



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.

Editor: Patrick James

5/2 Hardie Street Neutral Bay 2089

Telephone 9904 1515

Business Manager: Elizabeth Miller

1 The Babette, Castlecrag, 2068

Telephone 9958 7838

Production Manager: Frances Holland

Printers: Kenn Clacher, Tom Wenman,

Barrie Murdoch, Margaret Niven

& Les Powell

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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Elwyn Morris & Louise Verdon

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Jim Callaway & Ken Smith

October 1998

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CLUB UPDATE

A short note to keep you informed and reminded about what is happening. Meetings on the 3rd, 4th and 5th Wednesdays of the month. An important part of these meetings is socialising, renewing friendships, meeting and welcoming new members, planning walks, getting home when its not too late, etc. From now on, to allow time for these other activities, the *formal presentation* part of these meetings will finish by 9 PM. For this to happen it is important that the meetings start punctually at 8 PM. Only the *formal presentation* will finish by 9 PM, the time after 9 PM being for informal activities. This will hopefully encourage members (and prospectives) not to rush home as soon as the formal presentation finishes but to stay for a while, perhaps adjourning to the pub or a cafe. This is not to state that the presentation is not important or interesting, this is making time for social activities which are essential for the club. It also allows the Social Secretary or assistant and whoever else washes up and packs things away to get early away at a reasonable hour.

Due to the visit by Russell Willis on Wednesday 28 October, Bill Capon's presentation will finish a little later. It has not yet been decided if Russell's presentation will be before or after Bill's presentation.

Next Year's Committee and Other Positions

There is a challenge ahead. Next year there will be at least 5 committee members not standing again for their "seats". We thank them for their input over the years and move on to seek replacements. Many of these members have been on the committee for several years, keeping the machinery of the club moving. It is easy to overlook the work done by the committee *and* others until it isn't done - ie. somewhat like electricity in Auckland and Queensland, water in Sydney and gas in Victoria.

There is truth in the rumour circulating in the club that there generally isn't a rush to fill committee positions. The next Annual

General Meeting on Wednesday 10 March 1999 is just over 4 months away. Between now and then we need to find candidates to ensure that there is at least one person standing for each position. We don't have to limit ourselves to one person per position, but we need at least one member standing for each position.

Next month this magazine will publish a list of committee and other positions in the club, detailing what each position entails. However, the time to start thinking about filling these positions is **NOW**. This means **YOU** standing for a position yourself, *or* persuading someone else to stand.

Eddy Giacomel President

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

To vege or not to vege.

I hate to spoil a good story, however I would like to correct some "facts" in Clio's article about Ernie Austin and others in the September *Sydney Bushwalker*, before they become set as gospel in the Club history. I refer to the case of the longevity of Vegos and Carnivores. Frank Duncan's early days had been influenced by his father, who was a pillar of the British Vegetarian Society. While Anice and Frank Duncan were vegetarians in their early days in Australia, they were soon converted by the Carnivores with their Aussie barbecues.

I was brought up in a meat eating family that was partial to "a meat and three veg meal". Remnant tins of Nut Meat and packets of unpalatable dried vegies (dehides) were in the house and on our backs, however it was not all mung beans, as there also was the odd lamb chop or slice of bully beef to be eaten.

Frank Duncan claimed in his latter days that he was a vegetarian but that he also ate meat. He ate meat for most of his life. By living to the age of 93 he outlived his vegetarian father who died in 1946 at the age of 90. So much for statistics. *Barry Duncan* (son of Anice and Frank Duncan, foundation members)

Nepal by Libby Harrington

During October 1997, I joined four other intrepid adventurers on a trek into the Arun Everest Region of Eastern Nepal.

Our first few days were spent discovering the delights of Kathmandu where road rules don't exist and bartering is the norm. Where butcher shops consist of a chopping board and a managerie and beer is cheap. One sleeps at night with the sound of constant horn blowing mingled with the sounds of the drum which is played by anyone who feels like singing and dancing.

There were many Hindu and Buddhist temples to explore but we had serious trekking ahead so after four days we joined our leader and support team consisting of forty porters, sherpas and guides on a TATA bus for a two day, 600 KM journey through the Terai to our trek take off point at Hille (2085m). A slight interruption en route while two buses were disentangled. Why this didn't happen more often is a miracle.

