



all nations
BUSHWALKERS INC



Winter Newsletter
June 2015

PO Box Q23 Queen Victoria Building,
Sydney NSW 1230
<http://anbwalkers.org.au/>



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

WALK

Gerringong to Mirramurra (Confessions of a First Time Leader)

14 March 2015

Grade 4

Leader: Janice Besch



The Minnamurra view that rewards you at the end though is spectacular.

Confession 1: I had no idea what I was doing.

I'd heard about the Kiama Coastal Track from a life coach kindly provided by my wonderful employer, the University of Western Sydney, and I really wanted to walk it. I was also finding that the kind of walk I wanted to go on never seemed to coincide with when I was available. So it seemed sensible at the time to email Liam with the notion that I might put on this walk. He said 'yes' so quickly I didn't have time to get cold feet, which I surely would have if allowed. Thank you Liam!

This was about four months out from the walk date, which was to be one of the very last of the summer season. I did my homework, figured out the logistics, then wrote what I hoped would be a very inviting 3 options for joining the walk – right the way from staying over two nights in Kiama, to riding the train and making a VERY long day of it. Then silence. No immediate rumbles of interest, but with the walk so far away there was no cause to worry as far as I was concerned. I was able to sink back into my normal life, completely thoughtless to the fact that I had never led a walk before and never actually done the walk.

Confession 2: I really should have called it off....

Or should I? Three months out a long standing foot problem returned to haunt me. Doctors and cortisone ensued after the denial phase and there was still a chance I'd be fine on the day. And besides, someone had actually expressed interest. Thank you Paul!

Confession 3: I was scared as hell.

About 6 weeks out, and after an aborted attempt to actually do the walk with my sister in early February (too hot for someone who didn't like getting dirty and sweaty and too adventurous for someone whose foot was undeniably still hurting), I realised that leading the walk would actually mean being out in front of the other people on the walk. That is, leading! On weekends in particular I'm a middle of the line person, not an out in front person. Time to train. I finally faced reality and got my act together. I split the walk in half and did the two legs on different (very invigorating) days.

Confession 4: I thought I'd hate it.

Yep – for another four weeks and as my wonderful walk companions started to sign on, I spent most of my spare time worrying about the walk, doing the walk and documenting the walk. And the rest of the time I complained to my closests that I'd volunteered to do the walk. "What was I thinking???" I would exclaim, gesturing wildly or punching myself in the forehead. Not pretty.

Confession 5: I absolutely loved it!

So thank you, (in order of signing up and therefore of keeping me focussed when I needed to be) Paul, Suseela, Richard, Linda, Ken and Susan. You were all fabulous company and I never, ever felt under any pressure 'out in front'!

We did the whole 22 kilometres, though this was actually 29.8 kilopedometres (those who walked with me know the difference), starting from 8am at Gerringong Station and ending the walk in Mirramurra at 3.30pm. We didn't push along – plenty of time to take photos and Paul's album of the day is exquisite.

Here are some photos that I hope will inspire you to try this track yourselves, and I hope the words above inspire those who haven't led a walk to give it a go in the first place. Any of my loved ones will tell you that I took it a bit too seriously but really, it just made the outcome even sweeter!



Getting in the mood part one. Richard did the homework and found this little Thai restaurant called Harbour View, on the main Street, Friday night.



Getting in the mood part two. Walking from our cabin at Kiama on the Beach to the station. Yes, the dawn light was still about! 7:30am on a lovely March Saturday morning.



Start of the walk – 2.5 kilometres from Gerringong Station. In truth we had already walked two kilometres as well as breakfasted or coffeed at one of Gerringong's fine little cafes. This one was perched right on top of the hill, overlooking the coastline we'd soon be exploring.



The first disappointment, one minute after the start. Yes, the one and only disappointment was that the Werri Lagoon crossing that I'd promised would get us wet looked like this. Wet sand! And I had everyone prepared for fording rivers.....

I won't bore you with too many details, but the walk was stupidly beautiful. Particularly the section to Kiama.

The walk gets harder (if you walk on Bombo Beach rather than along the highway) and less reliable thereafter. Try Gerroa to Kiama instead?

