



Keeping Track

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

More than Everest - Trekking in Nepal

Story: Suseela Durvasula

October 2011

For a long time, I had longed to experience the Himalayas up close. In October 2011, on my way to India, I decided to make a detour to Nepal to do just that.

When most people think of Nepal they immediately think of Mount Everest. But Nepal is much more than just Everest. Did you know that of the world's 14 peaks over 8 000m, 8 are in Nepal? Or that in a country the size of England, Nepal has over 30 different ethnic groups with at least as many languages?

I chose to do a trek with World Expeditions in the Annapurna region of Nepal, which is west of Kathmandu, starting from Pokhara. I had heard that the traditional Annapurna Sanctuary/Circuit treks were now overrun with tourists so I tried to pick a trek that went off the main tourist trails. I did a camping trek, rather than staying in tea houses (family run guest houses). The advantage of camping is that you can stay in more remote areas. Not knowing how I'd cope with altitude, I decided to defer trekking in the Everest region for another time.

The trek exceeded my expectations. The weather was great and despite my earlier fears, we had no rain while walking. Early mornings were generally the best before the afternoon mist descended over the mountains. It only rained on a couple of nights and nothing that made it inconvenient. At the lower altitudes it was surprisingly hot and humid, but as we climbed, the temperature dropped quickly after the sun went down.

I had heard many tales of the legendary leeches in the Annapurna region but I managed to escape any leech bites, although we saw many in the forest. One of my fellow trekkers was not so lucky - the leeches seemed to go for him and



Our guide applying an effective leech repellent



Porter carrying kitchen tables

left me alone. The Nepalese have an ingenious way of combating leeches which was very effective - a solution of Detol and salt water brushed on to your boots.

There were only 3 trekkers in our group including me. For the 3 of us we had 2 wonderful guides plus 6 porters and 4 kitchen staff. It was literally a personal entourage. The porters carried enormous loads but they seemed to climb effortlessly up the mountain while we struggled with our day packs. After a while I stopped feeling guilty about it when I realised that porter work provides valuable employment. Porters usually work as farmers in the off-season and earn far less for far greater effort than working for a trekking company.

At the beginning and end of the trek we spent about 3 days walking through villages on more well known trekking routes. It was fascinating seeing people going about their daily lives. Villagers always greeted us with a friendly and genuine 'Namaste'. In Landruk village we witnessed kids cheerfully ascending 400m each day (in their sandals and thongs) just to get to school. Villagers carry enormous loads on their heads, such as firewood and fridges. I will never complain about a heavy backpack again! I came to admire the strength, stoicism and good humour of the Nepalese people.

Continued page 2



President's Report

Welcome to the Autumn 2012 edition of 'Keeping Track'.

The big news this quarter is the launch of our new website <http://anbwalkers.org.au> and our new club email address club@anbwalkers.org.au.

Key features of the new website include:

- member-only features accessed by a username and password;
- 'email all members' facility to replace Yahoo Groups;
- members-only discussion forum;
- facility to submit activities directly to the website for approval by the programme coordinator;
- easier ways of viewing club activities via a calendar, map or a program list; and
- photo album facility for any member to upload photos.

Any change can be daunting, but I'm sure you will find that communicating and obtaining information will be much easier and quicker with the new website.

If you have any questions or feedback about the website please email club@anbwalkers.org.au. There is also a contact page on the website to provide feedback. A special thanks to our Webmaster, David, for developing the website.

Preparation for the All Nations 50th anniversary celebrations are well underway. Keep an eye out for upcoming events in the autumn and winter program, including a special event to take place in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting to be held on 22 July 2012.

I hope you enjoy the variety of walks and other activities on offer this autumn.

Suseela Durvasula
President



After a few days we left the main trail and walked through real wilderness where we only came across a few other trekkers. We spent a few days in the forest and a few days in the mountains above the tree line. This was a highlight. With every step the mountains drew closer. Machapuchare (the 'Fish Tail' Mountain), Annapurna South and Huinchuli were

Colourful dyes near Hindu temple, Kathmandu



Annapurna South and Huinchuli Peaks from 4,200m

ever present. Watching the ever changing cloud formations around snow-capped mountains was a constant source of wonder.

We spent about 5 days climbing and 4 days descending. There's no such thing as flat walking in Nepal. The walking wasn't too hard as we took it pretty slow. After about 3000m it became impossible to walk quickly and without getting out of breath. The beauty of trekking in Nepal is that you learn to slow down and appreciate your surroundings.

The highlight was climbing to our high point of 4200m. We had a wonderful clear day and it felt like you could touch the mountains. Luckily I had no problems with the altitude. Other highlights were witnessing the sunrise over snow-capped mountains and waking up in the middle of the night to clear skies, a full moon and plenty of stars.

The food on the trek was tasty and very healthy. Although people are supposed to lose their appetite at altitude, I seemed to have an endless appetite! We had fresh vegetables every day,



Near Landruk, 1600m

eggs, pasta, noodles, rice, roti, curries, pizza, fruit and desserts, among other things. I was amazed at what the cooks could conjure up in such remote conditions.

After 10 days of trekking I felt fit and wonderfully relaxed. It was a shock returning to civilization, especially Kathmandu with its crazy traffic jams, congestion and colourful markets. Even more of a shock was landing in the mega metropolis of New Delhi just before Diwali (one of the most important Hindu festivals in the year). On my first night in India I was confronted by high rise, traffic, fireworks and Bollywood disco music. It was quite a change from laid back Nepal. I had a different but equally wonderful experience in India, but that's another story...

Meanwhile, the memories of trekking in the Himalayas and meeting the wonderful Nepalese people will remain with me for a long time. Next time I will have to get to Everest.

SOCIALGAINE

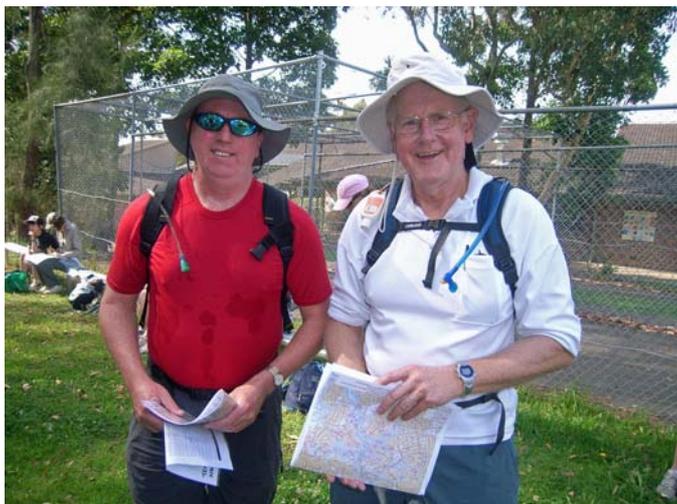
20 November 2011

Grade 2-4

Co-ordinator: Charles Bowden

Three teams which included two members new to the sport of rogaining took part in the 2011 Socialgaine, making it 8 participants in total with a good mix of experience and enthusiasm.

