down around the fire to cook dinner and generally relax and get ourselves ready for the next day quite unable to understand why the other two groups who had left for Kanangra Walls with us found it so

urgent to be back in Sydney a day early on a long weekend.

After a mild night with a few wispy clouds we arose early to watch the sunrise and listen to the lyrebirds calling from the valley below. After breakfast we set off over the tops and across the Dingo's Playground again for the third time in two days and down to Warrigal Gap above Mobbs Soak. We had enough water to get us back to Katoomba so we stayed high and followed the very interesting track along the eastern side of Mount Warrigal to Blackhorse Gap where we picked up the old and very faint track beside Mount Mouin which joins the fire trail leading down to Medlow Gap. From there we walked along the road to the junction and over Deberts Knob and so on to Taro's Ladders which we climbed in brilliant sunshine along with a party of young walkers who were also headed for Katoomba. We had our last lunch of the walk at the top of the ladders and our final views of Kanangra Walls in the far distance and so began the long, long trudge back along Narrow Neck with its steep ups and downs. By now it was getting quite cold again but as the sun got lower in the sky there were very interesting light and shade effects in the valleys and on the sandstone cliffs and across to Mount Solitary and The Ruined Castle. We passed several weary walkers making their way back to Katoomba and by the time we reached the sealed road the sun was setting in a riot of red and orange so it was time to put on a lot more clothes and walk back to the cars parked near the police station, have a meal and drive back to Sydney.

It was one of the best walks that I can remember. The weather was perfect, the leadership was excellent and the company left nothing to be desired. Thanks Tony and Eddy for a great walk. □

NEXT ISSUE

I will be away for a few weeks in July/August and Peter Miller has volunteered to produce the August issue of The Sydney Bushwalker magazine. Peter has some ideas for improving the magazine but will need your input to work with. Please support him by getting your stories and photographs etc to him as early as possible.

Thanks

George Mawer

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At Coolana

The weekend of June 29/30.

Bill Holland reports that Coolana was alive and jumping on this weekend when there were 32 people on site.

Eighteen prospectives were involved with their map reading and first aid tuition whilst most of the others - about 14 members plus 2 children - got involved with weed eradication and stacking and burning fallen timber to open up a large tract of the river flats area for camping.

"As darkness came we began a prolonged happy hour, followed by group singing and a generally good time both inside the shelter shed and around the outdoor fire".

See Club walks programs for Coolana dates. □

Letter to the Editor

from Patrick James.

Two matters which received undue prominence in the June issue have prompted this literary outburst. Firstly in response to Peter Miller, it is **NOT** time to update the look of our magazine. As the magazine gets older, and it is now 64 years old, there should be an ever increasing desire to retain the existing front cover. By all means improve the printing quality of the cover. Find the original. Who has the original? Is it still with a printer somewhere? Look now in your cupboard and return it forthwith. Certainly update the text on the cover, then scan it, digitise it, print it on board, glossy paper, rice paper or even coconut paper but it must remain substantially the same.

The inside of the magazine is a different matter. That can be and should be updated to include all the latest gee-whiz, bells and whistles to improve quality, layout and readability. Even try a second edition with large type for any visually challenged elders of the Bushies tribe.

Peter, our magazine should be like the Queen Victoria Building, venerable and stately on the outside and modern, contemporary and state of the art on the inside.

Now for my second two bobs worth, Leadership Accreditation. ORCA is the start of a bureaucracy, a waste of taxpayers/users money. ORCA should be immediately referred to the Razor Gang (Economic Review Committee) for removal before it gets up any more momentum. Bush walking is a sport, a hobby, perhaps even a religion but it is not an industry. When I lead walks (and I promise to lead more after November 1996) I don't lead a group of visitors on a factory inspection, it's not an industrial visit

to a National Park, it's partaking in/of a sport or hobby.

If people want to lead walks as a business then there is WorkCover Authority to cater for their needs, wants, requirements, compliance and/or regulation not some jumped-up, waste of money, fishy organisation. Each State has an industry control and regulatory body similar to WorkCover, there is even an existing national body, WorkSafe Australia. Another national body is unnecessary, unwanted, unjustified and unjustifiable.