Photos - Paul Schiebaan

President's Soapbox

As the Club's Annual General Meeting is fast approaching, it is time once again to express our thanks to everyone who donated freely of their time and effort to put on activities for Club Members. It has been another full calendar, with plenty of variety and choice, and judging from attendance numbers, it would appear that you are making the most of what is on offer which is gratifying.

The date for the AGM is Sunday 28 June. Further details appear elsewhere in the newsletter and you will also be reminded by email. We have a brand new venue, located at the Burwood Library and our guest speaker this year will be Mark Cachia, a Bushcare Supervisor, who will give a short presentation on the history of bush regeneration, how this has changed over time and current bush regeneration techniques.

There will also be perennial favourites such as the morning tea preamble, the Photographic Competition, and this year we hope to find somewhere suitable nearby for a light lunch afterwards, possibly yum cha or similar.

Naturally the main aim of the day is to elect a new Committee as well as to thank retiring Committee members for their services. I hope that you will be able to attend and cast your vote, or even nominate for a position, and I look forward to seeing you then.

On a separate note, a new safety initiative is being introduced by the Club, namely an Emergency Contact & Medical Information (ECMI) Form for Members to carry on their person or in their backpack. None of us are getting any younger and unfortunately increasing age is accompanied by a range of ailments that can beset us. The purpose of the ECMI form is to provide an activity leader or an emergency response person (eg police, fire, ambulance, medical etc personnel) with important information in situations where the Member is injured/unwell and unable to communicate and such information is vital to the Member's welfare.

Completing and carrying the ECMI form is purely voluntary but we believe it is potentially an important document for Members to take with them when planning on attending a Club activity. I would stress that the form is not for presenting to walk leaders or other Club members nor will it be requested prior to going on a walk or other activity. The form is simply a precautionary measure for the benefit of the Member in the event of an emergency and it should be retained by the Member at all times.

In the event of an emergency only the walk leader (or someone nominated by the walk leader should s/he be otherwise engaged or not available) and the emergency response personnel will access this information. In such situations, every attempt will be made to maintain confidentiality of the form's contents.

As I say, this is an entirely voluntary measure for each Member to consider on its merits and to take up as they deem appropriate. A copy of the ECMI form is now available on the Club's website.

See you at the AGM!

Charles Bowden



Annual General Meeting
The Carpenter Room
Burwood Public Library

All Members are invited to attend
Sunday 28 June 2015

Your invitation/nomination/proxy form
will be emailed to you.

9:30am : Come for morning tea
Please bring a plate

10:00am : Our guest speaker
Mark Cachia, Bushcare Supervisor with
Ryde Council, will give a short presentation
on Bush Regeneration: history, changes &
techniques.

10:30am : The AGM

12:00noon : The Photo competition

Afterwards : It is proposed to adjourn
for yum cha or similar at a local Burwood
restaurant

Change of Details

Don't forget to notify our Treasurer
Helen Hindin of any of the following:

- change in address
- email address
- phone numbers

email us at: club@anbwalkers.org.au

To change your details on the website you
need to make the alterations yourself.



PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION to be held at the AGM

**Photos: Any size, in colour or black
& white, and taken by you since
the last AGM.**

Categories are:

Nature (taken on a club activity)

People (taken on a club activity)

Open (any subject, taken anywhere
in the World)

4 entries per category for a viable competition.

*If insufficient entries in a category then the
entries will be included in the "Open" section
(Sorry, only one entry per person per category).*

How to Enter

Open to all club members who attend the AGM

To be entered on the back of photo:

Category, your name, when and where taken.

On arrival at the AGM, hand your entry to
the co-ordinator Len Sharp.

Prizes:

A first and second prize in each category;

First prize \$25 with a certificate

Second prize \$15 with a certificate

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If you don't have a (good) colour printer,
Charles Bowden can arrange printing of
photos for the competition at no cost on
A4 photo paper. For best reproduction,
photos need to be supplied to Charles
electronically in original size format. In
addition, you need to indicate where each
photo was taken, the date it was taken
and the category it is being entered
into. Don't leave it to the last minute to
contact Charles as it takes time to prepare
and print photos.

METROGAINE 2015

28 February 2015 Grade 2-4
Co-ordinator: Charles Bowden

Considering the ideal location of the course in Lane Cove National Park, close to public transport and familiar territory for most bushwalkers, we had a surprisingly low turnout from Club Members for this year's Metrogaine.

