



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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What goes down must come up - A Perry's Lookdown Adventure. by Gail Crichton

It was a lovely day for a walk down to Blue Gum via Pulpit Rock as 19 of us set off from Govetts Leap looking forward to a good day of walking. The views were wonderful as we walked along to Pulpit Rock. Some of the group decided on a side trip to Anvil Rock while the rest of us continued on to start the descent from Perry's Lookdown.

Well the best laid plans can go astray, as we started to get to the steep part of Perry's I suppose my foot didn't like the idea of where I put it and decided to let me know. When I heard a crack I knew I had a problem. I promptly sat down and there I stayed while my fellow walkers went into rescue mode. Firstly, my blood pressure had dropped with the shock of the injury so I was given some glucose lollies which helped greatly to bring my blood pressure back to normal.

In the meantime a couple of the group walked back to alert the others coming from Anvil Rock including Eddy Giacomel who was the Walk Leader. They rushed down to where I was to assess the situation, by this stage I realised that I couldn't walk out. A plan was formulated to get me to the top, but an awkward section made it difficult to move me. So I opted to hop on my good leg with Eddy and Frank Grennan as support up to a better part of the trail.

Once we got further up the trail it was decided that it would be best if I was carried out - a very brave decision and luckily we had a strong band of fellows on this walk. It took about 30 minutes to reach the top where Tony Manes was waiting with his car to take me to the hospital. He had run back a good part of the track and then got a lift for the remainder to our cars at Govetts Leap.

Once Anne Maguire, Tony and I were on our way to Katoomba Hospital the walk resumed. From all accounts a great day was had by all - even with the side trip of a rescue thrown in.

Eddy joked that he would see us at the Parakeet Café for dinner once I had the crutches and plaster put on. Well we were that long at the hospital - 5

hours to be exact that it was 5 pm when we left, so we did go and meet the walkers at the Parakeet - with crutches and plaster cast.

I want to thank every person who was on the walk, as I believe it was a real team effort, from the first moment I was injured to being carried out and then to the hospital.

A special thanks to Anne Maguire who gave up her day to spend with me at the hospital and kept my spirits high. Unfortunately the specialist has told me I am unable to bushwalk for about two months as I have torn ligaments and slight fractures on both sides of my ankle.

To anyone new to bushwalking please don't be put off by this story. Injuries are quite rare in bushwalking, in my six years of walking and canyoning I have only had one other injury.

Thank you for a great effort. It's a good feeling when people pull together and are so supportive for the bad times as well as the good times.

Last month Mouldy Harrison, a member of the SBW for over 40 years died at the age of 88 years. Mouldy Harrison started life as Lawrence Graham Harrison, and was known as Graham until he met up with SBW. In response to saying his name was Graham, someone said, "Graham, gray ham, that's mouldy bacon" and so Lawrence Graham Harrison became Mouldy Harrison.

Mouldy joined SBW in 1928 being introduced to the Club by Rae Page and her late husband Peter. Rae and Peter had met Mouldy (still Graham at that stage) on a ferry when going to Manly for a swim. He mentioned that he wanted to go bushwalking and they recommended their club, the SBW. Mouldy contracted polio as a 4 year old child. Although bedridden for about 18 months with massage 3 or 4 times a week for three years he recovered but was left with a thin and frail physique. On joining the Club he was advised not to undertake too strenuous walks. At times when sure and steady legs were required Mouldy would crawl on his hands and knees. He overcame his handicap by determination, courage and technology; he was able to have special light weight bushwalking gear made to suit.

The Snows of Kilimanjaro: by Peter Freeman,
Part 1 of two parts.

During my research for my African safari holiday in August 1995, I read about climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro and thought "I'll give this a try". Kilimanjaro can be climbed by a number of routes Marangu, Machame, Mweka and Umbwe and it is compulsory to have a guide. The Marangu Route is the most popular route and is generally attempted in five days. Trekkers stay in huts along the route and it can be quite crowded with up to 80 people in the lower huts on any given day. The Mweka and Umbwe routes are not used often. I decided to attempt the Machame Route as the trek was six days, it appeared to be the most scenic route from the guidebooks, you camped and didn't stay in huts and it rarely has more than two groups commencing each day.

"Don't worry, it's up there, not many people see Kili this time of year" said Thobias as I gazed up at the cloud from the window of the crowded bus bumping along the track to Machame village from where I was commencing my trek, hopefully, to the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.

I had met Thobias, my Tanzanian guide, only half an hour before at the bus station along with an English father and son combination, David and Stuart, who were to be my companions on the trek. They had told me their last trek had been Mont. Blanc so I was feeling very much the amateur. To complete my apprehension the samosas that I had eaten the day before were doing their best to evacuate my system.

