



**all nations**  
BUSHWALKERS INC



**Autumn Newsletter**  
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PO Box Q23 Queen Victoria Building  
NSW 1230  
[www.bushwalking.org.au/~allnations](http://www.bushwalking.org.au/~allnations)



NEWSLETTER OF ALL NATIONS BUSHWALKERS INC • FORMERLY A/N C BUSHWALKERS INC & ALL NATIONS CLUB WALKABOUT GROUP • FOUNDED 1962 • INCORPORATED 1992

## Trekking The Everest Highway

by Alison Lyon

October – November 2007



5545 metres, that was the height I was aiming for when I set off towards Everest Base Camp in Nepal.

After what seemed like months of planning and preparation I was finally boarding the plane at Sydney airport en route to Kathmandu. Flight scheduling meant I had to spend a night at the new Novotel hotel, Bangkok airport. Upon arrival at this luxurious establishment I made the most of facilities it had to offer. This turned out to be a wise decision as the luxuries were soon to cease.

The following morning I met up with my travelling partner, Michelle in line at check-in. Feeling excited, but also nervous, as I am not a fan of travelling in vehicles over which I have no control, we boarded the plane to Kathmandu. My fear of flying subsided dramatically when we sighted the peaks of the Himalayas (including Everest (8848m)), poking their summits through the clouds.

Kathmandu was a bustling, chaotic and very polluted city. Nothing like I imagined, bearing in mind the clear air of the mountains so close by. The Radisson hotel was an oasis in a city of noise and smells! Michelle, and I agreed to venture outside this calm and explore what the city had to offer (that is after a quick couple of Happy Hour cocktails each in the bar!). About 100 metres from our hotel we attempted to cross the road; after 3 tries involving lots of screaming, swearing and laughter a local passer by came to our aid. Like many cities on the Indian continent there does not



*Great view!*

*Mount Everest from Kala Patar summit*

seem to be any regard for road rules or etiquette, red traffic lights did nothing... just lots of beeping of horns and swerving around obstacles that get in the way, including the odd cow! We made it as far as Thamel, a shopper's paradise. We discovered that everything required for our trek could be purchased here at far lesser a price than in Australia. However to purchase equipment here would have been extremely time consuming given the amount of bartering that is required. We returned to our oasis with a few essential supplies (chocolate, drinking water and more chocolate!).

The remainder of our trekking group had not yet arrived so the following day we decided to brave the traffic again and Michelle negotiated the hire of a taxi to take us to Bhaktapur. Bhaktapur is a World Heritage site, known as the Ancient City of Culture. A walled city from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, devoid of cars but filled with temples, monuments and alleyways where local craftsmen create their wares. After Michelle had fallen in love with a Buddhist monk we decided to move on back to our friendly taxi driver who had waited for our return in order to deposit us back at the hotel and the delights of happy hour.

That evening we met our trek guide Ang Tschering Sherpa and the remainder of our trekking group. In all there were 15 of us, from the UK, Australia and 1 from Hong Kong. During our pre-trek briefing I became a little nervous about what seemed like a competitive bunch, as there was a debate over what percentage of us was actually going to make it to Base Camp.

Along the trek I got to know my travelling companions quite well. Sharing a small hole in the ground, there is no choice! I was interested in the varying reasons as to why different people would want to undertake such a challenge. There was the couple from Adelaide in their 60's who'd had the dream since their previous trip to Nepal. Peter from Scotland was raising money for a children's hospital where his 4 year old daughter had been treated for cancer. 2 men were from England raising money for a children's charity, one of whom said he would one day actually tackle the climb up to the summit...or maybe that was just his 'chat-up line'. It put my reasons into insignificance in comparison; I just wanted to have a look! Of course I wanted the challenge too, I'm at my happiest in the mountains or by the water. I've always, like so many others had a fascination for the biggest mountain of all.

*Continued next page*



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*Another newsletter, another program and lots of things for us all to do. Speaking of which, we are always looking for more people to put more events on the program. While this program is now in place, I would like you all to think of something you can put on the next program. It could be a social night out, a walk, a bike ride, a movie or anything else that you and others may be interested in. If you've never done it before, don't worry, we will help you out.*

*We also have our AGM coming up and I'd also like you to think of nominating for a position on your committee. We will have a number of vacancies this year so it is important to get some new people on the committee. It is not very onerous and is a good way of socializing with some of your fellow club members.*

*We may also have a special presentation by the BWRS at the AGM, so be sure to mark the date in your diary and come along. It promises to be an interesting day.*

*Liam Heery*

## Social

### The Music Man ( 76 trombones ) Friday 16 November 2007

A day and a show to remember

I took a gamble and ordered 6 tickets to my theatre outing, then lost my ticket list and unsold tickets. All was resolved when I was able to find out which seats I had bought from the ticket office and I had 2 empty seats.

When I thought nothing else could go wrong I arrived at 'Aspects of Asia' restaurant to find it had changed its name to 'Fortune House'. Eventually we all found our way there so all was well.

#### On with the show ...

In the first scene a group of travelling salesmen all in one coach together, chanting and singing to the rhythm of the train, gave an inkling of excellence to come and we were not disappointed. Gavin Owen as "Professor" Harold Hill, travelling con-artist, posing as music expert who sells band equipment, uniforms and highly priced music books, gave an outstanding performance as a song and dance man/comedian. He sets out to woo the beautifully voiced leading lady Samantha Maddison as hilarious Marian Paroo. A cast of 21 actors supported by a chorus of 17 ladies and 2 men plus an orchestra of nine made it a memorable night. For the first time the principals were fitted with head microphones which gave us a clarity of voices in a hall not noted for its acoustic qualities when packed out with performers and an audience.

Thanks to Eileen Ross, Sharyn Mattern and Carol Cox who came along and enjoyed this wonderful production. One would have liked to hear and watch a repeat rendition of '76 Trombones' by Gavin Owen. The next show is 'Carousel' in May/June 2008 so don't miss out.