We set off with day packs, dressed in our hi tech gear while the porters carried provisions, cooking equipment, tents etc., for a month, in baskets on their backs which weighed anything from fifty to one hundred kilos, in bare feet!

We followed the Arun River through lowlands of terraced rice paddies and villages where it was possible to purchase tea and tucker, fresh corn or the occasional chicken or sheep, and communicate with families and children with so few material possessions yet still happy with their simple lives. Whenever I sat down to sketch I would be surrounded by the children of the village eager for attention. They taught me to play the drum, sing and dance and I gave them my drawings, a most rewarding experience.

We ascended through rainforests filled with exotic plants and crossed suspension bridges which spanned raging rivers, seizing any opportunity to wash our hair and clothes and bathe in these rivers.

The Arun Valley ascended into slopes amassed with Rhododendrons and Azaleas and temperatures which dropped from 32 degrees to 5 degrees as we reached Shipton La (4,500m), the pass between the Arun and Barun valleys. For all our ascending efforts, we were rewarded with a magnificent view of the Himalaya, the tallest mountains in the world summing above the clouds in a most majestic manner.

The Barun valley is littered with bodies who did not make the journey to these high altitudes and our campsite at Mumbuk (3400m) caused our Hindu guide a sleepless night as he battled with the spirits of the dead.

For the next two days, we continued to ascend through alpine pasture with beautiful mountain scenery. We were fortunate to meet with an Australian expedition, members of which successfully ascended Makalu (8010m) in contrast to a Danish team who earlier had tragically lost one member through altitude sickness. Our team was not without its problems however as from about 4500m several were plagued with headaches and fatigue and various other side effects of high altitude. Rest day at Jark Kharka for some, was spent witnessing the evacuation by helicopter of the Danish climber, for others an insight into village life with a musical retort between the younger members of this small community.

By now the rumble of distant avalanches and afternoon snow storms was the norm and total respect for these awesome mountains was a necessity. However, we were rewarded with many beautiful sunrises and the surrounding vista was majestic as we were encompassed by the snow covered peaks of Pyramid Peak (7168m), Chanlang (6477m) and later Baruntse (7220m) and the south west face of Makalu and an unbelievably blue sky. We traversed the lateral moraine through Makalu and Hilary Base camps to a point two hours walk beyond (5200m) where altitude sickness claimed a few more victims.

Sadly we were unable to cross Sherpani Col and had to return the way we came, probably for the best as the weather deteriorated, -2°C to -14°C and snowing. Sadly, this weather system eventually claimed the lives of several climbers in other areas. We descended one thousand meters through unstable rockfalls back into Rhododendron and Juniper terrain, and once again had to face the pass at Shipton La. As a result of the storm, over a meter of snow fell over Shipton as we slept, one tent collapsed and several damaged and it took us over 10 hours to break trail over the Pass. We also guided six porters from another group, two German trekkers who were lost, a shepherd and pregnant cow and it was with great relief that we reached our campsite much later that night. From a height of 4500 m and clothed in all our ski gear we had descended to our campsite at Tashi Goan (2070m) and changed into shorts! Our wonderful porters struggled to carry their huge loads of up to 80 kilos throughout the night.

Our kitchen team never failed to produce hot washing water, three course meals complete with freshly baked bread, tea and biscuits, regardless of the conditions and usually had all prepared before we entered the camp.

Only three days later we were back at Tumlingtar drinking cold beer while our guide battled with bureaucracy to negotiate a charter flight back to Kathmandu.

We had trekked over 250 KM, lived with a most beautiful and friendly race, enjoyed spontaneous singing and dancing, experienced five star camping with delicious Nepalese food, learnt the art of bartering and showed no fear in traffic. It was with great sadness that we said goodbye to our Nepalese friends.

FOR SALE

"Zamberlain" Ladies Italian Leather Walking Boots with Vibram tread sole. Size: 42

Worn only once. \$120.00

Contact: Robyn on 9482 5471,
after 6.00 p.m.

A VERY SPECIAL INVITATION!

You are invited to join us on a PROSPECTIVES TRAINING WEEK END on **Saturday/Sunday 21 and 22 November** at the Club's property at Coolana in the beautiful Kangaroo Valley.

This weekend offers new members (and old members) practical training in navigation, first aid and bushcraft and as such is strongly recommended by the SBW Management Committee.

