



## WALK REPORT

### Royal Australian Navy Heritage Centre

Garden Island

Saturday 29 July 2006

Leader: Peter Bonner

My survey earlier this year convinced me that a visit to the Navy Heritage Centre was an activity that would interest and inform most members of our Club.

Thirteen walkers registered, some cancelled at the last minute, but 10 is a good manageable group who all arrived at No 4 Wharf Circular Quay in time to catch the 9.20am ferry to Garden Island, which quickly landed us at the jetty straight into the welcoming arms of the security man who gave us a short talk on the Island and where we could and couldn't go. He also pointed to the numerous video Surveillance cameras. 'Big BROTHER' was watching us !!

Checking that there were no visiting naval vessels in dock, we first toured the open air exhibits. i.e. A 50 tonne anchor, the bow of the first HMAS Parramatta, and a locally built riveted construction torpedo boat destroyer, very small by today's standards. Massive ship borne RADAR units, no longer on ship decks but bolted to big concrete plinths also.

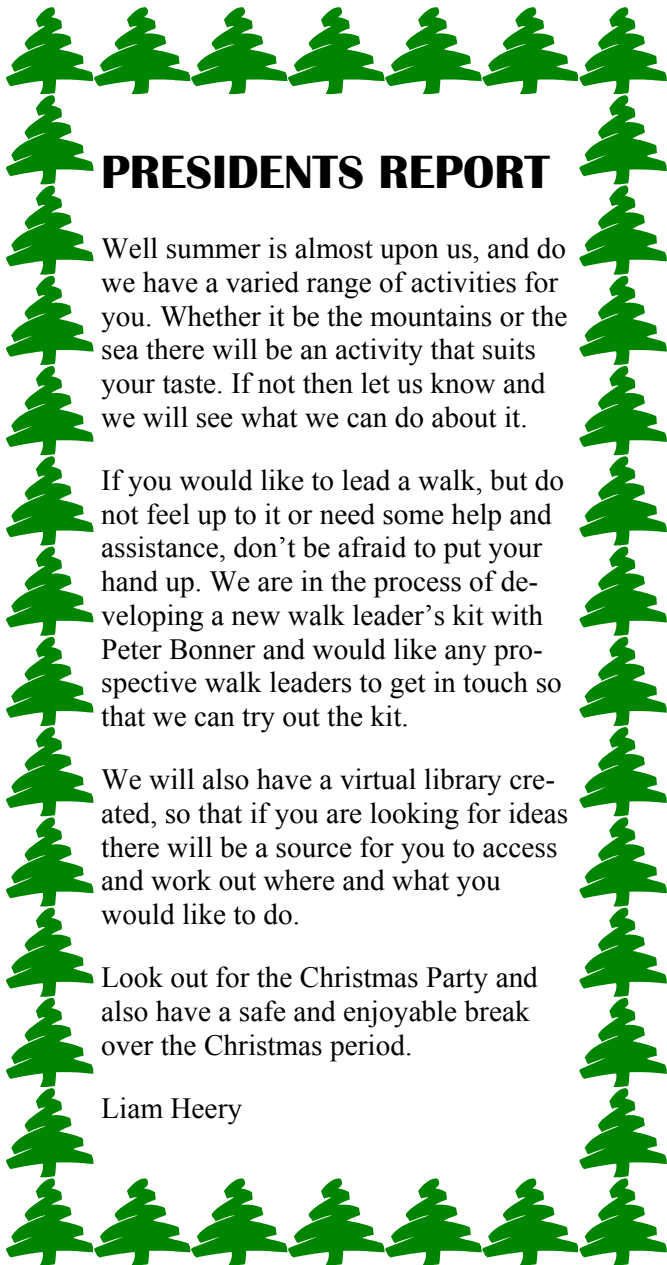
Next a visit to the 'Boatshed' (1913) with a beautiful heavy clinker wooden sailing dinghy and other items, brought us close to the 'Salt Horse Cafe for morning coffee and munchies.' Unfortunately, being Saturday no Gold Braid or other Naval types were present to beguile us with nautical tales so we made do with posing in front of a huge photograph of scruffy seamen. All stokers by the look of them and a restored ship's figure head.



Paying \$5 for gold/brass tokens allowed us entry to the Museum proper, which is on several levels. Bernard Clisby and I spent some time playing submarine Captains with the attack periscope. This allowed us to spy on anything in the 360° radius of buildings and seascope. With no enemy warships in sight I tracked several Sydney Harbour Ferries but none of the numerous dials, gauges and switches attached to the periscope worked. My last attempt at being a submarine captain failed when I said "down periscope" and stepped back ala "We Dive at Dawn" and went to snap the periscope handles up - they too didn't work!! Returning to reality we went at our own pace to leisurely tour the numerous audio-visual displays, of the Boxer Rebellion World Wars 1 & 2 and other Naval engagements right up to this year. A demonstration of the firepower of a modern Gatling gun was awful and frightening to watch.

The public area of Garden Island contains a number of relics including the earliest known graffiti in Australia (Jan 1788), the first rose gardens, and the first tennis court. Numerous paths and steps wind around the old fortifications and buildings. A viewing platform on top of the old main signalling building allowed us to enjoy a spectacular 360° view of the harbour with numerous commercial boats, ferries and sailing boats moving across the waters on a lovely sunny day. Lower down on a grassy area Sharyn Mattern organised the available picnic tables so we could have lunch in the sun with background views of the Harbour. On the return journey Margaret Weiss elected to go on to Watson's Bay, so we waved her goodbye!

*Continued next page*



## PRESIDENTS REPORT

Well summer is almost upon us, and do we have a varied range of activities for you. Whether it be the mountains or the sea there will be an activity that suits your taste. If not then let us know and we will see what we can do about it.

If you would like to lead a walk, but do not feel up to it or need some help and assistance, don't be afraid to put your hand up. We are in the process of developing a new walk leader's kit with Peter Bonner and would like any prospective walk leaders to get in touch so that we can try out the kit.

We will also have a virtual library created, so that if you are looking for ideas there will be a source for you to access and work out where and what you would like to do.

Look out for the Christmas Party and also have a safe and enjoyable break over the Christmas period.

Liam Heery

Continued from page 1

Disembarking at Circular Quay, not finding any buskers of merit we walked around to the Opera House entry to the Botanical Gardens.

