



FEATURE

A Day Bushwalk in Myanmar

November 2006

By Elizabeth Saadeh

Our three-week holiday in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) was not meant to be a walking holiday. We flew from Chiang Mai in Thailand to Mandalay, visited the ancient cities there, and then took a boat down the Irrawaddy River to Bagan, the “Angkor Wat” of Myanmar. We were able to get some exercise with hired bicycles around the thousands of temples there, but we hoped to do a small 2-day trek we’d heard of from Kalaw to our next stop, Inle Lake. But the best laid plans are meant to be flexible! When we evaluated the prospect of an 8-9 hour drive over terrible roads in a car with bald tyres for \$100 USD, we decided flying for \$51 each was a better idea. We knew it was possible to do a day trek at Inle Lake so that is what we organised. Our guide was Zawtem, a quiet-spoken, polite (and fit!) young man. We started out westward on our 15km bushwalk. The first hour and a half was totally uphill. And though the Lake is cooler than the lowlands, it was hot and humid going. To add to this, my partner John is fitter than me, and our traveling partner from Sydney, Gillian, is what I call an obsessive exerciser. So the first hour and a half was a push for me. Once we were on the flat I could keep up with the other 3 athletes at least. Part way up we stopped for a fruit and water break at a small thatched gazebo, where an old tribal woman joined us and sat cross-legged smoking her che-root before continuing her trek down to town to market.



At one point going slightly uphill, a large water buffalo, accompanied by some small children, came lumbering down the narrow path. Suddenly he threw his head (and horns) towards us, and our guide (followed by us) jumped back suddenly.



The scenery was beautiful, with green rolling hills and lots of vegetable cultivation.

Zawtem had arranged for our lunch at the house (made of woven reeds) of some acquaintances. Downstairs an old woman was curing tobacco, and upstairs in the living quarters we sat on the floor of the main room while a man cooked a spicy noodle dish for us.

The bushwalk probably would have been a medium on the

ANB scale, but there was a bit of “rockhopping” where the rains from the rainy season coupled with water buffalo tracks had dried into deep uneven culverts. On our descent back to the Lake, we came across a group of young people in gumboots who were the road gang working on the trail. These trails are used by the locals who take their produce down to town and buy necessities at the market.

Back out of the mountains, all life revolves around the Lake. Houses stand on stilts in the lake, tomatoes grow on peat moss beds in the lake, children row to their school on stilts in the lake, children bathe their water buffalo in the surrounding canals.

View our photos on:

http://au.pg.photos.yahoo.com/ph/lizard2travel/album?.dir=/d629scd&.src=ph&.tok=phswj_FBz2UYX8N8



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I hope everyone had an enjoyable break over the holiday period.

With the weather now beginning to cool and the end of daylight saving, we can get back into some serious walking and other varied activities.

I would like to thank all of the contributors and encourage everyone to attend in great numbers each event. For new members you are very welcome, and we would welcome any suggestions you may have, so that we can continue to improve the club and meet all member's needs.

To everyone, keep attending and spread the word to your friends: the more people we get to come along the better the club will be. What a great New Year's resolution... See you in the Bush!!

Liam Heery

Bundeena Urban Heritage Walks

Sunday 3 December 2006

Leader : Trish Gorrington

On the 3rd of December 2006 I led my first walk with the All Nations Bushwalking Club.

I have been a member for several years and started out with the idea that I wanted to lead walks when I became sufficiently proficient to do so.

I procrastinated for quite some time as I felt I didn't know the walks as well as most of the leaders in the club.

Over the years I have been on many walks with experienced leaders and have felt that in order to be a leader I needed confidence and experience. However, with the new mentoring system All Nations has developed, it is easy to lead a walk.

The Club is keen to mentor women who are interested in leading walks but feel they lack the confidence to lead. This can be gained by having the experienced leaders mentor them.

Len Sharp, as my mentor, selected a suitable walk for me to lead, helped me obtain necessary maps of the area, surveyed the walk with me and answered all my questions.

