



all nations
BUSHWALKERS INC



Spring Newsletter
September 2009

PO Box Q23 Queen Victoria Building,
NSW 1230
www.bushwalking.org.au/~allnations

Keeping Track

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

Marley Track

24 May 2009

Leader: Terry Redmond

There had been showers forecast and the heavy swell left over from the weeks' weather had closed the ferry but on the day we headed off under blue skies. Hugh and I did a father and son tag-team and alternated between lead and last man.

It was a collection of new faces and old. There were the old regulars of Alison, Bob, Charles, Hugh and myself. Back for more was new member Sue as well as Irish visitor, Gaye. A special welcome to two new members who joined on the day - David Cunningham and Phil Spacey. Both a wise and a bold move, gentlemen!

In the welcome speech I introduced the concept of "walker etiquette". Have any of you walk leaders ever led a walk where you stopped for 10 seconds to choose a path and immediately had someone behind you say:

"Are you *lost*?" "Do you *know* where we are going?" "Are you sure *that* is the right path?"

It can be disconcerting (I will refrain from using the word rude) when you have taken the time and trouble to fully scout the walk and then have someone question your sense of direction, memory and general intelligence. With this in mind the group was asked to refrain from such comments and except for one culprit (who would not identify himself on the day) it all went smoothly.

First point of call was the headland above Big Marley where we had morning tea and watched as Charles danced along the cliff edges looking for photo opportunities. It was quite dangerous as all could see that some of the rock edges were mere inches thick and we all hoped that Charles had not had a big breakfast.



We could see from all the white water why the ferry had been cancelled. Testament to the size of the seas was the huge tree trunk that had washed up on the beach (see group photo).

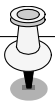
Then we headed inland, checking out an old derelict building with concrete flooring no less. Charles insightfully identified it as probably a WW2 coast watching station.

Lunch was at the feature spot of the day, Deer Pool, which was complete with a working waterfall. It provided a delight to both eyes and ears. I'm happy to report that Alison managed her second creek fording for the day without mishap. If you keep this up, Alison, you will destroy your "wet" reputation inside the club.

We continued up the hill till we reached the bitumen road and then set a brisk pace to get away from the weekend traffic. Arriving back near Bundeena we found we were ahead of schedule. Because there were so many hard-core walkers in the group, it was voted on and decided we would extend the walk to Jibbon Point.

All later agreed it was worth it. On the overland track, we came across a glorious flock of lorikeets. Arriving on the coast, Bob fossicked around and found what we voted to be a "shark's tooth". Our reason for the detour though had been to view the aboriginal rock carvings. As Bob and I had "primed" the group, several noticed the hammerhead shark. Only when they looked at it from the other direction did they see that it could have also been a wallaby (or a roo riding a surf board).

One notable moment, at the end of the walk, was when Hugh and I were taking up the rear and we came around the corner and saw the group on a little headland overlooking Jibbon Beach. Many had hands on hips and all were admiring the view in the late afternoon light. The walk was almost over but it seemed such a pity to end such a great day. All conveyed a well deserved sense of contentment and accomplishment. Watching them standing proudly there was a lovely reward for the work Hugh and I had put in.



Welcome to the Spring Edition of 'Keeping Track'.

In the Spring Program we have introduced a new walk grading system. The aim is to have a more objective measure of a walk's level of difficulty, based on a range of factors such as the distance, terrain and elevation. Of course the grading also depends on your own fitness and experience. It may change depending on the weather on the day. If you have any doubts or questions about the grading, please discuss these with the walk leader beforehand. Thanks to Nick Collins and the other club members who helped develop the new grading system. I hope you will find it a useful guide to future walks.

The Club is always looking for more walk leaders. We have introduced leaders' meetings into the program for experienced, new and potential leaders to share their ideas. Keep a lookout for these meetings in future programs. Leading a walk need not be difficult or onerous - just ask an experienced leader for guidance if you're interested. We also welcome ideas for other outdoor activities such as kayaking and social events such as restaurant nights.

Finally I would like to thank past committee members for their contribution to the Club. Liam Heery has made a valuable contribution as President over the last three years, bringing a great deal of energy and new ideas to the Club. Tom Whitehead meticulously looked after our finances as Treasurer. Peter Bonner enthusiastically courted new members in his role as Membership Inquiries Officer. The Club now has a new committee with a mixture of experienced members and new faces. We look forward to working with you, the members, to continue making the Club work for you.

Enjoy the bush this spring.

Suseela Durvasula
President

Change of Details

Don't forget to notify Treasurer Richard Milnes of any
●change in address, ●email address
●Phone numbers.
Phone: 0416 925 245 or email us at
anbcomm@hotmail.com



Answer to the last photo quiz - Len Sharp

WALK

Mill Creek Dharug National Park

Sunday 19 April 2009 Leader: Liam Heery

The Mill Creek area is a favourite of mine as there are many variations that can be used to link a number of tracks together and have an interesting and different walk experience each time we go there.

This walk was not to prove an exception to that rule!

After meeting most people at Pennant Hills station we headed off for Wisemans Ferry and then met up with our last two walkers at Mill Creek itself. Unfortunately I had been experiencing some bad back pain over the past couple of weeks so was unsure of how far I was going to be able to go. In explaining our planned routes I pointed out to everyone, potential "get out" points if I had to curtail the walk in any way.

Thankfully everyone understood my dilemma and were very supportive in whatever decision I would have to make.

It was a wettish day in that showers were forecast, and it had rained the day before, so the ground and scrub were fairly wet.

This meant that it wasn't long before we encountered our first leech attack! And attack us they did! It became a screeching competition as to who had the most leeches on them!

Luckily the members of the ANB are tough and were not going to let a blood sucking slug interfere with their enjoyment of the bush.

Although the lyrebirds in the area may now have a completely new vocabulary to mimic and sing.

As with any off-track expedition (and this was one) we navigated through an area unplanned for and approached our lunch spot (an extensive aboriginal carving site) from a completely new direction.

The going was tough and a medium walk quickly turned into a hard one!

The hard terrain was a good antidote to the leeches who now became a secondary consideration. We eventually reached our lunch spot, just as a torrential downpour opened upon us.

