



**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 Kimbilly Neighbourhood Centre, 16 Fitzroy Street, Kimbilly (near Milsons Point Railway Station). Visitors and prospective members are welcome any Wednesday.

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# January 1997

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## Big Dipper Blocks The Yahoos of Yalwal

Weekend Test Walk, November 23 - 24, led by Tony Manes

Reported by George Carter

(with additions by Elwyn Morris)

**T**ill recently, the peace of pristine Yalwal Creek on Morton National Park, with its once idyllic campspots, clear pools and granite rocks, was shattered every weekend by yahoos on trailer bikes and hoons in four wheel drives.

At an October clubnight ex-Shoalhaven planner Russ Evans, in a talk on the 250 Km south coast escarpment track he is coordinating, told how a party of local and NPWS dignitaries came to see just how bad the problem was. They were dedicating a plaque at Yalwal's abandoned mines, a historic site, when sputtering trailer bikes encircled them, doing wheelies and drowning out the speeches. A subsequent fatal accident where a clowning father and son ran into each other must have been the last straw.

To keep the hoons out of the national park, the NPWS has acted - with a vengeance. They've blocked the road into Yalwal Creek. Elwyn remembers this from pre-4WD and bike days, when Bill Holland used it as an easy approach to his memorable camps there. He also used it as an easy exit back to the cars after a weekend test walk, the reward for a gruelling first day climbing Myrtle Gully Ridge (gaiters essential) and an hour and a half of rock hopping on the second day.

Huge boulders and in one spot a termite nest have been tipped onto the road, so close that not even a bike can get through, and for good measure, high

humps the width of the road have been bulldozed at intervals of a few metres, for stretches along it. I have never seen anything like it - and nor had the yahoos. All the way along Yalwal Creek, on a fine Sunday, it was totally deserted and peaceful. Our party met no one at all on the whole walk.

Now the bad news. The humps are hard going even for a bushwalker to negotiate, especially with a weekend pack on after a hard walk. There's no way to go off-track parallel to the road, as in some spots there's a cliff on one side and a drop on the other. This means that what used to be classified as a medium weekend test walk, with a hard first day and much easier second day, is now harder.

### LUCK NEEDED

At least that's my opinion - and even Tony admitted he got tired! But he had a lot of luck, which he needed. First, it rained and blew so hard and the forecast was so grim on Friday that ten of the 15 cancelled, including a father and son who'd spent \$180 on hiring equipment. This left five fit, determined people - members Tony, Kay, and Kate, and two prospectives, Phil (a very experienced walker), and myself. I'd have gone even if it was snowing, having had Sunday rehearsals for months, that stopped me from completing my final membership requirement.

Secondly, Saturday was cold - in late November! A week before, there'd been a

heatwave, and a week later, there was another. Maybe the cold sent any snakes, ticks, leeches or mosquitoes back into hibernation, as we met none. A cool wind and light showers proved a blessing on the long steep climb through very thick, scratchy scrub, which gave my knees, left uncovered by gaiters or shorts, the required SBW initiation scars.

The rewards were spectacular rock formations on the way and the views from Reynolds saddle, in sunshine, of the cliffs towards Bundanoon, of Jervis bay, and of Danjera Dam. Being a small, fast party, by 2.30 pm we reached a sheltered camp spot by a lovely pool with high cliffs. A nearly full moon rose as the sun set, in crisp, perfect weather.

Thirdly, on the warm Sunday, we had deep, long pools to skinnydip in (again in true SBW tradition) as we rack hopped and walked along the creeks. Then instead of the flat smooth fire trail out to the cars, we hit the knee jarring ups and downs of the Big Dipper. I wondered how all the prospectives who originally booked on this "medium 20 km" (more like 27 km?) weekend test walk would have coped with this last ordeal, especially if they'd had the previous weeks 35 degrees!

Pooped but happy, the lucky five ended with the traditional restaurant meal on the way home. ■

### A reply to Maurice Smiths "EXCESSES"

I agree that numbers attending walks, being day, weekend or extended, should be limited in numbers due to all the reasons given by Maurice. I feel a more reasonable average would be 10 - 15 with an allowance for those walkers who book on walks and don't have the courtesy to notify the leader when they decide not to attend. Thus depriving others from going, or having the leader arrive at the start with no followers.

Another reason for having larger numbers on walks is so that "Sub groups" mentioned by Maurice don't spoil a walk don't spoil a walk for the rest of the group - especially prospectives. It seems to me that Maurice is trying to split club members into small "sub groups" instead of forcing members to mingle and educate prospectives in all aspects of bushwalking etiquette.