Here we bought ice creams and lazily strolled the gardens on a bush-walkers 'busman's holiday' Eventually we found the gift shop with small Wollomi Pine trees in pots for \$65 each. We said our good byes at 4.30pm and headed for home.

Welcome to visitor Richard Miles who enjoyed the day so much he joined on the spot. My thanks to those who came and helped in many small ways to make this activity worthwhile - Chris Webber who provided additional technical and historical details and Bernard a visitor from the WEA.

Also the Ramblers & Naturalists Club who drew my attention to the Museum of Sydney for my next Historical walk. Others, who by their presence, walking and talking, helped the day along were, William Meats, Jill Wockner, Jan Steven, Leigh Brown.



### Fyi

**Hornsby Shire Council has just published a cycling map on good quality paper for the Shire. It is free of charge!**

## DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

**1 February 2007**

- ◆ *Walk reports and photos*
- ◆ *Feature stories on holidays,*
- ◆ *People, flora and fauna,*
- ◆ *Camping tales*
- ◆ *Letters to the Editor*



**jcsteven@unwired.com.au**

### Bush Silence

The young horn moon hangs o'er the creek,  
The sun goes down, goes down the west,  
The golden wattles cease to sigh,  
The bellbirds go to rest.

The blue gums now no more are stirred,  
Like sentinels they stand,  
Now night spreads out her tent of stars,  
And silence holds the land.

*Richard Baylis*

These words are from a song written by William G James  
'Dedicated by special desire to Dame Nellie Melba'

## Climbing Mount Kinabalu

by Alison Lyon

I was in need of a holiday, but did not want to lie around on the beach drinking cocktails, or spend too much time doing retail therapy (well maybe for a couple of days that would be OK!). I wanted a challenge! So after a bit of research I settled on Sabah (Malaysian Borneo) and climbing Mount Kinabalu.

On 30th July I met up with my fellow travellers and local guide in the city of Kota Kinabalu (capital city of Sabah).

Our group of 11 flew to Sandakan, passing by Mount Kinabalu on our way. We were in awe of its size, the plane flew lower than the summit and I think most of us doubted our ability to reach the top. At 4,101metres it is the highest mountain in South East Asia (excluding the island of New Guinea).

The Orang-utan rehabilitation centre was a welcome distraction. I was horrified to find out that the jungle was being destroyed for the development of Palm Oil plantations and these beautiful animals were being pushed out of their homes. The volunteers do a lot of work with the local people and the injured and orphaned Orang-utans, some of whom have illegally been kept as pets, attempting to rehabilitate the animals back into the wild.

Later that afternoon began a 3-hour drive down dirt roads to our lodge in the jungle. A wonderful relaxing place, with an abundance of wildlife to see. Three trips in a boat along the Kinabatangan river, including one at night meant that we were able to view animals in their natural habitat. Crocodiles, lizards, snakes, proboscis monkeys, pygmy elephants, hornbills to name a few. A walk into the jungle, protected by the WWF led to a scary encounter with Pygmy elephants. We had accidentally got between a mother and her babies, we made a fast but quiet run out of the way.

The next part of the adventure was to be the mountain climb, however at the last minute a local MP had decided to close the track for his own use. So we headed to a small island (Pulau Tiga) off the west coast of Borneo where the original Survivor series had been filmed ('Survivor Pulau'). With clear warm water, opportunities to snorkel, walks around the island, a visit to snake island (inhabited only by snakes!) and a trek to volcanic mud baths, we were able to sit back, relax and feel that we were really escaping on a tropical island. To finish off those wonderful days there were opportunities to get to know another side of my fellow travellers in the karaoke bar, unfortunately the cocktails were in short supply due to the limited alcohol supply on the island (but it's amazing what you can mix with the local vodka to make it drinkable!).

Then came our journey to the base of Mount Kinabalu. First of all we stopped at the Poring Hot Springs. A few of the group managed to dunk themselves in the water, however my little toe was all I could manage, as I'm sure the water was almost at boiling point. We were also able to visit the canopy walk, a rope walkway high in the tall rainforest trees. I discovered pretty early on that it was best not to look down or examine the construction of the walkway too closely. Despite my heart racing at the thought of the whole thing collapsing at any second I was able to enjoy a different view of the rainforest. That night we stocked up on high energy snacks for our walk up the mountain. We met our 2 mountain guides the next day

and most agreed to employ a porter in order to have our overnight gear transported to the base camp, where we were to stay before the summit climb. Weighing in at 56kg I was reassured by the fact that the porters were able to carry up to 60kg and were known to transport tired and injured climbers up and down the mountain, at a price.



**Mt Kinabalu**

Having obtained our mountain passes (numbers of walkers on the mountain are limited) we set off with some trepidation and excitement. I'm unsure what the temperatures were for the day, but the humidity would have surely been over 90%. 4 1/2 hours later we reached base camp having experienced magnificent views along the way. The track starts in tropical rainforest, to a more temperate one and then up to alpine terrain. There was also a noticeable and welcome decline in temperature as we walked. I particularly enjoyed the experience of walking through clouds and then looking down on those clouds. The trek was a constant climb along uneven steps, designed for people with longer legs than mine. Our bed for the night was at one of the mountain hostels at base camp (3,260m) and unusually for me I was undisturbed by the fact that the sheets on my bed had obviously not been changed for a number of days. I did though find it hard to stomach the number of vomiting people around me who were obviously finding it difficult to cope with the altitude. After a meal of fried rice we were disappointed to discover that supplies of bottled water at the hostel were sold out. So the rest of the evening was spent boiling water for drinking during the summit climb.

The summit climb was to start at 2.30am and after donning 3 layers of thermals, raincoat, hat, gloves, head torch etc and a briefing by our guides we set off. Thank goodness for head torches and darkness, I was unable to see the sheer drops as I hung onto the ropes when I climbed, as I surely would have been too scared to continue. At this point I became aware of the effects of walking at altitude, noticing that after every 10 paces I was gasping for air! Luckily I had a companion from my group walking alongside me and we were able to keep going with the distraction of stories and jokes, concluding that we were possibly mad for even thinking about attempting the climb. Visibility was as far as the head torch beam could stretch

*Continued next page*

and all that we could see was bare grey rock stretching up ahead of us. 3 exhausting hours later we were aware that we had almost reached the summit. Scrambling over 100m of boulders with about 30 to 50 others we were able to take our turn on the summit for photos. A few minutes were all we needed as it was extremely cold and I was struggling to keep the circulation going in my fingers. But it was well worth the effort, even without the promised sunrise views (for the summit was shrouded in cloud). I was pleased to learn that all in our group had made it to the top.

