



all nations
BUSHWALKERS INC



Summer Newsletter
December 2014

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www.bushwalking.org.au/~allnations

Keeping Track

NEWSLETTER OF ALL NATIONS BUSHWALKERS INC • FORMERLY ANC BUSHWALKERS INC & ALL NATIONS CLUB WALKABOUT GROUP • FOUNDED 1964 • INCORPORATED 1992



Stop Press: Christmas Picnic - Saturday 6 December, 2014 ...

Trekking to Haba Snow Mountain

Yunnan Province, China

12-18 May 2014

By Charles Bowden

This trek was a long time in planning, around 2 years. I first found out about it during an earlier visit to Yunnan province in China when I visited the magnificently named Tiger Leaping Gorge. A range of logistical and bureaucratic hiccups contributed significantly to planning delays but, ultimately, the group of friends that I assembled for the trek benefited.

The trek lasted 7 days in all which included 3 days & nights at "Base Camp", a ramshackle collection of buildings situated at 4100m. Haba Snow Mountain loomed above us, a 5396m peak with a bonnet of snow at its summit. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

The trek starts from a village called Qiaotou, at around 1900m. It follows a well-used track that sidles along the flanks of snow-capped 3000m peaks which line the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, here called the Jinsha River.



Tiger Leaping Gorge

The slopes are steep but the gradual climb is relatively gentle, at least initially. So there is a sense of wonder when magnificent views appear as the track curves around a bend. And there a lot of bends: at one point, there is a steepish ascent known as the 28 Bends. I count 32 bends myself and by the time we reach the last of them we had risen 900m since leaving Qiaotou.

The track is punctuated by guesthouses built and maintained by the local Naxi people for trekkers. Accommodation is rather more comfortable than we expected and the food is delicious.

We spend our first night at the Halfway Guesthouse. It isn't clear to us where it was halfway to as we had 6 more days of walking ahead of us. But it is a welcome respite after 6 hours of walking.

On the second day, I persuade Mr Kim, our cheerfully eccentric and larger-than-life guide, to head offtrack to look for a waterfall, as depicted on the rudimentary sketch maps with which we were supplied. No topographic maps below 1:1,000,000 are available in China. We soon find out that Mr Kim has no idea where the waterfall is but we have fun climbing to a small spur and looking out over the valley.

We then spend the rest of the morning descending to the bottom of the valley, relinquishing all the height gained the previous day and then some, until we reach "middle" Tiger Leaping Gorge. While no tigers are in evidence, there is a swing bridge crossing to a rock in the middle of the roaring swirling river which some find nerve-wracking.

However, more fascinating still, is the narrow track that has been cut into the cliff face 100 metres above the river. It turns out that this is our route along the gorge until we emerge into the charming Walnut Grove village with its well-tended fields located at "lower" Tiger Leaping Gorge. Here we spend the night at Woody's Guesthouse, the most sumptuous we have encountered so far.

The following day we drive to Haba Village. This 1.5 hour journey affords us the first sights of the peak we are intending to climb. Haba Snow Mountain looks monstrous: jagged and fissured, unscalable except with ropes, pitons and helmets. Some of my companions stare at me mutely: "surely not" and "you can't be serious", their gazes seem to hint.

Haba Village is located at 2800m and is the launching point for the main height gain section of the trek, a 1300m, 7 hour walk up to Base Camp. We watch in fascination as two mules are loaded with most of our belongings. We still each carry full daypacks but our equine porters will make a big difference to our comfort levels at Base Camp.

The trek to Base Camp starts off in pine forest which soon gives way to hilly meadows used to graze cattle and goats. Then the track becomes deeply rutted from the hooves of years of horses and mules as it meanders through rhododendron forests and clumps of wild azaleas before it finally emerges onto the upper slopes of the mountain, typical rocky alpine terrain. The mountain peak is not visible due to cloud.

Base Camp facilities are rudimentary: no electricity, no sewerage, no heating, no insulation. Water is piped from a mountain tarn and needs to be boiled before consuming.



The Bunkhouse

The buildings are a mix of stone, wood and metal, all handbuilt by local villagers. Our quarters are at the end of a blockhouse which consists of several dormitories each sleeping 8-12 people in bunk beds. The kitchen and dining area are in a separate building from our sleeping area, smoky and sooty from woodfires used for cooking.