The bus rattled to a stop in the middle of the village green and at least fifty children formed a large semicircle around us, watching us unloading packs etc. It was at this stage that I noticed all the equipment my companions brought was new, including boots and everything colour co-ordinated, even their water bottles and hats. When I commented on their obviously new and top quality equipment, they announced that they had not slept in a tent before and that all their trekking had involved staying in huts and lodges.

Thobias walked into the group of onlookers and emerged with six older members from the crowd who were introduced as our porters. They sorted our provisions into woven baskets and attached two tents and 10 litres of water to my pack and

strapped David and Stuart's packs together, then hoisted the bundles on to their heads. I thought about the work that went into the ergonomically designed harness on my pack going to waste.

We set off, having received our lunch of a hard boiled egg, two slices of corn bread and a mandarin, passing through rows of mud huts which gave way to banana plantations, while the children followed for about 2 kilometres. The humid 30 degree heat immediately brought profuse perspiration to every member of the party. Thobias was saying "polee polee" (Swahili for slowly) and trying to get us to slow our progress. I thought, "good, he cannot take SBW pace", as he commenced to explain that we had to proceed slowly to help with acclimatisation to the altitudes that we would reach. We slowed to almost a stroll as we reached the gate into Kilimanjaro National Park, which had armed guards. At this point we met up with a party of 23 from the English Territorial Army, who were completing a similar route. "Great", I thought, "I took this route to stay away from the Marangu Route crowds".

From the gate we followed the track through dense moss covered forest, shrouded in mist. As we slowly climbed higher, the track deteriorated to a slippery muddy bog, which reminded me of walking in Tasmania. Stuart was having difficulty with his new boots and, following a lengthy stop, he decided to wear his joggers. The gradient was not steep but it was constant and gradually the forest thinned and the mosses gave way to silvery lichens hanging like stalactites from the trees.

The pace was very slow as Thobias kept up with his "polee polee". The campsite called Machame Hut was reached about five o'clock and we set up camp just in time for the cloud to briefly clear and give us a view of the summit. The three of us fell silent and stood in awe at the sheer magnitude of an almost 6,000 metre peak about 40 kilometres from us.

One of the porters placed a clean checked table cloth on the grass and announced that a cup of tea was to be served. Having just finished the tea, the same porter arrived with fried chicken and potatoes which were delicious albeit extremely oily followed by paw paw for dessert. We had ascended 1,500 metres and covered 13 kilometres in 6 hours of walking. Apart from constant

reminders from my samosas, I climbed into my sleeping bag feeling fit and looking forward to the next day.

After a sound night's sleep I was woken by a porter with a cup of tea at about 6 am. "This is trekking in style" I thought. Breakfast was porridge and paw paw and I was ready to set off about 7.30 am. However, my companions were still eating breakfast, having harassed Thobias into getting hot water for them to wash and shave. I told them cold water wakes you up. They then proceeded to procrastinate over what to wear and what to put in their day packs.

We finally set off at 9.00 am in bright sunshine, and majestic views every way you looked. After a short time the trees and bushes gave way to giant heather and clumps of grass across rocky outcrops. We climbed up a steep rocky ridge until we reached a 5-6 metre wall of rock which, after a quick scramble, led us to a flat area where we met with the Territorial Army again. There we had our lunch of a hard boiled egg, two slices of corn bread and a mandarin with them.

Lunch over, we followed a well formed undulating track towards the Shira Plateau and within a matter of minutes the wind picked up. Clouds from down in the valley enveloped us and the temperature dropped about 15 degrees and rain started to fall. I put on my waterproof gear and hurried to a cave, known as Shira Cave, about a kilometre away. On reaching the cave I was exhausted, my head aching and feeling dizzy and nauseous. When Thobias arrived he looked at me, shook his head and said "polee polee". I now knew the early symptoms of altitude sickness. However, I recovered in about an hour and then it was decided that the weather was not going to improve and that we would camp around the cave.

The cave was quickly filling with smoke from the campfire and David, in his rush to get out, cracked his head on the roof and suffered a deep cut to the top of his head. Stuart, who I found out then was a doctor, assessed the situation and decided the cut needed stitching but we did not have the correct equipment. We remembered the Territorial Army guys had a large first aid kit. Stuart set off to find them, while I erected a fly from one of the tents, made David comfortable and tried to stop the bleeding. Stuart arrived back with another doctor, two nurses and a

photographer who were with the Territorial Army. They also had a dentist and a physiotherapist in their group!! They quickly commenced treatment, anaesthetised the area and inserted five stitches. We then amalgamated some of our medications to provide sufficient pain relief and antibiotics.

During all the action Thobias and the porters just sat in the cave and boiled water. We then realised they had no idea of how to administer first aid and did not carry a first aid kit. Thobias then started asking the doctors for some advice concerning some of the porters. It turned out that one had syphilis and another had an abscess under one of his teeth. Medication was dispensed and then out came the checked table cloth again, laid on the wet ground and tea was served with a dinner of fried chicken and potatoes followed by paw paw. The day amounted to only 6 kilometres and a climb of 850 metres in about 5 hours of walking.