We began our descent quickly and within 15 minutes the cloud and darkness lifted, we had this feeling of being on top of the world! Reality quickly hit when we realised the terrain we had covered earlier could now be seen. When traversing one section using a rope, our guide asked if we were scared of heights, then went on to tell us that a woman had fallen the week before and broken her arm. At this stage of the trip I did not want to do such damage as I had a couple of days of retail therapy to look forward to and needed use of my arms for the shopping I had planned.

With big smiles we returned to base camp for a 'traditional' breakfast of bacon and eggs, well deserved.

Then came the descent from base camp, going down took just as long as going up. After about an hour my knees began to complain and with every step becoming increasingly painful, I could no longer hold back without swearing! But I couldn't give up, the National Park gates were a welcome sight and stretching out in the sun provided some relief. An early night followed a meal of fried rice and a celebratory drink of the potent local rice wine.

The next morning I awoke to sounds of moans and groans from my fellow travellers and found that we had all developed a new style of walking (looking like we had been on a horse

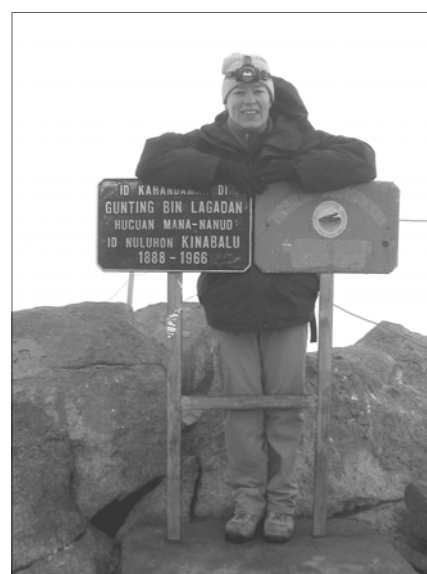
for far too long!). It took about 3 days before I could say that my legs had returned to normal.

The end of the adventure came soon, following a day on a local island, snorkelling, relaxing and sipping cocktails we parted company and headed on to the next stages of our journey. I flew to Kuala Lumpur for that couple of days of retail therapy, sight-seeing and a menu that offered more than rice.

*Having never visited Malaysia before I can now definitely recommend it. The people of Sabah are friendly and helpful. The mountain achievable, with some training. The shopping cheap. There is something for everyone; wild-life, views, history and beaches with coral reefs offshore. For me there are many more places to visit and challenges to pursue.*



**Mt Kinabalu Ascent**



**Mt Kinabalu Summit**

## **Australian Alps Co-operative Management – 20 Year Celebration**

### **RELAY WALK ALONG THE AUSTRALIAN ALPS WALKING TRACK**

#### **CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Participants are sought to walk one or more of the six sections into which the route is to be divided:

- |   |                                     |                         |           |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Walhalla to Mt Skene                | Sat 10 to Fri 16 Mar    | 07,7 days |
| 2 | Mt Skene to Hotham Heights          | Fri 16 to Sat 24 Mar    | 9 days    |
| 3 | Hotham Heights to Mitta Mitta River | Sat 24 to Fri 30 Mar    | 7 days    |
| 4 | Mitta Mitta River to Dead Horse Gap | Fri 30 Mar to Fri 6 Apr | 8 days    |
| 5 | Dead Horse Gap to Kiandra           | Fri 6 to Thurs 12 Apr   | 7 days    |
| 6 | Kiandra to Tharwa                   | Thurs 12 to Mon 16 Apr  | 5 days    |

#### ***Interested persons should contact :***

Relay Walk along the AAWT c/- Rob Horsfield, 11 Studley St, Kambah, ACT, 2902 by 15 December 2006

Gill Anderson Australian Alps Program Manager

Email: [ganderso@parks.vic.gov.au](mailto:ganderso@parks.vic.gov.au)

[www.australianalps.deh.gov.au](http://www.australianalps.deh.gov.au)



# Notice board

## **Blue Mountains Walking Track Project**

*Working to improve facilities  
in your NATIONAL PARK*

**Princes Rock Lookout Track Now  
Open!**

### **Track to the top of Wentworth Falls Stage 2 CLOSURES**

**Top crossing of Wentworth Falls, up  
to Fletchers Lookout**

**From: 24th October**

**Until: mid to late December**

**For: construction of a new stone  
crossing and barrier across  
the top of Wentworth Falls,  
and track upgrade.**

**For more information  
please contact the  
Walking Track  
Project Office  
on 4787 8207**

**Get Well Message for Judy  
Dervin** who has recently under-  
gone knee replacement surgery and  
is now enduring a rigorous  
rehabilitation programme.

*"We miss your interesting walks in  
the Blue Mountains and hope you  
are soon Back on Track Judy"*

## **Games Nights**



We have now  
had two games  
nights and both have been a success  
according to all those who attended.

Thanks to Chris, Charles, Jacqui,  
Bronwen, Suseela, Jan, Nick, Fennella,  
Sharyn, Wayne and Alison who all con-  
tributed and also brought along some  
very interesting games.

The variety of games so far included:  
dungeon & dragons, trivial pursuit,  
dominoes, scrabble, rapido, battle of the  
sexes, black jack and other card games.

Afterwards we all went to dinner at a  
local eatery which was excellent and  
extremely reasonable.

I am planning to have a games night  
each month, so look out for the dates  
and come along.

Liam Heery

## **Kayak/Canoe Hire Reminder**

The club has one "2 person" Kayak  
B-Line Estuary kayak and one single  
kayak for hire. Both are quite stable,  
fitted with rudders and suitable for  
estuary and flat water, river and lake  
use only. The hire includes paddles,  
spray skirts and floatation jackets  
which must be worn at all times on  
the water, during the hire period or  
when on a club canoe/kayak activity.

The hire charge is a nominal \$5.00  
per day/person.