The course location was next to Garigal NP, in the upper section of Middle Harbour, an area quite well known to some of the ANB participants as a couple of walks had been held in the vicinity recently. There were plenty of paths and tracks to choose from, offering a good deal of variety from thick bush to water views and the inevitable urban surroundings.



Lunchtime Legends



Latte Loafers

At the start of the event, the Lunchtime Legends (Andrew & John) headed north, the Lounge Lizards (Helen, Len & Charles) headed south and the Latte Loafers (Fenella, Nick & Julian) headed east. As a consequence, we didn't see each other for the rest of the day until the end of the event!



Lounge Lizards.

Conditions were hot and humid on the day which proved to be quite energy sapping. Rain was forecast which added an additional element of anxiety. However we were fortunate that the rain held off until after the prizes had been handed out at the end of the event, ensuring that all teams managed to finish without any problems.

The Legends amassed 970 points, an outstanding effort, coming 8th out of 33 in the Veterans, 9th out of 21 in the Men's and 22nd overall out of 93 teams.

The Lizards thought they had managed 820 points after realising their initial planned route was too ambitious and making post-luncheon adjustments. However later contentious deductions saw them achieve a creditable 700 points making them 19th in the Veterans and 51st overall.

The Loafers were nipping at their heels having accumulated a well-earned 630 points, 24th in Veterans and 62nd overall.

Thank you to Andrew, John, Nick, Fenella, Julian, Helen and Len for taking part and still managing a smile at the end!



*Len & Helen on the Garigal NP track
Photos Charles Bowden*

SOCIAL

Halpern & Johnson

Chester Street Theatre

4 November 2011

Co-ordinator: Peter Bonner

As usual the pre-show dinner was eaten at Nero's Café Bar, fast becoming a tradition more for its service and hospitality rather than for its food. Thankfully we theatre goers, Peter, Lan, Sharyn & Terry had with us some red & white wine which helped the meal and conversation along. Later a brisk walking pace got us to the theatre well in time for 'curtain up'.

My heart sank as a bleak stage setting was revealed, an elderly man, Halpern, looking down on his recently deceased wife's gravestone, no flowers as it is not the Jewish custom. It was not the right time. Another not quite so elderly man, Johnson, enters with flowers for 'Florence' with whom he has been meeting for lunch for the last 50 years! Halpern rejects the flowers - not the right time! Then follows several acrimonious meetings with the two men. Halpern accuses Johnson & Florence of cheating on him and Johnson of cheating on his own wife Beryl, also deceased.

I quickly became engrossed with the dialogues of Jewish customs with flowers and was it cheating by Florence who was Johnson's first girlfriend? After all they only had lunch together and talked about family matters and about Halpern!

The semantics of cheating, betrayal, infidelity, loyalty, all jostled for a place in this affair to put it into an acceptable perspective allowing Halpern & Johnson's abrasive meetings to melt into a mutually beneficial friendship.

A great play with much debate over coffee afterwards. This was the last of a series of 3 plays for \$48: great value. The two fine actors, Jim Burns & Errol Henderson, who played Halpern & Johnson received loud sustained standing applause from the entire audience at the final curtain call.



Terry, Sharyn, Peter and Lan

SNORKELLING

Chowder Bay

19 November 2011

Grade 2

Leader: Charles Bowden

Hip, hip... hippocampus! Actually, *hippocampus whitei* to be more precise, or White's seahorse. Sarah had alerted me to the resident seahorse population at Chowder Bay so I was looking forward to finding one. After diligent searching on my first outing, I found one clinging to the netting that surrounds the swimming area at Chowder Bay. On our second outing, I couldn't locate it but eagle-eyed Sarah found two more at a section of netting underneath a group of boys dive-bombing into the water. Evidently the seahorses are used to this kind of disturbance.

The area also offered many other marine specimens to delight the observer, including huge shoals of baitfish that swirled around you, obscuring the view at times. There were also large numbers of juvenile leatherjackets and luderick while trumpet fish and boxfish lurked in the shadows of the jetty.

This was my first snorkel outing to Chowder Bay at Clifton Gardens in Mosman although I had walked past it on several occasions while following the coastal path. It's a great snorkelling location although the parking area next to the beach is quite expensive so be prepared for a steep walk down (and back up) when using free parking in the streets above.



Baitfish

It was a sunny and very warm day, so it was surprising that only 4 snorkellers turned up. However it was a pleasure to welcome back Richard Milnes, freshly returned to Sydney after a year's travelling. Congratulations also to Sharyn and Sarah for being the first to venture into the water.

**Next ANB committee meeting
Tuesday 3 April 2012 at 6:30pm**

All members are welcome ... Come along and have your say

WALK

St Leonards Loop

20 November 2011

Leader: Liam Heery

Grade 4

While most people have the impression that I only lead hard walks, this walk was to prove otherwise, albeit it was 22 kms and took all day. At St Leonards Station I was welcomed by the other 9 members and 1 visitor who had joined me.

The first thing that we noticed was the high proportion of Irish representation on this walk, with 3 others of my compatriots joining me. It must have had something to do with finishing at a pub!

Leaving the station we crossed the road and it wasn't long before we entered Newlands Park which had a huge slide and numerous swings that looked inviting but it was too early in the walk to delay and play. Crossing River Road we entered the bush heading down to Gore Cove on the harbour. This is a lovely park and we were greeted by numerous water dragons at almost every turn.

Climbing steeply up to Vista Street we took a break to catch our breath and admire views of the city and Harbour Bridge. A few back streets then led us into Gore Creek Reserve, which has a tunnel under River Road to avoid the traffic. Making our way up Lane Cove Bushland Park we took our first major rest for morning tea in a small reserve on Ronald Avenue, where we were again presented with tantalising swings that Suseela couldn't keep off.

