

THE BUSH CLUB NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2015

www.bushclub.org.au

Walks Reports Spring p. 12
Walks Program Summer p. 18

WALKS SUBMISSIONS

Email

Walk submissions for the newsletter
walkssecretary@gmail.com

Short notice walks

bushclubsnw@gmail.com

Postal address

Walks Secretary
PO Box 3079
Regents Park.
NSW 2143



**Web Information and
Notice Board**

www.bushclub.org.au

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

Please send anything you think will
interest our members to
Judy O'Connor

bushclubeditor@gmail.com

Wet and Wild...and goodbye to dignity

By Carol Henderson

Walkers: Ruth East (leader), Barbara Mitchell, Gay Skarratt, Trisha Molinari, Graham Rollings, Doreen Handy and Carol Henderson.

Coopracambra NP lies in a remote section of Victoria, 250km south of Canberra. We planned to camp by the Genoa River and explore both directions.

On our first day, we walked upstream in wet and slippery conditions. Trisha slipped and fell hard against some rocks and injured her ribs so we returned to camp.

Get out Fast

Overnight the rain increased. At dawn, Graham discovered the water had broken the river banks and was heading rapidly towards our tents. An emergency evacuation was called. In various states of somnolence, people stuffed belongings into backpacks and took down tents. Undies, socks and hats were left dangling from tree branches, food left behind by one optimist, who thought we might be able to cross the river, and boots hastily put on wrong feet as we dashed to our meeting point. The rising waters had completely changed the landscape, which added to the confusion, and after a thwarted attempt to get through a thick stand of casuarinas, it became clear the only way to the meeting spot was along the edge of the river.

There was no way back to our cars except across the river and that was too dangerous. We bush-bashed through a thick wall of casuarinas until we found the slippery, steep escarpment which we

clambered up. During a halfway break, a conversation started about cannibalism and who would be eaten first. One member looked at my lean body and commented that meat was always sweeter close to the bone. Ruth was assured her leadership skills might mean she might be spared. Black humour is a wonderful release in such situations.

We continued our disheveled way to flat ground where our tents were erected. Expletives were heard as

**Who would be eaten first?
...meat sweeter closer to the
bone...**

some opportunistic bull ants, who must have overheard the conversation about cannibalism, decided to try a little human flesh. Tents were quickly taken down yet again and moved a short distance. This was fortuitous as we discovered an old four-wheel drive track and this gave us easy access back to the river.

Lighting fire with wet wood

Over the next two days there were many trips to the river checking water levels, collecting water, washing and drinking. Gay developed a great strategy of starting a fire with wet wood by putting wet kindling in her billy and gently heating it.

By the second day the water level began falling slowly but some of us decided to go onto half rations to give ourselves an extra day of waiting time. We decided to break camp on the third morning and move back down to the river in the hope of crossing. Whilst the water was only knee deep our greatest concern was its volume and strength. A fall while crossing may have meant being washed downstream and injured.

Ruth removed cords from her tent and made a hand line. She and Graham crossed to a large rock about 4m from the far bank. The cord's purpose was to stabilize people during this difficult final section.

Triangle of legs and pole

She instructed us on how to cross a fast flowing river: face upstream, plant the walking pole firmly in front, legs apart to make a large triangle, move one foot slowly and carefully until a piece of stable riverbed is found, move the other leg and repeat.

We stripped to our underwear to avoid water resistance. Trisha was the first to cross and sat by the river to assist people with the final section. Ruth then guided each person across the river, making the crossing several times. Doreen was chivalrously escorted by her partner Graham.

I was holding onto my pole so tightly I

**...leader picked me up by
the undies...**

managed to activate the fold stick button and finished up on my knees in the middle of the most turbulent section. Our intrepid leader picked me up by the undies in what was a particularly undignified wedgie position. I felt like a dangling daddy long legs spider but managed to get a grip on Trisha's walking pole.