If numbers on walks are limited as suggested by Maurice; I believe we will have more

cancellations of walks due to "no shows", prospectives may find it very difficult to get on a programmed walk and walks being booked out before the walks program comes out. This would eventually lead to the slow death of SBW.

Conclusions: Yes! We must limit numbers on walks. No! Leaders should not have to appear before the committee for exceeding limits. Numbers on walks should be left to the discretion of the experienced leader who knows what is required for his or her walk. If anything, educate inexperienced leaders. What would happen to classic social walks such as "The K to K" and "The Six Foot Track" and many other extended walks.

Come on Maurice, stop leading your cliquey little walks which no one can book on and expand your circle of bushwalking friends. Remember Maurice, you too were a prospective not so long ago. We have enough trouble getting enough leaders to lead walks without forcing inexperienced leaders into situations which they may not be ready for. Tony Manes. ■

## Finke Gorge and Watarrka National Parks

### Sydney Bushwalkers Special

Jacqui Calandra is organising a Sydney Bushwalkers group to join our Finke - Watarrka trip, April 13-26. Join her and get a group discount while you enjoy the ancient landscapes along the Finke River and explore the wonderful parts of Watarrka that the Kings Canyon tourists never see.

For more information about the group, phone Jacqui on (02) 9476 6538 or fax her on (02) 9476 6549



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## IT COULD HAPPEN HERE

by Mark Weatherley

In his letter on Kakadu National Park published in The December Sydney Bushwalker, Alex Colley wrote "99% of the park is denied to all but Aborigines. The park will therefore be managed no differently to privately owned land. No such restrictions apply in NSW parks - -"

Not yet, but watch this space, stay tuned! Privatisation of National Parks is coming to your state, courtesy of the Carr Labour Government.

On 27 November and 5 December 1996, after the date of Alex's letter, legislation was passed by both houses of the NSW Parliament that allows ownership of National Parks to be granted to Aboriginal Land Councils. The form of title under which ownership is granted is "Fee Simple", the same as for any suburban home site and most family homes.

There is provision for the land to be leased back to the Park Service but **the owners retain control through a majority on the board of management.** The service pays a rental which is negotiated between the owners and the Minister. The term of the lease can be for as little as thirty years, renewable only if both parties agree. The owners may use the land for hunting, fishing and gathering of traditional foods. New areas proposed as National Parks can be declared as "National Parks" under the same conditions of ownership and lease-back.

Ownership of seven existing National Parks, Historic Sites and Nature Reserves is granted immediately. **Ownership of any others parks can be granted provided that their Aboriginal cultural significance is not less than that of the original seven.** Four of these - Mungo N.P., Mootwingee H.S., Mount Grenfell H.S., and Mount Yarrowick N.R. all have high Aboriginal cultural significance and their transfer was not opposed by the conservation groups.

The remaining three are of much more concern. As far as people in the conservation movement are aware, they have no more Aboriginal cultural significance than the general run of National Parks, but they will now set the standard for cultural significance by which other parks can be given away. They are Jervis Bay N.P., Mootwingee N.P. and Coturundee N.R. If they set the standard it could only be a matter of time before Kosciusko, Royal, Kuringai Chase, Blue Mountains, Kanangra-Boyd, Wollemi, etc, etc, follow them into private ownership.

Public ownership has always been an essential feature of National Parks in NSW and elsewhere. Because National Parks have belonged to everyone we have been able to come and go in them as we please. If they become privately owned like Kakadu and Uluru we will have to expect that sooner or later their

owners will begin to behave like owners.

The title of the new legislation is "National Parks and Wildlife Amendment (Aboriginal Ownership) Bill 1996" ■

## NOTICE

### From the Walks Secretary

Just two days after bulk posting the 63 "Christmas / Thank You" cards to leaders who had contributed to the Walks Program for 1996, I received a note from the St Leonards mail centre advising me that I had posted 55 articles "UNDERPAID"!!

Congratulations came my way for being economical with the clubs funds. However, the receipts clarified the matter with Australia Post. In a way, this spoils a good story. The story about being economical is much more interesting.

Maureen and David Carter have streaked (?) past the finishing post leaving the competition for dead. In a remarkable and commendable effort Maureen and David are the first leaders to submit walks for the Autumn 1997 program. They submitted complete details by fax on 17/12/96, 38 days before the closing date. Well done Maureen and David! (Totalitarian regime propagandists eat your heart out!)

The closing date for the Autumn Walks Program (1st - 2nd March to 7th - 9th June) is Friday 24 January.

Eddy Giacomel ■

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

After reading Mark Weatherley's article on page 3, and re-reading Alex's Kakadu N.P. article on page 3 of the December issue, and then considering some of the possibilities of the "National Parks and Wildlife Amendment (Aboriginal Ownership) Bill 1996" all I can say is - "Wake up NSW, (whatever your ancestry). It seems it's already happening here".