The latrines are located downhill, about 50m away from the other buildings. It is a low squat building, split in two by a wall, with two cubicles on each side. A trench runs through the centre in which to deposit your waste. It is unspeakable but we cope.



Black Lake

Day 4 dawns or rather emerges grey and sombre. The clouds have set in low and there is some drizzle. This is our first altitude acclimatisation day and we are walking to a series of mountain lakes. We are joined by 2 mountain guides as well as Mr Kim. We set off and are soon encountering our first patches of snow... and yaks. These large shaggy beasts come in rusty red as well as the more usual black variety.

The mountain lakes look chilly and the surrounding peaks menacing. Views are restricted by the low cloud which is a pity as it must be spectacular on a clear day. Lunch consists of potatoes and eggs cooked over a fire on the shore of the largest lake. The warm food is welcome and counters the cold.

We retrace our steps back to our sleeping quarters and discover that a large group of about 50 walkers & guides has arrived during our absence. Base Camp becomes quite noisy as they gather, disperse, then reassemble at the behest of their leaders' exhortations. We are kept awake most of the night with their never-ending preparations and occasional mistaken invasions of our quarters.

They eventually set off for the peak at 4:00am and we finally get some respite before our second acclimatisation day.



Crampon training

This time we climb up a flank of the mountain to practise crampon and icepick techniques. The weather is similar to yesterday only now there is a bitter wind blowing as well. We are all rugged up with gloves, beanies, thermals and wet weather gear. Crampon training comprises learning how to put them on, followed by walking up a snowy hillside using a rope as guide. Icepick training consists of falling

and sliding back down the hillside, using the icepick as brake. Care must be taken so that you don't spike yourself with the crampons or stab yourself with the icepick. For some it is exhilarating, for others terrifying, but we all succeed in emerging unscathed and more confident. If only the weather would improve as tomorrow we climb to the summit.

That evening the clouds finally disappear and Haba Snow Mountain emerges, haloed in sunshine. The northern side of the mountain looks vastly different from its south

ern side that we had seen from the road. The summit is completely snow covered and the way up looks relatively smooth with none of the jaggedness of its southerly aspect. Our spirits lift.

We set off the following morning at 5:00am. The weather looks promising and dawn rays soon emerge to reveal a clear sky. We make steady progress with hourly rest stops until we reach the start of the snowline. For the last 400m ascent we will be using crampons so we stop to put them on. Breathing requires a little more effort but otherwise everyone looks to be coping well with the altitude. We are now at 5000m.

The walk up the steep snow slope is very slow but we persevere. At least the sun is still shining and the summit looks so close now. There is a large curving snowbank on the western side which overlooks a sheer drop plummeting 1000m or more. We carefully avoid stepping too close to the edge. The slope curves around to the right (east) before swinging back to the left. The summit is now in sight as is China's equivalent of a summit trig: a wooden pole to which colourful streamers are attached. We each touch the pole and congratulate each other between exhausted breaths. The views are magnificent. It has taken us 6 ½ hours.



Surrounding the summit

Our guides don't want us to linger so we head back down the snow slope. I wish I had skis as the snow is soft and inviting. Our trip back to

Base Camp is a little quicker than the climb up. All in all it has taken us about 11 hours to walk up and back. We are exhilarated. And congratulations abound back at base camp. The indefatigable and irrepressible Mr Kim tells us that we are the first western group to make it to the summit. I know this is not true but perhaps we are the first Australians that he has managed to get to the top... or perhaps just the oldest.

The following day is our last of the trek and we retrace our steps of Day 3, through the rhododendron forests, along the horse-rutted tracks, across the hillside meadows and down 1300m to Haba Village where we have lunch. In the afternoon we visit "upper" Tiger Leaping Gorge where at last we encounter tigers, two of them, larger than life, their graven images snarling defiantly at the thronging tourists.

And we also see for the first time the rock in the river which local legend has it that a fleeing tiger used to leap across in order to escape the hunters pursuing him. It leaves much to the imagination as the river is so wide that the tiger would have needed to be size of a large whale to accomplish the feat. But it is a visually arresting place, spectacular even, and a fitting conclusion to our trek.



