



all nations
BUSHWALKERS INC



Autumn Newsletter
March 2010

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www.bushwalking.org.au/~allnations



NEWSLETTER OF ALL NATIONS BUSHWALKERS INC • FORMERLY ANC BUSHWALKERS INC & ALL NATIONS CLUB WALKABOUT GROUP • FOUNDED 1962 • INCORPORATED 1992

The Overland Track - Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair, Tasmania November 2009

Suseela Durvasula

The last straw was when I started feeling water sloshing around in my supposedly water-proof boots. The rain had been beating down since the previous night. The track – indistinguishable at the best of times – had turned into a creek. All thoughts of climbing Mt Ossa, Tasmania's highest peak, had dissipated. We could barely see the mountain, let alone climb it.

Here I was on Day 4 of the famous Overland Track from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair in North-western Tasmania. It was the only point in the 6 day walk that I started thinking dangerous thoughts like, 'I want to go home' and 'I can't believe I paid to do this'. However, I quickly learned that no matter how difficult things seem on a walk, it's only temporary and you're usually rewarded for your efforts.

In our case, the reward was a warm hut with magnificent views of Cathedral Mountain, yummy hot chocolate and a chance to dry off. We were rewarded even more for our efforts the next day when we visited 3 magnificent waterfalls that were pumping after all the rain. I'd never seen waterfalls like that in Australia.

Fortunately that was the only day of inclement weather on the 6 day walk. I'd been told to expect the worst – rain, sleet and snow. It is Tasmania after all and it doesn't stay so green by itself.

There were so many highlights for me in this walk, it is difficult to sum them up in one short article. Here are a few:

- Spending day after day in pristine wilderness. This walk had everything - rugged mountains formed by glaciers, button grass plains, clear lakes and streams, waterfalls and dark old growth forests.
- The clear blue skies and perfect views of Cradle Mountain, Dove Lake and Crater Lake, after climbing to Marion's Lookout on Day 1. Apparently Cradle Mountain only reveals itself for 30 days a year. The rest of the time it's covered in cloud and mist. We were fortunate to be there on one of those clear days.
- Being late November it was a perfect time for wildflowers. I saw countless numbers of Tasmania waratahs, which are smaller than the NSW waratahs but no less spectacular.
- Seeing my first mountain shrimp – these are like yabbies and are normally found near pools and lakes. We were lucky enough to spot one near the track.
- The magical old growth forests – full of twisting tree roots, ferns, moss and mud – lots of mud. We took our time through these forests as there was so much to appreciate.
- Managing the challenging track. Although the Overland Track is not long and does not have many steep climbs, the track itself is quite eroded and muddy so you really have to concentrate on every step. I became an expert at dodging mud, rock hopping and negotiating slippery tree roots.
- Feeling cool about wearing gaiters. I was initially sceptical about the need for full-length gaiters, but I'm glad I had them. They were great for keeping off the mud



*On top of Marion's Lookout,
Cradle Mountain in the background*



President 's Report

Welcome to the Autumn edition of 'Keeping Track'.

This quarter we are trialling a new larger format for the activities program. This will allow us to include more information about each activity and makes the program much easier to read. We hope you enjoy the new format. Your comments are welcome – please pass them on to any of the Committee members.

It's never too late to consider putting on a walk or social activity. The more walk leaders the Club has, the stronger it will be. New blood is always welcome. If you're unsure, discuss your idea with an experienced walk leader or the program co-ordinator, Catharina Muller. There are plenty of experienced walk leaders who are willing to offer mentoring and walk leader mentor, Terry Redmond, can also provide assistance. Even after the 'official' program is published, you can still organise extra activities and publicise them on the group email. Just run it by Catharina first to ensure that the activity is Club related and doesn't clash with similar activities.

In another exciting development, the Club has recently purchased an LCD data projector. Previously, we were renting a projector on an ad hoc basis at considerable cost. Our own projector can now be used for Club photo nights, presentations by external organisations (such as the Rural Fire Service or the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad), leader training, presentations at the AGM and other activities. The projector is available to all members for Club related activities. Liam Heery did all the hard work in acquiring the projector and is the current custodian. If you want to find out about using the projector, contact Liam.

We hope you enjoy walking this autumn.

Suseela Durvasula
President

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and the leeches. (I actually managed the whole walk with out one leech bite, although we encountered many.) As it's so much cooler in Tasmania, the gaiters were far more comfortable to wear.