So George, the magazine cover remains the same, Leadership Accreditation is going not coming and ORCA can be disbanded before it develops the bands to restrict and constrict our sport and hobby. □

Gloucester Tops to Barrington Guest House

Queens Birthday Weekend 1996 - Ian Rannard

This walk was a very pleasant one. It was planned as an easy medium walk, mostly on tracks through the various forest types on the Gloucester and Barrington Tops and in the Williams River Valley. By leaving our vehicles at Barrington Guest House and hiring a bus to take us to our walk starting point at the vehicle barrier on the Gloucester Tops Walking Track we avoided all long steep climbs.

In keeping with this gentle approach Saturday was taken up with the drive from Sydney, the 3 hour bus trip, a quick inspection of Monroe Hut, and a 3 km walk to camping in an unmapped clearing in the forest about 4.15pm. You couldn't imagine a more delightful start to a long weekend walk. In the clear, cold, calm, late afternoon the wintry rays of sunlight slanted down through tall trees onto a track that in places was deep in shade and

beech leaves. Only the happy chatter of 19 walkers and later the occasional crack of firewood being broken interrupted the silence.

On Sunday we continued west along the track as it undulated through attractive sections of Antarctic Beech and open eucalypt forest. Wombat Creek was visited, Carey's Peak climbed, Wallaby Hill sidled, boggy Saxby Swamp crossed and a short section of the dreaded Scotch Broom pushed through until we arrived scratched and thankful on a grassy track from Aeroplane Hill that we followed to camp at 3pm near Black Swamp. An optional side trip to Big Hole was done by the energetic. About 5pm a tablecloth was spread on the ground and lots of scrumptious goodies laid out for happy hour. A nice touch was provided by Frank (the elder) who brought a flask of Creme de Menthe and Cognac. In the warm afterglow we all agreed there was much to be said for easy walks in large groups. That night around the fire we had a play reading supported by massed choral singing, in which some of the big questions of life were explored. The cynics declared it to be "just a panto with corny jokes".

Monday, foggy and damp, included a visit to the well sited Selby Alley Hut as we descended from the Tops through mist-shrouded trees past the Corker to Lagoon Pinch and the Rocky Crossing track, which we followed through beautiful rain forest back to the Guest House and our vehicles, arriving at 2pm.

Club members on the walk were: Maureen and David Carter, George Floyd, Margaret Sheens, Jenny Paton, Anne Maguire, Frank Grennan, Sheila Speter, Dennis Morgan, Allen Wells, Frank Sander, Wilf Hilder, Don Wilcox, Jan Brown, Pat Bickley, Rosemary MacDougall, Mike Schwarz, Glad and Ian Rannard (leader). □

Ethnic Bushwalking

(Broadening our Membership) Greg Bridge

In common with a lot of other SBW members I am also a member of the National Parks Association - my first "bushwalking" club and it was via meeting many SBW's through the NPA that I eventually joined the SBW - some might say a step up in the world whilst others might comment not so much up but 2 kilometres per hour faster! Coming to the SBW via the NPA has, I believe, been a common experience for a large percentage of SBW's and this in turn has relevance to a project I have, peripherally, become involved with in the NPA i.e. their "ethnic" (and I hate that word) bushwalking initiative.

By way of background the NPA was formed in the mid 1960's as a "private" environmental protection organisation and a bushwalking program, officially titled "Field Activities" operates within the NPA to educate people in the environment and encourage membership.

At the instigation of the NPA Executive Officer, Jason Shauness, working in conjunction with Henry Roda (member NPA and SBW), the NPA recently commenced a pilot program of bushwalks for specific (ethnic) groups, the ideas being -

- to promote an excellent recreational activity amongst groups which are presently under represented in the activity.
- to foster understanding and good relationships between ethnic communities and the wider society as represented by bushwalkers.

- to generate an understanding of, and interest in, the bush and conservation within these groups.
- to encourage participants in the program to join and become active in the NPA or in other such groups.