**For Club Members Only**

**For Kayak hire contact  
Peter Bonner H-9489 5027  
Mob- 0408 221 488**

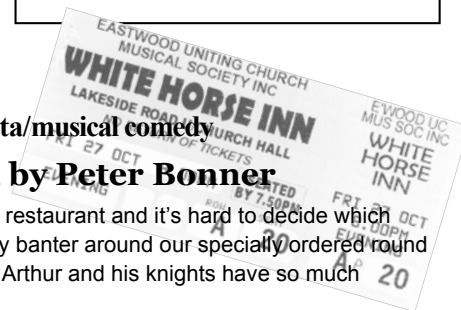


## **SOCIAL EVENT**

**"The White Horse Inn" operetta/musical comedy**  
**Friday 27 October arranged by Peter Bonner**

The pre-show dinner was at the Aspects of Asia restaurant and it's hard to decide which  
we enjoyed the most - the good food and friendly banter around our specially ordered round  
table to seat 12 hungry theatre goers ( Did King Arthur and his knights have so much  
fun???? Or the show itself?)

**My thanks to the cast from the Eastwood Uniting Church Musical society for a great  
night of musical entertainment. PB**



## **Virtual Library Virtual Library Virtual Library Virtual Library Virtual Library**

*Can't think of a walk to put on? Don't have a map for the area? Need fresh ideas?*

*At our last committee meeting we decided that we would set up a virtual library for the use of all members. The idea is that we have a list (the library) on our web site of all books, maps, articles and other items of interest that can be shared by all members. The material would be made available voluntarily by members and loaned to anyone else who would like to borrow the item.*

*For example I have a range of maps and two books of bushwalks in the Sydney region. These will be listed on the "virtual library" and if you would like to borrow any of them you can. If we have say 20 people doing the same thing, we will end up with a huge resource that we can all share.*

**Watch out for further developments as we develop the idea.**

# WALK REPORTS

## Ten Mile Hollow

Dharug National Park

### Walk 1

**Sunday 11 July 2006 Leader: Liam Heery**

What a great turn out (14 people) for this walk up the convict built road to Ten Mile Hollow in the Dharug National Park.

After leaving Hornsby we headed up the freeway and then through countryside with lots of orchards and nurseries to the pumping station at Mangrove mountain. Due to new fencing we had to cross Mangrove Creek weir and were lucky that the tide was out.

Walking along the creek with moss covered rocks and shaded light through the tree tops was a very pleasant experience.

At our lunch stop at Ten Mile Hollow a number of people took the opportunity to visit the Buddhist monastery, however as they were in a silent meditation retreat were unable to find much out about what goes on.

After lunch we headed back the "long way" via Clare Bridge also convict built and the second oldest in Australia. From here it was down hill but not down hill enough for some who decided to bush bash to cut out about a kilometre of fire trail.

Back at the creek we had to walk through the pumping station to get around the fence as the tide had come in and completely covered the weir.



Thanks to Jacqui, Kim, Tu, Annette, Len, Peter, Shalav, Zak, Charles, Stan, visitors Jason and Rebecca, and new member Fernando for a most enjoyable (although a little harder than expected) day.

### Walk 2

**Sunday 8 Oct 2006 Leader: Dave Cunningham**  
via Simpson's Track, Mangrove Creek,

This was a well graded walk with few steep descents or ascents and as it turned out we seem to have had the whole place to ourselves although the longish distance did make it a challenge (Total distance was about 20km). The walk was made even more challenging due to unseasonably hot weather with the mercury climbing into the low 30s and for much of the trip there being very little shade.

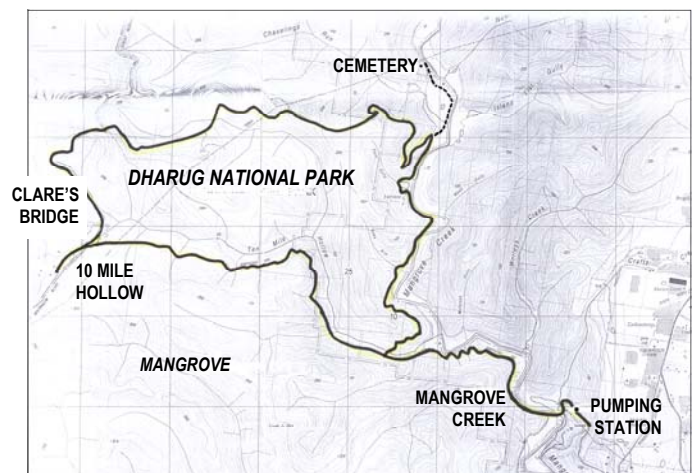
Four of us met at Pennant Hills Station before heading up to Lower Mangrove to start the walk along Simpson's Track then on to Ten Mile Hollow.

Getting to the track involves crossing Mangrove Creek at the Mangrove Creek Pumping Station via a rough causeway below the weir. When I initially surveyed this crossing some months earlier I did not realise that the creek below the weir was tidal thus when we tried to cross it to start the walk the causeway was completely submerged by the high morning tide. We were forced to use the weir itself which meant scrambling over locked gates and around fences.

With that drama out of the way we made very quick progress to Ten Mile Hollow where we stopped for an early lunch. After lunch we made our way up the Old Northern Road to Clare's Bridge then descended down into Dubbo Gully, stopping to look at the pioneer's graveyard along the way.

The southerly change that caused Sydney so much trouble hit us like an explosion just as we were approaching Mangrove Creek. Before we knew what hit us we had trees and branches falling down around us. Fortunately none fell close enough to cause us any danger and were able to finish the walk safely.

My thanks to Richard Milnes and to visitors Richard and Tracey Nutt for coming along and sharing the walk experience with us.



## Stanwell Park to Coledale

### Illawarra Range

Sunday 13 Aug 2006 Leader: Charles Bowden

Four of us set off on a bright sunny day on the Wodi Wodi track that begins behind the railway station at Stanwell Park. On reaching Stanwell Creek, we made the short side trip downstream to view the tallest railway viaduct in Australia. As it was early in the walk, a bush bash up the slope to link up with the track was suggested. This proved to be rather more arduous than expected, the slope being thickly covered with lawyer vines, blackberry bushes and cabbage palms: Jacqui's "shortcut" will long be remembered – and never repeated!