- The sense of achievement at finishing the walk at Lake St Clair. After a short ferry ride back across the lake, we took the 2 hour bus ride back to Launceston and civilisation. It took me much longer to adjust to being back at the office desk.

I was fortunate to have a friendly group of 9 others to walk with – 8 Australians and one American. We all bonded pretty quickly, helped each other out and had lots of fun. There was actually no one I wanted to strangle by the end of the walk, as sometimes happens with group travel.



The crystal clear waters of Crater Lake

Our two wonderful guides were Sam and Lynton. These two young men in their early twenties were amazing. As well as having an extensive knowledge of the area and the track, they were amazingly fit, responsible, helpful and good humoured. At the end of each day they would cook us a wonderful 2 course dinner, bake bread for the next day, make scones or muffins for afternoon tea, make breakfast, wash up and clean up! Some of the women wanted to take them home to introduce them to their daughters. Every walk should include a Sam and Lynton.

Although I had done a fair bit of training beforehand, I wasn't sure how I'd go, as this was only my third overnight walk and the weather can be quite unpredictable in Tasmania. I needn't have worried. After the first couple of days, I got used to my pack. By the end, my breath barely changed going up hills and I felt fitter and stronger. Of course, I wasn't doing it the 'hard core' way as we stayed in private huts and we didn't have to carry our own food. For me it was enough of a challenge to carry my own gear and walk for 6 consecutive days without worrying about carrying the kitchen sink as well. As a result, I managed to pack most of my gear into a large day pack.

The Overland Track is justifiably one of Australia's most famous walks. It's a good one to start with if you're relatively new to overnight walking. You get the opportunity to spend 6 days in amazing and remote wilderness. For me, the sense of personal achievement was an added bonus.

WALK

Up hill, across moor and down dale

Sunday 18 October 2009

Leader: Charles Bowden

Overcast conditions and a light drizzle didn't prevent 22 walkers from turning up at Sutherland ready to embark on this little adventure. The start of the walk at the southern entrance to Lady Carrington Drive leads through open rainforest alongside Bola Creek. Turning off onto Wallumarra Track, we headed down to the creek and crossed it before heading along the side of a lightly timbered slope, crossing several gullies disgoring into the creek. My only wrong turn for the day occurred at one of these gullies but I soon realised my mistake and turned back onto the correct path.

After a short climb up the slope, we soon hit the heathland plateau where the vegetation changed markedly. Short prickly bushes, densely packed because of the spring rains, replaced the open woodland. The overhead canopy had also disappeared as we walked towards the coast on a broad fire trail. Just before reaching the Garie trig marker, we donned gaiters, gloves and trouser legs before turning down an overgrown sidetrack in anticipation of the first off-track section of the walk. At the end of the sidetrack, we found a stack of beehives to which we gave a wide berth as we started to push through the dense bush thickets.



Wildflower wanderings - photo by Safwan Barbour

Initially the going was quite slow but at least the ground wasn't soggy. A range of colourful wildflowers were found including deep pink "Native Rose" *Boronia*, spiky Mountain Devils (*Lambertia formosa*), starchy pink Kunzeas, lots of white *Eparis* and *Conospermum* and some "Eggs & Bacon" *Dillwynia*, to name a few. Soon we reached broad expanses of sandstone and the going became easier as the heath thinned out. After about 1km, we emerged onto Wisers Track and stopped for lunch on top of Colbee Knob, a nearby vantage point, with 360 degree views.

After lunch we set off down the fire trail and then branched off onto the Karani Trail which leads to another rocky prominence with more views, this time down into the forested Hacking River valley. A worn and faded 1 cent piece dated 1966, found on the ground, was handed around as a curiosity piece to those who had been born or arrived in Australia after copper currency had been withdrawn from circulation. It was later tossed into a pool of water in a rocky depression, serving as a makeshift wishing well. Will it still be there in year's time?

Signs of earlier aboriginal site occupancy were evident at the lookout with the discovery of a number of sharpening grooves in the rocks. A couple of stone cairns indicated a potential off-track route through the scrub towards Palona Brook but we opted for a lower starting point instead.

This next off-track section was a short downhill scramble through the rainforest and we soon reached Palona Brook. Although overgrown and disappearing from view occasionally, we were able to use the creek as a reference to guide us downstream, past a small waterfall, before reaching the wide rocky streambed above Palona Cave and the main waterfall.