Ultimately we fielded 2 teams. Team 187 consisted of Suseela, Richard and Nick plus a contingent of supporters, while Team 188 comprised John and myself. The weather was warm and sunny and the Scouts Centre venue in Pennant Hills was spacious and grassy.

The course ran either side of the Comenarra Parkway and included a mix of suburbia as well as a number of tributary creeks to the Lane Cove River.

Both teams did creditably with Team 187 gaining the ascendancy over Team 188, 1440 points to 1110. Team 187 came 48th overall out of 157 teams and 7th in the Mixed Veteran category while Team 188 was some distance behind at 92nd overall and 4th in the Mens Superveteran category.

My thanks to all who came along and took part.

Free Walk Qualification Interval

The club last year introduced a policy of freely offering one introductory walk/activity to potential new members, on the understanding that they would join the club formally if they returned for further walks or activities. At the same time the introductory fee that was in place previously was removed as it was believed that this fee was a disincentive for some. This measure has been well received overall, however it has been observed that some individuals have been taking advantage of the 'free' walk/activity policy by returning for repeat 'free' walks/activities after several months have elapsed. The Committee is of the view that this approach unfairly takes advantage of the club's goodwill and has decided that, in future, 'free' introductory walks/activities will only be available to visitors or lapsed members who have not been on a club walk/activity in the previous 3 years.



Nick's supporters



Team 188 - John & Charles



Team 187 - Richard, Suseela & Nick

LATE SUMMER & EARLY AUTUMN SNORKELLING

Feb to April 2015

Grade 1- 3

Organiser: Charles Bowden

We only managed to fit in four snorkel outings in four months: Shelly Beach at Manly, Jibbon Beach at Bundeena, Forty Baskets Beach at Balgowlah and Bare Island at La Perouse.

Weather conditions were generally not ideal. While the water temperature was lovely at around 23C, the same could not be said for the air temperatures which hovered around the same mark, usually accompanied by a chilly breeze.

Shelly Beach offered the most variety of marine creatures including sightings of large Eastern Blue Groper, several stingrays, colourful wrasse, and flathead. A mature Eastern Water Dragon even emerged on a rock above us, seeming to be guarding our gear. Jibbon Beach proved a disappointment in some respects with conflicting tidal currents and wave patterns creating interesting whirlpools. We abandoned fish viewing and instead enjoyed floating like flotsam in the peculiar conditions.



Eastern Water Dragon



Multidirectional waves

Forty Baskets is always enjoyable and one of our group even managed to sight a turtle during the leisurely swim along the shoreline from Reef Beach. There was also a Rainbow Lorikeet nesting in a tree above the car-park. Bare Island proved a disappointment with a strong tidal surge stirring up the sediment so that visibility was severely impaired. It was also a chilly day and we opted for the nearby fish&chip shop instead of a second swim.

My thanks to regular snorkellers Bob, Saf, Paul, Charbèle and Kathy for persisting, Robert & Sarah for giving Bundeena a go and to Peter for perpetual gear minding. Hopefully we will have better conditions and see more stuff next summer.



Fiddler ray



School of Stripeys



Female Eastern-Blue Groper



Banded Toadfish

MARATHON 2015

The Great North Walk 29 March 2015 Grade 5+

Leader: Nick Collins
Story: Fiona Bachmaan

Those that have been around ANB for a little while will have heard of the annual marathon bushwalk. A marathon (usually a long distance running event) is 26 miles and 385 yards, or 42.195 Kilometres. This comes from the fabled run of Greek soldier Pheidippides, in 490 B.C. Legend states Pheidippides ran from the Battle of Marathon, to Athens, to announce the Persians had been defeated. After fighting in the Battle of Marathon and delivering the message Pheidippides collapsed and died, unlike our own ANB legends who had not quite such a melodramatic end, but close, and an awfully big adventure along the way.

Each marathon walk includes an early start, late finish, little breaks, absolutely no time to smell the roses, and solitary recovery on one's own pillow. Still, some of us keep turning up for them. Even more miraculously, some of us walk the whole way!

This marathon course spread over the Great North Walk, is the hardest of the lot so far.