We reached the top of the Illawarra escarpment in time for morning tea at the lookout point overlooking the town and beach. An eagle being chased by a crow provided some light entertainment before we set off along the Forest Trail that runs along the top of the escarpment. Apart from the flowering wattle, the unusually warm weather had already brought out grevillea blooms and even a solitary waratah, while plenty of budding gymea lilies were spotted.

Lunch was held at another cliff top site with splendid views south along the coast towards Thirroul and beyond. A flock of pelicans could be seen at one point, flying ponderously past us, heading north.

After reaching the end of the Forest Trail, we cut across a grassy tract full of high sedge until we reached a maintenance track for the nearby power lines. It was disappointing to see that this was being used as a dump site for hazardous materials, particularly asbestos from construction sites, it seemed.



*The Coledale slot - Photo by Charles Bowden*

Leaving the maintenance track, we cut across country through thickets of gorse and gymea lilies. Astonishingly, someone had marked the way with pink ribbons which we followed, more or less, until they petered out close to our exit point from the bush, straight onto a burnt out car. Leaving behind this vandalized relic, we reached the cliff top above the Coledale slot where we paused to admire the view.

The slot itself is a vertical and vertiginous descent down a narrow gouge in the cliff (see photo) which we all negotiated carefully and successfully. We then followed the scree slope down to the base of the cliff, the way down punctuated by rubber tyres, evidently rolled off the cliff above by similar hoons responsible for the burnt out car.

We soon emerged onto the cleared Water board land behind Coledale and headed for the railway station, tired but well satisfied.

Thanks to Jacqui Joseph, Chris Othen and Annette Sudan for taking part - and a special thank you to Liam Heery for turning up to give us a lift back to Stanwell Park.

## CYCLE/WALK

### Lady Carrington Drive Audley Royal National Park

Sunday 13 Aug 2006 Leader: Peter Bonner

We met at Strathfield Square, and arrived on time at Audley Weir to meet up with Wayne Lee. This made up our all male team of six cyclists.

Peter Bonner leader, Nick Collins, Leigh Brown, with his sparkling new Apollo cross bike, Zonko and John Rich. Our cycles covered the range of high tech mountain bike to the old and trusty faithfuls.

Lady Carrington Drive is an old dirt road closed to motor vehicles for over 20 years which runs along the Eastern bank of the Hacking River. Approx 10kms long it is crossed by 13 creeks each one identified by an Aboriginal name. The Drive is shared with cyclists, walkers, bird watchers, picnickers plus Mums and Dads with prams and young children - quite a mix. I was amazed to meet kamikaze mountain bikers hurtling down stream (down hill) full speed in total disregard for the safety of other users, especially as the DRIVE is bumpy, rocky wet rutted and muddy in places. Fortunately we did not see any accidents.

Morning tea was taken at a very pretty grassed area with a suitably aged rustic picnic table, just the right size for 6 male cyclists.

Morning tea over we happily gave the table to a new group of cyclists, continuing on our way at a leisurely pace to the end of the Drive. At Sir Bertram Stevens, at Nick's suggestion rather than go on to the Upper Causeway, we secured the 6 bikes to a suitable small tree with multiple wire loops and chains with keyed or combination locks. Everyone swore they remembered their lock combinations, and set off walking on The Forest Island loop track of 4.5 kms. This track, which follows several creeks takes about 1.5 hours to complete.

We lunched on a grassy sunlit slope, lyre birds were spotted and numerous bird calls entranced us on this beautiful walk of special interest were the stands of Palm trees.

Arriving back at our bikes, after the unlocking procedure had been completed with no lost keys or forgotten combinations, we set off on the largely downhill run back. As we had some time in hand we crossed over Varney's wooden bridge at Audley and cycled down the sealed road to Wattle Forest picnic area in time for afternoon tea and a lounge on the grass to watch the rowing boats and canoes glide past. Some folks had more boating skills than others who gave us some entertainment.

A farewell cup of coffee at the kiosk and then about 4.30pm we said our good-byes and headed for home.

Thanks guys for coming along it was a great day. Weather a lovely memorable day, sunny white fluffy clouds, coolish, ideal for walking or cycling.



Grade: easy-medium 25km cycling

Walks: 4.5 kms No punctures or incidents



# WALK REPORTS

## Mt. Hay Area Blue Mountains

Sunday 17 September Leader: Dave Cunningham

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This was in some ways my revenge on Mt Hay as the last time I attempted to walk in this area about 2 years ago I broke an arm after a fall.

So I was keen to get back there and finally complete climbing the mountain, this time without incident or injury. I almost got away with it this time finishing the walk with only a broken muffler after the car ran over one too many rocks on the Mt. Hay Rd!

Mt Hay is one of those Blue Mountains landmarks that the average traveller/bushwalker knows about but has never taken the trouble to visit due to it being so far off the main road.

Most topographical maps only show a relatively short track at the end of a very long fire trail as being the only sort of walk one can do in this area thus it rarely appears on the programme. As it turns out there is more to this area than the bushwalking maps let on.

After meeting Robert, Alex, Fanny, Faye, Nick and Peter at Strathfield we headed off to Wentworth Falls to pick up Chris, John and Michael before heading out along the Mt Hay Rd to the car park at the end of the trail. The road out to Mt Hay is in very poor condition and thus a great deal of care was needed to negotiate some of the trickier sections without damaging the vehicles. While the road can be tackled in a two wheel drive car (barely) I would highly recommend it be left to four wheel drives.

The plan was to walk to the top of Mt Hay and return, then walk out along one of the fire trails shown on the map but after discovering a number of promising tracks leading off the main track we decided to have a look at these instead. One of these tracks led us out to the edge of the cliff line looking straight into and over the magnificent Grose Valley before swinging around to a deep side gully via a small cave.

We spent most of the time looking at this and other tracks before heading up Mt Hay itself. After stopping for a late lunch we then made our way to the summit and briefly explored this area before returning to the cars and heading home, stopping at Wentworth Falls for coffee on the way.

The weather, while beautiful for most of the day, deteriorated as we were leaving the car park thus our departure was timely.

While offering great views (we could see the City skyline quite easily) and the spectacular geography of this area, it is well worth a return visit and further exploring.

Thank you to all those who came.

Dave Cunningham.

## Tempe to Sans Souci via Cook Park

Sunday 24 September Leader: Charles Bowden

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We set off from Tempe railway station on a misleadingly cool morning, walking on mostly cycle paths towards the coast. The paths meander past pocket wetlands tucked away in unlikely places: nestling under a freeway, sidling along a sports field, crouching beside a soccer stadium. Plenty of water birds were visible, the most striking of which were the black-headed stilts.