It provides an ideal introduction to camping. However, tents and other camping gear are optional as there is a shelter shed and BBQ facilities on site.

SBW members are especially invited to attend to assist with training and join in the social activities around the camp fire on Saturday evening.

Activities start on Saturday morning and transport assistance is available. Please phone:

Bill Holland (h & w) 9484 6636

Patrick James (h & w) 9904 1515

BARLEY WATER

100 grams Pearl Barley

1.5 litres Boiling Water

Grated rind and juice of 1 lemon

6 table spoons of Castor Sugar

Instructions Rinse the pearl barley, put into a jug and pour in the boiling water. Add the lemon rind and lemon juice and sugar and stir thoroughly. Leave to cool then strain into a clean jug or bottle before serving. This drink will keep for up to 5 days in the fridge, but do cover it as barley water easily picks up other flavours.

THE SOUTHERN PORTS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

by Brian Holden

In September 1997 I participated in a cycle tour organised by Bicycle SA called the Southern Ports Ride. I had never been to SA and looked at a map of the area I was to ride in. I saw town names I had never heard of and there were no physical features. I guessed at arid country. What a pleasant surprise I got. It was flat alright, but green with beautiful big gum trees everywhere. The roads were good and almost empty of traffic. As a bonus - Adelaide, my entry and exit point, is a delightful little city.

The ride started at Bordertown from the farm of the tour's leader. As I entered the town I was welcomed by a billboard proudly reminding me that it was the birthplace of Bob Hawke - which did not impress me one little bit. From there we rode to Kybybolite Football Club where the 120 of us were to camp on the playing field. I got there in time to see last quarter of the grand final between the Adelaide Crows and St. Kilda. The place was jumping as the Crows got closer to the win. I told a couple of young guys sucking on tinnies that I had never heard of the Crows and received a look of stunned disbelief. Throughout the tour the catering was done by the local women's group.

Day 2 takes us 110 KM to the Kalangadoo Football Club. There is a theory that riding on the flat is harder than going up and down as there is no change in muscle movements. My bum was so sore - but I refused to hitch a lift in the "Sad Wagon"

Day 3 has us camping at a caravan park at the first of the southern ports - Beachport. The towns are now looking the same with a pub within a cluster of a few shops and a bit of a spread of working class houses. Nevertheless, it was a very nice environment for a holiday which was different. The SA way of life is starting to seep into me by now. Due to their geographical isolation they

are quite parochial - as expected. "You lot from the East have forgotten we exist!"

Day 4 takes us to the Robe Football Club. Robe is a heritage town and the right place to spend day 5 as our rest day. All seems to be in place for a resort except we are looking out towards the Antarctic. Instead of being a top resort, Robe is a place which seems to get a handful of tourists who have been put on the wrong bus.

Day 6 and Kingston is the last southern port where we were to camp - this time at the Educational Centre. My cycling companion and I went straight to the copshop to report a truck which had nearly wiped us out. We fantasised that the driver would get into boiling hot water. It did not go quite that way i.e. "but he didn't hit you, did he? - besides the truckies have got a few complaints in about you guys". Our open mouths and wide eyes must have sent him vibes he had no trouble interpreting. Naturally, we were conceding that this bright young constable was right and we needed to do something about our attitude. He read our faces and smiled sweetly. We shrugged and bid him a pleasant farewell.

Day 7 takes us away from the sea and inland to the Padthaway Football Club. There is a glorious old mansion close by which has on-going winetasting as this is a big wine producing area.

Day 8 and the last day of riding takes us back to Bordertown via historic Mundulla tea rooms and craftshop. This was one of two very welcoming venues along the road which the organisers were able to arrange in advance. They were welcoming because 120 people arriving at once had the potential to bring in dollars. The other was the Lavender Farm where every lavender plant variety in existence is grown and anything to do with the colour and scent of lavender is the theme. What these two enthusiastic small businesses overlooked was that cyclists cannot buy much because they cannot carry it. I felt a bit embarrassed as the spreads laid out for us were generous.

After an hour at the dreadfully boring Bordertown Annual Show (see one and you see them all) we had a big party with hired entertainment on the last night which put a nice finish to what was one of the best holidays of my life. It was a holiday of discovery and having old friends like Margaret Niven and George Mawer along helped a lot.