After morning tea and having prised Suseela from her perch we then had our longest road stretch that took us over the Epping Road pedestrian bridge at Lane Cove and to the start of Stringybark Creek where we re-entered the bush that took us the whole way down to the Lane Cove River. Passing the Shell Service Station at Lane Cove West it was too much of a temptation to some, who abandoned the group to get their ice cream fixes.

From here we made our way along the banks of the Lane Cove River to Blackman Park and set up for lunch at some picnic tables at the bike training circuit. It wasn't long before Bob got out his Frisbee and was showing his prowess in throwing when the Frisbee took off and lodged high up in a Casuarina tree. This led to a group think tank on the best way to retrieve the Frisbee. After throwing stones, large branches, climbing up the tree, we finally had the tallest person in the ilk of David Cunningham using his stretch and a long branch to eventually dislodge the Frisbee! Bob was a happy man.

Back on track we kept to the river bank until we reached Linley Point where we crossed busy Burns Bay Road into Carisbrook Park and then up to Burns Bay Reserve. Here we found another excellent playground where the chance to have a go on the flying fox could not be missed. Therein commenced a competition of the longest run, most spectacular and craziest; all compered by Mary Thompson.

This reserve runs into Tennyson Park and from there we had a short walk along River Road to Warraroon Reserve which took us down to the natural archway and back up to Shaw Playground where another rest for afternoon tea was taken while the swings were put to good use again to see who could swing the highest, with a commendable effort put in by Catharina.

We then took some more back streets before entering the bush once again at the Gore Creek Reserve. It wasn't long before we passed yet another playground with a contraption that only Catharina knew how to work with a few of us being pushed in circles before jumping off and falling flat on our faces overcome by dizziness.

Then it started to rain so we made our way back to St Leonards Station via Smoothey Park and probably fortunately missing that long slide we had seen at the start of our walk.

What a great day we had and some very interesting places we visited. 22 kms with very little concrete in sight. Thanks to Suseela, Mary, Bob, Catharina, Rajiv, Susan, Fernando, Steve, David and new member Tom for joining me on this walk and also to those who stayed for a well earned meal at the Tavern afterwards.

SNORKELLING

Delwood Beach

5 November 2011

Grade 1

Leader: Charles Bowden

The weather was hot and sunny, enough to get sunburnt, the sea was calm and clear albeit slightly on the cool side at 19C and the sand was pale and clean but the ANB snorkellers were surprisingly few.

Just 4 members initially appeared for the first outing of the summer, later joined by one other, and what a lovely day it turned out. New gear abounded among the group, all keen to give the new camera/housing/wetsuit/mask/etc their baptism.

The fish were plentiful with sizeable examples of morwong, bream, leather jackets, juvenile groupers, surgeon fish and luderick. There were also shimmering schools of small fry which at times fearlessly surrounded the snorkeller. Notable sightings included two large trumpet fish, a very large grey puffer and two species of small box fish.

The batteries on my camera gave out midway during the first dip so thank you to Helen for providing additional photos and to everyone who came along and enjoyed a relaxing day.



Three-bar Porcupinefish - Dicotylichthys punctulatus

WALK

The Ponds

4 December 2011

Grade 1

Leader: Julie Armstrong

A walk through remnant bush dating back to Aboriginal times that winds through parks and alongside what is called the "Ponds"; a series of creeks, from Carlingford through Dundas Valley, Telopea, goes underneath Stewart Street and into Dundas to Rydalmere. The walk finishes at Rydalmere just before Victoria Road and the creek eventually flows into the Parramatta River. There has been interest in this walk and I will endeavour to lead this walk again in the near future.

After a car shuffle from Rydalmere we started our walk with the threat of rain that had been forecast all week. The start of the walk was at the Lookout at Carlingford with views west from Parramatta to the Blue Mountains.

Parramatta Council has done a good job setting out the walk which is very well marked and easy to follow. Regular voluntary weed clearing is performed in the first section of the walk but as we progressed further along the track in Dundas and Rydalmere unfortunately the weeds became very intrusive which was disappointing. As I live near the walk I have walked the first section many times either with my beautiful dog Riley or my son Petar or daughter Karina. Jan Steven helped me survey the entire walk which we completed in fine weather.

The walk is very easy going as it is mostly downhill or level walking. We spotted a water dragon and spiders before reaching approximately a third of the way into the walk. At Dundas Valley we walked across to Thomas Mitchell Reserve that was formerly a blue metal quarry and is now a rugby union playing field which is named Ray Price Oval. The oval is named after dual international Ray Price who started his career with Dundas Valley Rugby Union Club and represented Australia in Rugby Union and Rugby League ending his career with the Rugby League club the Parramatta Eels. I pointed out my house that overlooks this reserve to my fellow walkers.

Returning back across Yates Avenue to Curtis Oval, where cricket and soccer are played, we had morning tea outside the grandstand. This was where we realised the rain was about to start with ominous black clouds threatening overhead. We headed off hurriedly across the park to take up the walk again. We crossed Sturt Street, Telopea, and passed a part of the creek where Jan and I saw about 20 ducks on the survey. Along this walk often can be seen water dragons, skinks, spiders, and many varieties of birds. Ducks, ibis, cockatoos, galahs, lorikeets, rosellas, kookaburras, swallows, magpies, crows and both Indian Mynahs and Noisy Miners. I have seen possums and blue tongue lizards, owls, hawks and black cockatoos in the local area but I have never seen these during my walks on the 'Ponds' walk. We continued the walk across Stewart Street with the rain pouring down. Luckily most walkers were kitted out with either rain jackets or umbrellas so only our legs and feet got wet.

The walk then continues to follow the creek. The rain eased off and very near the end of the walk we had group photos taken on the steps up to where we had our cars parked. Walkers that did not need to participate in the car shuffle to retrieve our cars from the start of the walk proceeded on to the recently renovated Rose and Crown Hotel in Parramatta where I had booked a table for lunch. We all met up there to

dry out and enjoyed a drink, meal and coffee in the oldest Inn surviving on the same site in Parramatta.

Thank you to the ten walkers who joined me on the "Ponds" walk, Peter, Paul, Margaret, Jan, Sharyn, Pan, new member Helen and visitors Bob, Tina and Linda.

For the early history of the "Ponds" and Dundas Valley area please refer to the extract by Parramatta Council that is sign-posted along the walk.