Unbelievably this was to be the highlight of the day. As soon as it ended we were left with the most amazing aboriginal carvings that hitherto were unrecognisable. There were people, dreamtime figures, kangaroos, emus, foot prints, shields, and much more jumping from the rock platform all around us, for all to see.

After lunch we headed off in a new direction and again found a new track that led us out and back to the Mill Creek circuit, which after some discussion we decided to finish and take the circular route back to our cars.

After de-leeching (although not too successfully for some) we headed back to Carlingford Bowling Club where we had a great recovery meal.

Thanks to Jacqui, Bob, Alison, Charles, Faye, Diane, Andy and Len for putting up with my slightly off navigation on a wet day, but one that proved to be very rewarding.

Notice board

Our New Committee

President	Suseela Durvasula
Secretary	Allison Lyon
Treasurer	Richard Milnes
Programme Co-ordinator	Catharina Muller
Membership enquiries	Bob Seibrigh
Newsletter Editor	Jan Steven
Web Administration	Charles Bowden

Congratulations Mark and Moon

Our bushwalking club produces more than great walks.

Our wedding and family function was held at Wentworth Falls at a lovely historic B&B.



Our baby ... Max was born on the 8.05.09 at 6:25 am weighing 8lb.

He is a very happy boy and much loved by both our families.



Mark and Moon

Membership Cards Reminder

This is proof of your current membership and should be carried with you on all club activities.

Present your ANB card at *Alpsport Ryde* and *Paddy Pallin Sydney, Chatswood* and *Miranda* stores to enjoy **10% discount off full priced items.**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

AGM 12 July 2009

The past year has been a year filled with numerous and varied activities. They have included the normal walks which are and will continue to be the mainstay of the club, to camping on foot, by bicycle and by car. We also have varied social activities from the regular restaurant nights to theatre outings and regular games nights. Our photo nights also continue to be well attended. During the summer we go snorkelling and in winter indoor climbing. For those looking for something eerie there are night walks.

All of these activities are put on by you the members and without both the leaders and the attendees we would not have such a strong club. I thank you all for both attending and leading.

This year we have had a few new leaders who always infuse something new and different. I would encourage you all to give it a go.

With that in mind there will be a new position created on the committee to encourage new leaders and help out existing ones if required. So now there will be no excuse to anyone not putting on a walk in the future.

This year has also seen the proposed development of standards for bushwalking activities. While the response to these proposals is being co-ordinated by Confederation, it is highly likely that we as a club will have to consider adopting whatever proposals eventuate. This could mean that all walk leaders will be required to have a first aid certificate and also have a qualification to be a walk leader. We should not be afraid of any of these developments and in fact should embrace them. The more people in the club with first aid training the better for the club and the community as a whole. In relation to qualifications, any current leader will be well able to gain whatever qualification might be required. I would also envisage that the club would be supportive financially (as we are currently towards first aid qualifications) if that was necessary.

This year we have also introduced a tiered membership fee, so that the longer you are a member you will be rewarded with a reduced fee. I encourage everyone to take up this offer and become a long term member.

Finally as this is my last President's report I would like to thank everyone who served on the committee with me. It has been a privilege and altogether enjoyable experience that I would recommend to everyone. The club only functions because of its members and especially those who give up their valuable time to make it all happen.

Liam Heery

EXPLORATORY WALKS

Burralow Creek

Blue Mountains National Park

13th May 2007 to Sunday 5th April 2009

Leader: Len Sharp

This was an exploratory walk up Burralow Creek was completed over four Sundays of fine weather spanning 2 years.

Day 1 Sunday 13th May 2007

Alison, Annette, Charles, Jacqui and Liam made up our party. Two cars were used, with one placed on Bowen Mountain. This was at the locked gate at the top end of Lieutenant Bowen Road, leading to the fire trail to Burralow Creek. The other car was placed at the end of Cabbage Tree Road, Grose Vale, where we commenced the walk.

A side gully is used to access Cabbage Tree Creek via a short distance off-track. The faint track on the creek is then followed downstream to the intersection at Burralow Creek. Crossing Cabbage Tree Creek and accessing Burralow Creek involves a difficult scramble over slippery rocks and a tangle of shrubs but the effort is worth it as the southern side of Burralow is open and sunny; the best place for morning tea.

A short distance upstream the floor of the creek is flat, smooth rock with the narrow stream meandering through it and interspersed with huge boulders. This is what motivated me for further exploration, following a previous walk by Nick Collins when we took a side trip to here for morning tea.

Walking was easy initially, just crossing from side to side on the smooth rock bed of the creek and finding a way through the huge boulders. However, the character of the creek changed fairly quickly and we found it easier to walk along the rock ledges on the southern side to avoid the thick shrubs. These ledges eventually petered out and we were forced back onto the sides of the creek.

The vegetation changes again as the valley narrows and rainforest becomes dominant for almost the remainder of the creek. This has advantages and disadvantages for walkers. There is less thick vegetation under the tree canopy but there are many tangled tree roots amongst the rocks littering the bed of the creek.

At one stage girl power staged a competition to find the best way through, the challenge was met and fizzled out to cries from the serial complainer of "wait, you didn't wait!"

We encountered a jumble of massive boulders blocking the creek and creating a small waterfall. This was overcome by climbing through the branches of a tree on the left and then swinging up and across a gap in the boulders to gain the heights.

The increase in height put us above the canopy and back into the sunshine for a short while. A pool was



Mossy boulder

created behind the waterfall and then the narrow stream started again upstream together with the rainforest. Watergums lined the banks under the canopy and sometimes it was easier to walk at the base of the small cliff lines where the vegetation is thinner.

Eventually the inevitable cry went up for a lunch break but we needed somewhere clear of vegetation and some sunlight. By this time we were on the southern bank of the creek dodging among small boulders and watergums. We progressed further upstream and then spotted a large flat rock in the middle of the creek, which was ideal for lunch. At this stage it was decided to finish the creek exploration for the day and look for a way out. We still didn't know if we could find a way through the upper cliff lines and wanted to start looking while there was still plenty of daylight.

For our days effort we had explored 1.7km of Burralow Creek out of a total of 7.8km planned to the final exit where the fire trail crossed the creek.