The Chinese community was chosen for the first walks in the program. Excellent support was received from the Australian Chinese Community Association (ACCA) who assisted in translating an advertisement into Chinese and its placement in Chinese community newspapers. Peter Wong, a prominent person within ACCA and who assisted in all aspects, was contact person for the first walk, in Lane Cove National Park, to eliminate language problems.

From the advertisements 37 responses were received before the attendance was closed off and of these 31 eventually attended the walk, which took the form of some basic instruction, with the aid of an interpreter where required, and walk guidance and assistance by NPA leaders - my own minor role. An SBS news crew, invited by Jason Shauness, filmed the walk and conducted some interviews. This resulted in about 90 seconds priceless television coverage in that evening's, Sunday, 6.30pm news.

From the comments of participants and their enquiries re future walks, there is no doubt this "pilot" walk was a great success and as I compose this the next walk is about to take place centred around Glenbrook / Red Hands Cave.

The pilot program is proving the concept but unless the NPA can obtain some sponsorship it may not be extended any further as the NPA on its own, does not have the finances to implement such a program on an ongoing basis. I might add that most NPA work is performed by volunteers but sponsorship funds are needed for employment of a project officer to organise and promote activities so if anyone knows of any potential sponsor, private or business (perfect project for companies as it involves the environment and multi-cultural society) or knows anyone who may know someone else, I would appreciate your contacting either myself or the NPA directly - and remember that ultimately we all stand to benefit. □

Advance Notice October Long Weekend

Bike Rides around Canberra with Ian Debert.

Ian is planning to visit Canberra for the three day long weekend. Drive down on Friday 4th, back on Monday 7th. Stay at the South Side Motor Park for about \$55 each for cabin type accommodation for the three nights.

Canberra is beautiful in the spring and the plan is to do selected exploratory bike trips.

A \$20 deposit must be paid by September 6. Contact Ian to arrange or post your cheque (payable to Ian Debert) to 36 Lewis Street Dee Why 2099.

A Tribute to Jim Brown -

and concern about new topographic maps.

Ainslie Morris

Jim Brown's last article written for The Sydney Bushwalker brought a lump to my throat. What a wonderful writer he was, and how pleasant to work with when I was editor both of the magazine and of our history, "The Sydney Bush Walkers". Jim's article "In Your Memories", is a reminder that he was also a fine walker and a remarkable navigator. I imagine struggling around rugged bush with only a 1:250000 map! It has rather taken the wind out of my sails as this letter was going to be a whinge about maps.

But here goes anyway, as it is important.

What do members think of the latest printing of 1:25000 topographic maps? I bought the Nerrigundah map (dated 1988) recently, and with a couple of SBW friends, set out to see if Pinewood Creek ran easily into the Deua River. Now that orange is used instead of black for roads and tracks, we had difficulty picking out the road against the pink contours. The much paler blue than previously used makes the creeks and larger rivers hard to see, especially as the formerly flat green background denoting "Medium vegetation" is now stippled.

Heaven help you if you were trying to use such a map in failing light

and thick scrub to find a campsite or fire trail!

We finally resorted to using the Batemans Bay State Forests map on a scale of 1:125000 to work out what was on the Nerrigundah map.

A note on the map cover informs us that CALM "is developing a new range of up to date products", so perhaps now is the time to let it know what our club thinks of the current colour scheme. The address is: Central Mapping Authority of New South Wales, Panorama Avenue, Bathurst 2795. □

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Enjoy the ancient landscapes along the Finke River. Marvel at Watarrka's incredible plant diversity - the richest in arid Australia. Wander through hidden gorges. Climb the hills and enjoy magnificent views. Cool off with swims in some of the Centre's most beautiful waterholes. Ask for our 16-page brochure and detailed trip notes.



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The June 1996 General Meeting

by Barry Wallace

It was around 2012 when the president called the 15 or so members present to order and began the meeting. The call for apologies brought these forth on behalf of Patrick James, Tom Wenman, Michelle Powell and Jim Calloway. New member Jan Pieters was called for welcome but was not present.