Cave group - photo by Katherine McNevin

Here we paused for afternoon tea and a welcome break in the sunshine only to be startled by the arrival of a small group from the Catholic Bushwalkers Club, coming down the same obscure track, hot on our heels. They stopped for a chat and it turned out that they had started from Waterfall so adding quite a few additional kilometres to the trek.

We reversed the order and trailed them down the ledges beside the waterfall and into Palona Cave before rejoining Lady Carrington Drive and the short stroll back to the cars.

In spite of the initial inclement conditions and, for some, the stretching of their comfort zone by venturing off-track for the first time, this walk proved to be very successful. No snakes were seen (although several copper-tailed skinks may have startled a few) but a few leeches tested people's resilience! Congratulations to Adele Stephenson, Meiha Cheung, Katherine McNevin, Suseela Durvasula, Len Sharp, Michael Thompson, Yubang Zhang, Bongsuk Cha, Alison Lyon, Safwan Barbour, Monica Flynn, Peter West, Catharina Muller, Jasmin Tan, Yuko Imai, Enid Almeida, Linda Kelen, Helen Newman and Derek Holt for taking part and special thanks to Ken Beath for the botanical advice and Bob Seibright for providing assistance in the awkward spots along the way.

WALK

Spit Bridge to Manly Saturday 7 November 2009 Leader: Fenella Walter

A large cheery group of walkers joined me on the Spit to Manly walk, with many new faces among them and many who'd never done this walk before. Said to be the most scenic walk in the world, Spit to Manly is always worth doing,



Clockwise from front left-Peter, Violet, Richard, Yuko, Julie, Linda, Lee, Dhanjeet, Farida, Zak, Jan, Derek, Alice, Ines, Caroline, Yubang & Enid



Taking it easy, Enid and Yuko



This delightful circle was taken at Lamington National Park, west of the Gold Coast, in Queensland, Australia. These are native Australian mountain parrots. Those predominantly red and blue are Crimson Rosellas. The red and green birds are King Parrots. They are feasting on sunflower seeds which someone left for them, but (who) did not expect them to form such a perfect ring.

even if the sun disappears and the humidity shoots skyward, as it did on this day.



The wildflowers were out.

We stopped briefly at Clontarf, where the high tide forced us onto the road. Then up to the Aboriginal carvings and on to Forty Baskets Beach for lunch.

Lots of little stops along the way to admire the wildflowers, the clear stretches of water and the jacarandas scattered along the foreshores.



Yubang Zheng Photos by Fenella

Now and then you'd hear a shriek as a sprightly water dragon flew across our path. In fact, many shrieks and many water dragons. Imagine if there'd been leeches!

Forty Baskets brought some welcome relief from the humidity and a few even ventured into the sea. After that, it was a short meander down to Manly where it was 'au revoir'.

ROGAINE

Hares and Tortoises Sunday 15 November 2009 Organiser: Charles Bowden

This year's Socialgaine rogaining event was held at Morisset on the shores of Lake Macquarie. This formerly sleepy little hamlet seems to have received a rude awakening, judging by the amount housing and civic developments taking place including a new sewage processing plant. Fortunately it has lost none of its hospitality: we had barely started out on the course when we met a couple out for a Sunday stroll who wanted to invite us round for coffee, a 'social'gaine indeed.



Street search

The club fielded two teams: team 93 with Alison fresh from mountaineering & marathoning exploits and the indefatigable Len were the ANB Hares; team 94 which consisted of 3 novice rogainers plus seasoned campaigners Michael and myself were the ANB Tortoises.

Conditions were sunny and hot on the day and all rogainers were soon feeling the effects. Fortunately the course area was relatively flat which helped lessen the exertion and included many points of access to a river and the lake. Competitors were actually seen launching themselves into the water for a cooling dip along their chosen route.

The Hares set themselves an ambitious course to include the highest scoring control (passing the pub on the way) while the Tortoises took a more conservative approach, still managing to bag the second highest control (nowhere near the pub). A highlight at this control was to watch an enormous wasp pulling a huntsman spider of equal if not larger size, paralysed by the wasp's sting, into the wasp's lair, a cavity beneath a concrete plinth. There it would provide sustenance for the wasp's young when they hatched: David Attenborough would have been thrilled – although some of the Tortoises seemed less than impressed when I tried to explain this.