It continued to rain all night and the morning was miserable with strong winds and sleet and a temperature of 5 degrees. I had my breakfast in the cave with the porters while my companions ate in their tent and once again demanded warm water for washing and shaving and similar discussions concerning what to pack and what to wear. We headed off up a broad boulder strewn ridge with visibility limited to about 50 metres and the wind at our backs. After about three hours "polee polee" we had climbed about 800 metres and reached a buttress called the "Wedge". We then descended a muddy scree slope and climbed back up a ridge where we had lunch of a hard boiled egg, two slices of corn bread with jam and a mandarin, in the shelter of a large boulder as the wind continued to howl around us. Stuart and I were suffering slight effects of altitude sickness, headache and dizziness, and this was 4500 metres. How will I feel at almost 6000 metres?

After lunch we descended the steep Great Barranco Valley for approximately 3 hours dropping to 4000 metres where we reached the Barranco Hut campsite. I was feeling much better at the lower altitude but the weather had not improved and the tents were erected on a small muddy flat at the foot of the Barranco Wall, a 200 metre high cliff, which could not be seen through the mist. The now not so clean wet checked cloth made another appearance and we were served scrambled eggs. *More next month.*



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ATTEMPT AT THE HAUTE ROUTE, or GUESS WHO'S COMING FOR DINNER by David Rostron, Part 1 of two parts.

Ian Wolfe's Haute Route Ski Mountaineering trip from Chamonix, France to Saas Fee, Switzerland attracted eight enthusiastic souls who converged on Argentière (10km from Chamonix) on 13/4/97. The trip was to be for 10 days from 17/4/97. We enjoyed a few days of lift skiing before meeting the organiser, Peter Cliff (Scottish mountaineer) and our two guides, Richard and Alan.

A mass of gear - skis, poles, skins, crampons, ski crampons, ice axe, avalanche beeper and harness - was provided for each person. In addition there was rope, first-aid kit, repair kit, tent, shovels, spare skins, etc to be shared.

The first day of reckoning with our guides followed. Some intense skiing, rope, crampon and ice-axe work, resulted in despondency for some and elation for others. At the end of the day, only four of the party were approved as having the technique required, two were doubtful, whilst two were informed they did not have the necessary skills.

There was another day of "training" with the guides. Our party of four "enjoyed" a steep snow climb, a very exposed icy traverse over about 1 to 1-1/2km, climbed another col and then had a very rough descent of about 1200m on more icy, bumpy snow. This was followed by about 4km on a "combat trail" - narrow ski tracks through rocks and trees just above a creek to the small village of Le Buet. Life improved as we sat in the hotel garden enjoying a beer whilst waiting for our train back to Argentière.

That evening we were informed the other guide, Alan, was prepared to set off on the trip with the other two "doubtful" members, but would probably turn back.

The weather had been beautiful and continued for our 8:00am start on the morning of 18/4/97. There was 6cm of new snow on the high tops. Two cablecars took us 2055m to the summit of the Grand Montets at 3295m. A descent of 700m was made on new snow at first and then the usual icy, bumpy surface to the Argentière Glacier. Skins and ski crampons were fitted for the 900m ascent to Col du Chardonay. Shortly after setting off, our guide, Richard, decided crampons and ice-

axes were required, in addition to roping up. When the slope eased it was back to skis and skins.

The altitude took its toll with one of the four, Bill being badly affected. Ray, who had started with the other guide, Alan, was also affected. As a result they both returned to Argentière with Alan, whilst Kenn joined the first party. This was the first of the surprises for the two girls remaining in Argentière - Ray and Bill were back for dinner.

The descent from Col du Chardonay was steep and icy and involved negotiating a bergschrund (large crevasse between mountain and glacier). We abseiled down on 80m of rope and then traversed around to the Saleina Glacier. There was a further ascent of about 250m to the Col d'Orny. This provided access to the Trient Plateau and Glacier. The snow plateau is 3-4km across and rimmed by jagged peaks. It was then about 3:30pm with a slight descent followed by about 100m climb to our destination, the Trient Hut (in Switzerland). There were many photographic stops in an attempt to capture the magic of this area.

The catered Swiss huts we stopped in were similar - accommodation in dormitories for 80-120 with breakfast and dinner (3-4 courses) being provided at a cost of about \$40. The huts were of 2-3 levels, of stone construction and all had a great ambiance. The food was plentiful and excellent but breakfast in most consisted of bread, jam and hot drinks (standard fare for the Swiss and French). In most of the huts water was obtained by melting snow. As a result it was necessary to purchase water for drinks at about \$1.80 per litre. Beer, wine, chocolate and health food bars could be obtained at inflated prices, (the huts are provisioned regularly by helicopters). Some form of salad was provided with the evening meals.