The day grew hotter fairly quickly and we stopped for morning tea by the Muddy Creek channel leading to the Cooks River to catch some of the breeze off the water. Not long after we reached the start of Cook Park which stretches from Kyeemagh to Sans Souci. We followed the path, dodging cyclists while admiring the beach scenery, until we reached Brighton-le-Sands, site of many commemorative edifices including the bronze sculpture to the First Fleet where the group photo was taken. We decided to stop for lunch nearby although it took a while to find a vacant table by which time a strong breeze had risen, threatening to snatch away our food and drink containers.

Chris seized the opportunity for a refreshing dip in the sea before we set off again. The park keeps pace with Lady Robinson Beach all the way to Dolls Point by which time the wind was gusting strongly, sandpapering our legs with grains whipped off the beach. The heat had also risen sharply so we decided to pause in the shade of some trees while Wayne and myself went for a swim to cool down. By the time we emerged from the water, the wind strength had risen another notch or two, so we hastened around Sandringham's shoreline, taking time to admire critically some of the extravagant coastal residences, before taking refuge in the floating café at Rocky Point for afternoon tea.

Bolstered by cake and coffee, we escorted Chris to a nearby bus stop before walking toward a final patch of wetlands straddling Bado-berong Creek, sandwiched between the suburbs of Sans Souci and Sandringham. This proved to be very pleasant, sheltered from the wind and shady as well. Ducks abounded in the creek while pairs of red-rumped parrots romped under flowering Coral Trees with their succulent beak-shaped blooms. At the end of the wetlands, not far from the bus stop, a young cherry blossom tree was a pink and white sentinel to mark the end of the walk.

Thanks to Karen Askew, Chris Relling, Wayne Lee and William Meats for taking part.



Group sitting by First Fleet memorial, Brighton-le-Sands



# WALK REPORTS

## Scarborough Cliff top to Stanwell Park

### Illawarra Escarpment

Sunday 1 October 2006      Leader: Charles Bowden

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This delightful Spring walk once again demonstrated its popularity with a good turnout on a sunny day. After sorting out the car shuffle, we set off along the Forest Trail which begins on the escarpment above Scarborough. Several vantage points offer stunning views along the coast with Austinmer and Port Kembla easily visible on the day. Another feature of the walk is the unusual bird's eye view of the coalmine at Coalcliff including the railway loading yard.

Waratahs and gynea lilies abound in spring on this track and, although not as abundant as in previous years, possibly due to the early dry conditions, we weren't disappointed, finding plenty of vivid examples to keep everyone enthralled. Plenty of other colourful wildflowers were also in abundance and Burnum Burnum's pocket guide was given a good workout.

After stopping for lunch at the point overlooking Stanwell Park and the beach, we descended the newly refurbished track from the cliff top to the junction with the Wodi Wodi track. We followed this east towards Stanwell Creek where we paused while some went downstream to gaze at the 69.5 metre high railway viaduct, the tallest in Australia. Faye even managed to find a jungle swing which Tarzan would have envied!

Back on the Wodi Wodi track, we followed its undulations across the hillside swathed in golden Dillwynia before finally reaching the end of the trail outside the railway station at Stanwell Park. It was then a short walk past the old miners' cottages down to the Stanwell Park café for a well-earned recovery.

Thanks to Spiro Stathos, Suseela Durvasula, Robert Marotta, Elizabeth Saadeh, Karen Askew, Faye Xu, Alex Loo, Fanny Wong, Len Sharp, Ellen Lau, Peter Robins and Sandra Vila for taking part.



*Group at lookout over Stanwell Park*



*Golden rest*

*Photos by Charles Bowden*

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## 'The Bogey Holes' Mount Wilson

Saturday/Sunday 4-5 November 2006

Leader: Peter Bonner

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This Camp was originally planned for Mountain Lagoon to Colo River Wollemi National Park. Paul Goessling and I had surveyed the area Wed prior to the walk as it was about 10 years since our last trip to this location. A cancellation brought my camp party down to three and I had to change to the more easily accessible campsite, The Bogey Holes,

We arrived at the Bogey Holes campsite at 11:30am approx. Everything was wet, however Jan found some dry leaves and small sticks, and with metho from my Trangli stove we soon had a good fire and a boiling billy for a cuppa. Soon 3 tents were erected with some regard to overhanging branches and storm debris. After lunch I led the way to find the steep gorge/gully we saw on our last camp. It was quite a wet scrub bash so Michael and I pressed on leaving Jan perched on a rocky outcrop as both feet were giving a her some pain. We believed we could sight the steep sides of the gorge but were only 95% sure. So back to Jan and then the campsite, more tea with nibbles, fire wood gathering. After the evening meal and a long chat around the camp fire we snuggled into our sleeping bags. I was cosy in my Winter bag, Jan not so cosy in a Summer bag and Michael slept unsoundly through the whole night !! Around 1:30am I felt quite unwell. In fact I was bloody crook! Frantically I unzipped my tent and plunged out into the bush. My cooking again, the no label whiskey from Jan or the rough red from Michael ?? Or all three. I thought I was dying. I thought I might as well die warm, so back to my sleeping bag. Sunday after a fitful nights sleep I joined my fellow campers round the camp fire lit by Jan, but no bacon & eggs for me !! Jan said her feet were not up to another walk so left us whilst Michael and I, packed up wet tents and drove to Mount Irvine to walk to The Pavements. Lunch was taken on the rocks sheltered from a cool breeze, no one else about but one small mixed party of walkers back at the Fire Station.

Wild life: 3 dead Rabbits, 1 large black Goanna one lyre bird numerous song birds heard after the rain had stopped.

Weather: light rain, cool at night Thanks everyone, Paul for help with the survey, Michael and Jan, we showed one can camp in the rain and still have a good interesting time. (Abridged)

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# CAR CAMP

## Abercrombie Caves

October Long Weekend 30 Sept - 2 Oct 2006

Walk Co-ordinator: Christopher Webber

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Peter Bonner unfortunately had to cancel his camp for this weekend only two weeks beforehand, so I suggested this camp as a last minute alternative. Despite the short notice, nine people turned up, although four others (non-members) cancelled due to lack of equipment and transport. The happy campers were: Alison Lyon, Wayne Lee, Helena Lang, Michael Thompson, Eric Cheng, Fiona Lang, Stephen Hayes, and Michael's son Derek. The weather was perfect all weekend – clear blue skies and temperatures in the low 20's.