Once any land is in the hands of private owners it is accessible for commercial exploitation (in its many and varied forms) and every politician in this country must know that.

And as this Bill passed through both houses of Parliament in only a few days, and without so much as a whimper from the opposition or the conservation movement, it causes me to ponder questions like -

- "What is the significance (if any) in the fact that this Bill, and the recent large increase in the number of National Parks in NSW, must have been on the Government's agenda at the one time. - (see page 13 Nov '96 issue).
- "Is it possible that Aboriginal Australians are being used like pawns in a long term scheme to make national parks available for development?"
- "Has our conservation movement been infiltrated by big business?"

- "Does the Government really have the right to give our National Parks away?"
- "Is it possible that all the blood sweat and tears shed by ordinary conservation minded Australians in the past, in trying to preserve a little of our beautiful land in what they thought was a safe National Parks System, is all wasted?"

The purpose of national parks is to preserve some of the last remnants of the natural environment. Surely they should be retained in public ownership for the enjoyment of all Australians. These remnants have remained undeveloped until now because they were considered mostly economically useless. Giving them to Aboriginal Australians to compensate them for the European appropriation of their lands is an insult. Nor do I believe they are interested in parklands. They have given virtually no support to the conservation movement and I have never met nor seen one of them in any of the national parks that I have walked in.

What affects National Parks will affect all who use the them. If they are privately owned they certainly will not be **National Parks**

We can borrow from the TV ad that says "It won't happen overnight, but it will happen."

Think about it. Perhaps it's not too late even now, ■

**The British Military requires annual officer performance reviews. These are actual excerpts taken from people's reviews.**

His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of curiosity.

This officer is not so much of a has-been, but more of a definitely-wont-be.

When she opens her mouth, it seems that this is only to change whichever foot was previously in there.

He has carried out each and every one of his duties to his entire satisfaction.

He would be out of his depth in a car park puddle.

Technically sound, but socially impossible.

This young lady has delusions of adequacy.

When he joined my ship, this officer was something of a granny; since then he has aged considerably.

This medical officer has used my ship to carry his genitals from port to port, and my officers to carry him from bar to bar.

Since my last report he has reached rock bottom, and has started to dig.

She sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them.

He has the wisdom of youth and the energy of old age.

This officer should go far, and the sooner he starts, the better.

This man is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot.

by Jacqui Calandra ■

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# The Dinkum Dunny's Day is Done

or

## The Case for the Composting Clivus!

By Jaqui Calandra

As the editor comments in "Mail & Notices" of The Sydney Bushwalker December issue, toilet training is the first lesson in the bushlovers environmental handbook, but the solitary morning contemplation time with the twitter of birdsong and gleeful buzz of other winged creatures, requires a new approach with increasing numbers of people.

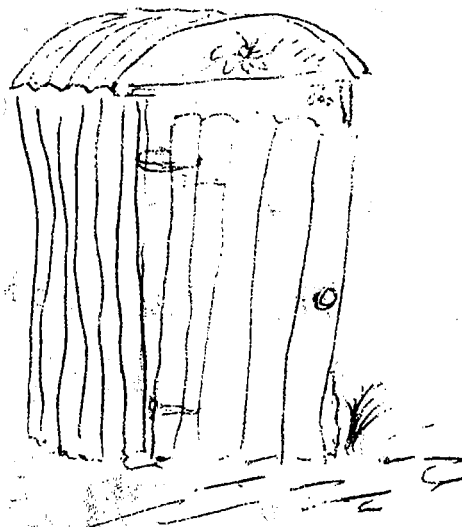
In this article I'd like to put the case for a composting toilet at Coolana, in particular the Clivus Minimus, which is an adaptation of the expensive Swedish design the Clivus Multrum. Most of my information has been provided by Leigh Davidson (1) of the Channon, Lismore, the book "Goodbye to the flush toilet" (2) and from various articles in the journal "ReNew" (3) formally "Soft Technology", and from "The Owner Builder", No. 5 September 1982.

Firstly a composting toilet requires no water thereby avoiding the cost of water/sewerage connection. The Clivus operates without any detectable odour, there are no chemicals involved and few mechanical components to break down.

Secondly, all organic material goes into it - toilet paper, paper towels, grease and fat, leaves and sawdust - these aid the decomposition process by lightening the composting pile to allow air penetration, and by supplying carbon for organisms in the compost to convert nitrogen and other nutrients to

stable forms, and to develop heat to evaporate liquid waste.