All the huts, including the Trient, have extensive balconies where visitors soak up the afternoon sun. (France and Switzerland had commenced two hours of daylight saving and it was light till about 9:00pm.)

We were away by about 8:00am the following morning for the 1700m descent to Champex. Arising from the problems on the previous day, the repair kit had been left with Bill and it was to be delivered to us in Champex by Peter Cliff.

During the descent of the Trient Glacier, about 10 minutes after leaving the hut, Kenn fell and slid about 25m into a crevasse. He did not respond to calling. Our guide, Richard, set up a ski belay and the 50m rope was lowered. Richard went down about 8m and made verbal contact but could not see Kenn. Fortunately, he had landed on a snowbridge about 20m down. He was able to remove his skis, attach these to his pack and then secure the rope to the bodyharness which we all wore. He was slowly pulled up out of the crevasse.

Kenn was obviously shaken and very quiet, as were the rest of us. Initially there were no apparent injuries, but a rescue helicopter was called by radio. A doctor was lowered and it was decided to take Kenn to hospital - Martigny - in Switzerland. It was later found he had 5 broken ribs, a contusion to one lung and bleeding around the spleen. He remained in hospital for a week.

Ian had organised membership of the French Alpine Club. This included insurance cover for rescue, medical and hospital expenses, otherwise the costs for Kenn could have been in the order of \$8-10,000.

We continued down the glacier, somewhat shaken, and were then faced with about a 50m vertical descent in a steep icy chute, with a bergschrund at the base. This was negotiated by careful side-slipping and stepping. Thankfully this ended the drama for the day and we relaxed on a pleasant ski down a non-glaciated valley to Champex. The organiser, Peter Cliff, met us and after he conferred with Richard, it was decided we should not continue the Haute Route. It was back to Argenti re and we were together again for dinner, minus Kenn. (The girls didn't guess this one!)

More next month.

Weed Infestation: Morton National Park

NP&WS have written to the Club about a current program to eradicate weeds such as lantana from National Parks, particularly in the Nowra district parks. They have requested SBW members to inform them of pest animal and plant occurrences in remote areas that we come across. The contact is Ian Smith of NP&WS: Nowra on 044 239800. Alternatively contact the Walks Secretary or the Conservation Secretary.

Central Australia 1997 – Red or Green?

Central Australia received more rain in the first few weeks of 1997 than in the previous 18 months. Every waterhole filled to the brim. Masses of green growth and wildflowers covered the red sands. Much of that water and many of the flowers remain.

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A WALK IN THE WADGILLIGA NATIONAL PARK by Christine Austin

On a balmy April day, Dave Kelly, (a Canberra friend), Craig and I commenced a week's walk from Tuross Falls via the Brogo and Wadbilliga Rivers. Judy, Dave's wife, was unable to come due to an ankle injury. My efforts to attract some of our old walking friends from the club proved fruitless, so there were just three of us.

From Tuross Cascades camping area, we headed south through open timbered hills to the farming area on the upper Tuross, the Tuross River meandering languidly, as it was very dry. Memories returned of David Rostron's Easter trip in the same area. Was it really twenty years ago? Small wonder that I couldn't identify our campsite. We called in at 'Nadjongbilla', an attractive property, where the cattle stormed past us in a cloud of dust. No-one was at home to ask permission to walk through, so we did anyway. Here a very high bridge had been constructed over the river, so we figured it must rain sometimes.

The many barbed-wire fences through and under which we crawled, reminded me that my tetanus shots were overdue. Oh well, it was too late now! We camped that night by the Tuross upstream of the last farm houses. Once we left the farming country, behind the banks of the Tuross became extremely scrubby, making wading through the river the quickest method of progress. Kydra, in the nearby Kybean range, soon appeared with its mantle of *allocasuarina nana* - beautiful to behold against the vivid blue sky, but horrible to walk through! Again, strong memories emerged of 'nana' on David's long distant trip.

However, we wished to reach the Brogo, so we had to confront the casuarina. Filling our water bottles, we clawed and scratched our way onto the ridge, from where we beheld a magnificent view of Kydra. Smoke haze from nearby burning-off was the only thing to mar this beautiful scene. From the divide we dropped towards an eastern facing ridge where, mercifully, the casuarina stopped. Instead the ridge became extremely rocky, dampening our hopes of reaching the Brogo that night. Upon arriving at a ridge junction, we selected the shorter direct route despite dire forebodings from Dave. On this ridge, the map showed some cliffs, which we hoped were not

significant. They were! Rebuffed, at 5.30 p.m., we retreated to a small shale saddle, the only place on the entire ridge not covered with broken boulders.