The "Ponds" walk group - photo Sharyn Mattern

"The Ponds, a name which I suppose it derived from several ponds of water, which are near the farms"

Watkin Tench, 1789

Parramatta and the surrounding districts were places of significant Aboriginal occupation prior to European settlement. The Ponds area was the land of the Darug language speaking Wallumedda clan. The Ponds Creek originally a series of swamps and soaks, and its tributaries, are the headwaters of a creek network flowing through a valley and joining Subiaco Creek. This walk follows the two creeks for most of their journey to the Parramatta River.

In 1832 at a site in the valley now known as Sir Thomas Mitchell Reserve, Major Thomas Mitchell examined the remains of a volcanic plug or pipe of columnar basalt and recommended that the site become a quarry (Pennant Hills Quarry). Due to the geological significance of the area, famous scientists such as Darwin, Clarke, Dana, Mawson and David visited the site. Convicts quarried the "blue metal" which was transported from the Ermington Wharf by boat to Sydney to be used in road construction. Local governments operated the quarry until it became uneconomic in the 1940s and it was later filled in and dedicated as a reserve.

The original vegetation in Carlingford, Dundas Valley and Rydalmere is seen in the remaining bushland remnants along the Ponds Walk. Tall Blue Gum High Forest dominated the ridge line along Marsden Road and gradually changed downslope into either Turpentine-Ironbark Forest or Shale-Sandstone Transition Forest. Along the lower reaches of Subiaco Creek Sydney Coastal River-flat Forest is characterised, by large Sydney Blue Gums. These bushland areas are small glimpses of the landscape that supported the Aboriginal people for thousands of years. All the bushland remnants are listed as endangered Ecological Communities under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995 and are protected. The majority of these plant communities have been cleared or disturbed in the past and are now being restored. Similarly the creeklines have been severely degraded through ongoing development and are also being gradually restored.

Text by John McClymont

WALK

Colo River Wollemi National Park

4 December 2011

Grade 5

Leader: Liam Heery

This was always going to be a tough walk and the weather leading up to it was not the best. With plenty of rain over the past week I didn't know how high the Colo was going to be and whether or not it was going to be navigable. I told everyone that they needed to be prepared to get "fully immersed in the river" and to bring a dry bag for clothes and food. So I was surprised but pleased when I had 7 other members confirmed for a very early start.

After a joint car shuffle to pick up people from different locations we all met together at Wilberforce at 8:00am. From here we had a drive to Upper Colo and then a short car shuffle to save a 4km road walk at the end of the walk.

We commenced the initial steep climb to get up to

Gospers Ridge and then continued along this gently rising ridge line to where it intersected with Mailes Ridge. On the way we stopped at a very nice lookout for morning tea and reapplied sun block etc as the sun was very strong, and at that time no hint of the rain that was forecast for later in the day.



Liam & Bob having lunch in overhang.

From the intersection of Mailes Ridge we then had a short walk along the fire trail to where we left the track and went bush. A short stop for everyone to put on gaiters, gloves etc and we were off through the bush. As expected this initial section was very dense and slow going. It wasn't long though until we reached the end of the ridge and caught sight of the Colo 400 metres below for the first time. It looked very full, but still with some patches of sand on the banks.

The descent is very steep and quick. Having a slip here or there and sliding a few feet was par for the course. We

only had one large cliff line to negotiate around and we ended up finding two ways through. Just before the river we heard loud thunder claps, felt some large rain drops and saw some very black clouds. With only a short distance to the bottom, most of us dispensed with our rain gear (knowing we were going to get wet later anyway) and hit the river right on schedule and exactly where I wanted.

By this time we were drenched and the Colo was reasonably high. Looking around for a spot to take a lunch break, we walked down the bank a little further and found a nice dry ledge that most of us were able to get cover on. It was nice to be able to take wet clothes off and dry off if only for half an hour.

After lunch, suitably full and having no option but to continue, we decided to try and keep up on the bank as much as possible. The alternative of getting into the Colo at this point was not feasible as we would have been swimming not walking. The bank was reasonably manageable, al-



Fernando, Tom & Sarah

though the numerous lawyer vines and other thorny shrubs made the going tedious at times. Luckily the heavy rains in previous weeks / months had swelled the Colo so that a lot of vegetation had been washed away.

It wasn't long before we came to our first major sandbank mid river and we decided to give it a go. Crossing over boots and all (although some decided at this point to put on their river shoes and clothes) I got to the sandbank and walked its length without difficulty. It was obvious from here though that staying on / in the river was now going to be our best option as the bank looked extremely rugged and overgrown.

We all then made preparations for walking in the river and plunged into the mighty Colo. The current was reasonably strong and helped push us along. Most of the sandbanks were underwater, so it was a matter of trying to see where the shallowest part of the river was and occasionally crossing over the main stream to adjoining sandbanks. These crossings varied in depth from knee high to chest high, which certainly challenged some of us. We began to notice that our concern for quicksand was not all that warranted as we hardly came across any. I surmised that the reason for this was the additional volumetric weight of water had compacted the viscous sand thus giving us a

solid walking platform.

Occasionally the river became too deep and on those occasions we crossed to either bank for safer passage. The going though was very tiring and about half way (which some thought was the whole way) we stopped on a sandbank and had a quick afternoon tea break. Stop-pages were also necessary from time to time to empty shoes / boots / socks of accumulated sand.

By now it was also getting cold and we had to keep moving to keep warm as any wind was piercing. We were getting closer to the Meroo exit when we again had to use the bank to get around a particularly deep hole. The vegetation also got worse at this stage so I pulled back out onto the river again as soon as I could. Len however decided to go higher up the bank to locate an old fire trail to the camp ground only to find his way hindered with extremely thick lantana. The group on the river continued on and as I thought I recognised the location, I scouted along the bank and found the faint track to the camp ground, our destination. If you didn't know where this track was, you would never be able to see it from the river and would just walk straight past (as I have heard has happened to others). We reached the camp ground shelter just as Len came running in trying to beat us there.

This was a welcome respite from the rain and a chance to dry off and wring out as much as possible. We then walked out to the cars where we all had another change of clothes which we had to hurriedly don as another heavy shower came in. A short car shuffle again and then it was time to leave. Unfortunately as I had to be home early I was unable to stay for a recovery and missed the opportunity to have a debrief and share the experience.

Thanks to Charles, Len, Bob, Peter, Sarah, Fernando and Tom for another unforgettable Colo experience, one that was definitely "not for the faint hearted".