The walks consisted of three parts that the Bundeena community have put together to showcase the area. The first and second parts were through the streets of Bundeena and the third was bushwalking out to a fine lookout.

After arriving at Cronulla we caught the ferry to Bundeena where we started the walk. Walking through the streets of Bundeena, we came across Jibbon beach which commands a spectacular view of the Kernell region all the way to the Sydney skyline.

Heading south we skirted the Royal National Park and found numerous deer droppings. This was quite interesting because many of the group didn't realise there were deer in Australia let alone so close to civilisation.

Continuing through the streets we arrived at Bonnie Vale Caravan Park, cutting through the scenic area we crossed a bridge that was once part of an old fish hatchery, then heading up through Maianbar we arrived at Yenabilli Point for lunch.

This was a spectacular view and sensational outlook over Port Hacking.

Heading back we walked along the beach, and even though it was a cool overcast day we had one member go swimming.



12 people joined me on the walk, all born outside Australia except me - this truly was an All Nations Walk. All in all it was very rewarding.

If you have ever wanted to lead a walk and didn't know how to start, give it a go today and contact the committee so they can make it happen for you.

"Lets get more chicks in the bush."

WALK / LI-LOING REPORT

Wollangambe River, Mount Wilson

Saturday 18 November 2006

Wollemi National Park

Leader: Len Sharp

Li-loing, for the uninitiated, is using an airbed to float down a flooded gorge.

The term li-loing comes from the brand of airbed used originally because it is relatively resilient, being constructed of rubberised canvas.

Other brands similarly constructed are now available.

The airbed provides one of the lightest means of flotation for a bushwalker and their pack and the ability to deflate it for carrying.

Li-loing is usually a warm weather activity as the water can be cold and a wetsuit is usually worn, but a woollen jumper and woollen socks will help keep you warm even if wet.

This particular activity has been carried out by the club for many years, and the area for this introductory li-lo trip is where we leave the gorge at the "exit".

It is so named because an Exit sign used to be painted on a prominent rock at the exit point, which is a dry side gorge, but one of many. Not all these side gorges have a means of scaling the cliffs out of the main gorge.

Our activity did not start until over an hour late, due to the lateness of a visitor, and a road diversion due to an accident near Kurrajong Heights.

It also occurred on a day when a bushfire was raging in the Grose Valley. The smoke could be seen rising in columns as we drove up the Bell's Line of Road towards Mount Wilson. However the National Parks and Wildlife Service had advised that our area was still open.

The fire proved to be a blessing in disguise for us as we had the Wollangambe River gorge to ourselves for the whole day, a unique experience, as usually it is a very popular li-loing area.

It was a pleasant sunny day, not too hot and, although the water levels seemed lower than previous years, the river was still flowing at our start point.

It was a first-time experience for Trish Gorring, Janice Besch and Lee Brown, which just shows that many of our activities can be repeated and yet still provide that first-time experience for some.

Trish in particular had wanted to do the activity previously but had missed out. Her latest word is wanting to do it again, and there are also many other canyons in the area to be experienced.

The Wollangambe River where we started is shallow and flowing over sand and fine gravel with some deeper pools as it flows around a bend and under an overhanging cliff covered in vegetation.

In some areas downstream the water is too shallow to sit on the li-lo and here we stood them on edge and guided them along beside us as we walked in the river.

However the true gorge eventually appears further downstream. Here the water is enclosed by sheer cliffs and contained in deep long pools. This is where the li-lo comes into its own and if used properly can be sat on so that only your lower body gets wet, and cold.

The best technique is to sit on the li-lo, as though sitting up in bed, and facing the foot of the bed with your pack resting on the pillow of the li-lo. You then paddle along backwards with your arms initially extended behind you and brought towards your feet. This has proved to be the least tiring technique.

At the end of each pool is a pile of broken rocks which have fallen into the gorge over many years and have provided the dam which creates the deep pools. These rocks have to be negotiated with care as they will become wet and slippery with sand and you will be carrying a li-lo under one arm.