President's Soapbox

I'm sure that I'm not alone in having a gloomy sense of déjà vu when the bushfire season announced itself with the recent fires in Katoomba and elsewhere. It is probably inevitable that our activities program in Summer will suffer some disruption due to bushfires and park closures. Most of us have noted the high levels of burgeoning undergrowth in the national parks, even obscuring popular well-trodden tracks.

Already areas of total fire ban have been announced so once again all walk and activities leaders are reminded to check regularly with NPWS and fire authorities before undertaking a scheduled activity in an area which might represent a fire risk such as National Parks, State Forests and bushland reserves.

Thank you nonetheless to all members who have placed activities onto the Summer program. It is pleasing to see so much variety on offer. Thank you also to everyone who has participated in or contributed to Club activities during the past year.

As we head toward the end of the calendar year, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that 2014 represents 50 years since the club was formally founded in 1964. We held a slightly premature (due to confusion over dates) but very successful celebration in 2012 to mark the occasion which we are not going to repeat. However I would urge everyone to join us at the Club's annual picnic to toast the past 50 years (and the next 50 too!) as well as to enjoy the usual festive atmosphere in good company.

Please make a note of the date and venue in your calendars and diaries and I look forward to seeing you then. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to extend to you our warmest greetings for the Festive Season and best wishes for a very happy New Year.

Charles Bowden

WALK

Moonlight Walk

Marramarra NP

9 August 2014

Leader: Liam Heery

Grade 3

Saturday was a fabulous day with clear blue skies and a very balmy 22 degrees. All looked well for our full moon walk, on a night that was to have the biggest moon of the year.

From Hornsby station after a minor delay, due to some heavy traffic, 7 hardy walkers headed off to Arcadia and the start of our walk midway between

the gate on Marramarra Ridge and the intersection of Smugglers track.

The moon was so bright that we walked without torches along the fire trail leading to the start of the Smugglers Ridge track. Along the way we noticed and smelt that a very recent bush fire had gone through the area. The Smugglers Ridge track was used as the starting point for the controlled burn and so it was cleared and much wider than I had anticipated.

Because of this we made extremely good time and it wasn't long before we reached the rock platform with aboriginal carvings. Under torch and moonlight the carvings stood out proudly.

After a short break we headed back along the track which was now beginning to descend and required careful concentration with the use of our head torches.

The bush was eerily quiet and the far away ridges provided silhouettes against the night sky.

On the final descent we veered slightly off the normal track, following where the bushies had set their fires, and ended up exiting about 50 metres down from where the track normally ends. This brought us onto the Marramarra Creek camping site and almost immediately everyone veered off in different directions collecting fire wood.

Within minutes we had a roaring fire and a variety of tasty foods were passed around for all to share. It was a shame that we had to leave however we gave ourselves more than an hour talking and warming around the fire.

Our final stretch home was all on fire trail and after the steep hill leading up from the creek we were all so warm we were eager to keep up the pace and retain our warmth.

It wasn't long before we reached the cars and were back at Hornsby not long after 1am.

Thanks to Jacqui, Charles, Nick, Sarah, Robert and Trevor (from the bush club) for a memorable night.



Walking along Smugglers Ridge Track



Snack break



Around the campfire at Marramarra Creek flats

Notices Notices Notices Notices



I have always believed that exercise is the key not only to physical health but a healthy mind.

Nelson Mandela

Notice to all Walk Leaders

Short notice activities and changes are encouraged, but they must go on the Club website, and be approved by the co-ordinator.

This is for reasons of insurance cover, competence vetting, and provision of attendance sheets.

If approved, and if the leader accepts the use of a 3rd party website or other publication medium to advertise an event, the information and description must be the same as our official version.



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@anwalkers.org.au

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

1 Feb 2015

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
jan.steven@bigpond.com

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

MY SPECIAL EXERCISE PROGRAM

- * *Beating about the bush*
- * *Jumping to conclusions*
- * *Climbing the wall*
- * *Swallowing my pride*



New New New

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LOCAL COUNCILS

WALK

Empire Pass, Lawson

14 September 2014

Leader: Charles Bowden

Grade 2

In spite of a handful of cancellations, 14 people turned out on a gloriously sunny Spring day for this pleasant walk in the Blue Mountains. Many of us reached Lawson early enough to have a morning coffee or tea in the sunshine before setting off from the railway station to the start of the walk at the end of Hughes Avenue where there is a rather old direction sign showing distances in miles.