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

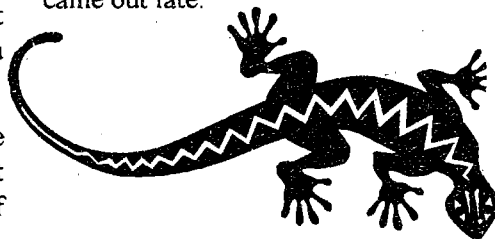
Correspondence revealed letters from NPWS with maps and details of the new wilderness areas, from Confederation requesting we workshop and respond to a questionnaire on training, from the NSW Premiers Department thanking us for our letter praising the wilderness declarations, and providing details of the areas concerned. John Noble wrote resigning from membership. There was also a letter from the Total Environment Centre seeking contributions. We sent letters out to our new member, and the conservation secretary provided details to NPWS of apparent trackmaking activities in the Woila Creek area.

The treasurer reported that we acquired income of \$3,810, spent \$1,481 and closed with a balance of \$12,518.

The walks secretary, not to be outdone by the numerical intensity of the treasurer, presented what purported to be detailed accounts of the walking activities for the month past. The closing balance was simply marvellous, whatever it was. In stark contrast to this there were no details for Jan Mohandas' extended walk over the weekend of 9 to 13 May to The Three Peaks and Splendour Rock. Maurice

Smith led 9 on his Morton NP trip over the normal weekend of May 10, 11, 12 in perfect weather. Of the day walks, Ken Smith was out on the Saturday in good weather with a party of 4 on his Heathcote to Otford walk but there were no details for trips by either Alan Mewett or Jim Callaway.

May 17, 18, 19 saw Ian Debert cancel his Kanangra trip due to illness. Greta James relocated her Blaydens Pass trip to Red Rocks due to uncertainties about the road to Blaydens Pass. There were 11 on the trip, which went well despite a shortage of water. Ken Smith started his Saturday Faulconbridge to Glenbrook rock hopping extravaganza at Springwood to ease pressure on the party of 8. They has some light showers during the morning and came out a bit late after a very full day. Eddy Giacomel rerouted his Mountain Lagoon/Tootie Creek trip to take in more points of interest for the party of 3. They enjoyed a rather long day with a swim along the way and came out late.



Lynne Yeaman led her first programmed walk, in KurinGai Chase NP, with a party of 32 in fine, cool weather. The leader reversed the order of the walk on recommendations from some members of the party. There was some uncertainty as to whether Peter Miller was on that trip, on some other more or less similar walk, or just playing the part of a greatly extended remote whipper-in. Usually reliable witnesses indicated

that he and his companion were still shadowing the main party at a respectful distance late in the afternoon as they ascended toward Lyrebird Gully.

The weekend of 24, 25, 26 May saw John Hogan's trip to Beloon Pass subverted due to undisclosed circumstances. Stephen Ellis's weekend walk in Megalong Valley was cancelled. Carol Lubbers led a party of 19, including John Hogan on her Gardens of Stone trip. Morag Ryder's Saturday walk from Faulconbridge to Glenbrook went with a party estimated at 12 by our informant, who played the part of silent watcher rather than participant. Ken Smith reported that his Glenbrook to Woodford Sunday walk went from dark to dark, with fine weather and a party of 5 whom Ken claims not only survived but also enjoyed the experience. Bill Holland's Tootie Creek Sunday walk went, with no details at the meeting. Later information indicates there were around 12 on the walk. The trip ended late after one of the participants developed mobility problems on the uphill return leg. Elwyn Morris led 16 on her Sunday walk from Milsons Point to Gladesville in fine conditions.

The weekend of 31 May, 1, 2, June saw a dearth of information with Paul McCann's Buckenbowra State Forest weekend walk cancelled, no report for Alan Well's Saturday walk out from Carlons, no report for Wilf Hilder's stage 7 of the disputed circumnavigation of Port Jackson on the Sunday, and a party of 10 and no other details for Frank Sander's Saturday walk from Berowra to Hornsby. Greta James' Sunday walk to Blue Gum Forest went, with >