Thirdly maintenance is minimal. Clivus Multrum means "sloping compost room" (Swedish) the inclined bottom, internal baffles and air channels control air flow through the organic material. As this material dries, its weight pushes the decomposed matter along the sloping bottom. The vent pipe from the composting chamber extends vertically through the roof to create a constant air flow, ensuring aerobic decomposition.



This is the most important factor in eliminating smell - it uses air and oxygen, as opposed to the anaerobic system which excludes air and produces the well known odour of pit toilets.

Fourthly the Clivus Minimus can be constructed in six man-days for a cost of approximately \$200. (4) Detailed construction plans are available free, and Leigh Davidson (Lismore) is available for phone consultation. He welcomes visitors to his nest of three composting units, all approved by Lismore City Council for use

on multiple occupancy developments.

Finally the type of composting toilet I have referred to in this article, the Clivus Multrum of Swedish origin and its relative the Clivus Minimus, are only two of many possibilities. Two other home built models are the Evans Rotating Drum System, and Farallones Institute Two Hole Composting Privy, detailed plans being available for both of these (Soft Technology No 40 pages 31 - 62). Commercially available models approved by The NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning include the Clivus Multrum, the Rotaloo and Biolet, with costs including installation varying from \$2300 (Biolet) to \$4600 (1993)

I hope this article has provided food for thought and original articles and plans are available for anyone who is interested.

### Further reading:

1. Goodbye To The Flush Toilet. Carol Hopping Stoner 1977 Rodale Press.
2. Evaluation Of Biological Toilets (stage 1) R. Rich CSIRO Div Building Research Highett, Vic. DBR Reprint #853.
3. The Toilet Papers. Sim van de Rym.
4. Composting Toilets You Can Build Yourself. Noel Jeffrey Soft Technology No 40 pages 31-62 ■



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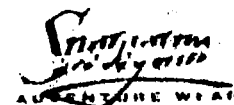
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## A Short Cut Toolong Indeed

By Maurice Smith

We gathered together at Adaminaby in the afternoon of 27 December 1996 after an early departure from Sydney for our six day walk in the Snowy Mountains. Adaminaby was our last real chance to purchase last minute items, including of course, fresh food, as well as ice creams, hot chips and similar essentials. The group who gathered were a mix of walkers from Sydney Bush Walkers and Sutherland Bushwalking Club, as well as two guests.

Upon arrival at the Round Mountain car park we shouldered our packs, heavy with gear that we hoped we would not need, as well as our food for six days. When walking in this area in summer walkers need to be equipped for blizzards as well as the better weather we were hoping to encounter. My pack weighed about 18 kilograms. A few other members of our group had packs that weighed over 20 kilos.

Our first afternoon with our heavy packs saw us have a very close encounter with a snake. After walking for an hour or so we had stopped to have a water break and check out a potential camp site next to a little stream close to the Round Mountain Fire Trail. We were standing around drinking our water and getting to know one another. There was a sudden movement near the bottom of John Griffin's pack, it was a snake sliding over John's boots looking for an exit from among the packs, boots and legs. A very quick scattering of

walkers in every direction gave the snake the room it sought and it slithered off into the bushes. As it went on its way we identified it as a tiger snake.

In the early hours of the next morning we were all woken from our sleep with lots of thunder and lightning. This weather was to be with us, with heavy showers of rain, for our first full day of walking. We were all concerned that this weather was to be an omen of what was to be with us for the walk.

After packing we headed across country on a short cut that was to cut off several kilometres of fire trail walking. The short cut took us through a thick snow gum forest and we "bagged" Mount Toolong in white out conditions. From the top of the mountain we headed north with the intention of hitting the Thiess Village Fire Trail. After walking for some time we seemed to be making little progress on the map. All of the navigators consulted map and compass. Agreement is reached on where we are. Ah, the joys of navigating with a 1:50000 map which is the only map available for the Snowies, instead of the 1:25000 maps we have for most of our NSW national parks. Eventually we hit the trail and we are able to make a good rate of progress. So much for the short cut, as it is now well after 3 pm and we are all quite tired.

Suddenly, from close by I hear traffic sounds. How strange, vehicles aren't allowed off the

sealed road running through the park! A moment later all is revealed. We come around the bend and there is a sealed road in front of us with ordinary traffic on it. A quick consultation of the map tells us that we are further north than we should be, having walked directly across the Thiess Village Fire Trail and not recognised it as such. It doesn't take us long to reach Patons Hut, outside which we pitch our tents, shortly after which a brief but heavy thundery rain shower dampens everything, except the mosquitoes which are very thick.

The following day sees us heading for the Pretty Plain Hut, along the Dargals Fire Trail, the Hellhole Fire Trail (what an interesting name) then Pretty Plain Creek and finally Bulls Head Creek. Along the way we admire the many wild flowers covering the hills as we walk in bright sunshine without any thundery showers we had encountered the previous day. This was my third time along Pretty Plain in five years and it was as beautiful as I remembered it.