A cliff came down to the water's edge on the eastern side opposite the lunch spot. This had to be overcome first and I noticed the rock strata in the cliff sloped down to a gully on our left. It had a small waterfall about three metres high. A small boulder on the left of the gully gave access to the lower ledge. It was a matter then of following this underneath the almost dry waterfall and along the ledge's upward slope to the right. The next ledge was easily accessed and then by climbing up and around the base of a tree we gained the scree slope leading to the upper cliff lines. A look at the map showed this as a possible route to the top, as any further move to our right ended in a very high cliff extending almost from the creek to the ridge top.



Descending through cleft in cliff line

The scree slope was not too steep, fairly clear of scrub, with sandy ground and plenty of trees to hold onto. We reached the first of the upper cliff lines and found a way up. The next was tricky with some mild exposure but Liam found a way through and we were up. Another slope led us to the ridge top and as there was still plenty of daylight left we took the opportunity to go to the cliff edge for the views.

We were rewarded for our efforts with great views to Vale Lookout below us to the left (south-east), Burralow Creek below us at our feet and beyond it Paterson Hill and the Grose River valley (south), and to our right (north-west) Burralow Creek; still to be explored. Charles' antics in taking photos at the cliff edge had my heart in my mouth, but it was a great spot for photos.

It was then easy walking along the open ridge top for 2.4km as we soon came across a track and fire trail leading to the first of the houses at Bowen Mountain on Lieutenant Bowen Drive. I made a mental note for our future exploration to drop off the side of this

ridge using the scree slope to access the gully floor and so avoid the upper cliffs we had climbed.

At the locked gate all that remained was an urban walk of 3.4 km to the car at the top of Bowen Mountain and the recovery of the second car. However Charles wanted to follow the fire trail to the east, running parallel, which we did. The shock of suburbia needed to be taken in small doses.

For our recovery I selected the historic Windsor Hotel, but our gourmets took one look and decided to go elsewhere after one beer. I then suggested the popular fish and chip shop across the road and so we dined alfresco under the gas heaters, entertained by the caged macaw.

Day 2 Sunday 7th October 2007

Alison, Andrew Connon (a friend of Tu's), Annette, Charles, Jacqui and Tu made up the party for this day. Two cars were used, one placed at the locked gate on Bowen Mountain where we had entered suburbia at the end of day 1 and the other at the Bush Fire Brigade (BFB) centre on Lieutenant Bowen Drive.

The day did not start out too well as I picked the incorrect branch of the fire trail leading to our previous exit ridge. I advised the group to have morning tea while the error was sorted out and corrected. Mention must be made here of the support provided by Andrew who volunteered to help me locate the correct trail.

As mentioned above for day 1, the intention was to drop off the ridge before the cliff lines. This we did, encountering small cliffs in the scree slope, but these were easily overcome. A series of tables were discovered and it was decided to follow these as the route was going in our intended direction, to the floor of the gully. We found ourselves in the wrong branch of our gully and so we backtracked a bit.

Having found the correct one, we proceeded under the rainforest canopy, climbing under or over fallen trees and negotiated a drop in the gully floor. Eventually we came to a large waterfall and despite the best efforts of Tu there was no way down to the front or right of us.

I noticed that a scree slope ran up to our left from under the waterfall and ended at the base of a small cliff. The cliff gradually became lower the further away from our position. Tu and I made for it, found a way down and then I recognised the slope used for our exit previously. It led to the sloping strata in the final cliff line giving access to our objective, Burrell Creek.

All of this backtracking took valuable time and left little for the real exploration of the creek.

The rainforest environment encountered previously predominated and did not present any unfamiliar challenges. Bracken fern on the sides of the creek had become more noticeable however. At a point in the vicinity of MacLeod Creek entering from the west, we decided that it was time to find our way out. We had covered only 1km along Burrell Creek for the day. A scree slope to the left of a gully and covered in bracken fern led us directly from the creek. There was not an intervening cliff line, yet. Eventually the top cliff lines were encountered and overcome for us by Tu and Liam.

We were soon on a fire trail heading north and leading into several more trails at the western side of houses. Our group became split up here and some of us overshoot what turned out to be the trail leading to the Fire Brigade centre. We ended up in a backyard and asked some children for permission to go through. The rest of our group were further to the north but eventually found their way through to Pamela Crescent and then we all regrouped at the car. The rear of the unattended BFB centre provided some privacy for changing into our recovery gear in the middle of Bowen Mountain suburbia.

Our recovery was held at the Jolly Frog Hotel, Windsor.

Day 3 Sunday 2nd March 2008

Alison, Amy Holtan, Bob, David Perkins, Jacqui, Liam and Nick made up the party for this day. Two cars were used and placed on Bowen Mountain. One was placed at the locked gate at the top end of Lieutenant Bowen Road, leading to the fire trail to Burrell Creek. The other was placed at the BFB centre on Lieutenant Bowen Drive where we started the day's exploration.

We went out through the back of the BFB centre and onto the correct fire trail leading to our last exit point. It was then just a matter of dropping off the side of the ridge and negotiating our way down to Burrell Creek around various cliff lines. It was impossible from the top to find the exact way we came out last time.



Liam on overhang

We made good progress up the creek this time. The vegetation was still mainly rainforest but the watergums had thinned out, and there were fewer rocks. We kept mainly to the right-hand side, sometimes at the water's edge or higher up at the base of small cliff lines where the vegetation is often thinner, or on hillside terraces. On one of these terraces a fallen tree lay across our path and we had to be careful finding the way safely through its branches. The fallen tree had cleared the canopy and we entered a welcome spot of sunlight for a short period.

Somewhere along the creek we must have stopped for morning tea and lunch, but my memory is a blank as far as describing the locations.

Not far from our exit point we came across a thick and flanged metal pipe lying at right angles to the creek. The pipe was approximately four metres long. Had it been used in the past for properties above us on the mountain? It was interesting to speculate. At the point agreed for our exit, the bank of the creek was relatively flat and clear of undergrowth and would make for a reasonable campsite. We walked up the slope to the left of a gully and reached the ridge top without too much difficulty.

Liam and Nick had their GPS's and used them to record our exit. A fire trail was soon encountered and I asked Nick at one intersection in which direction the BFB centre was. The complex trail system (to us at that stage of our knowledge) was then successfully negotiated back there.

This day proved the best so far for distance walked on the creek; we walked along it for 2.1km.

Our recovery was once again held at the Jolly Frog Hotel, Windsor.