For their lunchbreak, the Tortoises found an ideal log bench in a shady secluded spot under a large tree. There was only one dwelling in the vicinity. We had barely started munching when loud discordant bashing and thumping noises erupted from the house: a local aspiring drummer had started practising his repertoire, oblivious to the unwitting audience nearby. In keeping with the spirit of goodwill, we decided not to call the police to protest the noise!



Lake Macquarie

Both teams returned within the allotted 6 hour time span, the Hares just missing out on cracking the 1000 point barrier while the Tortoises scored over 700 points, a laudable effort all round. Final scores and placings were:

Team 93 (Hares): 61st overall (out of 96 teams), 38th (out of 63) Mixed category, and 26th (out of 38) Veterans category.

Team 94 (Tortoises): 79th overall, 50th Mixed, 31st Veterans

Many thanks to Diahne Berthold, Alison Lyon, Len Sharp, Michael Thompson and Fred Gornall for taking part and a special thanks to Chris Webber for the "free" petrol and driving.



Forest trail



Relaxing after

SNORKELLING

Delwood Beach

Saturday 28 November 2009

Leader: Charles Bowden

The first snorkel of the summer and the hot weather (mid 30s) made it an ideal day for a paddle in the water. So it was surprising that relatively few of the club's regular snorkellers appeared. Nonetheless we had nine turn up on the day including first-timer Yubang and visitor Judy.

Bob, Richard and I arrived in time to secure an ideal spot in the shade and on the grass with a bench seat as a bonus. We soon hit the water and early on found a small stingray lazing on the sand who seemed quite unafraid when I made



Common Stingree
(*Tryonoptera testacea*)

repeated attempts to take its picture. There was plenty of fish life including largish bream and luderick with the occasional smaller fry. I spotted a lime green pigmy leatherjacket in a patch of weed

but it proved to be quite shy, darting from one leafy hiding place to another.

Around lunchtime, one of the small 'kiosk' boats that ply the inner harbour beaches anchored briefly to dispense its wares. I think I was the only person to place an order as it left shortly afterwards following a harangue from a beachgoer protesting it was blocking access to the water.



Stripey & hula fish

The water was quite clear at the northern end of the beach but at the southern end the visibility was a little murkier. However there seemed to be a greater diversity of fish life so perhaps the particles were nutrient-rich. Here we found rock cale, morwong, leatherjackets and surgeonfish, small schools of goatfish and hula fish, the occasional yellow & black stripey, and a large ball of silvery minnows which explained the presence of a cormorant that we had seen earlier, repeatedly diving at one location.

We eventually decided to call it a day around 3:30pm after a leisurely and relaxing time of it – just as it should be!

In the water were Bob Seibrigh, Richard Milnes, Len Sharp, Judy Christie, Karin Erdmann, Alison Lyon, Annette Sudan and Yubang Zheng.

Malabar Beach & Long Bay, Malabar

Saturday 9 January 2010

Leader: Charles Bowden

A wonderful summer's day greeted us for the first snorkel of the New Year. We found that the area behind Malabar Beach has been extensively renovated. The toilet block with changing/showering facilities has been given a coat of paint. A large modern children's play area has been installed and many of the picnic tables have new roofing structures. With a nearby café plus a beach shower stand for washing off sand & salt, this is now one of the better appointed beaches for snorkelling.

We grabbed our favoured spot in the shade below the lifeguard tower and there was no hesitation in getting into the water. The tide was out when we arrived but started to come back in during the early afternoon. The water was clear and quite warm (about 21C) although some would dispute this!

There was plenty of marine life to view. Amongst the more exciting things seen (not necessarily by me) were a large group of cuttlefish, several small stingrays, blue gropers, a family of needle-thin flutemouths, a school of silver drummers and a live murex shell. The find of the day was Liam's discovery of a peculiar-looking fish hiding in a small rocky recess that I later identified from my reference books as a rock ling. It looks a little like a cross between an eel and a catfish – and is supposed to be good eating.



Silver drummers



Golf balls

The most disconcerting encounter was a pair of amateur spearfishers swimming alongside: we quickly put some distance between them and us. The most bizarre discovery was a nest of golf balls! The southern edge of Long Bay runs below the Randwick Golf Course. Snorkellers had evidently been gathering stray golf balls and added them to a now sizeable trove: I contributed 3 more.

Thank you to Liam Heery, Jacqui Joseph, Alison Lyon, Helen Hindin, Karin Erdmann, Yubang Zheng, Safwan Barbour, John Rich and Peter Bonner for sharing in a very pleasant day at the beach.