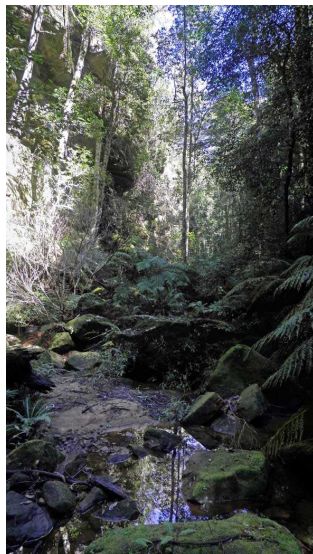
I decided to take an anticlockwise route so we began by visiting Frederica Falls via the Lower Track and, after a short break there, continued on the Empire Pass track to Lucy's Glen. This is a secluded and shady spot that is no longer marked on public maps nor signposted. The path off the main track is in poor condition and further progress beyond Lucy's Glen along the creek is hampered by flood debris and dense bush.



Frederica Falls

Instead, we continued along Empire Pass, past the junction of Frederica Falls Creek and Dante's Glen Creek to our first creek crossing. Recent heavy rains have dislodged rocks and trees so the crossing was somewhat awkward. We then continued on the western side of Dante's Glen Creek, climbing a little into the shady gorge before dropping back down to the creek and another crossing, much easier this time.

Just before the Round Walk turnoff, we inspected a small waterfall in a side gully before continuing on to St Michael's Falls where we stopped for lunch and a welcome rest.



Dante's Glen Creek

Shortly after lunch we found ourselves at Dante's Glen Falls, just around the corner as it were. Remains of ancient timber picnic tables and a rickety footbridge consisting of crumbling wooden planks on a rusty metal frame contrasted with the new sandstone steps that we later trod on our way to Fairy Falls.

All the waterfalls were gushing copiously to keep the photographers happy. In addition, there were plenty of wildflowers including orchids to lend colour to the landscape we were passing through.



Fairy Falls ledge

After pausing at Turtle Rock which unfortunately has been vandalised with graffiti, we continued on the Fairy Falls Track before turning off to Echo Point. Here everyone let loose with yodels and cooees and sundry screeches as the echo is quite effective.

Retracing our steps back to the main track, we crossed over the San Jose firetrail and continued on the Upper Track back to Hughes Avenue. Just before the finish, we turned off down a narrow unmarked path to look at the Lawson spring, a small runnel of water emerging from a rocky crevice in the hillside.



**Pink Swamp Heath-
*Sprengelia incarnata***

Back at the railway station, we adjourned for afternoon refreshments at a nearby café, crammed full of china crockery of every description and pattern and hue, before heading home.



**Showy Parrot Pea-
*Dillwynia sericea***

Thank you to Ken, Margaret, Sue, Jasmin, Roger, Pam, Pan, Chris, Beth, Nick, Julian, Vivienne and William for coming along and making it a pleasurable day.

FEATURE

Mont Blanc Ascent - France

September 2014

by Paul Ma

At 4810 metres, Mont Blanc is the highest mountain in the Alps in Europe. Climbing Mont Blanc has always been at the top of my to-do list. But for one reason or another, it is postponed to now. However if I had known there is such a fantastic walk along the ridge to the summit I would have climbed it much earlier !

Pre - climb Schedule

Day 1 - from NidD'aigle tram station to Tête Rousse Refuge

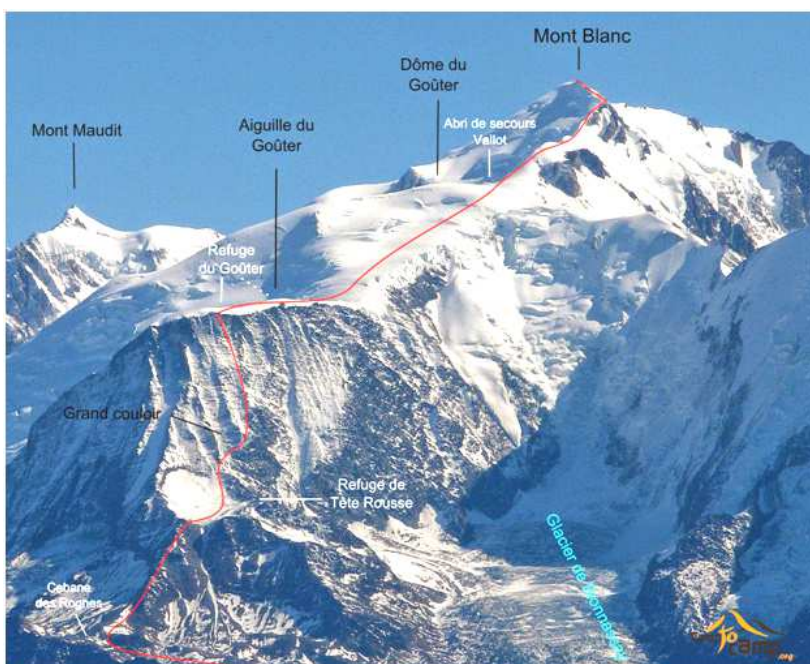
Day 2 - from Tête Rousse Refuge to Goûter Refuge