Once we had all made it across, our group's excitement and relief was palpable. There was also the great feeling of camaraderie and satisfaction that comes with a fantastic group effort.

A special thanks to Ruth East for her exemplary leadership under real difficulties and to Graham Rollings for the assistance he gave to Ruth and

the others. He sat against a rock in the middle of a turbulent river for about 45 minutes while we all crossed. Trisha, with her painful ribs, also did a sterling job of sitting on the far side with her trusty walking stick extended.

Stories grow better with time

One of the most important outcomes of the walks and adventures we have with the club is the memories of shared times and the stories that are re-told for many years. Time passes and stories may no longer be accurate. That does not matter. Veracity is occasionally outweighed by the joy of telling good stories from times past.



Welcome Cavan Hogue...our new President



Cavan was born in Newcastle in January 1937 and grew up there and in Canberra. He did his first walk with the club in 1999 and has been leading walks for many years mostly on the central coast but also in the northern and eastern parts of Sydney. He divides his time between Umina on the central coast and Haymarket.

He has worked as a librarian, archivist, diplomat, public servant, shop assistant and ant exterminator.

After retirement from the Diplomatic Service in 1998 he worked as an academic at the Australian National

University and Macquarie universities, in international business and minding grandchildren. He has now retired from most other commitments and so has time to be president of the club where he hopes his experience chairing committees and in administration may come in handy.

He sees the club as one for all seasons and thinks it important we cater for all kinds of walkers in a wide geographical area. Cavan says he hopes to serve for two years and retire at 80.

...and farewell from outgoing Lynne Outhred

As many of you know, I resigned as president at the AGM in November last. I have been president for the last three years, and have found the position a challenging learning experience, yet very rewarding. I found that although there was much to do, I enjoyed the role, especially with the incredible support and advice that I was given by the committee. I am also grateful for the encouragement and help from many members – you all made the job easier. If you are interested in the AGM reports, they can be found on the website www.bushclub.org.au

The most difficult part has been finding replacement committee members. The committee is a fantastic group of people who work very hard for the club. So think about putting your hand up when a vacancy occurs.

Welcome Cavan, I hope you enjoy the presidency as much as I did.



Touching the Sky By Peter Cunningham

For anyone keen on the mountains what could be better than a walk in the Alps from Europe's highest mountain, Mont Blanc, to its most dramatic peak, the Matterhorn?

Walkers: Robyn Christie, Angelica Langley, Margaret Sheens, Henrike Korner, Jill Paillas, Alan Sauran, Jovanka Ajanovic, Peter Cunningham.

It's known as the Walkers' Haute Route, a low level version of the Mountaineering Haute Route, which is designed to avoid glaciers. Its highest point is just under 3000m, and it involves a lot of ups and downs. It traverses some magnificent mountain country, mostly with the spectacular backdrop of the snow covered and glaciated peaks of the Alps in view.



We set off in late August 2014, timed to miss the summer crowds but early enough to ensure the mountain *cabanes* were still open – they close mid-September. The first three days were shared with the Tour de Mont Blanc (TMB) route, so we had plenty of company. The walk alternates between high mountain passes, barren moraines, fertile valleys and plenty of cow pastures on the intermediate slopes. There's a short section in France to the Col de Balme then it's in

Switzerland the rest of the way, all French speaking except for the last two valleys where German is spoken.

Wild Goat Day

For the first day, the Mont Blanc massif, along with the Aiguille du Midi, other Aiguilles, the Mer de Glace and the Bionassay and Argentiere glaciers around it, dominated the scene. Two days later was our longest climb, 1636m, to a high mountain *cabane* with spectacular views. Next day we

...Edelweiss in full flower...

were in a less frequented section of the route, and had an ibex (wild goat) day seeing ten groups of these graceful animals, their sure-footed elegance making us look like clumsy bumblers. That day was a tough one, we crossed three high passes and took nine hours to reach the next *cabane*. The following day, in a secluded valley, we were kept entertained by the whistles of the marmots, with two more high passes and a stiff climb up ladders to set it off.