KAYAKING

Apple Tree Bay

Easy paddle up Cowan Creek

Saturday 5 Dec 2009 Leader: Peter Bonner

Members with canoes/kayaks were asked to come early to my house at Waitara so that we could sort out and load our watercraft and to pick up a 2 person fibreglass canoe on loan from Paul Goessling prior to meeting the train travellers at Waitara station at 9am. All this planning was thrown into confusion by the late cancellation of 2 members, so Paul's canoe was not needed; thanks anyway Paul!

Despite all of this we managed to fit in a late booking and get down to Apple Tree Bay around 10am. Further delay was brought about by an adult who we had previously assisted, with 3 teenagers astride jet skis, blocking the canoe launching ramp. A strong verbal altercation took place when they refused to move and a complaint was later lodged with the NPWS office at Bobbin Head.

Eventually we were on our way and rounding into Bobbin Head. Richard Milnes and I managed to change kayaks without falling in the water at a vacant jetty, as Richard had trouble steering the club kayak 'GNU'. Later we found out that the aluminium rudder pin had broken. This was later replaced with a purchase of some round stainless steel bar, which was machined down to the correct diameter with a cap head, cut to the correct length and drilled to accept a split pin, by John Rich in his workshop. The balance of the s/s bar was given to John Rich for later use.

Our lunch spot was a sandy bank. To get there we paddled past 4 little bays then a straight section to just past the high tension transmission lines, a marker for the lunch spot. Trevor and Dean Cambourne were the first to spot the HT Lines which were very difficult to see against a blue sky, and so won the prize of a Honer mouth organ each.

We were dismayed on landing at the lunch spot to find the area had been vandalised, partly burnt out and strewn with empty and broken Vodka bottles. A quick clean up made the area more or less habitable for lunch and a photo shoot.

On the paddle back we had the advantage of an outgoing tide. Passing through the moored million dollar Motor Yachts and Gin Palaces we debated which boat we would like to have. My eyes fell on a small ketch rigged yacht whilst others opted for one of the floating Gin Palaces. Thankfully on our arrival back at Apple Tree Bay the obnoxious jet skiers were not to be seen.

Everyone helped to load the assorted canoes and kayaks, and some helpers returned to my house for the unloading and placing the Club craft on the racks in my garage. We then enjoyed some of my home made fruit cake washed down with cups of tea...Especial thanks to Dave Cambourne for bringing his BIG canoe which was designated as the Safety Boat, to John Rich for providing an extra kayak and paddling expertise, and to participants Richard Milnes, Sarah Burke, Comelia Shepherd, Chris Bailey, Dean & Trevor Cambourne.

To conclude: a great day on the water, no incidents, no capsizes, no one cut their feet on oyster shells. We sighted numerous water birds and a few fish in the shallows.

Weather: overcast most of the time, with a very hot sun when the clouds parted, light breezes.



From left: Sarah, Cornelia, Richard, John, David and Chris out on a limb. Front: Trevor and Dean



The next ANB committee meeting is Tuesday 13 April 2010 at 6:30pm

All members are welcome ...

Come along and have your say

SEE DETAILS IN YOUR CURRENT PROGRAMME

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

3 May 2010

**SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
jcsteven@unwired.com.au**

**Pictures submitted :
At least 300DPI resolution preferred
to achieve good reproduction quality.**

Notices Notices Notices Notices



From your Committee

**The AGM will be held ...
Sunday 27th June 2010,
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

Do you want your photo taken?

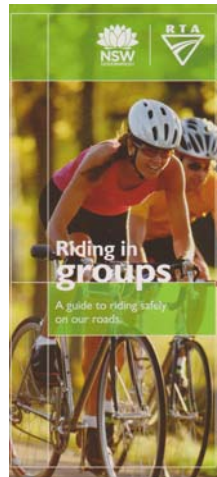
It is common for people to take photos of individuals or groups on walks. These photos may appear in the Club's newsletter or on the Club's website. They may also be sent to other walk participants or be entered in our annual photo competition. Photos are an important way of sharing our experiences and creating a sense of community within the Club.

Some of you may be uncomfortable with having your photo used for these purposes. **If you do, it is important that you let the walk leader know before the start of the activity and opt out of any photos that are taken on the day.** If you don't tell the leader, it will be assumed that you're ok with your photo being taken and used for Club purposes. The waiver form has now been amended to reflect this.

Attention all Cyclists!

This handy brochure is available from the RTA.