**Peter Bonner**

Our first day together was spent sightseeing in the city of Kathmandu. We visited the Hindu and Buddhist temples, watched cremations by the river and were entertained by professional holy-men. That evening we packed our bags for the trek and then went to a local Nepalese restaurant to enjoy a little wine and dancing.

Lukla (2800m), the village at the start of the trek, was a 45 minute flight from Kathmandu, described as "thrilling" in the brochure! We were to leave our hotel at 4am to catch the early flight, however due to poor visibility in both Kathmandu and Lukla we were delayed by 4 hours. As you can imagine Kathmandu airport was devoid of any distractions and comfortable chairs, however I was relieved when I realised how "thrilling" the flight was that we had not risked setting off any sooner. You would have to be a good pilot to negotiate the mountains of the Himalayas and then land the plane on a 400m long runway sloping up a mountain.

Well I won't bore you with all the details of the trail. With days of 6-8 hours walking each day, the trek to Everest was definitely as spectacular as I had imagined it would be. At the beginning of the trek are massive green valleys, rising from icy blue rivers hundreds of metres below...the further along the trek we got everything became bigger and higher, eventually leaving the trees behind. It's very hard to imagine how big these mountains are without seeing them for yourself; photographs do not do them justice.



*Encounter with a Yak*

We passed through forests, farmland, through Sherpa villages. We visited monasteries (one of which contained a Yeti Skull) and the Edmund Hillary School in Khumjung. We had encounters with Yaks and Dzopko (pronounced 'job-queue', a cross between a cow and a yak); we passed by memorials to those climbers who have died on Everest. The track was generally easy to negotiate, with a few hair-raising points being the high suspension bridges and the walk along the Khumbu glacier, where there were avalanches to our left and rockfalls to our right!

On the first few days of the trek we encountered the Dudhi Kosi (Milk River), a raging torrent of water, white in colour hence the name. We passed through pine forests and terraced fields containing crops of potatoes, cabbages and corn.

Day 3 and we headed towards Namche Bazaar; we were warned the night before to carry as little as possible as this would be a hard day: it certainly was! With what seemed to a never-ending uphill climb, we sounded like a group of elderly people suffering from a bad case of emphysema! The air was certainly becoming thinner. The climb was well worth the effort for we got our first sighting of our ultimate goal, Everest...as I walked around the hill and saw the mountain I stopped in my tracks, only just remembering my camera!

We passed through the gates of Sagarmatha (Everest) National Park, signed in under the watchful eye of rangers.

Namche at 3440m is a bustling market town, dependant on trading with visitors and locals alike, a great place to browse the Tibetan craft stalls and Sherpa owned shops. Also, we were informed, the last place where we could buy supplies of chocolates, toilet rolls and so on before prices would increase exponentially the closer we got to Everest.

Overnight we had our first victim to the altitude. Our fellow trekker described it as feeling like he was suffocating; panicking that there was no oxygen to breathe! Ang administered the antidote Diamox... it helps you breathe a little deeper and gets the oxygen around your system.

We spent a day acclimatising in Namche, those of us that were able took the 2 optional walks up to the Sagarmatha National Park HQ to see the sunrise and later the Everest View Hotel (3790m), to see the great views of Mount Everest and Ama Dablan (6856m).

Another 430 metres in altitude and we reached Tengboche where we camped outside the monastery, alongside a few Yaks! The monastery (which was recently rebuilt with assistance from Sir Edmund Hillary after most of it, was destroyed by fire) is an important place for those planning on attempting to climb to the summit of Mount Everest, as the monks will pray to the goddess of the mountain and request safe passage.

That evening our Sherpa guides handed around extra sleeping bags as the nights were becoming colder the higher we climbed. This was confirmed the next morning when we woke to find that our towels had frozen solid on the lines outside!

As we walked along the trail not only was I in awe of Mount Everest, I also fell in love with Ama Dablan, which is described as one of the most beautiful mountains of the Himalayas, hence the reason I have just as many photos of this as I do Everest.

Two days after Namche was another acclimatisation day this time at Dingboche (4360m). Unfortunately more and more of our group were succumbing to the effects of altitude; major headaches, nausea and vomiting. Fortunately for me I was fine, just a little snuffle. Those of us that were able took the walk up the hill to get a better view of the surrounding mountains.

After leaving one of our teammates behind, too sick now with the altitude, we walked on, now travelling well above the treeline. We passed a huge memorial area full of rock cairns dedicated to those who had lost their lives on the mountains. Our aim now was to reach Gorak Shep (5288m) our base camp for the assault on Kala Patar and Everest Base Camp. With views of Everest becoming bigger and better we were able to identify the routes that summiteers would attempt to get to the peak.



*Great place to pitch a tent  
Ama Dablan in background*

I spent most of my time thinking of those people who have attempted the climb, in awe of their physical and mental stamina, knowing now what was required to do the relatively short trek to Everest Base Camp.

The ascent of Kala Patar (5545m) was definitely a test of fitness and endurance. Two of our group decided to conserve energy for the walk to Base Camp, the effects of altitude and exhaustion too much. Kala Patar is basically a small black rocky mountain, the summit of which gives great views of the South face of Everest, the most popular climbing route. At this height conversation was brief as concentrating on getting oxygen into our lungs became the main focus.

The day walk to Base Camp (around 5360m) was definitely one of the most spectacular. The walk is along the Khumbu glacier. I had never seen such a vast piece of ice and snow, with such close up views of crevasses, lakes, ice pillars and caves. It was easy to see how somebody could be lost down in the depths of a glacier. It was a moving trail and I was a little scared by the rockfalls that were happening on my left and the avalanches to my right. There were



*"Made it!" Everest Base Camp*

little opportunities for rest as our Sherpa guides hurried us along the glacier, stating it was not safe to sit.

A banner announcing the first Thai expedition marked Everest Base Camp. There was a village of tents and large satellite dishes. I got out the binoculars and spotted a couple of climbers on the Khumbu Icefall, the first real climb on Everest and probably one of the most dangerous stages. Following lunch and a celebratory glug of brandy, we returned the way we came.

Twelve out of the Fifteen had made it all the way, some with the assistance of Diamox; I think most were happy with their achievement. Some vowed that never again would they take such a trip... Club Med being the obvious alternative!