Day 3 - from Goûter Refuge to summit, then descend all the way back to hotel

If the mountain guides stick to this schedule, then the climb should be reasonably achievable, not too difficult.

However, on my trip we went from Tête Rousse Refuge all the way to the summit, an ascent of 1643 metres. Now, that was tough. The guides turned out to be correct, because on day 3, the wind was too strong. No one was able to summit. So we were lucky to scale up the summit on day 2 !

But I can tell you, you need to be fit to ascend 1643 metres in one day in high altitude + heavy mountaineering boots + crampons !!!



Timeline

Day 1 - Mont Blanc ascent

09:30 we meet at Mercure Chamonix Centre Hotel (5 climbers + 3 mountain guides) and after picking up hire gear for the other climbers we travelled to Les Trabets which is near Les Houches to catch a cable car to take

us to Les Trabets then a tram to NidD'aigle, 2380 metres. We then walked to Tête Rousse Refuge. We reached Tête Rousse Refuge, 3167 metres, just when it is about to rain ... that explains why the guides were in such a hurry - they sensed something that we didn't ! We are to stay here for the night.

For the record, it took 2 hrs 11 mins (including 26 minutes of lunch) to ascend 787 metres,



At Dinner time at Tête Rousse Refuge - Of the 5 of us, 3 were advised by the mountain guides not to continue with the summit attempt as it will be too tough for them. That leaves just Louis (edge of the photo) and me to continue for the next 2 days.

Day 2 - Mont Blanc Summit

05:00 Breakfast at Tête Rousse Refuge. For Louis and I, the plan is to climb from Tête Rousse Refuge to Goûter Refuge. (By the way, there are 2 Goûter Refuges. In the photo, the solid line points to an old hut. The dotted line points to a new hut.)

Of the 3 mountain guides, Nicholas becomes my guide, Gaylon is Louis' guide, and Pierre takes the other 3 down the mountain via a different route.

As can be seen from the photo, it is an almost vertical climb all the way to Goûter!!! If you are afraid of heights, Mont Blanc is not for you. Fortunately there are steel cables to help you, and at 07:45 we reach Goûter Refuge, 3817 metres.

But as today is a perfect blue sky day, after an hour's rest at Goûter, the mountain guides push us on to the summit. I am quite tired at this stage, so I curse them for making life difficult for me. However it turns out to be the right decision because the next day, the wind is so strong no one is able to summit. We are lucky to have such far sighted guides.

Finally, Goûter Refuge is in sight, 3817 metres. For the record, from Tête Rousse to Goûter is 2 hrs 10 mins, an ascent of 650 metres. Climbers are all wearing crampons even though there is no ice nor snow. Crampons grip onto the rocks better. Helmet is also required as it is easy to bump your head against the rocks.



**08:46 Start walk to Mont Blanc summit -
12:23 at Mont Blanc summit, 4810 metres**



Made it!



At the summit - Nicholas my mountain guide is at the centre. Louis is on the right.

It took us 3 hrs 37 mins from Goûter to reach here, an ascent of 993 metres. It is unusual that the summit is not marked by a cairn or post, so you just have to trust me that this is the top of the Alps.

All together, today's ascent is 1643 metres from Tête Rousse Refuge to here in 6 hrs 43 mins which includes 1 hours rest at Goûter Refuge.