My companion and I finished off with a couple of days bus touring on Kangaroo Island. The island is the third largest after Tasmania and Melville. There was not much to see in physical features, flora or fauna. The fairy penguins of Kingscote were cute and looked as vulnerable as they have proven to be. One night a stray dog wiped out 45 of them.

The novelty of the place was in the feeling of being cut adrift - even though the mainland was not far away. The bus driver told us that he last went to the mainland 7 years ago, stayed 2 days and could not wait to get back. That sounded a bit over the top but I could appreciate the strong feeling of identification with a place which evolves with continued

isolation in that place. While walking the streets of the substantial town of Kingscote (unless one stopped and thought about it) it was easily overlooked that every piece of every building was shipped in by ferry from the mainland.

South Australia is now within my theatre of operations.

Coming soon "The Northern Sherries of South Australia". Editor

AN EXCEPTIONAL MID WEEK TREAT!

Members with time on their hands, retirees, semi-retirees or those who want to sample the delights of the mid-week activities. Take a break and join us, at

WOMBEAN CAVES

Tuesday 10th to Thursday 12th November
This commences with a bus tour from Mittagong to Old Joadja historical township then on to Wombean Caves where we have reserved accommodation (or camping). The next two days will include walking and optional cave tours. Contact **Bill Holland** 9484 6636 for bookings.

Kimberley Coast Expedition

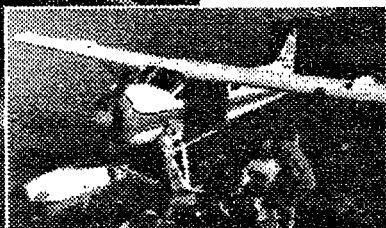
5 Weeks: March - April 1999

Waterfalls, gorges, beautiful pools, Aboriginal art, seaplanes, and boats — this trip has all these and more. If you can't manage the full five weeks, hop on one of the flights which brings in our food drops and you can do any one of the three sections.

A short ad like this can't begin to describe the incredible wilderness through which those who take part will travel.

If you are at all interested in what this land has to offer, you owe it to yourself to ask for the trip notes.

For more information about these trips and the rest of our bushwalking program contact:



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10 days: January 3-12 1999

Do you want to see Kakadu at its lush, green, tropical best without having to worry about camping in the rain?

Would you like to relax in beautiful, natural pools while you soak up the sights and scents of the bush around you? This is the **only** trip any tour operator offers which takes you far of the beaten track by day and brings you back to a comfortable bed at night.

Interested? Ask for the trip notes.

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walkabout@ais.com.au

Phone: (08) 8985 2134

Fax: (08) 8985 2355

What Fascinating Creeches are Leeches by John Poleson

Most bushwalkers regard leeches as distasteful if not downright nasty critters. There is not a lot of popular information about their habits so I decided to do a little research to try and uncover some details of their lifestyle. Close inspection reveals a fascinating and extraordinary group of animals. Let me share my findings with you.

Leeches belong to the huge group of animals called the *Annelids*, or segmented worms. This group includes the earthworms together with many kinds of marine worms including the kinds used by fishers for bait. Leeches however, belong to a very specialised group called *Hirudinea*. This class contains over 500 species of freshwater, marine and terrestrial beasts that we call leeches.

All leeches are divided into 34 segments with a strong sucker at each end of their body. They are very muscular with the mouth located within the front sucker. Australian leeches have two jaws which produce a V shaped incision. Leeches vary in size from about 7 mm to 200mm when extended. The largest species lives in the Amazon and can reach a length of 300 mm. The bitey end of a leech is the small end.

The ones that concern walkers are the land leeches. These have teeth used for biting to obtain blood. Clotting is retarded by the production of a substance called *hirudin*.

Leeches crawl in an inch-worm fashion with only the front and back suckers attached to the substratum. Remember the front end is the small end which contains the mouth. They can only move in one direction as they cannot reverse.

Leeches have highly developed senses and are very responsive to light, heat and body secretions. When a leech attaches to a walker its rear sucker attaches tightly to a suitable area of anatomy and the skin is slit. The jaws move very rapidly making about two slices per second. The bite is anaesthetised by a secretion so the beastie is

usually not discovered until its meal is well underway.