Really, li-loing is just a floating bushwalk interrupted by walking. The scenery slowly passes by and you see more of the sky as you lie back and look upwards. Yabbies are found in the pools and water dragons scuttle about the rocks and swim or dive into the pools.

Our visitor brought canoe paddles but these were a real hindrance scrambling over the rocks and trying to carry a li-lo as well. Smaller collapsible paddles may have been more appropriate. Some people have used the lids of four litre ice-cream containers with a strap for the hand which are less cumbersome and pack easily.

At the exit the li-los were deflated, we changed back into our clothes which hopefully did not get wet in their "waterproof" bags and we started the climb up the side gorge. The ascent also involves climbing up a small cliff using tree roots for hand-holds and then following the track to the fire trail which surrounds the little community of Mount Wilson.

We did not stop for a recovery afterwards as the tea rooms at Mount Wilson were closed and due to the late start people were keen to get home.

In addition to the people mentioned above, Michael Thompson and Fergus Leahy, a neighbour of Janice accompanied me on the day.

Thanks everyone.

WALK REPORT

Faulconbridge to Springwood via Scripture Rock

Sunday 26 November 2006

Leader : Charles Bowden

A smallish group of 7 set off along the Victory track from Faulconbridge on a humid Spring morning. After a small detour to admire the old stone foundations of a former road, now largely overgrown and forgotten, we followed Sassafras Creek as it meanders down towards Glenbrook Creek. Detours to view Clarinda and Numantia Falls were a trifle disappointing, the waterfalls reduced to mere glistening drops, a sign of the dry weather.

Several large orange and blue yabbies were stranded in a pool in the creek and further downstream we surprised a large water dragon who plunged into the stream but emerged on the far side to stare quietly at us. Birdlife was evident too, including a colourful pardalote and cuckoo, possibly because we were the only walkers on the track, or so it seemed, as we encountered no one else all day.



Scripture Rock

After pausing for lunch at the junction of Sassafras and Glenbrook Creeks, we eventually reached Scripture Rock (so named because of the words of the 23rd Psalm carved into the rock face) in time for a refreshing swim in the large pool below the rock.

On the bank, we found another waterdragon who appeared almost tame as it let us approach to within a few inches.



Water dragon

The walk to Springwood via Magdala Creek was livened by the occasional stroll up dry creek beds and at one point we were lucky to see one of the lyrebirds whose calls we had been hearing all day. There are several narrow gorges with overhangs and caves along this stretch as well as two more waterfalls, again reduced to dribbles.

It became apparent towards the end of the walk that the estimated distance had been exceeded by some 5kms! So it was a weary band that trudged up the Fairy Dell track to be greeted by the graffiti covered scout hall that marks the start of urban Springwood. We did not linger and instead repaired to the Lapstone pub for a recovery drink and meal.

Thanks to Beth Rohrlach, Ken Beath, Faye Xu, Len Sharp, Liam Heery and Jacqui Joseph for persisting.

Photos by Charles Bowden

Christmas Lights Stroll,

Friday 1 December 2006

Ashbury

Leader: Charles Bowden

A helluva lot of people turned up to the 2nd Xmas Lights stroll and it was such a pity that the host had not checked to see when the lights would be turned on: he was one day too early!

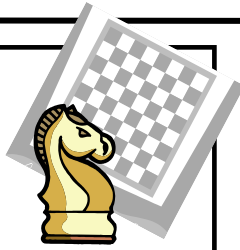
Although much reduced in scope (puns along the lines of "... a shadow of the real thing", "pales in comparison with last year"...) were heard, nonetheless several dwellings had decided to beat the clock and so provided some 'light' relief.

The aftermath, I mean party, seemed to be enjoyed by all although we were unable to break last year's record in terms of late hour, loud music and local constabulary!

Thank you to all who came, too many to name: I promise not to make the same mistake this year.

Notice board

Games Nights



The games nights have continued to be a hit, with a regular core of about 8 people enjoying a variety of board games. Each night we have had between 8 and 14 people and have finished off the night with dinner at one of the numerous cheap restaurants in Burwood. So if you haven't already sampled a games night, look at the program and set your sights on the next one.