Day 4 (Final) Sunday 5th April 2009

Alison, Charles, Jacqui and Liam made up our party for day 4. Only one car was used and placed at the BFB centre on Bowen Mountain.

Leaving through the back of the BFB centre we attempted once again to find the correct fire trail based on my memory from twelve months previously.

Liam tried to help with his GPS but was not sure at what point he had started recording our route out on day 3. Also we didn't have Nick's GPS to correlate with Liam's. Eventually by a system of trial and error we think we got it right and proceeded down the slope, through small cliff lines, terraces and some thick scratchy scrub to the creek.

The sides of the creek were covered in ferns, making it difficult to place the feet confidently. Also the creek did not have the rainforest canopy where we had exited on day 3. It was also narrower here and there was a high bank opposite us. The question then arose, was it THE creek or a side creek? Firstly it was flowing in the correct direction from the right to our left and I felt reasonably confident that it was not a side creek and so took the decision to proceed upstream. It was found easier to avoid the scratchy bushes and ferns by walking at the base of terraces or cliff lines, as we had done on previous days. If I was correct in the assumption that we were on Buralow Creek then the compass bearing should indicate the creek changing direction to our right a short distance upstream. This indicated the start of the largest bend in the creek for our whole exploration. The map also indicated the creek becomes broader in the first section. It proved to be correct and the creek was deeper making any crossing more difficult. It was not necessary to cross however and we followed the right-hand bank for the whole distance around the bend for a distance of 1.5km.

It was not all that easy to negotiate the creek in the big bend and we encountered a large cliff rising from the waters edge. A small ledge at the waters edge was followed for a short distance but it soon petered out. I decided to look for a way up and over the cliff. Liam tried to continue negotiating the ledge by what became toe and finger holds. Leaving him to it a way was found above on a very steep and loose slope of soil and leaves.

The way down was via groups of trees on the slope leading into a side gully on the upstream side of the cliff. Ledges in the small cliff line of the gully provided the steps needed to rejoin Buralow creek.

From here I gave directions to the group for the line to follow and join me. Liam had by now given up in his attempts and joined the others. I was then told that Charles had nearly gone for a dive off the cliff due to the loose soil. Luckily for me he was out of sight at the time otherwise it would have been a worry.



Liam crossing the creek

Further along after the bend we came across a large concrete slab on the bank showing signs of being used as a bed for some machinery. This was some indication that we were getting closer to the former property of "Boomanulla" on the edge of Buralow Swamp upstream. This former property is now part of the Blue Mountains National Park and has become the Buralow Picnic and Camping area.

The cliffs on the sides of the creek had now receded and the valley opened up. Also the creek had become shallower with a sandy bed. Cries went up for lunch and Charles spotted a small tree, which had fallen, across the creek a short distance behind us. We backtracked and used it to cross to the other bank using our individual styles.

Before crossing we noticed that leeches had attached themselves to some of us. This wasn't a bad record since it was the first time over our whole four-day exploration.

The bank opposite had sunshine with small sandy clearings amongst the low vegetation and shrubs. It looked a reasonable spot for lunch, but the serial complainer was not happy. It was demanded that the leader find another spot but there wasn't any nearby. Lunch was abandoned and we decided to have it later.



Alison on the bridge photos - Charles Bowden

We now proceeded in from the left-hand bank, heading upstream, weaving amongst the shrubs in a tea tree swamp. The ground was only damp and occasionally cut by small streams. At last through a gap in the shrubs we could see the yellow dirt of a fire trail and then there was the railing of the steel bridge. We quickened our pace and broke out through the last of the shrubs onto the road. The exploration was over and congratulatory handshakes were given all round. We crossed the bridge, noting the tannin-coloured water, and used the wide clearing formed by the bend in the fire trail to have lunch, after more de-leeching.

It only remained for us to walk 3.6km and 170 metres gain in height up the hill to the locked gate on the fire trail.

At the top we passed the Crago Observatory of Astronomical Society of NSW. It was a short distance from the locked gate where we had left a car previously, and yet surprisingly we had not noticed it around the slight bend.

Another 1.9km of urban walking on Bowen Mountain saw us back at the car.

The recovery, at the suggestion of Liam and Jacqui was held at a club out Carlingford way, I think, from memory.

Thanks to all who participated in this marathon extended exploration.

FEATURE

Walking the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, Spain (Again)

by Elizabeth Saadeh

This walk initially was a religious pilgrimage going back to the 11th century, when faithful Catholics made the journey to the Cathedral of Santiago in northeastern Spain, where the bones of the apostle St. James are supposedly buried. In the early days it was quite a dangerous journey: robbers, dogs, cold, discomfort, etc., but since it became popular a decade or 2 ago, the EU has put a lot of money into it. Now the path is well marked, and has not only your basic bunk bed refugios, but many private albergues and pensiones now.



3 years ago I walked the Camino from Pamplona to Leon with a friend. This time 6 of us started in Leon and made it the 326km to Santiago, carrying between 8.5 and 11.5 kilos in our backpacks.

Starting on 8 May, over the 14 days we averaged about 23km per day. Our first day was flat, boring, and partially industrial getting out of Leon. We stopped 2 days in Astorga to rest and visit Gaudi's bishop's palace. The following day we passed the "Cowboy Bar" which is the beginning of the cold weather. We also spent a few hours in the 12th through 14th century castle at Ponferrada.



Once in the province of Galicia it is green, mountainous, beautiful and COLD. It is reminiscent of Scotland, with thistles on the highlands. The small cafes serve up steaming bowls of Caldo Gallego, a hearty bean-greens-potato soup/stew. From Villafranca del Bierzo we elect to take the Pradela route (the hard one) over the mountain. The track initially goes up at a 45 degree angle or more. Much to our surprise we encounter not only some bicyclists up there, but a German woman pushing a pram with a crying 5-year old. We continued to see her along our route for several days.

O'Cebreiro on the mountaintop was a charming town, but the next day our worst walking day. Freezing cold rain and wind soaked



even my waterproof boots. The one small café we found for a café con leche was crammed with frozen pilgrim walkers. Finally arriving at our destination we found a private albergue who washed and dried all our clothes! I guess only one really bad weather day isn't too much to take.

The next day we deserved a short day, so stayed in Samos so we could tour the huge monastery, said to be one of the oldest in Europe. In the quite large town of Sarria some of us had a much needed massage.