View from Hornsby Station - photo Fiona

Six of us met at Hornsby station at 7am sunrise. We commenced walking shortly after, being passed by a peloton of cyclists. Then off into the bush we were bombarded by trail runners heading towards us. They came in enthusiastic batches dodging us narrowly on the single width track. A little further on we found a marshalling point. We were informed the half marathon with around 200 participants were running on our course. The marshal took our group photo, and we headed off while there was a gap in running traffic.



Dodging runners - photo Fiona



Saf crossing creek - photo Nick



Marathon starters - photo by marshal with Fiona's camera

No grade 5+ walk would really be complete without a creek crossing. This was a proper one where shoes and socks had to come off. If one's zip-off pants hadn't become shorts already, now was the time. The mangrove edged water led to muddy squelchy steps. The fish swirling around our legs didn't seem to mind.

On we went across a boardwalk, fire trails, narrow trails, urban trails, uphill trails and downhill trails. The brief lunch stop had fantastic scenic views from a high rock feature. Helen kept trying to convince us that she was only going to walk 30 kilometres to Cowan. The rest of the group seemed convinced all of us would marathon to the end.

During the morning we saw a lyre bird, then later a small brown snake. On later research, our walk leader Nick, assures us this snake was quite deadly.



A deadly brown snake - photo Nick



Lyrebird - photo Nick

In the afternoon we had well and truly settled into the idea of walking, and walking, and walking. In fact perhaps a little too much. When faced with a break in the track some of us just kept walking around an extra bypass. Two at the front walked directly on, and the group was split in two. Despite being in the bush, mobile phones were switched on, and messages and calls made. Each group estimated where the other was, and we still couldn't find each other. The first group stopped, then backtracked to look for the second group, but didn't find them. The side tracked group tried to catch up to the front group, but couldn't, as they weren't there anymore. More messages agreed on meeting at Cowan station, because surely everyone could spot a train station. So it was a big surprise to the second group to arrive at Cowan Station and actually be the first group there.

There was much debate about who was where, who was getting the train home at this 30km mark, and who was going to Brooklyn, still 12km away, and uphill. David and

Helen opted for the next train. Paul and Saf still lost in the wilderness, looked like getting the train also. Leaving Nick and Fiona still looking to maintain their craziness. The 5:15pm train approached, Saf and Paul appeared from the bush, only to be restrained by the locking safety gates at the pedestrian crossing. David was the only one able to access the train. Helen waited for Paul, and Saf also appeared. This extra excursion and regrouping time meant commencing the Cowan to Brooklyn leg at approximately 6pm rather than the anticipated and required 5pm. Nick, Saf, and Fiona continued uphill towards Brooklyn, leaving Helen and Paul to catch the next train. The next big ascent seemed to go on until it was dark. When absolutely necessary we donned matching head torches. (Anaconda is us!?) This made it easier to scramble up the rocks ahead.

The bush opened up to fire trails, and many outstanding spider webs holding Golden Orbs. Not so impressive to walk into. The remaining three walkers enjoyed some views over the Hawkesbury River, and then continued the homeward stretch.



Spiderman Nick - photo Fiona

At the sign indicating 1.3km until Brooklyn we realised there was too much walking time remaining to make the 10pm train. Nick proposed running as the only time effective way to get the train, or be stuck at Brooklyn until 11:30pm. We started to run, Nick kept a good pace. Saf and Fiona ran, and walked a bit, then discussed the remaining time to the actual train time of 10:05pm. This meant catching the train was really actually possible. We had better keep running, and should have been already. Down the horrible cemented slope into the back of Brooklyn, through the back of the town. Nick was already on the train platform pointing down the track to the oncoming train. Saf and Fiona dragged themselves up the stairs, and across the rail bridge, as the train pulled into the station underneath. Nick looked pleadingly at the conductor pointing to the rabble coming down the stairs. Saf and Fiona followed Nick onto the train, the doors closed and a second later carried the dirty, sweaty walkers away. Post walk we switched phones on to receive a call from President Charles, who was already receiving enquiries about late walkers' whereabouts. We were all fine despite, or maybe because, of our marathon effort.

THURSDAY WALKERS

A Flying Carpet!
Thursday Survey exploratory walk,
9 April 2015 **Grade 4-5**
Leader: Freda Moxom
Story: Nick Collins

A recent destination for our Thursday Surveyors was the amazing Flying Carpet, a fabulous, and to some, slightly terrifying, rocky outcrop in the Gardens of Stone National Park. It juts out of the cliff line above the Carne Creek valley, part of it is only a metre or so wide, and there are cliffs stretching hundreds of metres above and below you!