Two of life's great beginnings!!

Two miracles instead of one,
Two special lives have just begun!

Jana
12.57pm 2.810 kg 49cm
Tina
13.04pm 2.275kg 47cm

on January 2, 2007

Proud parents Zvonko Slagjana and Eva Grkavac



Congratulations!
from all of us



60 - Another one of life's great beginnings!!

In January 2007, Graham Wallace, celebrated his 60th birthday with friends and family. It required a team effort to light the candles and an individual to extinguish.



There's life left in those lungs!! We enjoyed Graham's accomplishments, encouraged his dreams and celebrated him.

Graham's comment: *"He was a wise man who invented beer"*.

A thought also shared by Plato.

*Revellers after the
Christmas Lights
stroll December 1
Photo by Marcela*



Resignation

We are sorry to announce that Bronwen Amis has resigned from her position of treasurer / membership officer with our club.

*In the short time she has been on the committee she has made a valuable contribution to **All Nations Bushwalkers** and we wish her every success in her new career which necessitates relocating to Brisbane to take up a new position.*

Tom Whitehead has very kindly accepted to step into this role until the next Annual General Meeting of the club in June.



*Car camp: Green Patch, Jervis Bay
26-28 January*

SNORKELLING

Bare Island, La Perouse

Saturday 16 Dec 2006 Leader: Charles Bowden

Bare Island is a popular snorkelling and diving spot as the island provides a sheltered space of water on one side when the waves are breaking on the other. This day was no exception as it was windy as well as being overcast and cool.



Bare Is group – courtesy of Wayne Lee

Nonetheless, after sharing out various bits of gear, six of us braved the water to gaze at the fish and other marine creatures which can be found near and under the granite shelving at 1-2 metres below the surface. There was plenty of marine life to be seen, however the water temperature took its toll on the floating spectators.

Those who wore wetsuits lasted longest but the second dip after lunch was much shorter than the first! We all trooped to the nearby café afterwards for some warming drinks and après-snorkel chatter usually beginning: “Did you see the...”

Thank you to Alison Lyon, Graham Wallace, Wayne Lee, Sharyn Mattern and Richard Milnes for not drowning.

Parsley Bay, Vacluse

Saturday 6 Jan 2007 Leader: Charles Bowden

I owe a debt to Peter Bonner for planting the idea of holding snorkelling activities during the hotter months, thanks to a snorkelling day he held the previous summer. So it was a pleasure to see him at this venue with 5 others, although it was nearly half an hour before I realized that they were on the other side of the park from where I was sitting!

Having found each other we quickly shared out items of gear and headed for the placid and very shallow waters of Parsley Bay. Protected by a shark net about 100 metres out, this is an ideal spot for snorkellers not confident in their swimming or floating abilities.

There is plenty of interesting marine life to be found on the rock-strewn sides of the bay although it was disconcerting to find a large gap between the bottom of the shark net and the sand through which large fish could roam at will. It was a warm sunny day so we all spent a good deal of time in the water, with a break for lunch. The local kiosk did a brisk trade in drinks and icecreams.

Thank you to Peter Bonner, Janice Besch, Wade Wyatt, Stan Jedovnický, Richard Milnes and John Rich for wading in.



Parsley Bay Group - courtesy of Janice Besch

WALK REPORT

Jack Evans Track to Erskine Creek & Nepean River Circuit Blue Mountains NP

Sunday 17 December 2006.

Leader: Len Sharp

What a nice day for a walk as it was sunny, but not too hot. Before the walk started we took a side track to the lookout over the Nepean River for morning tea and met some bushwalkers who were below us but making their way up. Their leader hailed me as I had met him before on Bushwalkers Wilderness rogaines, but can never remember his name and he had hailed me referring to someone else, a senior's moment for both of us.



Lookout over the Nepean River - Jacqui, Liam & Len

We then retraced our steps to the car park and then started down Jack Evans Track.

Along the way Liam pointed out the track on the left which we would use on our return journey.