Leeches feed infrequently but when they do they consume an enormous quantity of blood. Some leeches can consume up to 10 times their own weight. Digestion is very slow and they can fast for long periods. Medical leeches have been observed to go without food for 18 months. Leeches may require up to 200 days to digest a meal.

Leeches can survive dry periods by burrowing into the soil where they can completely dry out. Within 15 minutes after rain they can become fully active again.

Following a leech bite, blood may ooze for a considerable period, this is due to the anti-coagulant *hirudin*. Minor infection can occur due to bacteria located in the animal's gut. This is usually minor and can be treated with antiseptic cream. Itching and skin irritation is common. There is not a lot known about leech repellents; the most common being soap, eucalyptus oil, insect repellent and good tights or panty hose. There is no evidence that leeches transmit disease.

Finally, leeches are hermaphrodites and have both male and female sex organs. Mr and Mrs Leech are one and the same person.

Sources of information:

1. Search & Discovery, Australian Museum,
2. Barnes, Robert. *Invertebrate Zoology*,
3. Buchsbaum, Ralph. *Animals without Backbones*.

The correct spelling of creeches is of course kreachers, Editor.

SBW SONG BOOK

The "SBW Song Book" has been printed and is available to members at a cost of \$5-00. Now you can sing around the campfire - no longer lost for words! There have been earlier songbooks, but this version has old songs (from 1930/40 etc.) and new songs (1960/70 etc.). **Price \$5.00** (available in the Clubrooms or add \$1 for postage). Essential for the Reunion.

Bug-Free Drinking Water

How long should you boil water to make it fit to drink? The following are the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for boiling water made in September 1994 on the basis of a contemporary literature review (1, 2). These recommendations have been followed by the New South Wales health authorities in responding to the recent water contamination incidents.

To make water microbiologically safe to drink CDC recommends to bring it to a rolling boil for one minute. This will inactivate all major waterborne bacterial pathogens (for example *Vibrio cholerae*, enterotoxigenic *Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella*, *Shigella sonnei*, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Yersinia enterocolitica* and *Legionella pneumophila*) and water borne protozoa (for example *Cryptosporidium parvum*, *Giardia lamblia* and *Entamoeba histolytica*). It will also be effective for waterborne viral pathogens such as hepatitis A virus, which is considered one of the more heat-resistant viruses. An increase in boiling time to three minutes is recommended if viral pathogens are suspected in drinking water in communities above 2000 metres elevation.

1. Anonymous. Assessment of inadequately filtered public drinking water- Washington, DC, December 1993. MMWR 1994; 43(36), 661-668.
2. Anonymous. Assessment of inadequately filtered public drinking water- Washington, DC, December 1993. JAMA 1994; 272(18), 1401-1402.

The above report has been extracted from Communicable Diseases Intelligence 22(9) September 1999, published by the Family Services Section of the Commonwealth Department of Health. Besides being of assistance should another water quality problem arise in Sydney it will also be of assistance on bushwalks generally and in particular when walking in those parts of the world where water quality is known to be bad. CDC is an American organisation hence the funny spelling.

A WEEKEND ON AN UNUSUAL FARM

by Elwyn Morris
Thirteen club members enjoyed a balmy spring weekend on Robyn O'Bryan's (Fran Holland's sister) biodynamic farm south of Bathurst on September 26 and 27. We walked on a nearby property whose owner had revegetated it with 6,500 native plants, marvelling at the variety of colourful orchids and flowers. Fran found a 19th century clay pipe bowl in an abandoned copper digging. Four cyclists rode the 16km back, while seven explored the 'black dam'. After a convivial evening meal, we retired to tents, rooms and the floor. Next morning we walked round the 300-acre farm, which was as green and lush as Ireland after the rains, and learnt how natives were being planted to hold the soil. The group consisted of Bill and Fran Holland, John and Lyn Poleson, Patrick James, Frank Woodgate, Margaret Niven and George Mawer (on their way to a South Australian cycling trip), Denise Shaw and John Hogan, whose ex-dog went ecstatic on seeing him myself and George. For the Sunday barbecue we were joined by Judy and Colin Barnes from Carcoar. Thank you, Robyn, for a memorable weekend!

"U RELAX 4 WE'LL DRIVE"

You are invited to join me in an exploratory trip in the Gulf Savannah Region of Queensland to Lawn Hill National Park during November 1998

Dates to be decided.