It states the **Code of Conduct** for riding in groups, cycling regulations and helpful information for all cyclists.



The Kitchen Shuffle

It's two steps forward and
Four steps back,
I only want to reach the tap!
Then chassé two towards the wall,
Pass right shoulders,
If you've got the gall!
Step to the right,
Select a cup,
Make sure it is the right way up!
Take the coffee, in turn of course,
Watch out for the bottle of tomato sauce!

As luck would have it,
Maybe now,
You'll fill your cup,
Before peak hour!
So now you've got it!
Step and bow,
Select the milk and
stir somehow!

The Kitchen Shuffle,
Ain't it great!
You really must participate.
In the morning, anytime
You know the steps,
You're doing fine!

Select a partner,
or a cup,
Then take your time,
And hurry up!

There's others waiting in the queue,
Step up quickly,
Make your brew.

Well I think that's it from me,
Hope you enjoy your cup of tea!

Mike Waters 2009
Printed with permission

Notice

Unclaimed object found
after Club Xmas party:
1 large plastic slotted spoon

Contact Charles
(04 1725 0817)
if this is yours.



*right: Strollers at
the Christmas
picnic.*

Christmas lights walk, Ashbury

Friday 18 December 2009 Leader: Charles Bowden

About 30 people turned up for this gentle stroll through two blocks of suburban Ashbury. The number of homes lit up seemed to be down on previous years but there were still plenty with winking, blinking, flashing, strobing over-the-top lighting effects to astound and amaze - or disparege if you felt that way inclined!

Reindeer with moving heads seemed to be de rigueur this year but I enjoyed the homes most that had made an attempt to be different. Some displays were elegant in their simplicity.

Although it rained earlier in the day, the weather started to clear in the evening so that we were able to complete the walk dry before ad-journing for canapés and refreshments.

Thank you to all who came and shared in the festivities. The Yuletide spirit carried many of you through to the club's Christmas Party the next day!

Special thanks to Charles who generously provided superb Vietnamese food and his home.- Editor



Photo by Richard Milnes



Photographic Competition

to be held at the next AGM

Sunday 27th June 2010

Photos must have been taken since the previous AGM.

Categories are:

PEOPLE
WATER SCENES
FLORA
FAUNA
NATURE'S 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)

Almost 4 months still to capture that perfect picture.

Annual Christmas picnic BBQ

Parramatta Park, Parramatta



Chef Hugh

A record number of over 40 people attended the Christmas picnic BBQ at Parramatta Park this year. A new site for the club, after 3 years at Bray's Bay Reserve, Rhodes, turned out to be a popular venue; it was time for a change.

Special thanks to David Cunningham who provided the much appreciated large shade shelter, Bob Seibrigh for leading a walk (stroll) around the park and all those who arrived early to help set up and those who stayed behind to ensure the site was left spic and span.



Alison, Moon and Mark with baby Max photos by Charles Bowden

WALK

Up the wrong creek

Sunday 17 Jan 2010 Leader: Charles Bowden

For this walk, I had been inspired by the description of a walk up Galong Creek by Michael Keats in his excellent tome, *Day Walks in Therabulat Country*. What subsequently transpired has no bearing (pun intended) and is in no way a reflection on the book!

After an early start from Sydney, we set off from Dunphy's car park above Carlon's Farm, which is located at the end of the Megalong Valley in the Blue Mountains. It was a sunny day with a relatively brisk breeze which made for pleasurable walking conditions.

The first part of the walk was to make our way via Tin Pot Hill along a spur leading down to Galong Creek. This proved to be much easier than anticipated with a faint track available to us for most of the way until we found an old farm road near the creek. Large grey kangaroos were seen on the slopes, a contrast to the small wallabies bordering the road earlier that morning. For the last few hundred metres we headed across open ground, startling a herd of cattle into a stampede away from us. I was equally as startled, not having thought to find livestock in this area. However the lower slopes were cleared of trees and are presumably still available for grazing.

On reaching Galong Creek we headed across to the northern bank, in part to make sure that we had the correct stream as there was some uncertainty as to whether it was Galong Creek itself or a tributary. Having satisfied ourselves that we had the right one, we continued walking along the creek, crisscrossing from time to time when the way forward looked better on one side or the other.