*Fernando drying out at end of walk
photos - Fernando Santisteban*

The Importance of Walking

My grandpa started walking five miles a day when he was 60. Now he's 97 years old and we don't know where the hell he is.

KAYAKING

Crosslands Reserve to Calna Creek and return

18 December 2011

Grade 2

Leader: Peter Bonner

Where are all our canoeists/kayakers members? Had the Club Xmas picnic at Tunks Hill Lane Cove the day before tired them out or was it the chance of more rain that scared them off? As two persons who had booked the club's double kayak 'Walkabout One' cancelled early Sunday morning, it left 3 single kayakers to meet at 10am at the Crosslands launch spot. John Rich arrived first and checked it out, and found a very low tide exposing a lot of black mud. I had checked my Maritime Services Tide Chart. Had Catharina changed my date and had I agreed to the new date without checking the tide times again? Maybe I had forgotten the time lag between Fort Denison and Crosslands, about 1½ hours, I dunno but we had to negotiate some deep sticky mud to get our kayaks afloat with ourselves aboard. After this it was paddling against an incoming tide working around quite a few sandbanks: one almost stretched from bank to bank



Narrabeen Lakes with Deep Creek Bridge in the back ground

causing me to miss the entry into Calna Creek. John Rich in his lightweight home-made 'French Tourer' was able to skilfully paddle his way back whilst Stephen and I had to wade to the deeper water towing our kayaks behind us. At the foot-bridge we had a photo shoot showing the bridge had sagged in the middle and we could only paddle under it close to either bank. This is a very pretty creek at low tides with the sandbanks rising up to separate the creek into a series of pools and water ways. Not a shag or a cormorant in sight. Normally one would see a variety of water and other birds, fish plus lizards, but not today. No wildlife in sight so nothing to do but make a small fire, boil the billy, sit down on a dry sandy spot and have a long lunch as upstream the creek waters were still running out. More photos then on the paddle back Stephen spotted an almost 2 metre goanna on the footbridge. Wildlife at last! So with a sighting of a wedge-tail eagle high in the sky earlier on we had to be satisfied.

Thanks to Stephen and John for your company and thanks again to John who hauled me out of my kayak when I got stuck half in and half out due to my crook right knee. Not a good leader day but enjoyable nevertheless. No rain, light breezes, some sunny periods, no power boats. As Ratty said to Mole "there is nothing, absolutely nothing half so much worth doing as simply messing about in BOATS!" and we certainly did that.



Notices Notices Notices



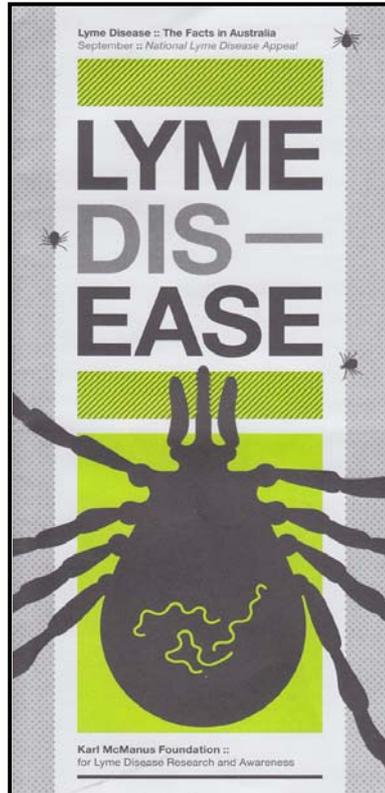
**all nations
BUSHWALKERS INC**

From your Committee

**The AGM will be held ...
Sunday 22nd July 2012,
Woodstock
Community
Centre
In the Ballroom**

Church Street, Burwood

More details in the next issue



Attention Bushwalkers

Ticks are in the news again. They love this warm humid weather we have been experiencing over the last couple of months and have become prevalent in some Bushland Shires and Regional Parks.

Lyme disease is an infectious disease transmitted by ticks or other biting insects and can cause serious health issues for the person who is bitten. An information leaflet 'LYME Disease': 'The Facts in Australia' is available from local Council offices or Community Centres, which should be read by all bushwalkers, mountain bikers and householders.

To find out more about LYME disease or download the leaflet go to....
karimcmanusfoundation.org.au

Peter J Bonner

The ANB Christmas BBQ/picnic at Tunks Hill

Lane Cove National Park

18 December 2011

Attendance at the Christmas picnic BBQ at Tunks Hill was fewer than usual, possibly because the access to the site was more difficult to get to. Those who did attend I think would agree we enjoyed a very pleasant day of eating, drinking, socialising and even some mild exercise.



Picnic organisers Jan and Catharina waiting for the kettle to boil

The venue provided us with good shelter, excellent facilities and beautiful views.



Thank you to all who came along, and extra thanks to those who helped in the setting/cleaning up, Yuko for the photos and also members who organised sporting activities.

It all helped to make a great day.



50 years of walking

An interesting excerpt from All Nations club newsletter, 'Welcome', going back to 1964.

The original 1962 Bushwalkers of the All Nations club became the 'Walkabout Group' in 1964, and on the 1st of March that year did their first walk. The following is an account of that walk.

We've tried to find earlier accounts of walks but to no avail, so Peter Bonner will be leading a modified version of this one as part of the anniversary celebrations.

Thanks to former member Helen McMaugh for providing a photocopy of the article.

Enjoy the read. A case of "the more things change, the more they stay the same".

Fenella Walter

April, 1964

W E L C O M E

WALKABOUT GROUP

A TALK ABOUT THE "WALKABOUT"

And so the "Walkabout Group" became a reality. The outing to the Woronora River was quite an experience.

The most unusual features were:

The punctual departure;

The women outnumbered the men by two to one (where is the men's spirit of adventure?)

A slight confusion with regard to the location. As it happens, there is a Woronora Dam (near Waterfall), and a Woronora Weir (near Heathcote) and the group was split into two equal parts; one finished at the Dam, the other at the Weir. After about an hour of shuttling to and from the Dam, everyone finally arrived in the glorious surroundings of Woronora Weir.

Fresh-water swimming was enjoyed (I am sure) even by those who were not swimming. The ramble, which took three hours, was full of surprises. The first was a steep climb to a height of 560 feet, followed by a descent and another climb to the 500-foot level. Bloodless mutiny occurred after the first climb – a small party broke away from the group, and following the "easy" way reached the camp about an hour later than the "faithfuls". The most exciting moment was passing underneath a rock which was just balanced on the trunk of an old, burnt tree.