Costs to be shared.

Contact

JOHN HOGAN

(SBW member) on

(07) 4054 2111

or

041 7733 352

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CLUBNIGHT REPORTS

by Elwyn Morris

After five great weeks down the Queensland coast from Cooktown to Brisbane - and not getting left behind on the Outer Reef by Super Cat, who were Super Careful to count everyone - your reporter is back.

ABSEILING Nuri Chorvat brought in a load of abseiling gear and showed slides of training sessions on September 23. In his Confederation safety role, he stressed that wearing some sort of helmet, even a bicycle one, was a good idea in case you or a rock fell on your head.

THE WESTERN USA NATIONAL PARKS Stunning slides of spectacular scenery were shown on September 30 by Geoff Bradley, who was lucky to travel in a comfortable RV (recreational vehicle) as much of it was under snow. Geoff gave us a run-down on how the geology created the landscape, and threw in some history on the Indians and early explorers. He had enough material for two shows - on the north west and south west.

COMING UP:- The October 14 General Meeting will be followed by a short slide show of Tasmania's Walls of Jerusalem by Jan Mohandas.

NEPAL On October 21, Sev Sternhell, who has done seven treks in Nepal and is about to go again, will show slides of the highlights and suggest routes and guides. We are trying a different Indian restaurant, the Shehnai near Milsons Point Station, for the pre-meeting dinner. Book with me on 9955.1827, day or evening. I like their food!

FOR SALE BUSH RETREAT PEACE & QUIET

Your own 137 ACRES of wilderness where you can explore the sandstone caves, the Rylstone pagodas, the wild orchids, the grass trees.

Where you can swim in the deep ¼ acre dam and watch the lyrebirds courting. Spend hours bird watching and frog listening.

The hard work is all done - pyramid solar power, telephone, hot and cold water, wood fire, gas cooker, gas/electric fridge, composter toilet, TV and fruit trees. Even the firewood is cut.

You can let bushwalking become a way of life or a weekend experience only, and still be only 3 hours from Sydney. At the end of the day there is a comfortable and cosy cabin to relax in.

Buildings include cabin, large new steel 2+ car garage and older shed. Excellent water storage with tanks and dam. Bitumen road to the gate, all-weather access driveway. Just 10km from Rylstone, just 10 minutes from the Wollemi.

Have you ever dreamt of owner building your own castle of sandstone, mud brick and ironbark? The raw materials are all here.

This property would suit 1 or 2 people as a home just as it is or with a view to building. There are plans approved already. The property would also suit a family as a weekender, with room to do your own thing and get together at night.

This peaceful environment could be yours for an investment of \$127.1/2K (neg.), but only if you are a very special type of person.

Enquiries to: KAITE MATILDA

Phone: 02 63791 587,

P.O. Box 100, RYLSTONE, NSW. 2849.

THE SIX FOOT TRACK

by Rosemary MacDougal

The Six Foot Track in a day! - you must have rocks in your head. So I have said for many years as this annual event looms before us and people start registering and organising their bookings at Caves House. Well this year the rocks got into my scone and I decided I should find out why so many people have such a good time (or so they have said). For the uninitiated this is a walk across the Blue Mountains from Katoomba to Jenolan Caves - a distance of 43 kms.

After organising the event for many years Jan Mohandus (whose brainwave it was in the first place) handed over the reins to Tony Crichton. Not only does the organiser have to receive registrations from the walkers but he also has to arrange a block booking at Caves House (a feat that deserves a gold medal) and then to gather the support group to provide sustenance along the way and take out the dead bodies or parts thereof.

The starting time was 6.30 AM at the Explorers Tree at Katoomba. On leaving Sydney at 4.30 AM it was 20 degrees but thankfully it was much cooler by the start of the walk. There were 23 starters which unfortunately excluded Tony because he had a bout of Giardia (is that how you spell it) and was not at all well. He was however able to join the support team. It seems he failed to adhere to all warnings to clean his teeth in scotch!

As we set off down Nellies Glen light rain began to fall causing the temperature to drop a bit further. It made for very pleasant walking. Our first stop was at Megalong Road where our support team had set up morning tea under a hastily erected gunya. Juices of all varieties were available together with home made cakes.