You meet a lot of interesting people on the Camino, although less so when travelling with a group of friends. Two people are ideal, though there are also many many single walkers. The section of the Camino we did has more beautiful scenery and is more rural than many other parts of the Camino (the entire length of the main branch of the Camino in northern Spain is 800km).

After arriving in Santiago (rainiest city in Spain) and having a wonderful 3-day rest, 4 of us returned to Leon, rented a car, and drove to the Picos de Europa, a beautiful Swiss-like mountain range north of Leon. We did some good walking there, one day (in late May) through piles of snow after taking the funicular up the mountain.

When finally it was down to just me and John, we crossed into France. Though we did few walks there, we did hire bicycles in Beaune, for wine tasting in Burgundy and in Blois, for visiting the grand chateaux along the Loire, and had free city bikes in Bayonne/Biarritz.



In spite of the morning croissants with butter we managed to not gain weight, so guess we did enough exercise!

THE ALL NATIONS PHOTO COMPETITION 2009

Held at the AGM July 12, 2009

And the winners were...

Nick Collins (3)

Richard Milnes

Pan Wen Jun

Andrew McCrae

Winners each received prize certificates with vouchers for \$20.

The winners were decided by member's votes.

Our thanks to organiser Len Sharp and to all those who entered.



PEOPLE -
Andrew McCrae



FLORA - Nick Collins



FAUNA - Richard Milnes

Snap that special photo at a club activity to enter the 2010 photo competition...

Snap that special photo at a club activity to enter the 2010 photo competition...



WATER SCENES - Nick Collins

CAMPING - Pan Wen Jun



NATURE'S WONDERS - Nick Collins



The winning photos along with other entries are available for viewing in colour within the Club's Website and the Yahoo Groups page.

You will find them grouped in an album called -
"Photo Competition 2009"
within the 'Photos' folder.

ROGAINE

Wombats and Wallabies

Paddy Pallin Rogaine

13-14 June 2009 Co-ordinator: Charles Bowden

This year's NSW Paddy Pallin 6-hour rogaine was held on the banks of the Shoalhaven River, near Nowra. The site was a camping area called Coolendel on the edge of Yalwal State Forest, a lovely grassy location with toilet & shower block (with hot water!) and plenty of firewood. It was easily the best PP rogaining site we have encountered.



The Group - David, Shu, Charles, Len, Alison

After checking in at the camp office, we were astounded to see a large wombat quietly grazing by the track leading to the camping areas. We quickly pulled off the road to take photos. The wombat seemed unconcerned so we crept closer and closer until eventually we came within touching distance. This all seemed rather improbable so I concluded that it must be a pet, unlike the swamp wallaby a little further off who was of a shyer disposition and bounded into the bush as soon as we came within 20 metres.

We left the wombat and located a suitable campsite only to find ourselves surrounded by more wombats of all sizes, unconcernedly trundling around on the lush grass of the camping area. It turns out that they are not pets at all but are so accustomed to campers that they wander around at will. We had to make sure that our tents did not block the access routes to their burrows in case they bulldozed their way through!

We spent a pleasant night around the campfire which had been boosted by Len's fuel bottle when conventional lighting methods failed miserably. It certainly warded off the chill as did the excellent meal provided by the event's caterers, the indefatigable Waitara Scouts. The menu included beef with Guinness and lamb korma curry!



ANB1 at the finish

The following morning we rose early to get maps and course notes to plan our route. We had formed two teams: ANB 1 (aka the Wombats) were David and Shu and ANB 2 (aka the Wallabies) were Len, Alison and myself. David had already indicated his intention not to run so I felt that he would be a suitable partner for Shu who was undertaking her first rogaine. Alison was fresh from successfully completing a half-marathon so it was up to Len and myself to try to keep up with her.

The first part of the course chosen by the Wallabies went without a hitch and we quickly found our navigational rhythm, finding several early controls in quick succession. However our confidence received a significant dent when we had to abandon the hunt for control 74, supposedly at the head of a gully, after an hour of fruitless searching in half a dozen gullies. 70 points was a large number to forego and it was with keen anticipation that we headed for control 102, hoping to restore our dignity with 100 points, the highest possible score for a single control. It was not to be: this control proved equally as elusive in spite of another even longer search. We had wasted over 3 hours (half the allotted time) trying to find these two controls so we eventually decided to shorten our route so that we could make it to the finish in time. Alison took this as an invitation to pick up the pace and over several stretches had us running (not jogging) to ensure that no further time was lost unnecessarily. As a result, we now know how to tire out the normally indefatigable Len: make him run! The only problem was that I was brought almost to a standstill! It's a good thing that we had fine weather and some pleasant views along the way.



ANB2 at the finish

The Wombats took a slightly different course, keeping initially closer to the river. As they ventured inland David's navigation skills came to the fore and they succeeded in finding control 74, apparently further down the gully than the course notes had indicated. They made steady progress over the remainder of the

course, ultimately finishing 250 points ahead of the Wallabies, a great result: shades of the Tortoise and the Hare!

For those with a statistical bent:

Wombats (ANB 1): 660 points, 101st out of 220 teams, 54th Mixed

Wallabies (ANB 2): 410 points, 167th out of 220 teams, 96th Mixed, 67th Veterans

(Outright winners: 1670 points; Mixed winners: 1570 points; Veterans winners: 1530 points)

Congratulations and thank you to Len Sharp, David Perkins, Shu Fan and Alison Lyon for taking part in a very enjoyable weekend and for politely ignoring the bad language late in the day from yours truly, still fuming pointlessly over the 'lost' controls!

Thank you too to Gillian Perkins for the photos.

WALK REPORT

Epping to Chatswood - ABOVE GROUND FREE FOOT TRANSPORT

Sunday 14 June 2009

Leader: Nick Collins

That's how I advertised this walk.

Nineteen fine souls took up the 14 June challenge. We walked free of charge from Epping station to Chatswood station, and many of us returned via the \$3.80 brand spanking new underground rail link.

The return bit took 17 minutes and was warm, clean, and comfortable.



The Group setting out



Taking a break



A great line in rainwear



Waiting for the train at Chatswood

The above ground version took 7 hours to cover the 19km of mainly bush tracks along the Lane Cove valley.