From the bottom of Jack Evans Track towards the Nepean River the scrub on the creek was a bit thick. The track here was not really a track, but the bushwalking book suggested staying on the northern side of the creek.

We tended to split up in the scrub as some found their best way, but we were always within earshot and waited every so often to regroup.

Jacqui pointed out some flat rock areas on the other side of the creek and we gladly crossed over. The southern side proved to be the easiest route to take until a point where the creek dropped and it then became easier on the northern side for the short walk to the Nepean River.

We made the intersection our lunch and swimming spot. It is a nice area with a small sandy shore and the water looked clear.

The Nepean River was fairly quiet for a change as power boats can usually reach this spot and destroy the peace.

A small tinny approached us and entered Erskine Creek where they moored. This did not impinge on our enjoyment of the place as we were starting to pack up anyway.

The occupants were two young men with stubbies in their hands. Jacqui expressed the hope that they would not leave their rubbish behind. We chatted briefly with them and one inquired as to how we had arrived there. He expressed an interest in bushwalking and Robert wrote down our internet address for him.

I personally doubt if we will ever hear from him again and we noticed a small pile of empty stubbies lying on the bank beside their boat. Jacqui's wish will probably be unfulfilled.

We learnt our lesson well on the way in and this time - stuck to the southern shore for most of the way back until we came to the intersection of the side track up to the saddle in the Jack Evan's Track. By taking this side track the worst of the scrub around the bend to the bottom of Jack Evan's Track was avoided. Our only visitor did very well on the walk and we had plenty of rest stops going uphill.

On the way home we had our recovery at the Lapstone Hotel. The barman there told us that it was management policy not to allow hats to be worn in the hotel, so Jonny had to remove his baseball cap. While waiting for our orders to arrive the waitress delivered a basket of garlic bread, and we all took a piece. We all assumed one of us had ordered it to share but, as it turned out, the order belonged to the next table, an honest mistake on our part, and in a way a small repayment for the hat policy as we were not charged for the bread.

Thanks to the following attendees for their company: Jacqui Joseph, Liam Heery, Judie Kremko-Wallace, Robert Marotta and his friend and our visitor Jonny Kristeller.



Lunch break and a swim

Picture Quiz

Can you guess who owns these legs?"



See the Winter issue for the answer



From your Committee

A Date for your Diary

**The AGM will be held ...
Sunday 24th June 2007,
10.30am - 12.30pm**

**Woodstock
Community
Centre**

Church Street, Burwood

Starting time 10.30am.

**Don't forget the Photo
Competition**

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

More details in next issue

Heathcote to Waterfall

Sunday 7 January

Heathcote NP

Leader: Charles Bowden

Fine weather and a moderate grade and distance saw a dozen people turn up to the start of this pleasant walk along creeks and rivers in Heathcote National Park. We set off from the railway station through back streets to the inconspicuous start of the walk which takes you past a local scout camp with its own hand built stone jamboree ground. The track wanders down the side of a ridge until it reaches a fire trail maintained by the Waterboard and featuring a large pipeline.

After spending morning tea at Eddles Pool on Heathcote Creek, we walked along the fire trail, wondering at the 'art gallery' displayed at intervals on the pipeline before climbing up the short hill to Woronora Gap where just 500 metres of land separates the Woronora River from Heathcote Creek. We then branched off onto a narrow track which led to Eckersley Point on Woronora River, a sharp wide bend, ideal for swimming.

This is exactly what several of us did before climbing back up and then back down the Gap slope and taking the track next to the Battery Causeway that leads to Waterfall. The exciting find of the day (of the year, for me) was the discovery of a large adult echidna scratching through the leaves beside the trail. Initially oblivious to our presence, he eventually realised that he had a large audience and so tried to dig his way into the hollow beneath a burnt-out tree stump.

Yours truly nearly impaled a finger when he stroked a spine to test its sharpness, prompting a convulsion from the aggrieved monotreme. We decided to leave the echidna to its surroundings and headed further along the track for lunch at Mark's Lookout. After a swift trip back to Eckersley Point to fetch a mislaid pair of sunglasses (barely keeping up with Trish setting a brisk pace), we proceeded along the track for an afternoon tea halt and swim at Kingfisher Pool.