Who says you can't be comfortable anywhere in the bush? Sipping our litre of water (from which we managed to make a cup of tea) and eating carrot cake, we reflected that there was nothing wrong with our campsite at all, even if it was a little lonely. Loneliness wasn't the lyrebirds' problem, for the next morning the concert was the best I've ever heard. We couldn't stay long to enjoy it though, for our thirst was increasing. Two hours later, we finally arrived at the Brogo and enjoyed our porridge by its pristine banks.

A relatively easy afternoon followed, rockhopping up the river bed. Craig and I had a swim in a pool guarded by a black snake. A surprising find was a watch and a pair of sunglasses. Had the snake scared the last party so much?

The Brogo boasted some beautiful pools, but the late April sunshine did not produce the warmth to entice us to more swims. Again the need to find a campsite approached. The river banks, when not actually bluffs, consisted mostly of steeply sloping, angular quartzite debris overgrown with vines and scrub. "Which bank is best?" asked one. "Neither, really", replied another. "This side looks rocky, but that side looks worse." It amazes me how debates about campsites take on proportions of major magnitude. However, they are important at the time, and, after thirty minutes of pacing about, we settled on a spot which, after considerable gardening, proved very comfortable.

The next day, Wednesday, there was one tricky rock scramble around vine covered cliffs on the upper Brogo, but largely it was an easy and delightful river to follow. Its clean and clear water bespoke of its pristine source, to which we had now arrived. Loading up with water, we prepared to negotiate the very rocky and scrubby ascent towards Wadbilliga firetrail. It was typical of this area that as soon as the slope eased the undergrowth thickened, in this case mainly low banksia and mallee. Whilst climbing, words like "purgatorial" and "diabolical" rumbled through my mind and thoughts as "Thank goodness X and Y aren't here, or a long friendship would be ending."

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With some relief we finally gained the fire trail, where we had to make a difficult decision - to descend 300 metres down the fire trail to water or to attempt, as planned, to reach the Wadbilliga before dark. The former was chosen and an hour's walk (or hobble, in my case) down the fire trail brought us to our most attractive campsite of the walk - grassy flats under huge gums by a tributary of Back River. There was plenty of refreshing water, even in the drought conditions.

Trying not to think about the climb, we retraced our steps up the fire trail in the morning and arrived at Wadbilliga Trig several hours later. Here the view was again obscured by smoke haze. The descent to the Wadbilliga River convinced us that just occasionally it's nice to have made the correct decision. The banksia surrounding the trig made the nana look almost friendly and the next kilometre took over an hour. We were surveying the spots where we might have stood up for the night, had we made the decision to head to the Wadbilliga the day before. Only when the ridge narrowed to rocky knife-edge did the scrub relent.

After eating lunch by a remote and beautiful creek which flowed close to our ridge, we reached the Wadbilliga at three in the afternoon right at the intended spot. It was great navigating by Craig and Dave. Surrounding us were towering cliffs and huge drops - it appeared we had selected the easiest ridge, although sometimes it didn't seem that way. Like the Brogo, the pristine catchment of this river provided clear water and an interesting variety of vegetation - weed free!

Although the river dropped very sharply at first, rockhopping was easy on rounded granite boulders and there were no bluffs to negotiate. After several hours, the Wadbilliga widened, the banks remained rough and the surface water disappeared. At dusk the last water seen was thirty minutes upstream and still no campsites had appeared. It was obvious that nothing was going to be simple on this trip. Fortunately a pool was found, not flowing but clean, and by removing the larger rocks we cleared two tent sites in a tiny gully. Our thermarests were earning their keep.

The next day was again quite hot and we walked to the junction of Queens Pound River by morning tea. We were somewhat startled by the sound of a

car, but of course we were close to the fire trail which runs between Cooma and Cobargo. We were rather grateful for this road, for the direct climb to Conways Gap through the dense rain forest would have been awful.

At Conways Gap, we chatted to a park worker (the owner of the car we had heard) about their hazard reduction burning programme, which they were undertaking very diligently, judging by the amount of smoke about. He didn't seem very interested when I told him that the smoke had messed up our views.

Our last night was spent on a tributary of Bumberry Creek, another attractive spot. The 'short cut' to this campsite avoided some distance on the firetrail at the cost of another patch of nana to negotiate! From our campsite, we could see it gazing on us malignantly. Dave thought that during the night it might engulf us forever.

A side trip to Tuross Falls Lookout the next morning proved very worthwhile. The gorge was spectacularly rugged and I was grateful that I hadn't been asked on a trip down there. A last small but very determined belt of banksia and casuarina slowed our approach to the Tuross. By lunchtime, we had returned to the cars and ate a hasty lunch of leftovers. We drove to Canberra where a delicious meal provided by Judy completed the trip.