The following morning we awoke to frost on our tents and fog in the valley. However, as the sun came over the hill tops the fog and frost quickly disappeared and we were left with another lovely day that was to see us head to Greymare Hut along the Strumbo Fire Trail for some of the way. Lunch along the way saw us on the top of the Grey Mares Range looking out ▷ ◁

across to the Main Range. Several cross country skiers spent time looking seriously across to the Main Range at some snow around the back of Watsons Crag and other nearby locations. Plans were formulated by the skiers as to how to get there within a few weekends for some out of season skiing.

We arrived at Greymare Hut quite early, which gave us plenty of time to look at the abandoned gold mining equipment from the 1930's. The water there was just as cold as the water we had washed in on the previous nights.

The following day was New Year's Eve, our scheduled "lay day". So to work up an appetite for our New Year's Eve party most of us headed over to Valentine Hut and Valentine Falls. Quite a few other walkers were met that day all making for Valentine Hut, the party there may well have

rivalled ours. Upon arriving back at Greymare Hut a table from the hut was taken outside and all manner of party goodies came out from the packs and was placed on the table. The variety and volume of food and drink was quite amazing. Much merriment was had and at 9 pm we celebrated New years Eve (Fijian time) and retired for the night.

Away from the hut on New Year's Day, in bright sunny conditions. Lunch time saw us on the top of Mount Jagungal in perfect conditions. For half the group, this was their first time on the summit, including John and Roger who had cross country skied the Main Range for several decades. After viewing the scenery for quite some time we reluctantly left the peak and continued further north for our last night in the bush.

Again the weather was kind to us on our last day. We woke to find fog in the valleys, however,

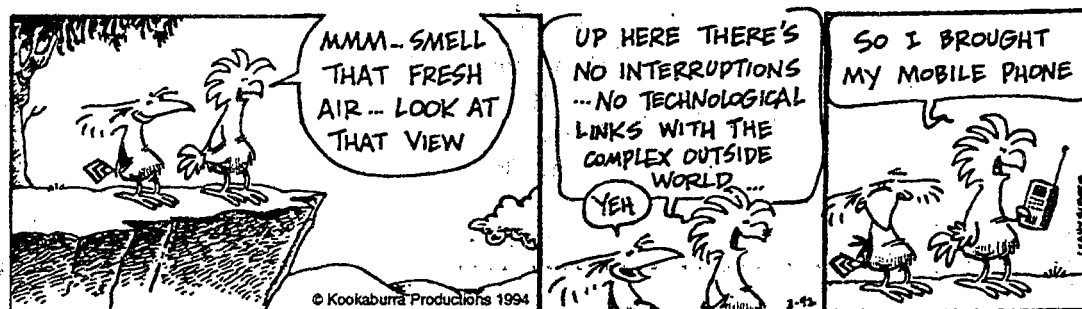
as we had camped high we were able to pack away dry tents and head back to the cars by walking along Farm Ridge Fire Trail. After wading across the Tumut River we then climbed our last hill up to the Round Mountain Hut and then back to the cars for our long drive home.

For me, the highlights of the trip were sitting around the camp fire talking about our past outdoor activities and the personalities we had met, the mostly great weather we had and the joy of the rest of the group on the top of Mount Jagungal.

Party members were - Sydney Bush Walkers: Tony Holgate, Bob Horder, Cathy Nolan, Jan Roberts, Merrilyn Sach, Don Wills. Sutherland Bushwalking Club: John Griffin, Trish Griffin. Both clubs: Nuri Chorvat, Maurice Smith (leader). Guests: Roger Buick and Jill Shanny. ■

## BEYOND THE BLACK STUMP

BY LEAHY & PIPER



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Please, if you're going to bring a mobile phone - as some of us often do - leave it off. Don't leave it switched on for "important business calls" as happened on a walk recently. If they are that important you need to be at your desk to deal with them effectively. Not out in the bush with the birds and the stillness.

(Kaite)

## ETTREMA TRAVERSE - ATTEMPT NO. 3 - OCTOBER 5/6/7 1996

By Oliver Crawford

It was 4.00 p.m. on Friday when the advance party of 5 people in 3 cars met at Tianjarra Falls to begin the car shuffle. The 3 vehicles proceeded to Tullyangela Clearing - one very gingerly around a certain bend, while the driver made a silent thanksgiving. The above manoeuvre was completed by 4.45 by which time a 4th vehicle was expected at Tianjarra and, although a little late, everybody who was expected on Friday night had turned up. So we proceeded in 2 cars to Blaydon's Pass for dinner and camp where we arrived at about 7.30.