Heathcote to Waterfall Group - courtesy of Janice Besch

Refreshed and re-energized, we soon afterwards reached the end of the track and walked along the fire trail below Waterfall which passes alongside Lake Toolooma. This is a local dam fringed with reeds where we found a couple of fishermen in canoes calmly swinging their rods.

The final challenge was a short climb off track up a nearby slope to reach a fire trail leading to Waterfall. It was then a short stroll to the station and, as a suitable watering hole for a recovery could not be located, we said our farewells and scattered to our various conveyances for the trip home.

Thank you to Karin Erdmann, Jackie Walker, Janice Besch, Tracey Lane, Ken Beath, Trish Goring, Ann Menezies, Elizabeth Saadeh, Karen Askew, Spiros Stathos and Rubina Usman for not being put off by the sight of their leader carrying a large 17kg hybrid backpack!

WALK / SAIL REPORT

Hawkesbury River & Ku Ring-Gai NP

Sunday 21 January 2007

Leader: Liam Heery

As the weather forecast for the day was "very hot" we knew that those sailing were going to have the best of the day, while the walkers would have a hard time in the heat.

The sailors got off to a good start with a good breeze allowing us to sail out to Lion Island at the mouth of Broken Bay, then it was a race against time to get back to Jerusalem Bay to meet the walkers due in at 1pm to have lunch all together. There was also the possibility of a well deserved swim and snorkelling (thanks to Charles who brought some spare gear).

However it was the sailors who were able to enjoy the swim with Faye disappearing into the distance as she swam out to greet the multi million dollar cruise boats!!



Lion Island off the port bow

Back on land we were getting worried as by 2.30pm the walkers were still nowhere to be seen. A call to leader Charles, found them at the top of the hill about to descend into Jerusalem Bay. Due to the heat, up to 46 degrees on his thermometer!! The group had a hard time and had to take numerous breaks.

Now at Jerusalem Bay the walkers were able to cool down and recover from their ordeal as we motored back to Brooklyn, due to unfavourable winds! The joys of walking and sailing...all dependant on the weather...including getting home which proved difficult as the bush fires had closed all roads back to Sydney!!

Thanks to Jacqui, Alison, Tom, Marcella, Len, Karen, Charles, Sue, Ruby and Faye for enduring an eventful day.



Jacqui and Charles



Len and Alison with Barrenjoey Head in background

Postscript: This could be the last of the walk / sail combinations as I have to sell the boat. However if someone wanted to buy it, you could continue the tradition! Free sailing tuition can be provided!!

Photographic Competition



to be held at the next AGM

Sunday
June 24th
2007

Prizes as well as a certificate will be your reward.

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

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

Photos must have been taken since the previous AGM.

Categories are:

PEOPLE
WATER SCENES
FLORA
FAUNA
NATURES WONDERS
CAMPING

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

(Sorry, only one entry per category)

How to Enter

Mount each photograph on a sheet of A4 size paper.

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

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

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

WALK REPORT

Narrabeen Lake

Saturday 20 January 2007

Leader: Peter Bonner

The 9.30 am wait at Pymble Station was fruitless, trains came and went but no lady bush walker. So at 9.50am Paul and I drove to meet the other walkers at the Bilarong Reserve Parking area. Here I was greeted by David Pezaro, former Club Chairman and walk leader from the old ALL NATIONS CLUB. (Walkabout Group days, years & years ago) plus another 7 walkers making up our party to ten.



David Pezaro (left) - trying to recruit some geese

Since the walk survey late last year a few minor changes had taken place.

Recent upgrading of paths, more playground equipment along the waterfront and repairs to one of the road bridges. The lake was still there, a little lower due to our current drought conditions, and luckily the parking ticketing machines were not functioning or had gone: long may they stay that way !!!

The way around the foreshores of the lake is a mixture of public roads with stony and sandy tracks.