And it does indeed seem a bit like you're flying on a magic rocky carpet above the valley.



Cliff beside Flying Carpet

Six of us headed out very early in the morning, and drove out to a secret parking spot where the adventure begins. Such is the quality of this amazing wilderness experience that I'd like to do my bit to keep it relatively unknown, so I'm not going to divulge the exact location!

We consulted our various maps, track notes, and GPS devices (no two of which ever quite agree on much!) then off through the bush, down an easy pass through the cliff line, and hugging the cliff bottom, we progressed along ledges, and past photogenic caves, canyons, and slots.

Rounding one of the protrusions out of the cliff above, we looked up and identified our prime destination. Then it was a steep scramble up, aided by climbing tapes affixed



Group on Flying carpet

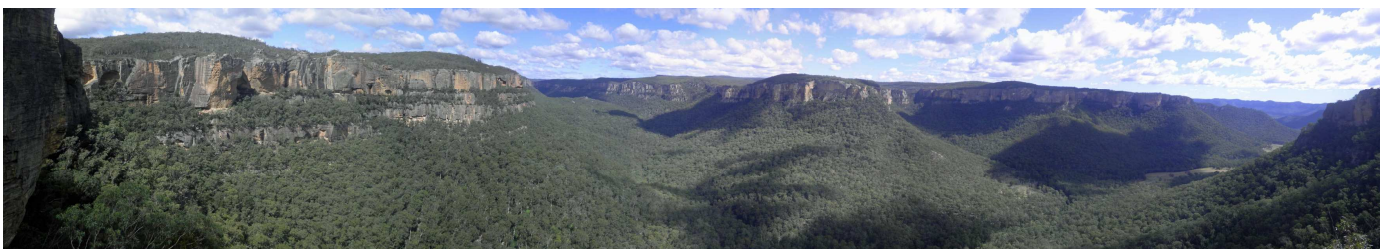


Lunch at base of Flying Carpet

first by two of our more assured freeform climbers, and onto the platform itself.

There's a slightly tricky bit as you walk out onto the thing, and some of the party members weren't too proud to accept a bit of help here. Some were fine with it all though, and one fellow couldn't resist hamming it up slightly for the camera, as evidenced in the picture!

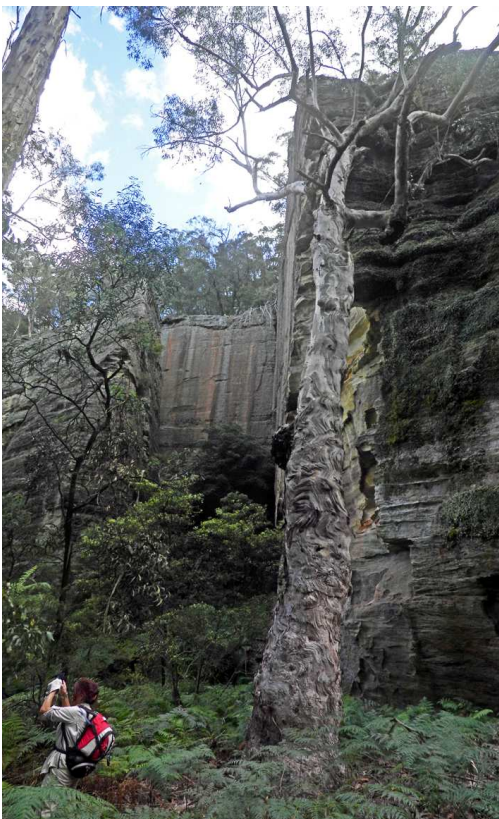
*Photos - Charles
More photos on the Club website.*