We tested a GPS unit for the first time on this trip. Without instructions we may not have operated it in the optimum manner but our conclusion was that the art of navigation is not yet defunct. The only occasion we obtained an accurate location was at Wadbilliga Trig when we already knew our exact position. In the Brogo and Wadbilliga gorges the errors varied between 400 and 1200 metres. We suspect that maximum accuracy is obtained only when satellites can be located close to the horizon.

The Wadbilliga National Park is a very spectacular and rugged walking area which appears to be rarely visited by the club as we saw no SBW entries in the Wadbilliga Trig log book.

Back from the Brink - Blue Gum Forest and the Grose Wilderness. by Andy Macqueen.

Book Review by Alex Colley.

Andy Macqueen's book is of great interest to S.B.W. members, both because of its well researched and detailed description of the history and features of the Grose Valley and its extensive coverage of S.B.W. activities. It is attractively illustrated with scenic and historic photographs. The book is on four parts, entitled Beginnings, Scenes, Adventure and Cradle of Conservation.

Part I - Beginnings - starts with a description of the geology which is the reason for the landscape. With a little knowledge of the layers of sedimentary rocks which form the Sydney Basin the bushwalker can follow them down the valleys. Further down still are the Silurian rocks formed some 400 million years ago. The landscape and its history is of world significance. It is the basis of Dr. Geoff Mosley's submission *Blue Mountains for World Heritage*. Further geological knowledge is available in the *Layers of time: the Blue Mountains and their geology* by J.W. Pickett and J.D. Alder, which describes in detail features which can be observed at thirty six scenic spots.

Early explorations in the valley, mostly undertaken to find a crossing of the mountains, are described. They all proved too difficult until Blaxland, Lawson and Wentworth followed the divide between the Grose and the Cox. Experienced bushwalkers with modern equipment could have done some of these trips fairly easily, but neither bushwalkers nor bushwalking equipment were about two centuries ago.

Part II - Schemes - describes the many attempts to develop the valley. All failed except one - the Canyon Colliery near the headwaters of the Grose, soon to close. No doubt near these many failures are the reason for the book being entitled *Back from the Brink*. One of the first was what Andy describes as "The Great Railway Foolery." In 1859, in an attempt to find a route for a railway over the mountains, a horse track, known as the "Engineer's Track" was constructed all the way up the river. Although overgrown and in many places destroyed by floods and landslides, the track is still the easiest way to follow the river when you can find it. (A track was constructed up the Colo too

for the same purpose). Ten years later serious consideration was given to a dam for Sydney water supply, but it too proved too hard. Cattlemen and loggers also tried, but the most persistent were the miners, hoping to exploit some thin seams of coal and oil shale. There are numerous exploration adits and even abandoned mines in the upper valley. Then there was the Development Syndicate of 1925, which envisaged a power station which would exploit the Valley's "almost unlimited supply of the best quality coal, enabling the Valley of the Grose to be transformed from a riot of scrubland to a hive of industry."

Part III - Adventure - describes numerous visits, expeditions and bushwalks in the area prior to the formation of the S.B.W. One of these, from Richmond to Blackheath, I led myself in 1927.

Part IV - Cradle of Conservation - This is the part of greatest interest to the S.B.W. It describes in detail not only the Blue Gum Forest Campaign, but the subsequent history of the forest, illustrated with historic photographs. It describes the efforts of the S.B.W. to combat stream bank erosion and the degradation caused by over-usage after the forest was saved from the axe. In 1969 the National Parks and Wildlife Service, with the support of bushwalkers, banned camping in the area.

The saving of Blue Gum Forest was not just the preservation of 40 acres of Blue Gums from the axe. It was the genesis of today's ever growing conservation movement. As Andy Macqueen has written:

The Blue Gum forest campaign came at a time when, flying in the face of preoccupation by authorities for development and settlement, Myles Dunphy and his contemporaries were preparing plans for a vast national park in the Blue Mountains. The campaign was to be the biggest single catalyst for the final appearance of the park. No other event served so well to focus the energy of bushwalkers and other conservationists. No other event provided so much inspiration and impetus. The Blue Gum Forest came to symbolise what could be achieved. Without that symbol Dunphy's endeavours to create national parks - not only in the Blue Mountains but elsewhere - may well have floundered.

Blue Gum Forest, with its inspiring trees and cliff-bound setting, stands as the Cradle of Conservation in New South Wales.

In his second land chapter *Fires, fire trails and wilderness*, Andy reports the nomination of the Grose Wilderness by the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs. If this nomination is approved by the NPWS and accepted by the Government it will mean an end to development threats. It will be a boon to the tourist interests of the Blue Mountains, a gift to the citizens of Sydney, who will have a wilderness just beyond the city, and a boost to World Heritage listing. It will also be a complete answer to the anti-conservation lobby which holds that because an area is not pristine it should be opened to further degradation instead of being restored. There have been a lot of development scars in the valley, but most have been restored by nature and reservation.