Occasionally we were enclosed on both sides by bush and temperate rain forest. There were plenty of photographic opportunities along the way in the grassy areas where large numbers of ducks, geese & water birds of all sorts dabbled in the water or came to us expecting a handout! Greg Daley, last man, shot off to find a cheap canoe hire shop and came back to report that unfortunately it had gone!

Lunch was eaten in the Jamieson Park area about three-quarters way around the lake, well past Pipe Clay Point, on rocks close to the water but sheltered from the wind and sun which was now quite hot. Walking on we got through the Cromer golf course without anyone being hit by a golf ball; all the golfers we passed were very pleasant to us wishing us a good day. Next came the NSW Academy of Sport with its fine array of sleek rowing boats, catamarans, kayaks and jungle gym equipment. Skirting the edges of the open areas we sought the shade of a big tree and lay down for a rest as we were way ahead of my schedule. Here Nick Collins drew my attention to a column of ghostly skeleton cicadas marching up the tree - these I dutifully photographed with my 'dinosaur' film camera.

Reaching the safety of the Wakehurst Parkway without being apprehended by any S&R staff we continued our circular walk to the Deep Creek overpass. Here 4 members elected to carry on to the cars, but as it was only 2:20pm, I took the rest of the party along the Deep Creek track. This early section is quite pretty and on the way we met a bird watching group who told us the deep water hole they came to visit was a muddy mess with just a trickle of water - no birds or fish, and so it was. However, we did find a burnt out rusty car! After a rest we walked back to the cars observing a strong wind was now blowing, sending all manner of sailcraft racing through the water with the crews hanging on to keep the boats upright.



Fenella Walter taking a paddle in Deep Creek

Back at the cars not an ice cream van in sight! Not a sound of 'Greensleeves' to be heard! tough!

Thanks to all those who came along, to Greg Daley for last person duties, to Paul Goessling for assistance with the survey last year plus coffee/ice cream afterwards. Welcome to Natalie Wood who liked us so much she joined on the spot.

Notes: Swimming in the Lake during the summer months is not recommended due to the presence of a parasitic worm which causes 'Pelican Itch'.

There is no plan for a proper walkway / track around the lake as the two Councils involved, Pittwater and Warringah, cannot get their act together. What a pity.



*Notice on the southern side of Wheeler Park
"The seagulls were worried"*

WALK

Coba Point Marramarra NP

Sunday 4 Feb 2007 Leader: Liam Heery

A great turnout for this walk in potentially hot weather, with the forecast for a hot and humid day. We left Hornsby at the leisurely time of 9.30am and headed down Galston Gorge to get to the great Marramarra NP.

On leaving the cars we decided to take our morning tea break and therefore a late lunch at the lookout at Collingridge Point. This has one of the most spectacular views over Berowra Creek and the neighbouring Muogamarra Reserve on the other side of the river. We stayed here for over half an hour taking in the fresh air and welcome breeze.



It was then back to the walking track to Coba Point, a little longer than expected, but with grumbling stomachs everyone soldiered on and we were again rewarded with magnificent views over the Hawkesbury River and more fresh breezes.

Coming back on the same track we took our time with plenty of breaks in the shade when we could find it.

We got back to the cars and after conferring with Nick's new GPS reckoned we had just walked 22kms, then headed for Hornsby where some of us had a very good recovery meal!

Thanks to new member Dereck and visitor Sebastian, together with Ehinomen, Jacqui, Karen, Nick, Suseela Michael and Peter.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

1 May 2007

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO

jcsteven@unwired.com.au

Annual Christmas Picnic

Brays Reserve Rhodes Park

Saturday 9 Dec 2006 Leader: Trish Gorrington

What a beautiful day for a picnic. Azure blue skies with a comfortable temperature and a light breeze.

This was my first visit to Brays Reserve and once I found the car park (a bit tricky for first timers), it was but a short walk to our picnic location.

The site was set up by Trish and her helpers who arrived early to assist. Peter Bonner's shade gazebo and a gas BBQ hired from the Café Volunteers at Concord Hospital plus some tables and chairs were set up.