The walk back to Lukla was certainly hard, but became easier as the air got thicker and oxygen was more readily available. The route was not exactly the one we had climbed, so we were able to experience more variety in the scenery. The trekker we left in Dingboche, we met again in Orsho, however by the time we reached Khumjung it was evident she would not manage the walk back to Lukla. She was airlifted via helicopter back to Kathmandu.

It was sad having to leave my new friends in Kathmandu: we had shared an amazing experience together. We finished off by having a few celebratory meals and drinks before we departed and have since swapped numerous emails and photos.

My next trip will be to tackle a mountain (maybe half the size of Everest!) and learn a few of those alpine climbing skills, just to get some idea of what it would be like and of course to set myself a new challenge. Namaste! Good Day! Until the next adventure...

# WALK REPORTS

## Socialgaine Port Stephens

17-18 November 2007 Leader: Charles Bowden

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A sunny day made light work of the 2-hour drive up to Port Stephens to the One Mile Beach Holiday Park where we planned to spend the night. We weren't sure what to expect but the Holiday Park lived up to its advertising, situated in the lee of large sand dunes with the beach just 25 metres away.

Shadecloth matting was spread over the sites where we pitched our tents to protect the ground vegetation and a variety of tents in all manner of shapes & sizes soon sprouted. Richard's pavilion was much admired, especially when it transpired that it only cost \$20: what a bargain!

Soon after, we located a nearby kiosk that sold ice-cream and quickly depleted their stock as we triumphantly slurped and licked our way to the beach. More timid souls were content to bask in the late afternoon rays while the adventurous attempted to body-surf in the refreshing water. A kite surfer accelerating effortlessly across the waves provided a welcome distraction.

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## Meryla Pass to Lake Yarrunga Morton National Park

Sunday 25 November 2007 Leader: Charles Bowden

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Ten of us packed into two cars arrived at Meryla Pass after the 2+ hour trip from Sydney via Moss Vale. Little now remains of Meryla farm, which gave its name to a number of features in the region, except a stock dam choked with reeds with cleared ground beyond gradually being reclaimed by the bush. However it still features spectacular views across the valley to Mt Carrialoo and Mt Moollattoo.

Initially taking the fire trail leading to Griffin's Farm, we turned off onto a disused fire trail leading to Lake Yarrunga, a man-made dam. This used to be a popular route to the lake's edge but the track has evidently been left to "regenerate" judging by the fallen trees, creek washouts and eroded edges.

About 1 km in, we turned off onto a narrow overgrown track that leads to the remains of yet another ancient farm holding near Wombat Hill. Little now remains of this homestead except crumbling dry stone walls, painstakingly built by hand more than a century ago. Instead golden orb spiders have taken over the surrounding land, as evidenced by the webs we were continually brushing aside.

The track became increasingly difficult to follow and ultimately I lost it. Finding ourselves on the eastern side of Wombat Hill heading back north instead of south, I attempted to retrace our steps without success. So the exploratory part of the walk began, only this time it was in order to negotiate an eastern descent down a spur, following one of the many gullies that lead into the lake and, more importantly, that lower down cross the fire trail we had left earlier.

An arduous bush bash through thick scrub on a steep slope ensued and it took us over an hour to travel the 500 metres to the trail. In the process we discovered that two species of leech infested the area which prompted a thorough search for these

Dinner was held at a pub in Nelson Bay whose extensive menu was somewhat marred by the disconcerting discovery that the kitchen closed at 8:30 on a Saturday night! Dessert was therefore deferred until we located a suitable café looking out over the marina before heading back to our tents.

During the night, fearsome growls and bellows woke us up as the local bunyip stalked the camp. In the morning we discovered the source of the racket: a territorial male koala found fast asleep in the fork of a nearby tree.

Having completed registration formalities, the two ANB teams (5 in each team) set about planning their respective routes. Team 2 decided to head west up to Soldier's Point and back whereas Team 1 opted for a south-east circuit, hoping to find a coastal establishment offering morning coffee. Unfortunately this much anticipated oasis never materialised and caffeine withdrawal no doubt contributed to a later error of judgment in tackling an overgrown hill which cost them dearly in time and energy.

Team 2 eventually finished with a meritorious 530 points while Team 1, ably led by David Perkins, scored a mighty 710 points. Congratulations to Alison Lyon, Len Sharp, Wayne Lee, Michael Thompson, Gillian Perkins, Margaret Weiss, Richard Milnes and Trish Gorrington for completing the course and gaining in experience, especially those for whom this was their first rogaine.

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unwelcome hitchhikers when we reached the lake. Several of us took to the lake's cool and refreshing water for a surreal swim among the dead trees marking the drowned valley where the dam was built.

As we wended our way back up the fire trail, large clouds began to settle over the escarpment above us. At one point, a large wombat was spotted on the track but, startled at our approach, it quickly lumbered off into the bush. Shortly after we reached the cars and headed off to Mittagong for a recovery meal.



*Lake Yarrunga*

Thank you to a stoic Mark Rea for taking his car along the bumpy dirt roads leading to our launching point. And thank you to Faye Xu, Pan Wen Jun, Moon Yong, Jenny McCallan, Alison Lyon, Jasmin Tan, Alex Loo and Fanny Wong for not complaining too much when their walk leader lost the way.

**I shall return for another attempt to find the elusive trail from Wombat Hill to Lake Yarrunga: be prepared!**

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# FEATURE

## Atlantic Crossing November - December 2007 by Liam Heery



After 33 hours flying from Sydney through London and Madrid I arrived at Las Palmas airport expecting to be picked up by a local taxi driver organized by my brother. With no Spanish and my mind mushy from no sleep I eventually figured out that I was on my own. I grabbed a cab and in sign language told him I needed to go to the marina. Luckily my brother called and told me where the boat was moored, otherwise I'd probably still be walking around the hundreds of yachts looking for the one I was to spend the next three weeks on.

Over the next 5 days I was to meet the rest of the crew, who arrived at different stages. Of the six of us, I knew my brother but no one else. They however had all sailed together numerous times.