Soon after, we climbed to another *cabane*, for which we first had to climb 1200m to a pass, down the other side to a lake, then a tough



460m climb to the *cabane* in a spectacular setting opposite the huge Moiry icefall. We sat there drinking their excellent draft beer admiring the

...black cows fight to be alpha female...

icefall through the large plate glass window. The *cabane* is serviced by helicopter, over 100 people were there and the chopper called once a fortnight to stock it. Next day we went through an extensive field of edelweiss in full flower, before another high pass, at the top of which we again lunched in windless sunny weather with splendid mountain views. Hard to beat!

A strange phenomenon in the Swiss Valais mountains is the *Fighting Cows*. The ubiquitous black cows there fight to be the 'alpha female' in each herd,

... 175km in 14 days, with a total climb of about 11,000m...

going for each other with their sharp horns. There are pictures everywhere of their fights, the locals say you can't stop them, it's in their nature. So they stage competitions between top cows from different herds, then watch and bet on the winner (just like Australians would probably do).

Next, a couple of long climbs to high level passes followed before our last big descent into the Mattertal. For our last day of walking we had a delightful walk up the valley to Zermatt Only and, in the last kilometre, we finally saw the Matterhorn itself.

On our final day in Zermatt some of us took the new teleferique up to a rock in

the glacier at 3880m elevation, from where we could see almost our whole route: the Matterhorn just near us, Mont Blanc in the distance, the spectacular Grand Combin and Weisshorn, our constant companions on the walk, in between; in addition the Gran Paradiso in Italy and to the north the Bernese Oberland with Eiger, Mönch and Jungfrau. What a view! And below were skiers enjoying summer runs on the glaciers.

We were fortunate with excellent weather - Cunningham's luck again! We all went pretty well, though a couple of the days were pretty tough. And so ended a trip where we enjoyed the mountain air, great views, wildlife, lovely wildflowers and good company.



Leaders and First Aiders

Congratulations to the following who completed a recent club training session: Christine McColl, Jane Milgate, Paul Milgate, Lucy Morris, Vincent Murtagh, Linda Pracy, Sally Reynolds, Julian Saban, John Sharpe, Vince Smith, Phil Stacey.

And to those who completed First Aid training: Lucy Morris, Michael Warren, Joanne Yip, Ian Mustchin, Henrike Korner.

For information on future courses contact Sandra Bushell, Training Coordinator.

BUSH CLUB COMMITTEE 2015

OFFICE BEARERS

President:	Cavan Hogue
Vice President:	Carol Henderson
Vice President:	Lynne Outhred
Treasurer/Public Officer:	Barbara Mitchell
Membership Secretary:	Diane McPhail
Secretary:	Carol Henderson
Assistant Secretary:	Katherine Gloor
Walks Secretary:	Colin Reid
Events Coordinator:	Shirley Hart
Ordinary Member responsible for new leaders:	John Hungerford

OTHER OFFICE BEARER POSITIONS DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE

Webmaster:
Jacqui Hickson

TWO ORDINARY MEMBERS TO BE APPOINTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Ordinary Member:
Walter Baer
Ordinary Member:
Vacant

AUDITOR

Honorary Auditor
Bob Wood

OTHER APPOINTMENTS TO ASSIST COMMITTEE

Membership Registrar:	Ron Mead
Newsletter Coordinators:	Judy O'Connor Bev Barnett Tam Khuat
Electronic Program Coordinator:	Jacqui Hickson
Updates Coordinator	Lynn Dabbs
Insurance Officer:	Alan Sauran
Librarian/Archivist:	Michael Keats
Training Officer:	Sandra Bushell
BWRS representative	Keith Maxwell
Confederation Rep:	Dick Weston
Search and Rescue Reps:	Graham Conden Keith Maxwell
Updates Program Approval Sub-committee	Graham Conden John Cooper Bob Taffel Lionel Sontag
New Members Approval Sub-committee	Graham Conden Ron Mead Diane McPhail
Advisory Panel	Graham Conden John Cooper Bob Taffel



As Australia marks the 100th anniversary of the start of World War 1 and Gallipoli campaign, it is fitting to reflect on some of our fellow bushwalkers who died or were injured fighting for Australia.