On Saturday, Helena and Michael met me at Wentworth Falls station, and we drove from there to the caves via Bathurst. It was to be Helena's first camp. We stopped at Bathurst to be breathalysed and to check the map. The traffic wasn't any problem. The last time I had been to the caves, on a club weekend with my father more than 20 years ago, the road had been dirt most of the way from Bathurst, and the last section was particularly scary. However, it is now a very good quality tarmac road. The last section into the caves still is still one lane wide with blind hairpin bends, but is not as bad as the Wombeyan Caves road.

The campsites were not crowded, and we quickly found a nice site to ourselves by the river, disturbing a small flock of ducks. The river was flowing but only just, and the ranger said it was at the lowest level he had ever seen. There was a lot of algae floating on the surface in some places. Needless to say there was no swimming! We had just enough time to put up the tents and join the 2:30pm Bushrangers Cave Tour.



Abercrombie caves are not as pretty or as extensive as Jenolan Caves but possibly have more interesting geology. Grove Creek, which runs through the caves, apparently used to run over the top of them, but the water from the river trickled down and eventually the roof collapsed, creating an enormous sink hole and the huge arch (biggest in the southern hemisphere) you walk through on the self-guided tour. The cave formations are often covered in mud from previous floods, which provide evidence of the steady decline in rainfall over the last several thousand years – floods that used to reach the tops of the caves now rise just five

metres. We were shown fossils from crinoids, the prehistoric sea creatures that lived on the sea floor and helped to form the limestone that makes up the cave. Fossils from diprotodon, thylacoleo (the marsupial lion), and a rainforest rat have also been found in the ancient mud inside the caves (it is too dry for rainforest to be found anywhere near the caves now).

The Bushrangers Cave got its name from the Ribbon Gang, a group of escaped convicts turned bushrangers, who stayed there briefly in 1824. They were found and captured after a fight nearby, and hanged in Bathurst. The cave is inhabited by an endangered species of bat, and we saw several of the tiny mammals flying around inside.

After the Bushrangers Cave, we visited the Stable Cave, where the Bushrangers kept their horses, and took the self-guided tour through the grand Arch. This tour follows the river through the cave, which has marvellous acoustics as well as beautiful formations. We took a turn on the dance floor, built by miners over a century ago.

On return to the camp, I was pleased to meet Alison, Steve, and Wayne, who had arrived after us. While some people now set about collecting firewood, others finished setting up camp and getting dinner ready. A wallaby hopped by not far up the hill. The firewood collecting became a frenzy as darkness fell, with Michael supplying a saw and Steve and Wayne enthusiastically jumping, dragging, burning, and sawing. The metal fireplace was soon glowing, which was just as well, as the temperature was dropping fast. It helped Helena produce some culinary miracles with what she had intended to be her cold salads – she had been unable to buy a stove.

Enough chairs had been brought for everybody to sit around the fire, and after a shared dinner and some port we talked long into the night. Derek and Wayne diligently kept the fire burning. There was no TV or even mobile phone reception. All that could be heard apart from our voices, was the trickling of the water on the rocks and the frogs croaking. This changed when we went to bed, to be regaled by some loud snoring! The night was much colder than expected, and many people had difficulty sleeping. Helena said she hadn't slept at all, and would have to leave that day with Fiona and Eric to avoid another cold night.

We had a relaxed start the next day. For breakfast entertainment, I watched a beautiful pair of fairy wrens hopping around a bush next to the fireplace. There was also a very tame crimson rosella that walked right up to us trying to scrounge some food. The Belfry Cave tour started at 10.30am. My brother Tony, his wife Maxine, and their young children Karl and Grace had driven up from Gundaroo, near Canberra for the day, and we met them at the kiosk. Grace is too young to walk by herself, and Maxine had to stay behind with her. As we crawled through passages and clambered up and down ladders we soon found out why! The guide was again excellent, and this tour offered some unusual views of the caves, but just getting around on this tour was the most fun. Maxine was able to join us again afterwards, when we did the self-guided tour again for those who had missed it on Saturday.

After lunch, we went for a 9 km/three hour walk to Mt Grey and the Grove Creek Falls. This involved a long climb up to a ridge line, which was particularly hard on Tony, who was carrying 13kg of Grace on his back. We took a wrong turning at one point that gave us a great view of the valley, and also a close up of a wallaby, which hopped away from us. Tony pointed out the correct track, and soon we had climbed up to the top. Somehow in the process, Derek scraped his elbow, and my home-made first aid kit got used for the first time. Lucky for him, Alison and Maxine



were there (they are both nurses) and they did a really professional job fixing him up. Derek must have liked all the attention and having his arm in a bandage, as he stopped complaining about the walk after that!

After walking along the ridge on a wide track for a while, we came to the Mt Grey turn-off. From here, we walked down and around the gold diggings. There was very little to see, as it was about 150 years since the last gold miner had been there, but it was still surprising to see how little was left to show of what must have been a bustling little town of several thousand people. Some mine shafts could still be seen but in many places, all that was left was a marker post that was described in the accompanying brochure.

From Mt Grey we walked down progressively greener slopes to the river. Here we stopped for afternoon tea. It was a beautiful day and the sun had done its work on many of the walkers. Some were short of water while others had to pack up and leave before it got dark. At this point, we could go left along the river to the falls, or right to the camp, and most decided to head back to the camp. As my brother is a former ANC Bushwalkers club president and the route simply followed the river, there was no problem with splitting the group. However, only two of the hardy and brave were left to accompany me to the falls— Alison and Wayne. We had just over a kilometre to go, walking along the quietly trickling river, to get to the falls. We climbed up to a look-



out to see a spectacular 70m drop that suddenly appears as if out of nowhere. It was well worth the extra kms. We saw a wallaby hopping by the river on the way back, while the rest of the group saw another one with a joey in her pouch. We got back in time to see off Tony and his family, and Helena, Fiona, and Eric as well.

Although we were down to six people, we energetically gathered some more wood for the campfire, and had another relaxing evening sitting around the fireplace talking, eating, and listening to Wayne's music collection on his MP3 player.