It was a bit cool, and a bit wet towards the end, but what the hell, it was a good day out.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

3 November 2009

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO.....

jcsteven@unwired.com.au

Pictures submitted - 300DPI resolution preferred to achieve good reproduction quality

WALK

Galaxies of Glow Worms

Wollemi National Park

Sunday 21 June 2009 Leader: Charles Bowden

After gathering at Strathfield on a wet and cloudy morning, nine walkers set off in 2 vehicles for the Glow Worm Tunnel in Wollemi National Park. This is one of the longer road trips for a day walk, involving some 150 km including 35km of dirt road. It took us about 2 ¾ hours and fortunately we had two 4WD vehicles that could handle the dirt roads which were heavily rutted and very muddy due to recent rain.

The walk itself is a 9km circuit and I decided to take the anti-clockwise route, starting with the Pagoda Link track, then the Old Coach Road and finishing with the Glow Worm Tunnel track and the tunnel itself. This proved to be the right choice on the day due to the inclement weather. The Link track is narrow in parts with one or two short climbs, and slippery on the day so it was good to get this over with early in the piece.



Kavita walking beside railway embankment



Drainage channel - Alexis standing by

The Old Coach Road is a broad well maintained fire-trail, much easier to walk on and we were fortunate that a break in the

drizzle coincided with lunchtime. There was convenient seating on a metal barrier and a view over the upper end of Wolgan valley, only partly obscured by clouds.

After lunch the rain resumed as if on cue and we made steady progress to the junction with the Tunnel track, in reality the former railway cutting that serviced the coal mining operations. Further on the remains of the railway could still be seen in the form of half-buried wooden sleepers, stone embankment and drainage channels and the occasional rusty metal pipe. Views over Newnes and central Wolgan valley were shrouded in cloud however Stan was able to engage our interest with informed commentary on how the railway was built, pointing out salient features as we walked along the old cutting.

The entrance to the old railway tunnel is framed with vines and lined with tree ferns while a creek burbles through it, a very attractive setting in any weather. The interior is very dark so we trod warily to avoid the runnels of water while searching in the gloom with our torches. The glow worms soon appeared in small clusters, gradually increasing in number the deeper we went in. The tunnel curves slightly and the glow worms suddenly became huge constellations on the ceiling and walls as we neared the centre of the tunnel, out of reach of the dim light from the tunnel entrances.



Sandra and Sue inside the tunnel

We switched off our torches on several occasions to gaze in awe at the multitudes of pinpricks of light. Glow worms are in reality the larvae of a small mosquito-like fly. The bioluminescent light produced by the glow worms is a chemical secretion to lure insects. The glow worms, only a few millimetres long and needle-thin, weave vertical silk threads in which to snare their prey, mostly midges and tiny flies attracted by the light.

We emerged from the tunnel starry-eyed and blinking a little before heading off down the broad trail back to the cars. The journey home was broken with a welcome 'recovery' meal at the Apple Bar where we all had a chance to relax and discuss what we had seen.

Thank you to local historian Stan Jedovnicki, program coordinator Catharina Muller, return visitor Kavita Gupta, new members Sophie Richard & Alexis Dubief, fireman's friend Sandra Dobson, quiet observer Sue Yap and fellow driver Tu Tran for venturing out and making the most of it!

NIGHT WALK

Berowra Regional Park

Saturday 4 July 2009

Leader: Liam Heery

As planned the weather was perfect for another night time adventure into the bushland near to Sydney

This year I elected to do a harder walk, but kept in closer to the city. The walk was part of the Great North Walk and the section we completed was from Cowan to Berowra via Berowra Waters.

The moon came up as planned and although it was not a complete full moon it was only 3 days short. There were no clouds in the sky and we had great views of thousands of stars including the milky way.

However it was cold! The initial part of the track is a narrow walking track that traverses a couple of creeks, with some steep ascents and descents to be negotiated including some rungs. One difficult section led to the fall of one person, who bravely picked themselves up and continued the whole way without complaint, but had bruises and sores for a week afterwards.

Mill Creek

Dharug National Park

Sunday 7 June 2009

Leader: Peter Bonner

The final count was 17 walkers, and after the usual dodging about, we assembled at the picnic area for introductions and the appointment of a last person ready for the start of this EASY walk.

I had first camped and walked in this area well over 30 years ago before it was officially opened by the NPWS.

Back then we had the whole area to ourselves except for the snoring wombats that kept my young family and myself awake until I went around with a long stick to poke into the wombat holes to wake them up so we could finally go to sleep. Back to reality! We set off in excellent sunny walking weather taking the lower section of the track along Biamea Creek. Here I was amazed to find a green painted



Walking at night is a lot slower than during the day, so it took 3 hours to get to our supper spot only 6kms from the start. Our supper spot proved to be a good choice, out of the wind with a big fire and a great lookout over Berowra Waters, with its glistening homes and restaurants along the waterfront.

Everyone had brought something to eat, some more than others and even some more exotic, with kangaroo sausages, noodles, soups, roasted bananas and of course marshmallows on the menu. As usual there were also some alcoholic beverages, which was all well and good for everyone that was not partaking in Dry July!

Unfortunately every good thing must come to an end, and so we had to douse the fire and pack up for the remaining walk home. Down the hill to Berowra Creek, past the ferry and then up the climb to our final break at the lookout over the creek to Crossland's, luckily now empty, unlike when I surveyed the walk and came across 25 other walkers from the NPA.

After our final rest it was back on track for the final climb up to Berowra and the station car park by 1am. Thanks to Jacqui, Alison, Sophie, Alexis, Faye, Charles, David and Stan for joining me on another night time adventure.



safety fence going part the way down to the creek level. This is just a waste of money as there were many other places further along where a fence just might have some justification but of course there wasn't one. My intention was to walk the pretty 'Grasstree track' section on our return as it would be a pity to miss it. However, after inspecting the cave up the hill and taking lunch on the rocks with a view, I followed a track deviation which took us on a much longer route round to the starting point reaching our cars just before 5:00pm. Almost there, on a sloping bit of rocky track, Karin gave her ankle a bit of a twist but was able to 'soldier' on with assistance from fellow walkers. A follow up phone call later that evening ascertained that Karin was home safely. Thanks to everyone who came along and assisted in some way. This is a lovely area and worth another visit, and for those who asked, the final kilometres was 11, not the advertised 7km. Leigh led a small band into the Wisemans Ferry Hotel for a drop of the 'amber stuff' but I had walkers to get back to Hornsby Station "so next time" as they say.