I was the official "gofer" walking up and down to the main shopping areas doing 10 to 15kms a day as I kept returning only to be told "oh I forgot to tell you to get xxx" or "that shackle doesn't fit, I need xxx"!!!

I also had to help provision the boat for 3 weeks, for 6 people, plus one week's emergency food. That's a lot of shopping trolleys that had to be filled. Our fresh meat was diced, vacuum packed and then frozen, so as to make it last longer (no refrigeration on board). Then every item of food had to be taken out of its packaging and re-packed and individually washed, so as not to bring on board any fungus or creepy crawlies.



It seemed like weeks of preparation (even cutting up emergency storm boards for each window in case they got blown out in a storm) but eventually we were on the start line and off. Racing down the east coast of the Canaries we passed a number of "acceleration zones" where wind speeds are doubled in strength due to funneling from the islands and can go from 25 to 50 knots without warning!!

We almost broached when hit by a strong wind in one of these zones and that was the last time we used our spinnaker for the rest of the trip.

Day turned into night and at daybreak we were on our own, out of sight of land and no other boats in sight. It's amazing how 240 yachts can disappear in the open ocean!

We got into the hang of our watch-keeping system of three hours on watch split between 3 teams of 2, between 8pm and 8am. During the day we all pitched in and slept or alternatively had one of three daytime jobs to do (cooking, housekeeping and maintenance). I was also responsible for making sure the engine would start when and if we needed it, keeping track of where we were, how far we had travelled and how far we had still left to go, together with keeping time (we had four time changes during the crossing).

The first week went very quickly as we all felt rushed off our feet with heaps of things and jobs to do. The second week we had the

hang of things and everything was working well, so when we were sucked into the outer extremities of a generating hurricane we were not too worried and were able to handle everything that was thrown at us. This included 3 to 4 storey high waves, blinding rain and wind speeds up to 50 knots (100km / hr). The boat handled it all very well but alas our two jib poles could not withstand the force of the wind and within a few hours of each other they had snapped in half. A window also got blown in and a wave of water cascaded over the navigation station electronics, interrupting our communication with the outside world for days. Minor leaks also played havoc with the electrics and were a constant drain on our batteries.

After a few days of this weather we were into our third and last week and were now humming along with the end in sight. Impatience was getting the better of us and throwing caution to the winds we all had sea showers. Tying ourselves to the back of the boat we used buckets to throw sea water over ourselves to wash away the grime and smells of the past two weeks... the stench must have been enough to force fish out of water as we started getting flying fish landing on deck. We also had a killer whale come up to the boat at 3am in the morning to take a breath and make a 90 degree turn just before he ran into our broadside.

We were able to supplement our diet with a couple of fresh fish, including a fine tuna, which we gobbled up carpaccio style within a few hours of being caught. The tuna proved to be too rich however, as most of the crew (excluding your truly) succumbed to the runs over the next couple of days.

It wasn't long before we sighted land, and there was St Lucia in the distance. Only another six to seven hours to go. The sea wouldn't let up though and a rogue wave was dumped right on top of the skipper as he was emerging through the companionway, much to the merriment of us all. Rounding St Lucia to the north to enter Rodney Bay, the wind would also not let us go when we tried to be smart by setting all of our sails, only to have all of our lines tangled and having to do a couple of 360's to untangle the mess.



At 4.30pm we were the 147<sup>th</sup> boat to cross the line, out of 240 starters.

Of the other entries, four boats went down and their crews had to be rescued. One person died when they were knocked over and hit their head on a winch. Another person was taken off with third degree burns (caused when the cooking pot was thrown off the cooker). Another yacht was boarded by pirates but managed to hold them off until help arrived. And there were numerous minor injuries such as broken ribs and sprains. So all in all we did pretty well: survived without injury and without any major damage to the boat. We handled the weather and most importantly got on with each other, working as a team and achieving both personal and group goals.

# WALK REPORT

**Cowan to Brooklyn**  
Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park  
Sunday 6 January 2008 Leader: Trish Gorrington

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## Be prepared for all conditions

We were expecting it to be cold and wet, showers with a top of 22 degrees. I even received a worried text the day before asking if we would be going ahead at all due to the rain. However 21 brave souls turned up for the walk at Cowan Station.

I packed my thermals and poncho as well as my cossies and towel.

What a surprise when it was 35 degrees with not a cloud in sight. We had several people suffer from heat exhaustion and one person wanted to be walked out as the heat was just too much.

Luckily I warned everyone to bring their cossies as well and there were several swimming spots such as Jerusalem bay and Brooklyn Dam which made up for all the sweating up those 300m ascents.

We found some hidden Aboriginal carvings thanks to John Rich. Apart from the heat which turned a relatively easy walk into quite a



*Waterlilies on Brooklyn Dam*

challenge we had a great day and were well rewarded with a few refreshing beverages at the pub.

Thanks to Jenny Curry and John Rich for assisting William, and Len Sharp for his support.

**It shows you that you can never be too prepared. WATER WATER WATER - I cannot stress enough that every summer walk you do at least carry at least 2 litres of water.**

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## Staying Healthy and Safe in the Bush

by Alison Lyon

Bushwalking is a fun way to develop health, fitness, and stamina and offers great stress relief. You may come across an unfriendly mosquito, or may be in the bush for a bit longer than you planned. However, bushwalking in general is an enjoyable and safe activity, if you go prepared.

In order to make this more likely there are a number of things that could be considered prior to undertaking a walk.

- Choose a walk that suits your level of fitness. If you are unsure about the demands of the walk talk to the leader.
- If you regularly take medication, for example to treat asthma, diabetes or so on, take enough for the duration of the walk and a little extra just in case of delays or emergencies. Tell your walk leader of any current medical conditions and where you keep any medication for this (i.e.: in your pocket, pack etc).
- If you are having any problems on the walk, or feel unwell let your walk leader know.
- Take plenty of water in order to avoid dehydration.

As a general rule the average adult requires around 2.5 to 3 litres of fluid a day from food and drinks, this requirement obviously increases when exercising.

Aim to drink around 600ml an hour, more if the weather is hot.