There is a light breeze, otherwise not too cold. I wear a merino wool short sleeve t-shirt, then 3 thermal long sleeve undershirts, plus a Gortex jacket to stop the wind. At the lower part of the body, just a pair of thermal long johns inside a pair of hiking trousers.



Descending from Mont Blanc summit

The guides say most of the time it is very windy and cold here. Usually they'll stop for 2 seconds to take a photo, then descend straight away. We are so lucky with such a perfect day that we linger around for quarter of an hour, soaking up the atmosphere, enjoying the view, and most of all elated at our success in conquering the Alps. 12:35 we descend Mont Blanc summit for Goûter Refuge arriving at 14:20. Overnight at Goûter

Day 3 - the descent from Goûter

07:00 Breakfast at Goûter Refuge then walk to NidD'aigle tram station. We wait near Tête Rousse Refuge for Louis and his guide who went to Tête Rouse to retrieve his umbrella then resume walking to NidD'aigle tram station.



10:51 The tram departs NidD'aigle tram station (of Tramway du Mont-Blanc) for Bellevue tram station then we walk to catch the cable car to Les Trabets (which is near Les Houches).

11:31 Car leaves for Mercure Chamonix Centre Hotel. Back to where we started.

Paul has more great photos and an unedited account of his trip at:

<http://mntviews.blogspot.com.au/2014/09/mont-blanc-france.html>

WALK

Benighted in the Blue Mountains

19 October 2014

Grade 5+

Leader: Charles Bowden

There is always a risk when undertaking an unsurveyed walk that includes challenging and difficult terrain that the conditions might prove to be too arduous on the day. So it proved to be for one member of our group but at least the tale has a happy ending. The aim of the walk was to find our way to a hill called Goolara Peak, then descend to Cox's River, before finding Goolara Gully and following this back as far as possible towards Ironpot Ridge. Sounds simple, doesn't it?

The four of us arrived at around 9:30am at Dunphy's carpark to find it crowded with cars and tents and campers. It was an extraordinary sight for a normally quiet Sunday morning. A large group of enthusiastic teenagers were performing calisthenics in the carparking area itself while others roamed aimlessly around the camping area.

After donning our gear we set off quickly to leave behind this unexpected bedlam and hasten into the relative peace of the bush. Our first objective was to walk up to the top of Ironpot Ridge, along the trail that passes initially through private property. A friendly equine checked us out as we made good progress and soon reached the ridgetop. From here we followed the track that leads to Ironmonger Spur but then continued past this junction to admire the views of the Cox River valley. We also found some aboriginal sharpening grooves on the rocks nearby.

We initially missed the turnoff to Tinpot Mountain but realised our error as the trail petered out and were able to cut back to the main ridge without too much difficulty. After a short morning tea stop on the small peak just before Tinpot Mountain we continued on to Goolara Peak, a rocky prominence with more great views along the Cox River valley.

We decided to descend to Cox's River along the main eastern spur jutting out from Goolara Peak rather than via a northern gully route that looked quite precipitous. This decision proved to be a good one as, once off the steep parapet of Goolara Peak, the spur was sparsely vegetated under the tree canopy and we quickly reached Cox's River at the junction with Slaughtertown Gully.



Descending Goolara Peak

Here we stopped for lunch beside the placid river waters before heading off downstream along the well-established riverside track. We passed Grand Bluffs (which were anything but) before reaching the bend around the much more imposing Wallaroo Point, surprising some fishermen on the far side.



Paul and Saf

Just past the bend's apex, we found Goolara Gully. It was steep and rocky but negotiable and we made steady progress for the first 200 metres or so before encountering very steep rocky slope in the middle of the watercourse. Probably a waterfall after heavy rain, there was only a small wet channel in the centre as we checked it out. It looked tricky but climbable. After some investigation of potential routes up, we decided that time might be against us as one of our group was beginning to flag as a result of the effort already expended. So a

route was found out of the gully on its northern side and we emerged at the base of a steep cliffline.



Charles and Liam

We started to follow a narrow dirt ledge usually found at the base of cliffs. At one point we surprised a young wombat foraging near its burrow. He was so startled by our unexpected presence in his wilderness that he froze in indecision in the scrub.

At this point severe fatigue had taken its toll on our companion and progress was very slow with frequent lengthy halts required. It became evident that we weren't going to make it back to the car before nightfall so we started to look for a suitable bivouac site for the night. We were rather fortunate in discovering a small recessed cave under a cliff overhang which proved to be ideal. We had shelter, a roof over our heads, a rocky surface on which to build a fire, and space to lie down.