Progress was at times slow but not too difficult as we negotiated very slippery rocks, dense undergrowth and patches of stinging nettles. Water was flowing quite strongly and at one point we found in the creek what I now believe to be a type of nematode. It was unusually long, about 40-50cm, and incredibly thin, no thicker than a pine needle. The body felt slightly rough and brittle to touch. It was hard to make out its head which was no thicker than the rest of the body, just a fraction darker in colour. But it could whip its head up quite quickly when handled. Later research seems to point the finger at a type of roundworm of which there are both parasitical and free-living versions.

We stopped for lunch next to a small cascade in a shady glade. Here we discovered that leeches had also been hitching a ride, to the consternation of some.

I had been looking forward to reaching by lunchtime the canyon-like sections as described in the book but the creek hadn't widened or deepened appreciably. It was then that David expressed concern that the creek hadn't changed direction as indicated on the map. After a few moments, we realised that at some point we had missed the junction with a major tributary where Galong Creek then starts to head south-east. Belatedly using our GPS and the map, we then realised that we had been following Stanhope Creek for the past couple of hours. I should have been paying closer attention to the navigation and direction of travel!

After some discussion, we decided to abandon the Galong Creek plan as the time taken to retrace our steps would

probably not have allowed us a sufficient margin to complete the trip. Instead we could see that Stanhope Creek would eventually emerge at the top of a ridge where large transmission lines marched across the countryside. We could then use these to guide us back to the road leading to Carlon's Farm.



Stanhope Creek & walkers



Cascade Crossing

After lunch we continued up Stanhope Creek. A tricky section of wet slippery rock onto which a small cascade was splashing provided a test which all passed successfully without falling into the pool below. It was then a steady and gradually steeper climb up the creek until we left it to take a spur leading up to the ridge and the transmission lines.

From here it was easy walking across fields following the transmission lines until we reached the road. The walk back along the road was enlivened with a couple of adventurously steep downhill shortcuts to offset some hairpin bends before reaching Carlon's Farm and the short trudge up to Dunphy's carpark.

Thank you to Liam Heery and Bob Seibrigt for sharing the trailblazing duties, and to Chyanne Ali, Alison Lyon, Jacqui Joseph, Nick Collins, Alex Cuestas, Meiha Cheung and David Perkins for their forbearance and good humour. It was, after all, an exploratory walk. Another attempt on Galong Creek will be made soon!

FULL PACK WALK

“The Castle”

Budawang National Park

23-24 January 2010 Leader: Liam Heery

The walk to The Castle in the Budawang National Park is one of the iconic walks in NSW and it has been on my “most wanted list” for some time.

After a 4wd trip close by last year, with enticing views of The Castle and Pigeon House Mountain, I made it a priority to tick off this walk, and this weekend was the perfect opportunity.

As luck would have it, the weather was becoming hotter and hotter in the days leading up to the walk and as we were driving through Nowra the outside gauge in the car hit 40 degrees! The Gods were on our side though, as when we reached Milton, 15 minutes later the temperature had plummeted to a cool 27 degrees.

Due to a total fire ban we had planned to do without cooking stoves and had replaced their weight with enough water in case we couldn't find any in the bush.

Arriving at Long Gully camp site we met a group of bushwalkers from Canberra who had decided to call it a day due to the heat and were heading home. Luckily for us the heat had gone and while still humid and warm, we didn't have much difficulty climbing up through Kalianna Ridge to the base of The Castle. From here the going got a lot tougher as you have to scramble over or around boulders and in and out through mallee scrub and tree roots. We also encountered a couple of streams with ample water if we needed it. Now there was no need to conserve the water we carried as we knew we could refill here on the way back.

The going through the mallee scrub and subsequent climb to Meakins Pass took considerably longer than anticipated, so when we reached the saddle and the sign to Cooyoyo Creek campsite, 500 metres away and downhill there was an audible sigh of relief from everyone.



Start of the walk: Bob, Alison, Jacqui, Cheyanne, Annette and Len

Arriving at the campsite, we encountered 5 other people, who were not all that impressed that their quiet campsite had just doubled its population. The campsite is well set up with a central fire place (which unfortunately we could not use, due to the fire ban), satellite tent sites all around, one of the best look-outs in NSW, a flowing creek nearby and a well maintained toilet.

As most of us had brought cold dinners it wasn't long before we were in party mode and sharing stories, laughs and a few glasses of wine, port and whisky!

The next morning we took our time striking camp as a misty cloud engulfed The Castle above. In vain hope we looked to the skies to see if the sun was going to shine through and burn the mist away.