CYCLING

Whale Watching Cycle Ride

5th July 2009 Leader: Bob Seibright

By Diane Meynell

Bob, Chris, Delia, Ann, Andy, Di made up our group of six. This was a day of great promise, whales, cakes and great company!

The ride was to commence at Wolli Creek Station and take us to Cape Solander where we hoped to see whales migrating north to Queensland for calving and mating. I was very excited about this and couldn't wait to catch my first glimpse of a



whale outside of a safari park where I'd seen a human trained captive killer whale (orca) jumping through a hoop and splashing the delighted audience.

The first stop of the day saw Bob remove his long johns to reveal a pair of long shorts more suitable for

the warm sunshine. The implicit promise of further revelations kept us on the move for at least the next couple of hours.

We were treated to the story of how Brighton-Le-Sands beach had changed over the years as Chris explained that the white sandy beach used to be much wider before the dredging changed the water dynamics and washed most of the beach away.

We were intending to stop at a gorgeous wee coffee shop, but for some reason we never saw it. Don't know if this was related to the Bob's shorts situation or not. Ann saved us later though, demonstrating valuable tourist guide skills by steering us to a great wee place for cake on the way home... but more of that later. Since the promised morning coffee and cake stop turned into a damp squib, Bob led us enthusiastically to a 'café boat' in a quiet little spot under the Taren point road bridge, but unfortunately it was all shut up so we stopped at a little picnic bench in the sun and ate Andy's home baked scones.

The ride to Cape Solander took us down cycle ways through city underpasses, quiet industrial areas and mangrove swamps. The outward distance of 25kms seemed longer than the 31km second half, and this I cannot explain as we took the same route home as there and my

bike computer couldn't be wrong, could it?

The last 2km towards Cape Solander through the Botany Bay National Park undulated over a pretty tarmac tourist road with glimpses of the sea. Finally at the end of the tarmac we hauled the bikes over rocks and a string 'barrier' to be able to sit and look out to sea. Strangely, we were asked by the warden to move further towards the cliffs as we were a danger to children in our present location!

It was pretty special knowing the whales were there hurrying along their way, but being unable to see them. A couple of the party got cold fairly quickly and went to find a sunnier spot while Bob went for a mini hike down the coast, leaving three of us to sit staring hopefully out to sea. Although we weren't there long we caught two glimpses of whale activity. I saw a whole humpback (I think anyway, judging by its shape) come out of the water, it was quite a distance away and was a split second before the splash. Then Andy caught sight of a fan spray... and that was it! Three hours cycling and that was it. According to a family sitting there when we arrived, 45 minutes earlier a pod of twelve passed through - but that's the luck of the draw.

Before very long we were headed homewards again and spotted Jacqui and Liam in their car doing it the easy way (they had done the night walk the previous day).

The ride down the hill back through the National Park was great, nice and fast with only the odd car to worry about.

Chris left us part way home and headed for Cronulla train station as he needed to catch his train from Central station, so that left five of us.

To draw a nice close to the day Ann took us to a really good tea shop where they had some fine award winning cakes. So with tired legs, sore bums and full tummies we made our way back to Wolli Creek.



Thanks to Bob for leading the ride and thanks to the whales for showing up! I can't wait to get down to Cape Solander again. Apparently when the whales come back through they go more slowly and breach more often as they have the calves with them. Next time though, I'll go armed with a flask, blanket and cushion!

WALK LEADERS COURSE

Walk Leaders & Prospective Walk Leaders Course Part 1 followed by a Social BBQ Saturday 25 July 2009 conducted by Peter Bonner

To avoid too much talking, I prepared a bullet point course on 'butchers' paper draped over a chalkboard on an easel so that everyone could see the items under discussion. With my 'students' comfortably seated at a long table to discuss the main headings, and with pens or pencils poised to take copious notes of important sections, we were OFF.

WHY BE A WALK LEADER?

WHAT MAKES A GOOD WALK LEADER?

WHAT MAKES A GOOD WALK?

SELECTING YOUR FIRST WALK

BEFORE THE WALK STARTS

SAFETYCHECK

ON THE WALK (morning tea ritual and its importance and First Aid)

LUNCH (another ritual)

END OF WALK

All these main topics and numerous subsidiary topics were discussed which carried on into the garden where afternoon tea & coffee was taken, (a ritual not to be forgotten), washed down by various goodies including some scrumptious 'Hedgehog' from Jan Steven.

Then followed a round table recitation from members recounting near miss incidents whilst on a walk with the club or on an overseas trip. Back in the classroom at the end of the formal proceedings we rehearsed the mantra to be

said out aloud by all participants just before a walk starts ie -

START TOGETHER! WALK TOGETHER! FINISH TOGETHER!

My thanks to all those who came along, too numerous to name here, and in some way helped with words of wisdom and experience. Questions we discussed... Who looks after the last person? What about whistles? What happens if the leader has an accident?

To conclude, the social BBQ went well although new comers to the art of roasting chestnuts on my BRAZIER need more practice, too many burnt offerings !!! My thanks to the BBQ, wood choppers and fire lighters, never seen so much smoke before. Unfortunately members went home early with the early start for Alison's Blue Mountains walk the next morning. This course was held at Waitara in my house and started on time at 1:00pm

Later, ex members Dave & Lynn Cambourne with their boys Dean and Trevor arrived, so we got the BBQ going again whilst the boys checked on my resident possum, chased our cats Timmy & Sheba around in the dark of the garden and finally with great pride announced that I had TWO possums and not One in my garden. Moving in doors, as it was getting cold, we drank more tea and ate goodies and talked about the canoeing trips we had been on. Then it was time for all of us to go to bed. Good to see you again Dave!

The course will continue with
Part 2: **Car Camping, date TBA**

Life Membership for Judy Dervin by Peter J Bonner



At the last committee meeting, under the Chairmanship of Liam Heery prior to the AGM, a proposal was put forward and passed unanimously to award Life Membership of the All Nations Bushwalkers Inc to Judy Dervin in recognition of her many years service to our club.

Some time in 1979 Judy joined the All Nations Club and in doing so joined the Walkabout Group, the outdoor section, one of the many sporting/social/cultural groups within this unique club set up in the late 1950s to help migrants integrate into Australian society.