In very hot weather you may be sweating a lot, consider adding an Oral Rehydration Solution to your drinking water. Remember thirst is a sign that you are already dehydrated.

- Avoid heat exhaustion/stroke. Keep cool by wearing loose, light coloured clothing and a hat.
- Watch out for those intense Australian sunrays; avoid burning and adding to those wrinkles! Apply sunscreen (minimum SPF should be 15, but preferably 30+), reapply every 2 hours and don't forget nose, lips and the back of your neck. Remember the sunnies too.
- Avoid bites and stings, in my own experience the uncomfortable effects of these can last days or even weeks! Wear long sleeves and trousers in areas where mosquitos and leeches may be encountered. Apply insect repellent to both exposed and unexposed skin. Mosquitos can bite through clothing; leeches can wriggle through boot eyelets!
- Blisters can be prevented by wearing dry, seamless, good fitting socks and well worn-in foot wear. At the first sign of chafing apply protection, such as a blister pad. Consider also carrying a spare pair of socks, well worth it if you are like

# SNORKELLING

## Gordon's Bay, Clovelly

Saturday 24 November 2007

Leader: Charles Bowden

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Election Day and a hardy group turned up on an inclement day to wash away the emotions of the polling booth. It had been raining earlier in the week and the skies were still overcast. A swell was breaking on the rocks on the northern side of the bay but the southern end seemed to offer some shelter. A couple of rain showers encouraged us to don our gear and hasten into the water which was partly obscured by surface flotsam from creek runoff. We persisted and some fish were seen but the murky water made visibility difficult.

The highlight of the day was an attractive white nudibranch discovered trying to crawl under some seaweed for shelter. It wasn't so much the nudibranch that was a highlight as the antics of the snorkellers trying to catch a glimpse while struggling to avoid being pounded onto the rocks by an increasingly turbulent sea.

We eventually called it a day and repaired to the nearby café at Clovelly Beach for a fortifying snack. The café manager's disposition



*Richard, Helena and Wayne*

was at one with the weather & sea and we decided to leave after an interminable wait for some very ordinary drinks.

Thanks to Carol Cox, Alison Lyon, Helena Lang, Richard Milnes, Wayne Lee and Katherine McNevin their good spirits in adverse circumstances.

me and tend to get wet in even the smallest puddle, or river.

- Be prepared for the cold, particularly on wet, windy days. Remember a raincoat and also carry or have dry clothes available for the end of the walk. Layers are more effective than 1 warm item. Consider carrying a space blanket, which can also double as a shelter or can be used as a dry seat.
- Take food for morning, afternoon tea and lunch. Bushwalking can use a lot of energy, particularly if you are tackling any of those big climbs in the Blue Mountains! Nuts, dried fruit and chocolate make good energy giving snacks and are light weight in your pack.
- Try not to walk alone. In the event of an accident, a group of 3 or more will allow 1 person to stay with the injured, whilst another goes for help. Also, let somebody know where you are going and your expected time of return, and notify that person when you have returned safely.
- Always carry a personal First Aid kit and have some idea of how to use the contents. Do a First Aid course, not only invaluable knowledge for the bush, but life in general.

***Remember accidents and emergencies happen when you least expect them.***

## Delwood Beach, Manly

Saturday 15 December 2007

Leader: Charles Bowden

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A fine summer's day and calm waters greeted us at this new venue, next door to Fairlight Beach. A grassy bank shaded by tall trees provided an excellent spot to prepare ourselves and don our gear.



*Stripeys (black and gold)  
and Modos (yellow tail)*

Entry into the water was across a flat rocky shelf which proved to be a challenge for plucky newcomer, Renuka, suffering a graze to her shins as she negotiated the obstacle. Undeterred, she persisted with her baptism and quickly gained confidence as the day progressed.

There was plenty of marine life to be found among the sandstone protrusions on the southern side of the beach, including even a crayfish.

Lessons in duck-diving revealed apparently hollow legs and balsa limbs possessed by a couple of snorkellers for whom even the addition of a weightbelt proved pointless. Further thought needed by the leader on this problem!

Late in the day a lost snorkel bought only that day caused some consternation but a thorough search of the rocks and gullies brought a happy conclusion to the day.

Thanks to Peter Bonner, Alison Lyon, Annette Sudan with Louise & Henry, Renuka Sane, Karyn Krawford and Richard Milnes for an enjoyable day.

# Macmasters Beach, Little Beach, Maitland Bay, Putty Beach. Bouddi National Park, Central Coast.

Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2007.

Leader: Len Sharp

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This walk was undertaken as a private walk as there were only three participants and our club rules require a minimum of four participants for safety. In practice this means that one person stays with the injured and two go for help if the nature of the injury requires it. In any case nobody should be left alone in the bush.

It was a circular walk with a tail, i.e. like the capital letter "Q". We took one car for reasons of cost, which meant that the last part of the walk, the "tail", was repeated for which we were rewarded, as explained later.

Parking at the MacMasters Beach Surf Club we started our walk up a series of steps, interconnecting laneways and back streets which led us quickly onto a nice paved path through open forest and into the heathland of Mourawaring Moor above.

We took the main sandy fire trail which ended above Little Beach at an eroded track, then followed it down to the little stream and grassy camping and picnic area for morning tea on an elevated flat tent site and thought how good it would be to camp. It was one of the very few really flat spots.

Morning tea over, a steep walk led us up the fire trail towards the Little Beach car park and then along a bush track onto Bombi Moor. Heathland with views to the south of the ocean and the Pittwater/ Palm Beach area were our reward. This sandy fire trail across the moor ended as before at an eroded track, leading to Caves Bay. The bay was a real contrast to Little Beach, - enclosed by thick bush, a rocky stream and a mass of broken rocks for a beach. Rock hopping a short distance down to the bay to look we then returned to climb the narrow track up the other side. The start of the track is not easy to see.

Coming out of the bush at the cleared grassy saddle behind the northern headland of Maitland Bay. You can see from here the ocean on one side and the beach in the bay on the other. On the ocean side the horizontal strata of the sandstone and its bands of brittle ironstone were also inspected. It is almost incomprehensible that we were looking at something that was laid down about 200 million years ago.