Two years after WW2, in 1947, a decision was made to erect a bushwalkers' memorial in the Blue Mountains NP at Splendour Rock, Mt Dingo, in the heart of the Wild Dog Mountains. The organisers noted:

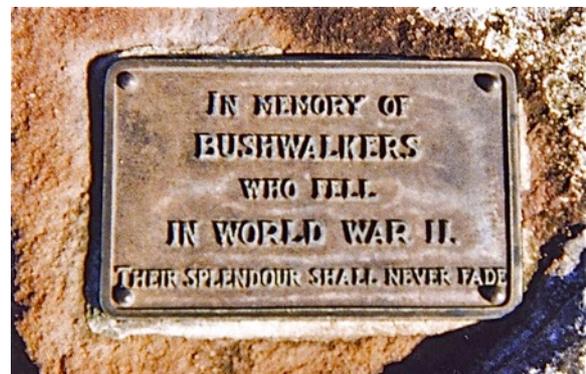
'...here, where the eye is drawn to the glory of Kanangra Walls, surely the spiritual home of bush walkers, is a spot beloved of many of those whom we seek to honour.'

On Anzac Day 1948, a simple bronze plaque was unveiled by Paddy Pallin in the presence of about 90 bushwalkers. Again, it was noted: '...those familiar landmarks, Mt Cloudmaker, the Gangerang Range, Mt Paralyser and Mt Gouougang all lie within our gaze from this wonderful viewpoint. We could wonder how often had our fallen comrades gazed in happiness upon this scene that we still enjoy?'

Bushwalkers known to have died in World War II

- Bruce Elder, Coast & Mountain Walkers RAN
- Kenneth Grenfell, Rucksack Club RAAF
- Reg Hewitt, Sydney Bush Walkers AIF
- George Loder, Trampers Club RAAF
- James McCormack, YMCA Ramblers, RAAF

- Gordon Mannell, Sydney Bush Walkers, RAAF
- Mac Nichols, YMCA Ramblers, AIF
- Arnold Ray, Coast & Mountain Walkers RAAF
- Charles Roberts, Coast & Mountain Walkers AIF
- Norman Saill, Sydney Bush Walkers RAAF
- Gordon Smith, Sydney Bush Walkers AIF
- Gordon Townsend, Coast & Mountain Walkers RAAF
- Jack Wall, Campfire Club RAAF



Each Anzac Day bushwalkers gather at Splendour Rock to remember these men, many recording their memories and feelings in the log book.



Words of Advice

Recently on a club walk, a member near the rear of a large group had a fairly severe accident, but bravely did not notify the leader and completed the walk.



Because the leader did not know about the accident, it did not appear on the leader's walk report. This meant the member would have a hard time proving to our insurance company the injury had occurred on a club activity.

The moral is: notify the leader of any accident, whether it happened to you or to another person and irrespective of whether the injured person was able to complete the walk.

Committee



When Things go Seriously Wrong

By Keith Maxwell

Club member and President, BWRS

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) is a valuable community asset used by NSW Police for remote area search and rescue. However it is not a primary rescue squad. For that, eg when you have a seriously injured person, you need to contact triple zero.

Here is a guide for dealing with emergency services when someone is so seriously injured that outside medical assistance is required.