Have you ever realised how wonderful a small cup of cold water can taste? The members of the group did when they discovered a water tap, next to the pumping station. It was really unforgettable.

Finally, the storm – the timing was perfect: the last car had just started when it began to pour down in buckets.

Yes, the day will leave pleasant memories all round.

NATE BURNETT



Celebrations

50th Anniversary Walk and picnic /BBQ Engadine - Audley, Sutherland Royal National Park Sunday 3 June 2012

Join in one of our classic walks from 50 years ago. This 11km walk includes a Picnic/BBQ after the walk. Salads, tea & coffee will be provided. Bring your own meat. Walkers will be meeting 10am at Engadine station (take 9:14 train from Central). Non walkers meeting 12 noon at Audley Visitor centre. Park entrance fees \$11 per car. In honour of our first "cake lady" Barbara Mitchell, slices of gourmet boiled fruit cake will be distributed.

LEADER: Terry Redmond 0425 234 385 M

CO-LEADER: Peter Bonner 9489 5027 H 0408 221 488 M

BOOK BEFORE 28 MAY PLEASE

HOW TO MAKE A PERSONAL ACCIDENT CLAIM WITH NSW BUSHWALKING FEDERATION'S INSURANCE BROKER:

When a club member is injured on a club activity, the procedure is for the injured club member to contact our Insurance Broker (Marsh) either to notify of a possible claim or to obtain a Personal Accident claim form. The Claim Form is to be completed by the injured club member and returned to Marsh. Please quote our PA Policy No. 0012117

Cameron Douglas of Marsh advises that notification of an injury be made to him ideally within 30 days of the date of the injury. Obviously the more serious the accident the quicker our insurer wishes to be notified.

Cameron's preference regarding contact is by email but if your injured club member requires to speak with him he is happy to receive your call.

Cameron's contact details are:

Email: cameron.douglas@marsh.com

Direct Phone: (02) 8864 7325

And please quote the NSW Bushwalking Confederation and our PA Policy No. 0012117 in your emails - thank you.

For your club's insurance questions, please contact our Insurance Officer Denise Kruse : insurance@bushwalking.org.au

Administration Officer
The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc.
Phone: 9565 4005
www.bushwalking.org.au

FEATURE

Yuraygir National Park Coastal Walk - 65 kms

30 December 2011 to 2 January 2012

Grade 3 - 4

Leader: Liam Heery



Looking down the coast - FS

The Yuraygir NP is located between Yamba and Red Rock in the north east of NSW. Recently the NP service connected a few local walks together to make up this walk which starts at Angourie and follows the coast line for 65 kms to Red Rock.

Jacqui spotted a description of this walk earlier in the year and thought it would make a good Christmas / New Year walk.

After much deliberation and planning the logistics, I decided to walk from north to south as was recommended by National Parks so as to have the sun behind you. We soon discovered this does not take into account the wind and with 3 days of 25-30 knot southerlies as a head wind, in hindsight I would reconsider the direction based on the wind first.

With six people willing to trust their New Year celebrations in the wilderness with me, and thanks to John for providing the second car, we left Sydney, on time, Thursday morning and after a couple of rest/eat stops we reached the Corindi Holiday Park at about 5:30pm. Once settled into our campsite we headed up to the conveniently located Amble Inn for a very nice dinner and to outline what we were going to be doing over the next 4 days.



Ready to go 65 kms to Red Rock - JR

Day 1

After packing up our tents, preparing back packs and doing final checks we drove into Red Rock where I had organised a bus to pick us up and take us the one and a half hour drive up to Angourie. Our driver Bruce from B & D Mini Buses at Grafton was very helpful and took us right to the start of the Coastal Walking track at Angourie beach.

We headed off down the "closed" track (which another day tripper had told us was not a problem) to the point where the track was closed due to a land slip of about one and a half feet in width! Luckily we took the right route as we made good progress to our first beach.

Following the water line to keep on hard sand we encountered what was to become something of a nuisance of a head wind until we reached Shelley Head where we stopped for lunch.

Leaving Shelley Head we kept to the inland track and avoided the beach thereby nullifying the effect of the wind and kept to this method of walking on the beach in the morning when the winds

were not as strong and inland in the afternoon where we could when they got stronger. After winding around Lake Arragan to the campsite we found it to be overflowing with people in large tents and 4WDs. My choice of the third camping location turned out to be a good one as we ended up with a nice spot overlooking the beach.

Here we came across the first of many helpful offers from people we met throughout the walk. To replenish our water supply the nearest tap was over a kilometre away. The people around us not only gave us the use of their water but also drove us up to the tap to refill our empty bottles and bladders.

This was followed by a visit from the NP rangers ensuring everyone had paid their camping fees and collecting ours. As we were doing the Coastal walk they were very interested in how we were going and on finding out that Sarah was one of their working compatriots we ended up with a small discount.

Kangaroos abounded at this campsite and we had to be careful that we didn't walk into them there were so many. The camp site also had firewood and fireplaces so our resident pyromaniac had a great time keeping us entertained with his fire lighting skills.

Day 2

During the night we had some heavy rain. Packing up took place in between squalls and we were off by 9am and heading down the beach to Brooms Head.



Brooms Head Beach - JR

At Brooms Head we stopped for morning tea, while a couple of our party went back to the shop to satisfy their consumerist urges.

Crossing over Brooms Head and sighting a heavy squall coming towards us, we donned our wet weather gear, just before we headed onto Sandon Beach where we came across the surreal image of two scantily clad young girls trying to keep out of the rain from under a beach umbrella!

Sandon Beach is long and became more tiring with every step as the incoming tide forced us up onto the softer sand. Although

Sandon was within sight we had to take a break on the beach before resuming our walk to end of the beach before rounding the corner to the entrance of the Sandon River, our first major river crossing. I had earlier made the decision to try our luck at getting across



Liam ready for anything - FS

without booking the local boat operator. As we approached the boat ramp I spotted a tinnie about to head off up river. After whistling to catch their attention, they readily agreed to transport us across the narrow causeway in two shifts so it wasn't long before we were on the southern bank.

Here we stopped for lunch and a swim and with water supplies running down we now had to make do with whatever we could find. On studying the map and knowing that even small creeks were flowing with ample water I decided to wait until about an hour away where I thought we would come across a lake where we could replenish supplies.