◁ Ian Rennard's Gloucester Tops walk led off the reports for the June long weekend (7 to 10 June). There were 20 in the party but no other details. Jan Mohandas cancelled his Warrumbungles trip but Ian Debert had 20 on his Widden Brook base camp trip in cold, clear conditions. Spiro led 9 on his stroked version of the Mount Colong trip in perfect weather. They did run things a bit fine at the end, but Spiro's claim of spending the last two hours in the dark can only lend credence to those warnings his mother gave him so long ago now. The K to K brigade were out in diversity if not perhaps force, though a total of 18 starters caught the bus out from Katoomba and that is not to be sneezed at. First out the gate was Ken Smith with a team of 3 walking out to a curiously vacant Coal Seam Cave on Friday night. They arrived at around 0115 on Saturday, luxuriated around until 0700 and set out again. The waters of Gingra Creek mocked them from the pools above the gravel fan reach as they passed at 1100, and those of Ti-Willa Creek cooled their feet and slaked their thirst at around 1215. Kowong Mountain and Koorikone Spur passed in sweat dripping lung stretching aspiration to yield the shores of the Cox River at around 1700. They pounded up Howling Dog Spur on Sunday to meet a dilettante group led by the walks secretary on Splendour Rock. This group of 6 had set out under the baton of Tony Holgate with 9 others after spending Friday night with the milling hordes at Kanangra Walls. The combined party moved at a brisk clip over Cloudmaker, via Dex Creek and Strongleg to reach the Cox at around 1730. Next morning Eddy's group moved off early up to Splendour Rock. It was just a matter of a stroll into Katoomba for the combined Smith/Giacometti party to complete the trip. For some reason Ken cancelled his Monday

day walk to the Nattai, lack of starters perhaps? Meanwhile back on the Cox Tony, he of the incredibly battered white hat, and the other 9 walkers moved off in a more leisurely fashion for a high camp near Splendour Rock in mild conditions. Monday saw them strolling back along Narrow Neck to Katoomba. There was no report for Ken Cheng's north shore walk, from Berowra to Hornsby on the Saturday, but it did conclude the walks reports for the month.

Conservation report concerned information that NPWS have identified further proposed additions to wilderness areas, some of which appear to be contentious, involving as they do carefully sculpted exclusions along rivers, stock routes and other features. Interim forest assessment plans have been prepared for review. The Nature Conservation Council has asked for support for a forest reserve plan yet to be defined(?).

Confederation report indicated that they are discussing "section 19.2 activities" (activities involving risk taking in National Parks to the unwashed) with NPWS. The structure of Confederation meetings has changed. In future there will be a brief general meeting followed by meetings of the executive committees. Indications are that the proposed new map style will be used only in areas of high socio-economic activity. Maps of walking areas, which one must presume are not areas of high socio-economic activity, will in future not be revised. The draft of the Blue Mountains National Park plan of management is due to be available in January 1997.

General business saw passage of a motion rescinding the motion of the November '95 general meeting that had expressed that meeting's opposition to Confederation's intent to write to NPWS supporting the

consideration of an area in the Grose River catchment for proposal for listing as wilderness.

The announcements closed the meeting at 2144. □

Letter to:

**The Director-General
Northern Zone NSW NPWS**

Dear Sir

Thank you for your advice on identified additions to wilderness areas. We were pleased to know the extent of the identified additions, particularly the 91,000 ha under consideration in the Guy Fawkes Wilderness, which would then constitute one of the largest wilderness areas in the state.

As you note it contains outstanding examples of tall old growth forests and is a major habitat of many threatened species. It is, however, subject to grazing, logging, overburning, ORV and horseriding, dams, mining, pollution and weed and feral animals infestation. These threats are contrary to the Service's wilderness management guidelines, but given adequate means, the wilderness value of the area can be restored.

The task of restoration will be jeopardised by the exclusion from declaration of the stock route which bisects the area. The continuance of the above threats will be facilitated by the route, which affords access by ORV's and horse riders to the adjacent wilderness. Droving of stock has been replaced by truck transport and there is no longer any need for the route. We hope that you will preserve the integrity of the wilderness by adding the route to the declared area.

Yours faithfully,

A.G. Colley OAM

Hon. Conservation Secretary

The Colong Foundation □