Cliffs and Carne Creek Valley view from Flying Carpet



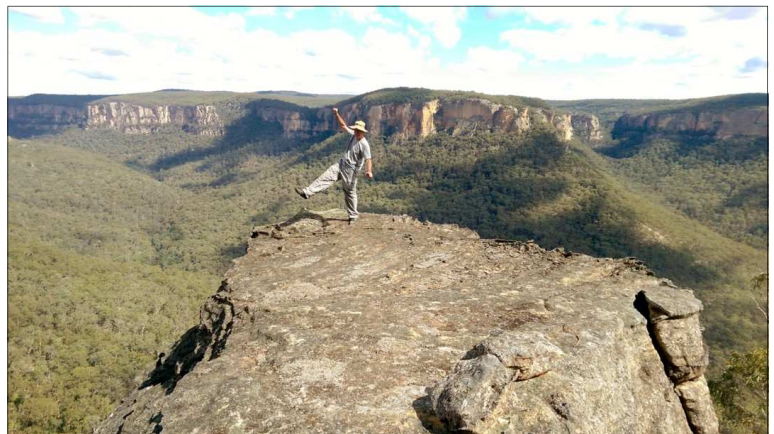
Meiha ascending Flying Carpet fissure



Striking cliffs & tree in Gurgler Pass



A Broad-headed snake, *Hoplocephalus bungaroides*, sunning itself on a rocky spot in the Gardens of Stone National Park. It's been described by Sydney University scientists as Australia's most endangered snake, and is found only in small pockets within 200km of Sydney. Our Thursday Survey group came across it on their recent trip to visit the 'Flying Carpet' rock formation. Photo: Nick Collins



Nick on flying Carpet - photo Saf

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE - 3 August 2015

**SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
jan.steven@bigpond.com**

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

The Gardens of Stone: *In Focus* Photographic Competition

Good photographs, like all great works of art, reveal things we did not know or notice before. Powerful images can influence public opinion; they have captured turning points of history.

The Gardens of Stone Alliance of conservation groups will use photography to present a place worth keeping. A place where nature has created gothic villages in stone, a landscape covered in the rarest plants, a land under siege.

The Gardens of Stone is a region only two hours' drive west from Sydney, yet almost unknown. This is the land of pagodas – tall towers of stone crowned with delicate rock sculptures. These formations are unique in the world. The region contains deep canyons and gorges, vast caves, luxuriant rainforests, glades of giant gum trees soaring into the sky and gently sloping dells of delicate wildflowers. Many rare species of plants and animals inhabit these landscapes.

This winter groups of adventurous photographers will capture its stories.

If the Gardens of Stone were better known, it would surely be protected for its beauty.

Unbelievably, much of this spectacular region is under threat from coal mining. Exceptional images and creative writing can break the silence and help stop the damage.

The Gardens of Stone: *In Focus* Photographic Competition will give photographers a rare experience of capturing some of the best of this region through a camera lens. Whether you are a professional, non-professional, or junior photographer, all participants will discover a wonderland and have a chance to exhibit photographs in an exhibition at a prestigious venue in Sydney.

The Gardens of Stone is a wild region, hard to penetrate without bushwalking skills. So, during the competition, experienced volunteer guides will take the participating photographers on journeys to iconic locations through this unique terrain.

The competition starts on 3 June 2015. The weekend day walks for registered competitors will be conducted 20-21 June, 27-28 June, 4-5 July, and 11-12 July 2015. The competition entries due date is 28 July 2015.

To find out more, and register for the competition or “Visit the Gardens” guided photography walks, visit www.colongwilderness.org.au