From Sandon there was a choice of taking the beach or an inland route and as it was high tide and windy I opted for the inland route. Luckily I was prepared and had detailed maps (thanks Andrew) with me. Anyone trying to follow this route without a map would quickly find themselves lost as there are no signs and a number of intersecting tracks.

After about an hour and at a location where I deduced there would be water I ventured into the bush and within 10 metres came across a swamp/lake with plenty of fresh water.

We refilled our bottles and bladders (filtered and or treated) and had enough water for the rest of the day's endeavours. Continuing along the inland track we occasionally came close to the beach and satisfied ourselves that we had made the right decision seeing that the tide was in and the wind would have been in our faces.

This was to be a long and tiring day and by the time we got to the Lake Illaroo camp ground everyone would have been happy to set up camp at the first opportunity. However, I had my eye on a camp site at Rocky Point, a further kilometre or so on, and convinced the others to persevere and bypass the multitude of "city campers" on what was to be our New Years Eve. By the time we reached the end of the regulated camping areas I was a bit worried. I had not located the campsite I was looking for, until fortunately at the last minute I saw a hidden sign pointing to the Rocky Point walk-in camping area. A quick check revealed this to be the spot I wanted and we set up camp on our own without anyone else around us.

We soon had a visit from NP rangers, one of whom was the ranger responsible for setting up the walk. He was impressed that we had picked this spot to camp, especially on New Years Eve, and whether it was because of this or for some other reason we were not asked to pay a camping fee.

Again a couple of people could not resist the lure of shops at Minnie Water now only 800 metres away and disappeared to get some goodies, water and also a celebratory drink to share for the New Year.

As always when camping the body clock is regulated by the sun

and it was decided that our official New Years was to be at 9pm. Luckily we were able to hold out until then and we were all in bed and asleep by 9:30pm

Day 3

Today was to be another long day. With another major river crossing at Wooli we were all up and ready to go by 9am (although some had left earlier to visit the Minnie Water shops and have a shower at the surf club). A short break at Minnie Water and we were off over the headland and onto Diggers Beach. At the end of the beach we came across Diggers Camp which has an almost permanently flowing pipe spouting a shower of water onto the beach for anyone wanting a fresh shower.

On top of the headland we stopped for morning tea at the Boorkoom camping area, which has toilets and barbecue facilities. We were advised by the ranger it would be best to organise a boat crossing at Wooli and thanks to Fernando's multitude of mobile devices I was able to make contact with the boat man to organise a pick up for around 2:30pm.



Wooli River crossing - FS

We headed off through the magnificent Wilsons Headland with great views up and down the coast and then back onto Sandon Beach for the walk into town. Along the way we met some local beachcombers who gave us the good oil on where to exit the beach and the best place to pick up our river boat.

Exiting the beach as soon as we could we quickly found ourselves at the Sandon Kiosk and a further call to the boatman confirmed (after a little persuasion) that he would pick us up from the Kiosk thus saving a 3 km road walk. A group of 4 other coastal walkers whom we had seen but not caught up until then were very miffed that they could not be picked up at the same point and had to do the extra walk.

After lunch (with Nick being the only person having held out from getting anything at any of the shops) we were on board the MV Sandon and cruising down the Sandon River towards the sea. Passing high sand dunes along the way it was interesting to see some holiday makers boogie boarding down the dunes and flying over a ramp to land in the river.

At the mouth of the river we were dropped off having paid our toll of \$10 per person. We walked through a rudimentary campsite which at other times (ie outside of school holidays) would be a good spot to break the walk and camp.

However I had other ideas and wanted to head for Freshwater Beach (another 5-6 kms) where I had spent a Christmas camping about 23 years ago (hoping my memory would hold and I could find the right spot)!

Initially I thought we could have taken the inland track marked on the map. Our boatman was not aware that the track existed and advised us to take the recommended coastal route. As there was no sign of the track when we looked for it we continued along the coast.

The terrain from here though became particularly tough, even more so now that the tide was in. We had to traverse kilometres of rock platforms that were uneven, sharp and difficult to find a way through. At one point we came across a makeshift hide-away under the pandanus palms which would have done any Robinson Crusoe proud. Traversing from rock platform to wallaby track to beach we eventually came to the start of the sweeping Freshwater Beach. Just before though, eagle eyed John spotted two turtles frolicking in the surf as we passed, while Fernando was busily taking movies for YouTube!



Rock layers - JR

Freshwater Beach looked somewhat familiar, even though it was now (as all roads and 4WDs are banned) the remotest section of the park and a true wilderness. It was also getting late, so when I spotted a familiar cutting that looked like a creek I made a bee-line for it. Sure enough this was my old campsite and there was a full flowing creek with fresh water deep enough to take a bath in. The campsite had all but disappeared without any indication of its former use. For us it was an awesome place to spend our last night completely alone with the bush, stars and sea.

Nick set up his tent open to the Eastern sky, hoping to catch a glimpse of a comet in the pre-dawn horizon, while Tom camped on the sand near to the creek alongside his trademark fire, and the rest of us spread out over a soft flat dune in between the creek and ocean.

Day 4

Our last day heralded the best weather of the trip with blue skies, a flat sea and warm sun. Today we only had about 6 kms to cover so we had plenty of time, although I wanted to cross Station Creek while the tide was low.



Waterfront camping - JR

As we were getting up we spotted the other walking party coming down the beach. It was revealed that they had a hard time with the boatman at Wolli and ended up camping with the multitudes on the southern side of the crossing. I think they were very envious of our progress and camping locations.

Following a leisurely breakfast we packed up and headed towards Pebbly Beach. Before rounding the headland there was a track that looked like it went up and over the dunes to the campsite. However I choose the shoreline as I felt it would be quicker and easier. Tom who had left earlier to chat with the other group, took this track and confirmed later that I had made the right choice.

Pebbly Beach has a 4WD drive-in campsite and we were again the objects of curiosity as we walked through the site, before looking for the shallowest spot to cross Station Creek. Our final morning tea break was taken under a shady tree before heading off across the hard sand of Station Creek Beach.

It wasn't long before we reached the Corindi River at Red Rock, our last major obstacle and river crossing. Again we were fortunate to meet some friendly locals who were only too willing to lend us their canoes to port our packs across the river while we took a welcome swim alongside.