With positive minds we headed back up to the saddle to drop our packs and then headed off to climb The Castle proper.

Passing the “tunnel” on the way we found the marked route and our first obstacle. A boulder atop a cliff face to be scaled requiring strong hand holds to swing you around and over to a gully leading up the tadpole tail of the castle.

The route up from here requires a lot of scrambling and occasionally we needed to take our packs off to either hand them up or so that we could fit through some tight cracks and crevices that could present a challenge to larger members of the community.

The challenge was not over yet, as we then encountered the final and most exciting climb to the top, which was reached by a series of climbs up the exposed cliff face aided by ropes already in place (though getting more faded and dangerous with each use), which were used to abseil up the cliff face.



Tight fit: Bob, Alison

At last we reached the top and are now “Castle summiteers”. However, due to the mist and heavy cloud, there was nothing to see and after walking to the highest point we decided it wasn't worthwhile going right to the end. On our way we encountered a broad headed snake, very beautiful with yellow and black stripes. It is the only endangered venomous snake in Australia and lives only around the Sydney basin and Southern Highlands. A privilege to see and a great find.

Taking leave of The Castle, we headed down and retrieved our packs. The weather had now become wet and, as we re-entered the mallee scrub, we were drenched through from the dew on the vegetation. Going down was as tough as coming up and again took longer than anticipated. However, once off The Castle and back onto Kalianna Ridge the weather improved and we dried off very quickly.

It wasn't long before we got back to the cars at Long Gully and headed into Milton where we all had huge pizzas resulting in bloated stomachs as we headed back to Sydney.

Thanks to Jacqueline Joseph, Alison Lyon, Bob Seibrigh, Cheyanne Ali, Len Sharp and Annette Sudan for helping me realise one of my dreams.

Welcome to 11 New Members

Louis Goh

Louis Nguyen

Marina Santisteban

Sarah Burke

Susanne Berkeley

James Stitt

Anastasia Sewell

Gisel (Cornelia) Shepherd

David Ross

Jane Lewis

Annette Houghton

See you in the bush



Change of Details

Don't forget to notify
Treasurer Richard Milnes
of any of the following -

- change in address,
- email address
- phone numbers.

Phone: 0416 925 245 or
email us at -
anbcomm@hotmail.com

Club night

Friday 12 February 2010

Organiser: Liam Heery

The club's new projector was put to the test this night and came up with flying colours. It is very simple to use and the clarity of the pictures was well received.

The inaugural showing was of the club walk to The Castle in the Budawang National Park. It was clear from the photos that climbing to the top of the castle is not for the faint hearted and even Len's hat had trouble fitting through some of the rock crevices.

Next up was a range of very interesting photos from Shanghai that Yoko had taken on her last trip there, very awe inspiring and a tribute to Chinese development.

This was followed by David's photos of his recent trip down memory lane and through Wilsons Promontory and into the Snowy Mountains, where he was looking for suitable locations for future club walks. Going by the pictures there are many choices.

Staying with the Snowy theme, Liam showed pictures of the 4 day walk taken over the New Year period from Guthega to Mt Kosciuszko. It was interesting to see ice flows still around at this time of year, and also to see how quickly the Snowy River can come up with rain and become a raging torrent.

Charles then entertained us with photos of walks around New Caledonia and places where he would like to organise a club expedition to in the future. Let's hope this comes through as some of the locations are pretty "exotique".



Tight fit - Len

Check out this issue on our club website -
www.bushwalking.org.au/~allnations

**to view the colour edition of Keeping Track
plus extra pages of great photos**

Just click on 'NEWS'

HERITAGE FESTIVAL 2010 Programme 9 - 24 April

Organised annually by the National Trust
Collect a programme from your local library

*Featuring history walks in your local area
and historic houses rarely open to the public.*

Extra events are listed on the website : www.nationaltrust.com.au

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

Bola Creek to Palona Brook

18 Oct 2009

Photos by Safwan Barbour



Bola Creek



Palona Cave Group

Spit to Manly walk

2 Nov 2009

Photos by Fenella Walter



Adele & Meiha



Lunch break at Forty Baskets Beach



Colbee Knob

Christmas BBQ/picnic

Photo by Charles Bowden



“The Castle”

Budawang National Park

23-24 January 2010 Photos by Liam Heery



Climbing into the mist, Jacqui

Up the wrong creek

17 Jan 2010 Photos by Charles Bowden



Group photo



Nematode



Endangered Broad Headed snake