Camp was made about 200m along the track in a clump of trees with nice soft ground. As the trees were entered, a distinct rise in temperature (the night being fairly cool) was noted. Everybody made themselves comfortable and having feasted the area soon became quiet as people retired, save the strange rattling sound emerging from one of the temporary shelters.

The morning sun awoke us all around 5.30 a.m. and we were all ready and packed by the time Maureen and David turned up as expected at 8.00 a.m., completing the party of 10.

Much to Maureen's disappointment, we bypassed Blaydon's Pass and continued along the old road, about 2 km easy walking, to a magnificent rock ledge overlooking the Danjera Creek valley. A brief stop allowed for photos, then the escarpment was followed

back to the south for about 100 m to a superb ramp taking us to the bottom of the cliff line. This had been discovered on attempt No. 1 at New Year 1996 when the route had been altered due to a human factor. Time spent on reconnaissance is never wasted!

The descent to the creek was via a beautiful, easy ridge (a little care needed to find the top of the correct one) and once there, morning tea was declared. This was followed by some of the most pleasant, grassy flat walking I've encountered around Sydney, with plenty of shade, an ideal area for a summer gourmet walk.

On a very large flat, halfway along the creek, a rather sleepy and short-sighted wombat (not wearing glasses) was surprised in the open, but he was not about to tolerate Maureen's stealthy approach with camera in hand. A quick retreat into the nearest hole soon put paid to that idea.

So, after enjoying lunch before leaving Danjera Creek, we ascended the desired ridge to Morley Saddle and from there, descended Atkinson Spur to Bundundah Creek, where camp was made on a very pleasant, flat grassy site, with a couple of hours daylight to spare.

Overnight, the weather changed and in the morning there was some doubt as to the wisdom of continuing. The prospect of attempt No. 4 loomed, owing to several problems with one of the

members. However, a consensus (no dictatorship in this group!) was reached that we continue which we did.

As usual with these conditions - i.e. bush bashing in the rain - you become just as wet regardless of weather you wore a raincoat or not. In the vicinity of Paul's Pass, we experienced a really heavy shower but, as luck would have it, we found a very nice cave just above and close to the Dog Leg Cave. Several even thought it was the actual cave, but this was later disproved. Be that as it may and being early, about 10.30, a fire was lit and we spent a good 2 hours there, drying out and eating, and did not leave until after lunch.

The obligatory side trip to Possibility Point was cancelled on the premise that one would not see anything anyhow. Those of the party who wish to see it will have to go again, and choose better weather next time.

Leaving the cave, we descended into a small gully which led us straight onto Paul's Pass, passing the true Dog Leg Cave on the way. The Pass was negotiated with surprising alacrity, each person carrying their own pack through the slot which proved easier than Blaydon's Pass. On a previous trip, we roped the packs down before negotiating the slot, and this obviously took extra time.

And so, along the wombat trail, westward to the top of the correct descending ridge with

yours truly in the navigator's seat (I think it was the correct ridge - anyway it got us down!). By 2.30 we were in Cinch Creek. There were only a couple of incidents on the way down the steep ridge. Apparently our leader displayed great agility in avoiding a bounding boulder just in the nick of time and Maureen magnanimously volunteered as a decoy for the rest of the party by taking on board a rather irritated bull ant which objected to its solitude being disturbed. Maureen repeated this heroic action later at the camp site too.

This left only a slightly swollen creek with slippery rocks to negotiate to the campsite at the junction of Tullyangela and Ettrema Creeks, where we arrived around 4.00 p.m. The time taken included a little exploratory on Ettrema Creek to check out other camp sites. Two were found, nice and flat with soft leafy debris on the ground, but they were under trees which some of the party objected to, being dark and shady.

So, the usual campground was selected. As we approached we saw another party on the banks of Ettrema Creek, which was moving off in the upstream direction. As contact was not made, we can only assume it was the group led by Maurice Smith, but we wondered where he planned to camp as our experience of Ettrema Creek was that the next camp site was at Jones Creek which could not be reached in the remaining daylight. To be sure, there are a few spots which could be classed as emergency sites, but nothing in the class of

Tullyangela or Myall Creek sites.

Anyway, it left our camp site available to us so we took possession for the night. The fire on this occasion was the most reluctant fire I have experienced in a long while. It took about 2 hours before it was near ready for cooking but, of course, when we finished our meals it settled in to be a beautiful fire. During the night those of us who, owing to the relentless march of the years, were unable to get through the night without getting up at least once, adjusted the fire to keep it going so that in the morning we had a great fire as soon as we got up.