As always, render First Aid before contacting *triple zero*. BWRS offers training in either a one day course (*Provide First Aid*) or four day course (*Remote Area First Aid*). See website for dates and course registration details: www.bwrs.org.au

As an incentive to members to complete the training, the club pays 50% of the fee for approved courses. *Contact Training Officer, Sandra Bushell, for details.*

Once you have administered First Aid, you should have good information on the condition of the person, their injuries and general state. Next, establish your exact location (grid reference where possible) and, once all that is done, contact *triple zero*.

The first question the operator will ask will be: ***Which service do you require?*** Your answer needs to be ***Police please.***

This is because NSW Police have 'responsibility for life and limb' so they are in control of typical bush search and rescue incidents and are well aware of grid references for bushwalker locations. They will make the call to the Ambulance service on your behalf.

When asked for location, always say the grid reference (if you are able to obtain) slowly.



Bush emergency incidents are rare so *triple zero* staff often mishear or don't understand bushwalking terms. If this happens, ask to speak to a supervisor. (Remember *triple zero* calls are recorded).

Remember the name of a nearby geographic feature is NOT a location; it is just a place of special interest.

Owners of smart phones should consider downloading the **Emergency+** application.

Triple zero will decide the medical services required. You cannot tell *triple zero* that a helicopter is required but an accurate description of the person's injuries and your location will help

emergency services decide on the most appropriate response.

Medical evacuation has evolved over time. If *triple zero* allocates a medical helicopter, they will be attempting to 'bring the hospital to you'. Medical treatment of injured persons now starts when the helicopter arrives at the location, no matter how remote, not when it reaches the hospital.

However, remember that since a medical helicopter is a flying ambulance there may be a transport fee. This should be no surprise as transport in a road ambulance also incurs a transport fee.

Helicopter transport can be expensive so the fee may be large. All bushwalkers should get Ambulance transport insurance. Most private health insurance policies have this cover. However, it is possible to get *Ambulance Only* cover from a number of health funds.

If you are the injured person, you should contact the club's Insurance Officer, Alan Sauran, as members are covered by Bushwalking NSW for public liability and personal injury. You may also be able to claim for 'unusual expenses'.

Apart from *triple zero*, which is the number to contact for emergency services, if you need help in a flood, storm or tsunami you may need the State Emergency Service (SES) on 132 500

Finally, take the time to browse the *triple zero* website, as there are other phone numbers for particular situations:

Have you had experience of an emergency situation? Perhaps on a walk, or as the injured person? Please let us know your story and whether you have any further tips or information. www.bushclub.org.au

Australian Alps Walking Track

30 October-12 December

by John Hungerford

The AAWT is a long distance walking trail through the alpine areas of Victoria, NSW and ACT. It weaves mainly through national parks and ascends many peaks including Mt Kosciuszko, Mt Bogong and Bimber Peak, the highest peaks in NSW, Victoria and ACT respectively.

This was a great but very hard walk led by **Tony Hickson**, made easier by the support provided by many members for which we were grateful. Many people offered me equipment - I took **Diane McPhail's** tent and **Alan McPhail's** pack.



Successful through-walkers: John Hungerford, Gary Roughley, Tony Hickson.

Members who walked part of the way were: **Bob Salijevic** (9 days), **Graham Conden** (4 days), **Chris Edwards** (5 days), **Alain Sauran** (6 days) and **Rogo** (6 days).

Tony chose where to camp each night and where to have rest days to restock food. He determined where and when support people could meet us and booked accommodation and transport.

For communications and help, Tony arranged for **Elizabeth Hungeford** to relay the daily *good news* message from his spot device and for **Lionel Sontag** to assist if a *need help* message was sent. Luckily this didn't happen.

All the through-walkers had to assemble their food parcels in weekly amounts and label them according to where they were destined. **Morrie Donovan** took some to Jamieson, **Tony Hickson** and **David Cunningham** to Mt Hotham, **David Cunningham** to Taylor's Crossing and **John Maltby** dropped some at Talbingo and took some to Thredbo.