On the Monday morning, Michael and Derek left first, while Wayne, Steve, Alison and I packed up at a more leisurely pace. I followed Alison's car out of the park, and just as she turned onto the Bathurst road, an echidna ran across the road in front of her. This was very exciting for me, as it was the first time since coming to Australia that I had seen one in the wild. I stopped to take some photos of its spiny back as it thrust itself into the ground – it let me touch it. The four of us met at Bathurst, and finally at the Imperial Hotel in Mount Victoria for lunch. Thanks to everybody for coming and helping to make this such a great weekend!

Chris Webber

## NIGHT WALK

### Marramarra NP

29 October 2006

Leader: Liam Heery

A full moon and a clear sky was what we were looking for on this night walk, which commenced in daylight at Hornsby station, but had turned to night by the time we reached Marramarra NP at 7.30pm.

Heading off in the moon light with me were Jacqui, Judie, Graham, Karen, Len, Annette, Faye, Charles, John and Stan.

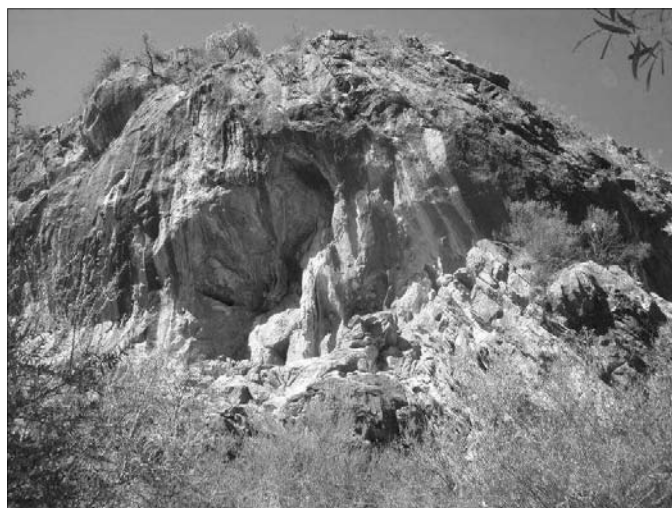
We were immediately presented with the prospect of not having to use our torches as the moon light was so bright that we could clearly see where we were going.

However nothing is ever as simple as it seems and by the time we got to Marramarra Creek we were confronted with a high tide that had cut off our route to the camp site and fire place. So Liam decided to go up creek where he found a very narrow fallen tree to tight rope across, while the rest of the group stripped to undies to wade across the creek.

We reached the camp site and lit a fire, had roasted marshmallows and a variety of shared goodies before leaving Len and Annette behind camping for the night.

Back at the creek, Liam crossed on his narrow log while the others again waded across to much merriment.

A great night walk with plenty of joyous conversation and good company made this one of the best walks had by those present.



Photography by Wayne Lee

### HAPPY TRAILS

Walkers now have access to a \$15 million foreshore trail from Glebe to Pyrmont. The walk was opened by Sydney Mayor Clover Moore on Saturday 11 November 2006.



## Welcome to New Members

Helena Lang  
Fiona Lang  
Fanny Wong  
Lisa Ochs  
Wade Wyatt  
Eric Cheng  
Lorena Cappellone  
Anthony Milanoli

**See you in the bush**

## Coba Ridge to Kulpers Track

Marramarra NP

29 October 2006

Leader: Liam Heery

The first day of daylight saving allowed us the liberty of a late Sunday start, meeting at 9.00am.

On the track we decided to do a diversion so as to extend the day and finish late so that we wouldn't be too early for dinner at the Hornsby Inn!

Our diversion took us to the look out over Collingridge Point on Berowra Creek, where we had a leisurely morning tea.

Back on track we headed into the bush to make our off track crossing. On the way we discovered some (new to us) aboriginal carvings of Kangaroos.

Then on to a rock face overlooking Coba Creek, where we stopped for a long lunch in the sun.

While there we witnessed two youths revving a two wheel drive car (which would be impossible to drive out) and destroying the bush. Unaware we were overlooking them they continued what they were doing, which from discussions could have been anything from disposing of a body to setting the car alight.

Concerned that we might be caught in any bush fire generated from burning the car, we telephoned the police and reported the incident.

Making our way cautiously around the location where the car was, as I stepped over a tree stump my foot landed within an inch of a black snakes head. Karen who was behind me reckoned that I made the fastest pirouette and reverse twist jump she had ever seen in her life, as I tried to reverse time and move away from the snake, who then casually eyed me and slithered off into the bush.

As we then came upon the car we again cautiously circled around but could no longer see the two youths. The car now abandoned in the middle of the high creek rushes could hardly be seen. Not wanting to disturb too much we looked for rego plates and through the windows but there was no body!

After we got back into mobile range I checked with the police again only to find that they had not made much of an attempt to locate where we and the car were, even though I had given them exact GPS coordinates!

The end to a fabulous walk (that ended up being 22 kms instead of 15 kms) was spent in the Hornsby Inn. Thanks to Jacqui, Karen, Michael, Chris and Len for sharing a memorable day.

## ANB Xmas Party

*When: Saturday 9 December*

*Time: From 10:00am*

*Where: Brays Bay Reserve,  
Rhodes Park, RHODES*

*Many activities including  
walks*

*Contact: Trish 9569 2298  
or Suseela 96631723*

*Details on separate leaflet*

## Mt Tomah Botanical Gardens

Saturday 7 October 2006

Co-ordinator Sharyn Mattern

Eight of us met at Strathfield for the carpool and set out shortly after 10am. Travelling via Richmond and Bilpin on the Bell Line of Road, we arrived at 11:30am and met up with Judy Derwin. After a coffee stop we set off at a leisurely pace to walk in these splendid gardens, frequently stopping to admire the plants and the great panoramic views from the lookout and taking photos along the way. The protea garden was looking fabulous as were the tulips, azaleas and numerous other spring flowers, shrubs, trees and vines.

Two weddings were taking place in the gardens, one of which was in the formal garden. A great setting.

Many purchased beautiful cut waratahs before we departed. 2 stops on the way home to buy fruit and veg and to try the "Berry Ice Cream" which was highly recommended by Sharyn. It was certainly worth stopping for. Thanks for a great day Sharyn. - Jan



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