While the others made the site ready for the night, collecting wood for the fire and checking provisions and attire, I headed off into the dusk to find a spur or outcrop which would allow a signal to reach my mobile phone. After about 30-40 minutes I emerged onto the spur below Goolara Peak that we had descended earlier that day. So close! At least I had found our way out for the following morning.

I sent off a lengthy text message to be relayed to various friends and relatives of the group, reassuring them of our well-being and advising of the need to bivouac overnight, plus exhorting them not to call emergency services as there

were no injuries plus we knew where we were and how to get back. Then I headed back to our cave camp for a well-earned rest.

We kept a fire going for most of the night which proved to be very welcome. Although the weather was quite mild, there was a chill in the air and the cave rocks were quite cold which meant that you started to shiver after a while when lying on the ground.



Bivouac cave and campfire

Early the next morning, we packed up and set off following the exit route I had pioneered the night before. We soon emerged on the slope below Goolara Peak. As water was running low for most of us, progress back up and along Ironpot Ridge was deliberately slow to avoid overheating and we eventually reached the car 4 hours later at around 10:15am.

After rehydrating with water from the campground tank and changing clothes, we drove back up Megalong Valley road, stopping at the tearooms near Peach Tree Road for brunch as we were all famished, before continuing back to Sydney.

Some observations

Between us we had torches, safety/space blankets, first aid supplies, fire-making apparatus, extra clothing, snack food and some water to enable us to spend the night in some degree of comfort and safety.

Not everyone, however, was similarly equipped. So anyone intending to take part in walks in remote areas where delays due to conditions are possible should make a note of these items that should be included in their packing list.

It is probably also important to note that, without the cave, conditions would have been much less pleasant but still tolerable.

We were carrying the club's emergency beacon with us but, as has been mentioned before, a delayed return does not in itself justify setting off the PLB if there is no injury or life-threatening situation. In addition, once a beacon is activated, you have to remain at that spot until rescuers have reached you.

The ability to communicate instead via mobile phone, even if just by text message, is infinitely preferable where possible.

Another fallback option is, before undertaking a remote area/wilderness walk, to ask your family/friends not to alert emergency services until an agreed period of time has elapsed since your intended return, typically 24 hours.

Thank you to Liam, Paul and Saf for coping with the unexpected and ensuring we all had a tale to tell!

WALK

Jacaranda Walk & 5 Bridges Walk around Hunters Hill

Saturday November 1 Grades 1 and 2

Leader: Julie Armstrong

With a weather forecast of 34° and 70% chance of afternoon thunderstorms, I did have a few enquiries from worried walkers prior to the day. On the day I was still receiving requests to join the afternoon 5 Bridges walk. To put it mildly the response to the walk was fantastic. Including myself, 23 keen walkers made the walk/s, ANB members and many visitors including 5 from Meetup (and another 2 from Meetup on the day unable to attend, but keen to perhaps attend another walk). Time will tell if we receive any new members to our club. The six 'Walk with Us' brochures that I had all went, so I advised all our visitors that they could find help in joining ANB on our website.



Graham with group on the Jacaranda walk

Photos - Sharyn Mattern

For the Jacaranda walk we met our guide Graham at the Hunter Hill Historical Society Museum which occupies a corner of Hunters Hill Council Building at 22 Alexandra Street. We were welcome to look around the museum with

Graham giving a brief commentary on what is contained in the museum while everyone arrived.

When I surveyed the 5 Bridges walk two Saturdays prior to the walk there were no Jacarandas in bloom. That was worrying but when I spoke with Graham midweek before the walk he assured me they were out. When I mentioned to Graham I was undecided where to have lunch he



suggested we lunch at Hunters Hill Club which is a bowling club with a bistro which we found to have good food and service and most welcome air-conditioning.

During the walk we saw many flowering Jacarandas. We found out that they are native to Chile (not Japan as I thought or Australia as someone else thought) where the climate is similar to our part of NSW and they do well in and around Sydney and Grafton.