Rain had been forecast for the day and we felt the first very fine spots as we headed along the beach after coming down the wooden steps from the saddle track. Although 11:30 is a bit early for lunch it was decided to have it under the only shelter below the overhanging cliffs.

After lunch as we walked up the steps on the paved track at the southern end of the beach, the sight of a water dragon up a tree pretending that we could not see it rewarded us.

There were good views back towards Maitland Bay from the rocky point above. It looked just like one of the images of a Pacific island. We headed around the headland and up and down the various small gullies with their small wooden bridges. The trees also were a lot taller here than seen on the walk so far. Dodging around muddy sections of the track at the southern end of the headland brought us to Gerrin Point with the railings and a more formal look-out. It was also the start of a tamer type of bushwalk with boardwalks around the cliffs above Bullimah Beach.

The headland, from the track branching off to Bullimah Beach, to Putty Beach, had all been burnt and it is amazing that the wooden boardwalk had escaped the fire. Perhaps it was a precautionary low intensity burn by the NPWS.

Putty Beach crowded with people was a bit of a shock after the bush. We paused at the picnic area behind the beach for comfort stops and a rest at the tables from which nobody seemed in a hurry to leave.

A kookaburra soon entertained us by flying quickly across the clearing to a tree on the other side and grabbing a cicada. It did this a few times in different directions and amazed us with the keenness of its eyesight.

Alas, all good things must come to an end and so we walked to the informal steep rough track behind the camping area, which led up the spur to Killcare Heights.

Heights in Sydney real estate terms usually imply superior property relative to the surrounding area and so it was here with the two-storey houses hugging the land above the beach. The ocean views were to die for and could not be built out with the national park between them and the beach below. Lucky for bushwalkers there is a rocky point at the top of the track where there are views of the full length of Putty Beach.

There were some exotic flowers, red gladioli and yellow coreopsis, garden escapees, growing in the water ruts leading to the point. They looked really good and we thought of picking them on the way home, involving only a small diversion.

We continued to the north in front of the houses and then into a cleared area of bush for a short walk up to the main road above. Walking beside the road for a short distance led to the Marie Byles Lookout and ocean views.

Marie Byles was an early bushwalker of the early 1930s who campaigned with others for Bouddi to be dedicated as a national park. It was set aside in July 1935 and named in the following year. Bouddi is an aboriginal word meaning 'heart' or 'water running over rocks'.

An information board at the Maitland Bay Information Centre tells of the shipwreck of S.S. Maitland in the early hours of the 6<sup>th</sup> May 1898 at Bouddi Point, the northern end of the bay, which carries the ship's name. The ship's bell is also on display outside the information centre.

Picking up the sandy and saturated fire trail we continued north. The damp conditions and shade from the trees attracted many mosquitoes and Alison in particular was the centre of attention despite repellent.

Leaving the park boundaries to take a shortcut along the main road after a short walk we re-entered the national park, picked up a bush track and ended up at Little Beach.

From here we re-walked the "tail" of our walk back to MacMasters Beach. In doing so we were rewarded by the sight of first one then progressively more orchids beside the track climbing up from Little Bay.

The question came to mind as to why we had not seen them in the morning, particularly as we were more fresh and alert then.

Our answer was soon revealed with the sight of orchids still in bud. Apparently the majority had flowered during the day. The green buds would not have attracted our eyes the same as the pink, spotted flowers of the \*Hyacinth Orchid (*Dipodium punctatum*).

Unfortunately we were too early by about half an hour for the bar and kitchen to open at the surf club and, as the rain started to really come down in buckets, we decided to leave after settling for the \$2 steak sandwiches instead.

Thanks to Alison Lyon and Peter West for their excellent compatible company throughout the day, and especially to Alison for driving, especially through that heavy rain back to Hornsby.

\* See page 11



## From your Committee

**The AGM will be held ...  
Sunday 29th June 2008,  
10.30am - 12.30pm**

**Woodstock  
Community  
Centre  
Church Street, Burwood**

**Starting time 10.30am.**

**An optional activity will be  
organised after the meeting**

*More details in next issue*

### **ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS**

#### **Make a contribution to your newsletter**

**Write an anecdote or experience  
concerning any ANB club activity  
for publication in Keeping Track.**

For example: the day that someone  
slipped and fell into the creek, or the day  
of the big storm.

Articles should be no more than 300  
words and the editor will award a \$20  
gift voucher from a camping store to the  
best article out of those published.

So, please get scribbling and send your  
jottings to -

jcsteven@unwired.com.au

I'm sure there are lots of amazing tales  
out there just waiting to be told.

*The newsletter editor will judge the com-  
petition and her decision will be final!*

Regards,  
Jan Steven - editor

**ALL NATIONS BUSHWALKERS  
PO Box Q23 Queen Victoria Building,  
NSW 1230**

## **Bon Voyage Judy**

One of our regular walk leaders in the recent past, Judy Derwin is travelling overseas for 3 months heading first to Perugia, Italy where she will study at an Italian language school for a month. She will be staying with an Italian family in the old medieval city of Perugia whilst honing up on her Italian. Judy will then catch up with old friends in Rome and Bologna, finishing her travels in Switzerland and Lake Como before returning home. She's taking her walking boots with her. Sounds like a great trip. We all wish you a great time Judy.

## **Banana, Honey and Seed Loaf – Alison Lyon**

I took this cake on a bike ride I did with the club last year...it seemed to go down well. It takes about 15 minutes to prepare and 1 hour to bake. It's full of healthy energy giving ingredients, just right for a day in the bush!

You will need:

- 1 tablespoon of toasted sesame seeds
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup extra light olive oil
- ⅓ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup of honey
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 large mashed banana
- ½ cup buttermilk
- ¼ cup quick cook oats
- ¼ cup raisins
- 1 ¼ cups self-raising flour, sifted
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons of extra honey, warmed

Pre-heat the oven to 160C. Grease and line a loaf pan (11cm x 25cm).

Combine seeds in a bowl.