The nomination is also a landmark in bushwalker wilderness policy. There was some opposition to the nomination because it involved road and fire trail closures. Andy writes that "To argue that firetrails should remain for our convenience is to abandon wilderness ideals. If we wish to preserve natural bushwalking areas for perpetuity, we must throw away short-sighted attitudes and become wild-centres, not self-centred."

The book is a stimulant to bushwalking in the valley. There was a time when it was a popular bushwalking area. Some of the popular walks were down the Grose, a walk from Faulconbridge to Richmond (one a pattern test walk). Pierces Pass and Victoria Creek. Walks to Blue Gum are still popular, though marred by the loss of the attractive Blue Gum Forest camp site. There is however, a considerable tract of accessible bushwalking country seldom visited. Much of it is readily accessible because of the many tracks constructed in the area. Perhaps access by rail was the reason for the valley's early popularity. Nowadays it is usually necessary to return to cars.

Andy Macqueen's book is available from the Colong Foundation for Wilderness, Gloucester Walk, 88 Cumberland Street, Sydney for \$30 including postage. Geoff Mosley's book is also available for \$15 including postage. Pickett and Alder's booklet is available from The Australian Geologist office 706 Wynyard House, 301 George Street, for \$9.95, or \$12.50 posted.

Eighty Years of Conservation

The Colong Foundation is presenting an exhibition of photographs spanning eighty years of conservation from 1920 to 1997 in September - October this year. The exhibition highlights the work of Alan Rigby, a foundation SBW member and Henry Gold a current member of SBW.

Alan Rigby's artistry lives on; the front cover of *The Sydney Bushwalker*, is one of his drawings and our flannel flower badge is his 1927 design.

Alan was instrumental in starting the campaign to save Blue Gum forest in 1931. A campaign in which SBW and other like minded, pro-conservation groups took up the cudgels and won! The result is the beautiful Blue Gum forest which past, present and future generations of bushwalkers have, do and will enjoy.

In May this year Henry spoke at the Club and showed some of his photographs to a room packed with an appreciative audience. Henry has been photographing the Australian bush since 1955, and his photos have played an important part in the Colong Foundation campaigns. Henry is widely known for his N.S.W. Wilderness Calendar

The exhibition will be held in the Fountain Court, N.S.W. Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney, and will only be open on **weekdays**. Opening dates and times are:

9 am to 5 pm,	22 Sept. to 3 Oct. with
9 pm closing	23, 24 and 25 Sept. only.

A means of encouragement from the Athiests & Agnostics Walking Club, The Prayer of the Tired Bushwalker.

If you pick 'em up O Lord,
I'll put them down.

Sent in by Lorraine, aged 30 something.

For the record, the treasurer has informed the editor that 79% of subscriptions have been received and banked. The message SUBS OVERDUE on your address label is not a headline for Captain Nimo and the Nautilus. It means you have not paid your subscription to the Club. An insert this month gives details. If this applies to YOU, then ACTION THIS DAY.

Our list of presidents as at July 1997; the names and dates are correct but some of the details may need to be updated. If you have information please pass it on to the editor. The last list was 10 years ago in the book *The First Sixty Years*. A lot of these presidents could be at the 70th Anniversary Reunion at Coolana on 11 and 12 October this year, at the dinner on the 17 October, at the picnic at Manly dam on 19 October or at the Nostalgia evening at the club rooms on 22 October. Now if all these presidents contacted their committees and persuaded them all to come to the 70th Anniversary celebrations what a wonderful time we would have. Notable are the holders of the presidential bone of office on multiple occasions : Jack Gentle thrice, Ron Knightly and Don Finch both twice.