We had a good turnout of members - 20 including Tom's Mum and Dad, Ann and Michael Whitehead visiting from UK for Christmas.



People had taken great trouble in bringing along interesting and delicious food to share and we were soon into the pre-lunch nibbles and drinks.

After lunch some of the more energetic members strolled around the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway and Interpretive Shipyard Sculptural Elements whilst others stayed back at the site to play boule, totem tennis and quoits or just chat and relax.

I had to leave mid-afternoon and the last members packed up and left around 4:30pm. - Jan Steven

On behalf of members a vote of thanks to Trish for organising this enjoyable day.



The favourite activity of the day - Boule

Welcome to New Members

Greg Daley
Lorna Harling
Shirley Lin
Liz Reynolds
Warren Riddell
Rubina Usman
Shuang-ming Wang
Corrine Wilding
Natalie Wood
Scott Yandell
Edward Youds

And welcome back to

Denise Kruse
Karin Erdmann

See you in the bush

Confessions of a Sherpa Queen

By Suseela Durvasula

How I trained for my first full pack walk and left the Puritans in a lather over hot showers

I've done it now – there's no turning back. I've committed myself to going on my first overnight walk. Flights and accommodation have been booked and it's less than 2 weeks to go.

I'm walking the legendary Routeburn Track in New Zealand's South Island along with a fellow club member. Imagine *Lord of the Rings* country with spectacular vistas, mountains, lakes and waterfalls - the works.

According to some of my fellow club members, however – let's call them 'The Puritans' - I'm taking the wimp's way out. I'm doing what is called an 'assisted walk'. This means you pay someone to provide your food. You sleep in lodges with beds and showers. It's not luxury by any means, but it's something no one could pass up at the end of a long day's walk. You still carry your own clothes and food and water for the day. This will be more than enough for me as a first time overnight walker.

My Puritan friends (who coincidentally happen to be doing the same walk at exactly the same time) have christened us the 'Sherpa Queens'. I think they believe that some nice-looking hobbits will be carrying our bags for us and massaging our feet at the end of the day. I think they're imagining spa baths, saunas and gourmet meals. My Puritan friends are doing it the proper way – unassisted and carrying their own food and sleeping bags. I admire their determination and energy, but we'll see who has the last laugh when those hot showers beckon.

Even Sherpa Queens have to do some preparation for overnight walks. Here are some tips I've picked up over the last couple of months, They might not work for everyone and experienced walkers probably know this already ... but here they are:

1. Buy your boots and a pack well before the actual walk – you want to feel as comfortable as possible walking around with both.
2. Don't buy a pack that is too big. The bigger the pack, the more you'll be tempted to carry because there's room. A smaller pack will force you to pack light.
3. There's nothing that prepares you for walking uphill like walking up hills. Do lots of walking up hills! – preferably at least twice a week, with your pack loaded up with the gear you will take on the walk.
4. Do as many Club day walks as possible carrying a heavier pack. There's no point in filling your pack with bricks and books. These are 'dead weights' and don't give you true sense of what it'll be like to carry your pack. Fill your pack with the clothes you plan to take on the walk. Water is good too – if it gets too heavy you can ditch it or drink it.
5. Running up hills or slopes is a great way to improve cardiovascular fitness. You'll sweat like anything and feel muscles you've never felt before, but keep telling yourself it must be good for you. It actually starts getting easier after a while.
6. Use a walking stick – it's great for balance, going up and down hills and takes the load off the knees.
7. You'll soon get over feeling like a dog walking around with a full pack in the suburbs or at the beach, while everyone else is lazing in the summer sun. Just plug in that Ipod and keep walking.
8. If there are days you couldn't be bothered training (and believe me, I've had lots of them), just keep telling yourself that it'll all be worth it in the end. More pain now means you can enjoy yourself on the actual walk and you won't be embarrassed by some eighty year-old whizzing past you on that mountain.
Hopefully after this walk, I'll realise that full pack walks are possible.

With a little preparation and training, this Sherpa Queen may one day become a Puritan too.



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