Stir together, in a large bowl until just combined - the oil, sugar, honey, eggs, banana, oats, raisins, flour, cinnamon and 2 thirds of the seed mixture.

Pour mixture into pan. Sprinkle top with remaining seeds.

Bake for 1 hour. Then turn onto wire rack to cool, brush top with extra honey.



## **Photographic Competition**

**to be held at the  
next AGM**

**Sunday June 29th 2008**

Prizes as well as a certificate will be your reward.

The winning photos will be published in the Spring issue of Keeping Track.

There's still 3 months left to snap that special photo at one of the Club activities.

Photos must have been taken since the previous AGM.

Categories are:

**PEOPLE  
WATER SCENES  
FLORA  
FAUNA  
NATURES WONDERS  
CAMPING**

We need 4 entries per category to run a viable competition, so encourage your fellow members to enter with you.

(Sorry, only one entry per category)

### **How to Enter**

Each photograph should be displayed on a sheet of A4 size paper.

*If you don't have a (decent) colour printer, email the photos to Charles Bowden, our Web Master, who will arrange printing for you at no cost.*

On the reverse side put your name, category, the date and place where your picture was taken.

On arrival at the AGM, hand your entry to **the organiser Len Sharp.**

*The organiser's decision is final as to eligibility in accordance with the rules.*

# WALK REPORT

## Erskine Lookout To Pisgah Rock Blue Mountains NP

Sunday 13 January 2008 Leader: Charles Bowden

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After gathering at Strathfield, three carloads of walkers set off for Glenbrook on a warm humid day, collecting two more walkers at Glenbrook itself, bringing the group number to 13. By the time we reached the start of the walk near Erskine Lookout, the temperature had risen further and it promised to be a hot day. The track down to Erskine Creek is clearly marked and we quickly reached its edge. Crossing to the far side, some rock hopping and some wading, we paused for an early morning tea before setting off upstream along the western bank of the creek.

There is no track along this section of the creek and the going was quite tough for the first kilometre as we clambered over rocks and fallen trees, struggling through vines and creepers. The difficult terrain was made no easier by the rising temperature which had already hit 30C by mid-morning. A pause to allow some to recover from the heat was necessary at one point and hats and caps were dunked into the creek and the contents sloshed onto heads in an attempt to cool down. We certainly admired the "cool" of a couple whom we encountered coming down the creek on a lilo.



*Crossing Erskine Creek*

As we neared the bend when the creek veers west, a tree limb collapsed under the weight of a walker, propelling him on top of Margaret who was crushed to the ground at the water's edge and partly submerged. As a result of the impact, Margaret suffered a deep cut to the left forearm as well as bruising and abrasions. The walk was halted while Margaret's injuries were treated and a pad and compression bandage applied to the wound on the arm to stem the blood flow.

The wound was serious so we called an early lunch to allow Margaret time to recover from the shock and to gauge if she could travel further. We found a shady spot next to the creek where we could rest and swim. Margaret's arm was placed in a sling and, after some food and fluid, as well as a restorative dip in the creek, Margaret courageously agreed to try to continue in spite of the pain and discomfort. We were in an awkward spot and a rescue would have taken several hours to organize so I felt it would be best if we could press on, especially as I knew the creek valley would broaden and the going become easier.

We abandoned the planned walk to Dadder Cave and Bland's Pool and instead made our way towards the Lincoln Creek junction and our exit point. The group rallied to Margaret's assistance, clearing obstacles from her path and helping her at awkward spots. No sooner had we emerged onto the flat sandstone shelves near the junction than the increasingly oppressive heat dissolved into a

terrific thunderstorm. Initially the wind nearly blew us off our feet as we scuttled into the shelter of large boulders. The rain and hail that followed did its best to pummel and soak us before the storm as suddenly abated and allowed us to emerge wet and blinking from our bolt holes.

Shortly afterwards, we reached the junction of the two creeks and decided to stop and rest for a bit in the sunlight that had reappeared. Several took the opportunity for another dip in the creek before tackling the steep climb up to Pisgah Rock. Her bandage was checked again and Margaret's spirits were sufficiently buoyant to attempt the climb out.

The lower part of the track up the escarpment is relatively straightforward as it leads to the first of 6 steep rocky ledges, each around 10 metres high, that comprise the Pisgah Rock escarpment. To add to our woes, the rain returned as we reached the foot of the first ledge and this time stayed with us until the end.

Somehow Margaret found the will to climb the first daunting ledge with walkers assisting in the roles of boosters, props and haulers. Although succeeding ledges became progressively more difficult and treacherous in the pouring rain, Margaret found the resolve and determination to tackle each one and conquer it, an incredibly gutsy effort that must have been both painful and exhausting. Finally we all reached the top of Pisgah Rock, safe but sodden.

After taking in the rain shrouded view over Erskine Creek as we paused to catch our breath, we trudged down the broad access track to the carpark where, to add insult to injury, most had to wait in the rain while drivers collected the other cars.



*Broad-palmed frog, also known as  
Gravel frog or Gunther's frog*

As if we hadn't already been through enough drama, one of the cars wouldn't start and we had to leave it behind, instead squeezing into two vehicles for the trip to park entrance. There we collected Margaret's car and drove her home for a change of clothes and short rest before she was driven to hospital by her son.

The wound ultimately required stitches and plastic surgery, requiring an overnight stay in hospital, which underlined what a magnificent display of courage and stamina it had been to climb out of the valley.

The inoperable car was successfully recovered the following day but is unlikely to be allowed out onto dirt roads again!

I would like to congratulate all the walkers who persevered in spite of the gale and the hail, the heat and the rain, and everything else that was thrown at them on a particularly tough day. Heartfelt thanks also for the way Liam Heery, Jacqui Joseph, Katherine McNevin, Mark Leslie, Len Sharp, Bob Seibrigh, Peter West, Jasmin Tan and Mehrdad Golestan rallied around Margaret and provided the assistance she needed. Special mention goes to visitor, Peter de Ridder, who took on the elephantine role of uprooting and brushing aside large obstacles that might have made progress difficult for Margaret and to Alison Lyon for regularly checking the bandages and driving Margaret home.