On the Monday morning, we were all ready to leave at 7.30 which we did, arriving at the top of Howard's Pass in about 1.5 hours, settling down on a splendid rock with views across to Possibility Point. A leisurely morning tea (at 9.00 a.m.) was taken here and the sun even began to break through.

We left this salubrious point, rather reluctantly, not only because of its beauty, but because we knew we had 6 km of scrub bashing to endure. What must be done must be done however and, following our leader's philosophy, took a straight line bearing right across to Tullyangela Creek for the whole distance. A pause was called when we reached Mother Butles Creek and swam after which, by dint of some meandering, we managed to negotiate a path through the bullet-proof Hakea scrub of the swamp, arriving at Tullyangela Creek at about midday for an early lunch.

From there, it was but a matter of a relatively easy walk up the creek, taking care not to take the wrong branch to the clearing and our faithful steeds where we arrived about 2.30 p.m.

Many thanks to Jungle Jim, our cheerless and fearless leader, whose planning, execution and leadership is second to none.

Party Members: Jim Rivers (leader), David and Maureen Carter, Colin Atkinson, David Trinder, David Hoad (visitor), Tanya Entsies, Alison Clegg, Anna Scimone, and your scribe Oliver Crawford.



#### FOOTNOTE:

It appears that the party led by Maurice Smith did find a good campsite about 1.5 km upstream from the junction of Ettrema and Tullyangela Creeks, on a bend in Ettrema Creek, presumably about G.R. 466295. This one could be useful for a number of walks in the area.

## The December 1996 General Meeting.

By Barry Wallace

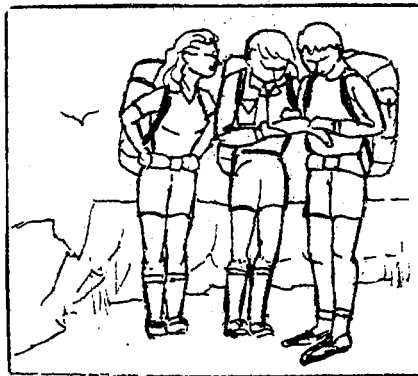
The meeting began at 2009 with around 22 members present and the president in the chair. The bone and gong were initially absent and one was mulling over phrases such as "going to the dogs", "wouldn't have happened in the old days", when the treasurer, who had also spotted the deficiency, brought them along before all lapsed into chaos for the want. The only apology was for a Jan Miller. New members Peter Blackband, Sally Croker, Ron Ellis, Ian Firth, Libby Harrington, Robyn O'Bryan and Nigel Weaver were called for welcome and either responded or no depending on the various tyrannies of time and distance.

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

Correspondence brought letters from NPWS offering copies of their annual report for the special price of only \$15.00 a copy, Eddy Giacomel responding to proposals to restrict other activities on reunion weekends, Total Environment Centre seeking donations, Wilderness Society seeking donations, Shirley Dean regarding the magazine and the 70th Anniversary celebrations, Kenn Clacher regarding the need to replace the club's ropes. We wrote to Careflight, Don Cornell, the administering authority for Kakadu, Kenn Clacher and our new members.

The treasurer's report was next, indicating we started the month with \$6,592, received income of \$1,313, spent \$400, and closed with \$7,505.

The walks reports began at the weekend of 15, 16, 17 November with Tony Maynes' walk to Talaterang Mountain, deferred from the weekend of 26, 27 October. The walk went, with a party of 11, and was described as a good walk. Wilf Hilder's Friday walk in Illawarra SRA went with a party of 5 and no other details. Maurice Smith's Ettrema walk attracted no report but Bill Holland made up for this by providing a fulsome report for his Meryla Pass walk. There were 10 in the party and they were regaled with the story of the stolen packs from a previous walk and were careful to stash their packs in a non obvious location. Life is, after all, a heuristic experience.



Morag Ryder led 5 on her Saturday Neates Glen walk in warm conditions. The pace was brisk and it was a great day. Frank Sander's Berowra to Turramurra walk the same day attracted 6 starters and was described as a pleasant meander. Dick Weston led 5 on his Kanuka Brook walk on the Sunday in hot conditions. There is probably no significance in the fact that the number on Eddy Giacomel's Sunday trip to the Colo from Mountain Lagoon was 13, but in any case the going was scratchy, scrubby and tough. It wasn't all bad, they had several swims and

came out at around 1700. There was no report for Wilf's Stage 14 of the great circumwhatever of Port Jackson.