Judy worked as a specialist librarian at Sydney University, later for a pharmaceutical company and for the last 12 years at the Biological & Chemical Research Institute in the Dept of Agriculture at Rydalmere.

For a long time Judy resided in Mount Victoria in the Blue Mountains joining the Blue Mountains Conservation Society. Using her local and acquired knowledge she led many walks and activities for our club to the great benefit of our members; to name a few -

Temples of Doom, Collit's Inn, Lawson's Long Alley, Mount York, Bell Trees (a private property), Deep Pass, Asgard Swamp, Barren Grounds and along the way investigating little known or long forgotten tracks ie The Wooky Holes etc (we are still not quite sure where they are)!

We're also appreciative of the weekend walks coupled with the Mount Vic Flicks film nights after dinner at a local restaurant.

Recently Judy sold her circa 1917 cottage on a steep block at Mt Victoria to move down the line to Wentworth Falls where the winters are not so severe and car parking no longer a problem for Judy and her visitors.

Judy is also a seasoned overseas traveller visiting Nepal, USA, Italy, New Zealand, India and more recently she went on a 4WD bird watching trip from Adelaide to the banks of the Warburton River & Lake Eyre.

Judy has always been generous with her time and passing on her bushwalking knowledge of the Blue Mountains for the pleasure and interest of others. Visitors could always be assured of a 'cuppa' tea and cake if Judy was home.

What more can we say except **Congratulations! Judy**, you truly deserve this honour and we wish you many happy days in your new home at Wentworth Falls.

MORE FROM THE AGM.....

Doing it by Numbers

The Club's New Walk Grading System

Welcome to New Members

Sophie Richards
Alexis Dubief
Diahnne Berthold
Mick Beltran
Enid Almeida
Nicole Douglas
Gaye McGuire
Colin Brown
David Cunningham
Phillip Stacey
Johan Smit
Melissa Teo
Zennia Hsia
Ros Lawrie



See you in the bush

The Club's new walk grading system comes into effect with the Spring programme, starting now.

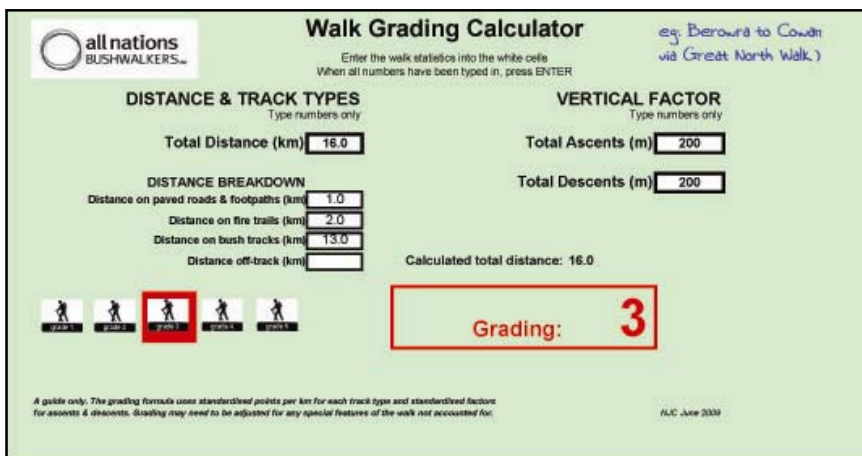
It's designed to reduce (eliminate?) the subjectivity whereby different leaders have sometimes graded differently, and also to de-emphasise the importance of distance in the grade descriptions (and increase the emphasis on terrain and ascents/descents).

The gradings are by number, from 1 to 5, which in general correspond to what we used to call 'Easy', 'Easy Medium', 'Medium', 'Medium Hard', and 'Hard'.

A group of us have put together an Excel based grading calculator, and walk leaders are being asked to put into it the relevant walk statistics (distance on various terrain types, plus ascent & descent), and it comes up with an appropriate walk grading. This can be subject to occasional manual override by the leader for any particularly unusual features that change the nature of the walk.

We've been talking about having a review and fine tuning session in 12 months time, and maybe producing version 2.0 then if necessary, so keep me informed of your experiences with it and suggestions for modifications to formula or whatever..... Happy walking.

Nick Collins



The screenshot shows the 'Walk Grading Calculator' spreadsheet. It has two main columns: 'DISTANCE & TRACK TYPES' and 'VERTICAL FACTOR'. Under 'DISTANCE & TRACK TYPES', there is a 'Total Distance (km)' field with the value '16.0'. Below this is a 'DISTANCE BREAKDOWN' section with four rows: 'Distance on paved roads & footpaths (km)' with '1.0', 'Distance on fire trails (km)' with '2.0', 'Distance on bush tracks (km)' with '13.0', and 'Distance off-track (km)' with an empty field. Under 'VERTICAL FACTOR', there are 'Total Ascents (m)' and 'Total Descents (m)' fields, both with the value '200'. A 'Calculated total distance: 16.0' is shown. At the bottom, there are five icons representing different track types, with the third icon (bush tracks) highlighted in red. A large red box contains the text 'Grading: 3'. A small note at the bottom left says 'A guide only. The grading formula uses standardised points per km for each track type and standardised factors for ascents & descents. Grading may need to be adjusted for any special features of the walk not accounted for.' The date 'A.N.C. June 2009' is in the bottom right.

Mick Beltran from the Rural Fire Service gave an excellent presentation prior to the start of the AGM. In recognition of our appreciation, Liam Heery presented a cheque for \$100 as a donation to the Rural Fire Service and Mick was made an honorary member of the ANB for 12 months.

Before you can confront an oncoming bush fire, you must protect yourself and all others with you from radiant heat. You should wear:

- sturdy leather footwear with woollen or cotton socks;
- long pants and a long sleeved shirt or jumper (pure wool or cotton offers the best protection from sparks and embers);
- a broad brimmed hat or hard hat if one is available;
- wet towels to drape over neck (leave the ears uncovered, they warn you of heat levels);
- goggles for eye protection;
- handkerchiefs to tie over nose and mouth to prevent inhalation of smoke and embers;
- gloves, if your hands are not used to working with tools;
- bottles of drinking water;

Do not wear synthetics – wear wool, cotton or denim.

www.bushfire.nsw.gov.au

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