**Most of all, all credit to Margaret Szokolai,  
for being an inspiration to us all!**

# WALK REPORT

## Box Head

### Bouddi National Park

Sunday 27 January 2008 Leader: Liam Heery

A very hot day and a late lazy start had all of the 15 people who turned up for this walk anticipating a leisurely day with lots of swimming to cool down and new places to explore.



*The Box Head group*

After leaving Hornsby we made our way to the Maitland Bay track and after viewing Maitland Bay beach, turned off to our first beach of the day, Bullimah Beach. We stopped here for morning tea and took in the vistas down the coast to the Pittwater peninsula. Unfortunately the waves were too big and only Jacqui tempted fate by putting her feet in the water.

From here we followed the boardwalk around the headland to Putty beach where most of us took the opportunity to have a swim before sitting down to lunch. I won't mention those who tempted fate by wearing sunnies into the surf, and while one person was lucky to retrieve their sunnies from under the water, the other person had to leave them to Neptune!!

After lunch we walked through Killcare and across the headland into Tallow Beach, where we again cooled down with another swim before heading off, and followed the shore line around to Little Tallow Beach. This required some rock climbing and while Faye was tempted to go up and over the cliff, the cliff face was too steep and she had to accept defeat and take the same route as the rest of us.

Little Tallow is a small beach and would be a good swimming spot on another occasion, but today we just rested while Liam and Len scouted out the trail ahead. The trail found we proceeded along the headland until we saw the trail that would take us up to the Box Head trail on top of the ridge.

At Box Head we rested for a short while, enjoying the expansive views from The Entrance to the Hawkesbury, Pittwater and right down the coast to the Sydney CBD skyline.

As we were all hot and sweaty by this stage we took the shortest way back through the Putty Beach campsite and up the hill to Jacqueline Avenue, where Jacqui posed for a photo.



A great day with spectacular scenery, beautiful beaches and for some of us a welcome drink and meal back at the Hornsby pub. Thanks to Jacqui, Len, Nick, Alison, Katherine, Mark, Merdad, Sandra, Peter, Fiona, Faye, Bob, Karin and new member Melanie Ng.



*Margaret and Len chatting*

*Snap that special photo at a club activity to enter the 2008 photo competition...*

### \*The Hyacinth Orchid

is a member of a group of Australian orchids that rely on a symbiotic association with various ground fungi.

Generally the plants lack the green chlorophyll cells that manufacture the plant's sugars and starches. This is overcome by its symbiotic relationship with a soil fungus.

Two types of fungus have been recorded, one with clamp-like connections to the orchid's roots. The other where the underground growing body of the fungus intrudes into the cells through a break in the outside of the root, or through a passage in the root's outside layer of cells. The roots contain three different types of cells. When the fungus enters the root of the orchid it infects the first cell layer and grows rapidly. The orchid then intervenes and digests the fungus within the second series of cells, storing the resultant starch products in the third layer of cells for the orchid's later use.

With acknowledgement for the foregoing on the Hyacinth Orchid and its symbiotic relationship, to "Australian Native Orchids" by Leo Cady & E.R. Rotherham, 1978 reprint, published by A.H. & A.W. Reed Pty. Ltd.



## Welcome to New Members

Renuka Sane

Eileen Ross

Sally Yu

Fiona Bachmann

Jennifer Curry

Maninder Kaur

Mehrdad Golestan

Melanie Ng

Amy Holtan



See you in the bush

## **DEADLINE** **FOR NEXT ISSUE**

**1 May 2008**

### **SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO ...**

jcsteven@unwired.com.au

Pictures submitted—

At Least 300DPI resolution  
preferred to achieve good  
reproduction quality

## **Change of Details**

Don't forget to notify us of any  
change in address, email address  
or phone numbers.

Contact us by email at:

**anbcomm@hotmail.com**

## **Christmas Lights Stroll - Ashbury**

Friday 21 December 2007

Leader: Charles Bowden

A couple of dozen members, determined to see what they missed the previous year, turned up full of seasonal cheer and bonhomie. Not even impending thunderstorms could deter their enthusiasm, most deliberately spurning umbrellas in a sign of faith as we set off.

We were rewarded with a whole block of outrageously decorated homes determined to outdo the Jones for conspicuous electricity consumption. Lights festooned walls, roofs, trees and fences while effigies of holy figures and mythical beings filled gardens and windows and reindeer abounded. Delicately twinkling or boldly flashing, lights in all manner of colours and configurations vied for the attention of passers-by who oohed and gasped gratifyingly at each garish creation.

Somewhat dazed by the end of the second street, the group adjourned to a nearby residence for suitable fare and refreshments before gradually dispersing. Hardier constitutions lingered longer, inveigled into Latin dancing by the sprightly Marcela, before calling it a night.

Thank you to all who came, too many to name, and for your goodwill.



*Photo: Marcella Whitehead*

## **Annual Christmas Picnic**

**Bray's Reserve, Rhodes**

Sunday 23 December 2007

What a beautiful day we had for our picnic this year. This was reflected by the 25 or so people who turned up bearing fabulous food and great Christmas spirit.

Most people arrived soon after midday and we soon had a great array of food and drinks spread out and the barbeque started up.

Julie Armstrong came along with her son and daughter to celebrate her 60th birthday and we all sang "Happy Birthday" before starting in on the great array of cakes, including Len's homemade fruitcake.

After lunch a large group strolled the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway leaving others to chat or play games - Jenga (much to Eva's delight), Badminton, and Frisbees to name a few.

Especially pleasing was to see Zvonko & Slagjana Grkavac arrive with Eva, our youngest cyclist member, and the twins who were about to turn 1 year old.

The BBQ area we had reserved proved to be very appropriate providing ample tables and seating, a good BBQ and even a sink with running water for washing up. Hopefully we will be able to secure an earlier booking for next year so that more members will be able to attend. Special thanks to Suseela for organising this event. - Editor



PS Len has the long handled BBQ tongs that were left behind.

**A big 'Thank you' to all who contributed to this newsletter - Editor**