Graham's walk followed mostly the same trail as we followed on Beth's Bastille Day walk earlier this year also led by him. Along the trail we saw the Joubert family home, Cate Blanchett's home which was decorated for Halloween with a huge spider (fake thank goodness) on the gate and Eddie Obied's home, which is the former French Embassy with huge iron gates that were shipped out from France and are decorated with the Fleur de lis. We didn't see the Joubert family, of course long deceased, or Cate or her family but we did see either Eddie or his son drive a 4 wheel drive into their driveway. Most of us who were aware of what Mr Obied allegedly had gotten up to had some unkind things to say about him and the former NSW Carr Government.

We also saw the Granary (former produce store), the first Post Office and the suburbs first hotel The Garibaldi which now houses offices and shops, along with many historical sandstone buildings.

Due to the extreme heat a few walkers left and remarkably a few joined us after lunch for the 5 Bridges walk.

The first bridge we crossed on our walk was Tarban Creek Road Bridge from which a spectacular vista of the Sydney skyline is available, Sydney Harbour Bridge to the top of Gladesville Bridge.

Next we walked under Gladesville Bridge and around to Gladesville Ferry Wharf. To the left of the ferry wharf is the remains of the previous Gladesville Bridge where you can look across to Chiswick and the sandstone remains of the bridge on the other side of Parramatta River. This is where we all thought we were going to get struck by lightning, drenched or both and discussed phoning for a mini bus to take us back to our cars. Fortunately the storm raged around us and we did not get rain until we were back to our cars about 4pm.



The afternoon walkers - photo Jan Steven

We then walked around Riverside Girls High and up and onto the footbridge that spans Victoria Road. Just before the girls school we stopped for a comfort stop adjoining the oval on the other side of the road where boys were playing cricket. Some of our visitors were amazed at the white uniforms the cricketers were wearing.

After crossing Victoria Road the path wound down to Tarban Creek and over the Tarban Creek footbridge. We stopped here for some respite from the sun and heat under some trees and spotted a few different species of birds. Then it was on and up to the hustle and bustle of Gladesville Road at Hunters Hill where the Hotel is and a few busy cafes. We continued on past the hotel and down to the Lane Cove River and under the fifth Bridge and last bridge, Fig Tree Bridge.

The first house we passed after the bridge we agreed it was a famous house, but no-one knew why. Then it was on past Hunters Hill High and up the steep incline of Mount Street, which separated the oldies from the youngsters then back to Alexandra Street and our cars.

Thank you to the 16 morning walkers, those who lunched at HHC and the 14 afternoon walkers. We heard on the weather report that night that it reached 37° in the City and was one of those unusual days where it was hotter in the City than Penrith which reached 36°.

Welcome to 6 New Members

Andrea McDonnell
Cheryl le Roux
Katherine Byrne
Trevor Giblin
Toya Kha
Damian Conway



See you in the bush

50 YEARS ON

By Helen McMaugh

A small group of 'veterans' has been quietly celebrating this year the founding of *ANC Walkabout Group in 1964 by the late Dr. Nate Burnett. Time has thinned the ranks of the early pioneers. Paddington RSL has been the venue for two luncheon get-togethers in May and October 2014.

The 'walkabouts' attending were Anne Brown, walks participant, walks leaders Dawn Daniel and Dora den Hengst, former Social Secretary/walks leader, Joan Sebastian, and former Chairperson/walks leader Helen McMaugh.

In May, the attendees included Ruth van Luyt, walks participant and widow of the late Hugh van Luyt. Hugh was not only one of the early members of Walkabout, but a volunteer 'greeter' in the ANC social club rooms in King's Cross, welcoming newcomers and visitors. Dawn, Dora, Joan and Helen were also stalwarts in the Walkabout Survey Teams, checking out routes for future walks in advance. Sadly, many of the male supporters in the Survey Teams are now deceased, but the surveys are fondly remembered with delight as being challenging, great fun, and usually ended up with wining and dining in the 'Cross.



Helen McMaugh & Anne Brown 2013



**Fred Ost, Christine van Vilsferen,
Dawn Daniel 1966**

At the October lunch, we shared Ginseng sweets provided by Brenda Jeam, widow of the late Karl Jeam. Karl was the first Chinese member of the Walkabout group. Brenda recently visited Sydney from Canada.

*original founding name of All Nations Bushwalkers



**Maria van der
Jagt &
Dora den
Hengst**



Ruth van Luyt



Joan Sebastian

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