	President	start	end details
1	Jack Debert	Feb 1928	Sep 1929 deceased
2	Frank Duncan	Sep. 1929	Mar 1931 deceased
3	Harold Chardon	1931	1932 deceased
4	Cliff Ritson	1932	1934 ?
5	Tom Herbert	1934	1936 deceased
6	Walter Roots	1936	Jul 1936 deceased
7	Maurice Berry	Jul 1936	Mar 1939 deceased 1984
8	Richard Croker	1939	1941 deceased
9	Alex Colley	1941	1942 Honorary Active Member
10	Dorothy Lawer	1942	1944 deceased 1986
11	David Stead	1944	1945 resigned, Lindfield, N.S.W.
12	Edna Garrad	1945	1946 deceased 1996
13	Jack Rose	1946	1947
14	Tom Moppett	1947	1952 Springwood, N.S.W.
15	Malcolm C McGregor	1952	1954 resigned, Mona Vale, N.S.W.
16	Jim Brown	1954	1956 deceased 1996
17	Brian Harvey	1956	1958 Honorary Member
18	Jack Gentle	1958	1960 Honorary Member
19	Ron E Knightly	1960	Jun 1960 active member
18	Jack Gentle	Jun 1960	1961 Honorary Member
20	Bill Rodgers	1961	1963 NSW southern highlands
19	Ron E Knightly	1963	1964 active member
21	Heather Joyce	1964	1965 resigned, in Tasmania
18	Jack Gentle	1965	1966 Honorary Member
22	John White	1966	1967 resigned, in Tasmania
23	Frank Rigby	1967	1969 active member
24	Don Finch	1969	1970 active member
25	Spiro Hajinakitas	1970	1972 Honorary Active Member
26	Bob Younger	1972	1974 Honorary Active Member
27	Barry Wallace	1974	1976 Honorary Active Member
28	Helen Gray	1976	1978 Honorary Active Member
29	Fazeley Read	1978	1980 active member
30	Bob Hodgson	1980	1982 active member
31	Tony Marshall	1982	1984 active member
32	Jim Percy	1984	1985 active member
33	Barbara Bruce	1985	1987 active member
34	Barrie Murdoch	1987	1989 active member
24	Don Finch	1989	1990 active member
35	Bill Holland	1990	1992 Honorary Active Member
36	Ian Debert	1992	1994 active member
37	Greta James	1994	1996 active member
38	Tony Holgate	1996	

CLUB COOLANA by Joan Rigby

With cooler, dryer weather the annual weeds at Coolana are dying back. A very small work party, with brush hooks, rakes and fire, cleared access to a good swimming spot, revealing a couple of good campsites with water views, then started on the slopes below the old road and extended the clearing along most of the rainforest edge. We were proud of our effort. Over the next few months we expect to have most of the area fit for weed control by mowing.

The shrubs and trees planted the previous month were in good condition. Thanks to all who donated to their purchase, and to Fran and Margaret for their selection. The local macropods have sampled a few, mostly those not native to the area. Does this mean we have gourmet kangaroos with a taste for the exotic?

During this winter we should complete the clearing of the accumulated deadfall and rubbish of the past years, so control of weed regrowth and establishment of shrubs and trees will be easier next summer. We are still pitifully short of helpers. The work we do may be hard or fairly easy: there is time to talk and relax as you wish. The regular workers would just like to see some new faces.

We have used all the plant guards donated last month. If you have any more tucked away in your garden shed they would be gratefully received. We have more shrubs to be planted in spring.

Next Coolana maintenance weekend is yet to be decided, possible dates are 30-31 August; 13-14 September; or 8-9 November. Check the walks program, the Sydney Bushwalker or ask.

FOOTNOTES by Patrick James

Our lead article this month by Gail Crighton is another tale of broken bones. Of late we've had a spate of broken and sprained bits and pieces. There does not seem to be any solution as all the accidents have been absolutely "normal". One alternative perhaps is to stay home in bed. But one can conceive of accidents happening in bed.

A couple of years ago Anne Jonquieres joined SBW during her stay in Sydney. Anne is now

back in France and is settled in Nancy, her old stamping ground. She recently wrote to Fran and Bill Holland and passed on her best wishes to the friends she made at SBW. She is fit and well, walking like mad with her walking club, enjoying life in the fast lane and misses Australia, Sydney, our fauna and her SBW friends. Best wishes Anne, write some more.

Our team from the Swiss/French alps have returned in one piece, albeit one skier a little bit damaged in transit, see the Haute Route Dinner Party article this month. Jan and Tony have returned from the west coast of the US of A. In three weeks and 3,200 km of driving on the other side of the road they had no unexpected surprises. In alphabetical order they saw bear, deer, Laffen Peak, sea elephants, sea otter, seals and Yosemite National Park. A travel story awaits us.

This month saw four SBWs head for the mountains of Peru for a couple of months. When they return I'll twist their arms for articles on their travels.

Bookings for the 70th Anniversary dinner have started to roll in. We have a large dining room which needs to be filled with happy members, ex-members and interested parties, people from the present, the past and the long, long ago. You may need to pass on the message. Keep in mind the other 70th Anniversary celebrations: The Reunion at Coolana, the barbeque/picnic at Manly Dam and the nostalgia evening at the clubrooms. The Reunion is for all. If the Reunion was called a Reunion/Union it would be clear that it was for people who had been before plus people attending for their first time. If you know of people who need transport to these once in seventy year events contact the Committee.

Anyone interested in a Three Peaks Walk (or Three Mountains for the purists) over a more leisurely period of 5 to 6 days, somewhere around the dates 29 July to 7 August, contact Dick Weston, 9752 1967 (W) Monday -Thursday; 047 53 1003 (H) till 10.30 pm.

Membership list update: delete Linda Mallett's work number, contact Linda on her home number only.