The next section was going to be the hardest because after crossing the Cox River we had two climbs. The river after the recent rain

was quite full and flowing swiftly. The sensible people took the bridge; others including myself led by Frank Grennan decided we should cross at the traditional spot down river and just below where everybody regroups before the climb. The water was waist high although I found myself falling into a rather large hole which fortunately did not cause me to disappear altogether.

At the top of the second climb where one reaches what is known as the pluviometer was one of the most wonderful sights I have seen; it was the support team with cups of hot soup, tea, coffee and more of those wonderful home made cakes. They had built a roaring fire which kept us warm while partaking of lunch and these lovely goodies.

From there the walk was pretty easy with a chance to talk and catch up with everybody's news; in some cases the world's problems (I think) were resolved.

Afternoon tea was at the pine forest on the road into Jenolan Caves and thereafter it was down hill all the way (well most of the way).

I finished at 4.30 PM somewhere in the middle of the group and feeling very pleased with my achievement.

Our night at Caves House was a lot fun and a great opportunity to compare notes.

Thank you Tony for a terrific day and thank Margaret Niven who has organised the support team every year and all the others without whom this annual trip could not be done.

PS Two weeks later I completed the double whammy and did the K to K - now there's another story about rocks in one's head. Not mine of course!

FOOTNOTES by Patrick James

The 71st Annual Reunion is nigh. On the weekend of 31 October-1 November at Coolana. Members active, inactive, non-active, honorary and prospective, their spouses, partners, children and parents (as the case may be) are invited, charged, perhaps even commanded to attend. There is/are oodles of room to camp in the park-like beauty of Coolana. Litres of water fit to drink. Hectares of bush through which to walk.

The usual program of events is to arrive on the Saturday at about morning tea time, meet, walk and talk till dinner time, happy hour starts sometime after afternoon tea and finishes sometime around dinner time. *When the sun goes down and the tide goes out, people gather round* and the entertainment begins. See the president become invested by being decked with the bones of office, enjoy campfire entertainment, feast on early Christmas cake, spinach pie, Greek coffee and/or hot Milo. Bring your SBW Songbook, or buy one there. You'll need a torch to light you page for the singing and perhaps something to lubricate your vocal cords (Chords?). Bring flour for the damper making competition on Sunday morning. Dampers can be entered in the open, seniors and children's competition. Of course the judges' decision is final and you can eat your own entry.

Spring Cleaning. Spring I is here, together with the birds, and bees, and blossoms and high pollen count. Now I is the time to clean your bushwalking gear. Everything can be washed, except perhaps your compass and maps. Packs can be scrubbed, sprayed with pre-wash and hit with a hose. Sleeping bags can also be washed. Take care and follow the washing instructions. You can buy special sleeping bag detergent from the usual shops. I have found that plain hair shampoo is quite effective. It also a good time to check out the first aid kit: replace the missing items, check the use-by-date of any

pharmaceuticals you may carry, enrol in a first aid course.

The new plastic billy announced last month; non-stick, rust free and aluminium free. Passed all its field trials except one. It was found to be significantly lighter than both steel and aluminium billies, 100% non-stick and with no contamination of iron or aluminium. The test for both iron and aluminium is to store stewed rhubarb in the container for 48 hours at room temperature and then test the rhubarb for any leached out iron and aluminium. The revolutionary billy was found to char, burn and disintegrate when tested in a moderate heat wood fire.

Wednesday 28 October Special

SPECIAL TREAT FOR ALL

Russell Willis of Willis's Walkabout in Darwin has flown into Sydney for a lightning visit and will give a short presentation at the club on Wednesday 28 October. Your chance to meet this peripatetic Darwinian who turned a hobby into a business. Get inside information about forthcoming Willis walking trips. Hear stories of sunken treasure off the coast of Broom, little known valleys where diamonds sparkle in the sunlight and the lost kingdom of the Olgas led by a group of blond Amazonian princesses.

**AND THERE'S MORE
THE THREE TENORS SING THE BLUES**

A presentation by Bill Capon, Don Matthews and David Rostron on the Blue Breaks. These smooth, sophisticated raconteurs and leaders of international repute will have you enthralled with this epic story of high adventure, romance and true love along crocodile infested rivers and fever ridden swamps to the ancient, forgotten temples in the wilderness between Warragamba Dam and Yerranderie. Relive the joys, sorrows and triumphs of Bill and his team of trusty companions and loyal porters.