On the other side we were again met with awe and disbelief that we had just completed a 65 km trek down the beach from Angourie. From here it was a short hop to the Red Rock camping ground where we booked in and put up our tents. Unfortunately one of the sites we were allocated was not very tent friendly and we could only fit one tent on it. The park have a regulation that no more than 6 people can be on any one site, so thanks Fernando for agreeing to be on your own.

With the afternoon free we each made our own way to shops, beach and showers, before meeting up again for a celebratory dinner at the "bowlo".



Recovery at Red Rock Bowl Club - JR

Next day it was back on the road again to civilised Sydney. Thanks to Jacqui, Nick, Fernando, Sarah, Tom and John for making this one of the best walks ever and bringing in the New Year in such good company.

*photos - Fernando Santisteban
John Renzenbrink*

***See more pics from the walk
on the website photo album***

WALK

Wet Wild Dogs

15 January 2012

Grade 5

Leader: Charles Bowden

Two carloads of walkers arrived at Carlon's Farm at around 9:00am after negotiating torrential rain between Sydney and the Blue Mountains. Large mobs of kangaroos and flocks of crimson rosellas patrolled the access road. Due to the poor weather conditions, I decided to shorten the original planned walk to around 20km, effectively downgrading the walk from Grade 5+ to Grade 5, which proved to be tough enough as it turned out.

Eight of us then set off in the rain at around 9:30am, first tackling the nettle-strewn Carlon Creek track and promptly losing the trail before we had gone a kilometre. The track had become extremely overgrown although we shortly found remnants of it again, in the process discovering another better defined entry/exit track for future reference.

Leeches also made their presence felt as soon as we reached the creek, and any phobias about the creatures were soon exposed for all to see and hear. The volume and frequency of the imprecations continued unabated for the rest of the day, sore feet and tired legs regardless.



Knife-edge ridge

We reached Breakfast Creek around 11:00am and crossed over to the start of the steep climb up Black Horse Ridge where we paused for a late morning tea. The rain also chose this moment to cease so we were able to shed our wet weather garments for the climb which took its usual toll due to the gradient.

At the top of the ridge, we stopped for lunch at the rocky outcrop which overlooks the upper reaches of Breakfast Creek with the Narroneck ridge beyond. Although the upper level of the latter was shrouded in cloud, there was still plenty to see and admire.

After lunch we continued climbing to the top of the Wild Dogs range with a well defined track taking us up to Blackhorse Gap, between Blackhorse Mountain and Mt Warrigal. Here we turned east and headed towards Mt Mouin. The cloud cover had lifted a little and the views from the narrow ridge and the peaks were well worth the effort.



Wild Dogs Range



Baby bearded dragon

Following afternoon tea at Mt Mouin (where we found a beautiful but feisty young bearded dragon, much to the consternation of some in our group for whom all things reptilian are anathema), we searched for a way down to Medlow Gap. A short but steep and scrambly off-track descent ensued until we reached a narrow track which ultimately led us to an old disused 4wd trail. The rain chose to resume during this awkward time to add to our woes but we successfully reached Medlow Gap shortly after 4:00pm.

The long trudge along the fire trail back to the cars in the light rain was tedious but, given the gloomy conditions, we welcomed the broad even surface and eventually reached the cars just before 6:30pm.

After changing into dry clothes, we headed off to the Pink Palace in Wentworth Falls for a well-earned recovery and great food.

Many thanks to Liam for helping out with driving and route-finding and to all the doughty walkers, who included Tom, Matt, Alex, Fernando, Jacqui & Catharina, whose endurance and enthusiasm was tested at times but who stayed focused and resolute: a sterling effort.

photos - Fernando Santisteban

WALK

Berghofer's Pass

22 January 2012

Leader: Judy Dervin

Grade 1

Welcome to 13 New Members

Abby Tang
Rhiannon Bell
Fay Lovell
Helen Shen
Soli Jahangir
Dianne Lumb
Lotus Zhong
Suzie Wicks
Cressida Keher
Joanne Timbs
Angela Stone
Gerda Maeder
Shawn Tan Jin

See you
in the bush



Three keen walkers set off from Mt. Victoria Station in misty rain to walk through the village to Lawson's Long Alley track head and the start of Berghofers Pass track.

Construction of this easy grade road was begun in 1907 at the instigation of John Berghofer, first president of Blaxland Shire Council, when Victoria Pass became too steep for early motor cars. It was completed in 1912 and became the main road over the mountains until 1920, when Victoria Pass was upgraded, and higher powered cars had been developed.

The rain stopped soon after we began the descent and it was perfect weather for walking.

The walk descends in gentle curves through beautiful scenery with views to Hartley Valley, crossing many culverts that were built across many small watercourses, and passes a stone water trough still used by horse riders who use this track.

We noticed various historic inscriptions carved into the tremendous cliff faces at the side of the track, especially the name of the pass, which had been removed during World War I, when Berghofer's German ancestry was considered offensive. In spite of his work for the community, and the fact that he was a naturalised British citizen, he was disqualified as a Councillor in 1916.

This walk also allows a view of the buttressed walls of masonry which support the filling required to bring the Victoria Pass to an even grade of 1 in 15 when the Pass was built in 1832.



The walk continues to near the bottom of Victoria Pass.

Estimated distance:
Mt Victoria Station and return 10km.



Photos - Jan Steven


Change of Details
Don't forget to notify
Treasurer Helen Hindin
of any of the following -
• change in address,
• email address,
• phone numbers.
Phone: 02 9331 1921 or
email us at -
club@anbwalkers.org.au

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

PHOTO ALBUM

Trekking in Nepal

Photos - Suseela Durvasula



Machapuchare (Fishtail) mountain



Villager transporting a fridge



A yak blocking the trail



Socialgaine Middle Harbour Creek

Photo - Charles Bowden



The Ponds walk 4 December 2011

Photo - Sharyn Mattern

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

4 May 2012

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

Pictures submitted : 300DPI resolution preferred to achieve good reproduction quality and photos should be separate files from the story text.

Yuraygir National Park Coastal Walk

29 January 2011

Photos - John Renzenbrink



Approaching Sandon



Drink stop at Diggers Beach

Wet Wild Dogs

15 January 2012

Photos - Fernando Santisteban



Flowering banksia - Banksia serrata



Morning Tea



Lunch

The ANB Christmas BBQ/picnic at Tunks Hill

Lane Cove National Park 18 December 2011

Photos - Yuko Imai