The *Dicksonia* Caterpillars

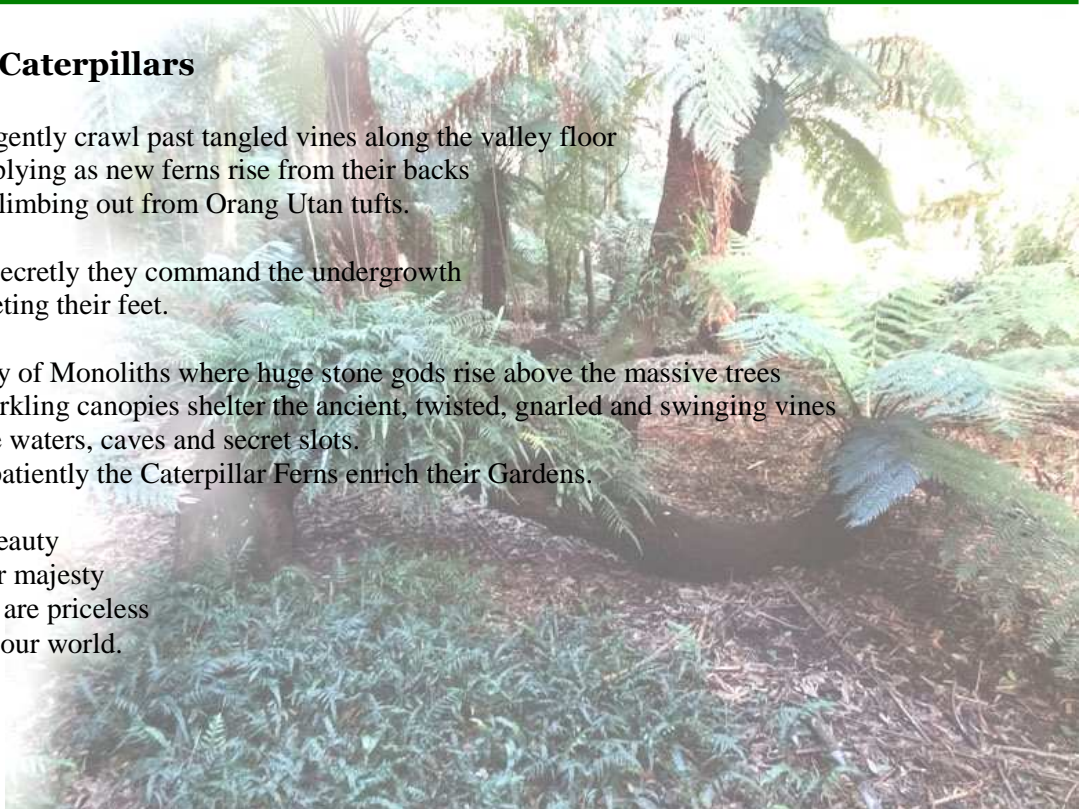
Gigantic caterpillars gently crawl past tangled vines along the valley floor
Ever so slowly multiplying as new ferns rise from their backs
Bright green fronds climbing out from Orang Utan tufts.

Slowly, silently and secretly they command the undergrowth
Iridescent fungi carpeting their feet.

They guard the Valley of Monoliths where huge stone gods rise above the massive trees
Whose dense and sparkling canopies shelter the ancient, twisted, gnarled and swinging vines
Growing amongst the waters, caves and secret slots.
Quietly, calmly and patiently the Caterpillar Ferns enrich their Gardens.

Visit them for their beauty
Admire them for their majesty
Protect them for they are priceless
Enjoy them; they are our world.

*By Freda Moxom
photo - Yuri Bolotin*



Dharug National Park

2 May 2015

Grade 3-5

Co-ordinator: Charles Bowden

Welcome to 3 New Members

Luci Tavener
Paul Bishop
Sarah Chun

See you in the bush

Welcome back
Diahne Berthold



There is an old gospel song popularised by singers such as Louis Armstrong and Tom Jones to which the refrain goes something like "Talk about rain, oh my Lord, didn't it fall, didn't it fall? Didn't it fall, oh my Lord, didn't it rain?" That pretty well sums up the Autumn Rogaine that was held in Dharug National Park. The centrepiece of the event was the Mill Creek walking track although the course extended well to the north and east, encompassing many ridges and gullies.



ANB Team 90 - Len & Freda

ANB fielded three teams for this event. Team 90 consisted of Len & Freda, Team 91 was Andrew & Alison while Team 93 was Meiha and yours truly. In spite of the appalling conditions, the organisers had a reasonably good turnout with over 250 competitors spread across around 100 teams. 40 teams were foolhardy or courageous enough to take on the 12 hour event, the remainder including ourselves sticking to the 6 hour event.

Given the conditions, it is with some glee that I discovered that Team 90 had taken out first place in the Mixed Superveteran category with a score of 680 points. What a great effort by Len & Freda! They also came 23rd overall out of 62 teams in the 6 hour event. Team 91 were not disgraced either coming 5th in the Mixed Veteran category and 31st overall. Team 93 came not too far behind with 350 points and 39th overall.

Congratulations to everyone for managing to negotiate normally dry gullies swollen to raging torrents, creeks that became waist-deep rivers, paddocks that became swamps as well as the ever-present assaults of leeches and mosquitoes.

And commiserations to both Freda and Meiha whose post-event travails with their inoperative vehicles were an unnecessary and unfortunate addition to an already eventful day.



ANB Team 91 - Andrew & Alison



← ANB Team 93 - Charles & Meiha

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