November 23, 24 saw the cancellation of Ian Debert's gourmet weekend at Danjerra Dam due to lack of gourmands. Kenn Clacher's abseiling weekend was initially transferred from Danae Brook to the Wollonagambe and then cancelled due to a superfluity of waters. Wayne Steele led 4 on his Budawang's walk. It was a great weekend despite high levels in the streams and an abundance of leeches. Tony Mayne's Bundudah/Yalwal Creek walk went with a party of 5. Conditions were cold, windy and a bit wet on the Saturday but Sunday was fine and warm. They reported that NPWS have closed the 4WD track up Yalwal Creek in support of the declaration of this area as wilderness. Bill Holland's Saturday walk on the Benowie track was threatened by bad weather so they stayed with the barbecue at the leader's house. Don Brooks has sustained an injury and could not lead his Cowan to Berowra walk on the Sunday. Frank Sander stepped in as substitute leader and led the party of 13 on the walk in clear, beautiful weather. Errol Sheedy had 8 on his Waterfall to Heathcote walk the same day but there were no other details. Greta James' walk to Junction Rock had 14 starters out on a very hot day. They swam and enjoyed themselves so much they had to come out via Evans Lookout rather than Neates Glen as they had planned.

The following weekend, 30 November, 1 December saw Tony

Holgate's family weekend in Nayook Creek with 17 on the Saturday and 6 on Sunday enjoying a pretty creek with plenty of time to look around. As is sometimes the way with families, there was some disputation as to the exact detail of what went on, but most agreed it was great weekend, and that they came out at around 1530. Greg Bridge's trip in Erskine Creek on the Saturday was subject to no such disputation, there were no details of any kind. Ron Watters led 16 on his walk near Macquarie Pass in a circular fashion such that they emerged at around 1600. Elwyn Morris cancelled her Forestville to Manly Wharf walk.

There was no report for Ian Wolfe's canyon trips over the weekend of 6, 7, 8 December and Patrick James' Kanuka Brook gourmet weekend was cancelled. Possibly those who read the list of who should attend were stricken by ennui and subsided into lachrymose catatonia. On the other hand they may have become so wretched they lay retching quietly in some foreign field that is forever amber. The combined bludge weekend and Christmas party with Mudgee Bushwalkers under Wendy Arnott is an unknown quantity. Tony Maynes led 5 on his Bundeena to Otford via the coast walk on the Saturday after some late cancellations by people who were apparently keeping a close eye on the weather. As it happened they had only one thunderstorm and that in the afternoon. Zol Bodlay had 12 on his Aboriginal Workshop walk that day. Thunder stalked the party throughout the walk, culminating in a very sudden storm late in the day. Jacqui Calandra had 12 on her visit to Pigface Point. Wilf Hilder accomplished the final stage of his circumwhatevering of Port Jackson with the party of 14

enjoying an impromptu feed of sausages at Reef Beach. It seems the locals were celebrating the non nudist status of "their" beach with a public barbecue. Don Brooks was still on the infirm list for his Eloura Bushland walk. In this case Mark Weatherly stepped in and led the party of 9 in cool overcast conditions on what was described as a great day. Bill Holland had 8 at the beginning of his Tuesday walk in the royal bushland but after the lunch swim at the leader's they did muster only 5 to the ticks. A story continues to end the walks reports for the month and indeed the year.



Conservation report covered an inconclusive meeting with Sydney Water Corporation over conditions of use to apply in the shared areas of control in the Blue Mountains National Park. There was also a comment that the type of restrictions appearing in the Kakadu plan of management may come to the Sydney area if plans to cede control of National Parks areas to the traditional owners are implemented. A protest to the federal minister responsible for aircraft carrying out low flying practice in river valleys in one of the southern National Parks has brought only a "we have always

done it we will continue to do it" response. NP&WS are reported to be working to reduce feral pig numbers in the Kanangra Boyd National Park. There was also mention from the floor that the latest plan of management for The Royal includes a "cabin conservation plan" covering the 299 (count 'em) cabins in the park.

Confederation report indicated a delay in resolution of the impasse over risk taking activities in National Parks. It seems that having said one needed permission to engage in risk taking activities, they now quail at the prospect of having to give anyone permission. It was all due to be sorted out by September 1996, but it appears the legal branch of the service has become involved and have begun explaining the sort of hole they may have dug for themselves. One school of thought suggests the whole idea may be scrubbed. Chronic opera scribes note, we saw it first!

The 70th Anniversary committee reported a poor response to survey forms included with some magazines last month. The proximity of Christmas and shortage of forms was cited as a possible cause for the around 10% response rate. (Well, 10% of what you cry. Ask Peter Miller he's running the stats for this operation.) All of this gave rise to debate, and indeed a motion from the floor opposing the wording of the black tie optional statement for the anniversary dinner. After some generally amiable debate it was agreed to lay the motion on the table for future consideration.

From there it was just a matter of general business, general waffle, announcements, and the meeting closed at approximately 2142.