Days 1-6: Walhalla to Rumpff Saddle - 111 kms

Morrie Donovan and **Pamela Warren** met us on Days 0,1,2,4,6,7. Day 7 was a rest day at Jamieson, joined by **Bob Salijevic**.

Days 8-16: to Mt Hotham - 117 kms

Anthea Michaelis was ill so she didn't walk on Day 8 but travelled with Morrie and Pamela towards the campsite at Low Saddle. Unfortunately, the road was so bad they couldn't reach their destination. Luckily we managed to get phone reception and learned of their fate. As Morrie had our tents, we slept out in the open that night. On Day 9 we walked back.



Intended through-walkers: **Gary Roughley** (guest), **Tony** and **Jacqui Hickson**, **John Hungerford**, **Anthea Michaelis**

Chris Edwards and **Graham Conden** were due to meet us on Day 10 at King Billy. Somehow they were apprised of the situation so they came to Jamieson on Day 9.

Morrie booked accommodation at Merrijig and Tony arranged for Brian Westley ('Wessa') to take us, the next day to Mt Speculation where the original plan was to have a mid-stage rest day. Rather than rest, however, we walked southbound across the Crosscut Saw then back to camp at Mt Speculation. However, we missed two and a half days of the trail.

Ken Lowe met us on days 15-19. Day 17 was a rest day at Mt Hotham after which Bob, Chris and Graham left us.

Days 18-23: to Taylor's Crossing - 92km

On this stage we camped at several huts. At Cope Hut we all slept inside but at the others I was the only one. On day 20 there was a steep descent to Big River which we waded across before the steep climb that followed.

At Taylor's Crossing we were met by **David** and **Sue Cunningham** and **Adrian** and **Julie Jones** who provided BBQ meat and liquor. These support people met us on Days 23-27 so Happy Hour became routine.

Days 25-30: to Thredbo - 129 kms

Jacqui didn't walk this stage. **Julie Jones** walked with us on the morning of Day 26. Day 31 was a rest day at Thredbo where we were met by **John** and **Ruth Maltby**.

Days 32-37: to Kiandra - 110km

To rejoin the track we took the chairlift to the top station then walked towards Mt Kosciuszko. On this stage we camped at several huts. Again, I was the only one to sleep inside with others putting up tents, sometimes in the rain.

We were met at Kiandra by **Ken Lowe** and James Smith (owner of Talbingo)

Caravan Park) who drove us to Talbingo for our rest day (Day 38).

Days 39-44: to Tharwa - 113 kms

Jacqui didn't walk this stage. We were joined by **Alain Sauran** and **Rogo**. **Suzanne Aubrun** was at Talbingo also. Ken Lowe met us on Day 39 at which time Anthea Michaelis retired, injured. On Day 40 we waded across Tantangara Creek then the Murrumbidge River.

We were met just before the finish by Jacqui Hickson, John Maltby, Chris Edwards and Anthea Michaelis.

Overall the track is poorly marked; at times it is excellent but just when you need a marker it isn't there.

On the way we saw leeches, ants, flies, rabbits, a hare, brumbies, deer, snakes, kangaroos and birds. We had remarkably good weather, it was never really cold and we never had rain for more than a few hours during the day and were only interrupted cooking dinner twice.

Total distance: 675 kms over 37 walking days. Daily average 18.2 kms/day. Total ascents 26,510 metres Total descents 26,495 metres



Welcome to New Members



Harold Thompson, Lloyd Davies, Maggie Weiley, Jaeson Song, Jennifer Hocking, Rene Canuto, Clive Beddoe, Sally Ho, Suraya Coorey, Peggy Sniffin, Mark Wigley, Margaret Carr, Lauren Byrne, Jackie Williamson, Brendon Anderson, Ann Mourant, Elaine Prior.

Watch this space

The club's 75th anniversary book *The Bush Club 75 Years Old and Still Walking*, a collection of club walks in national parks, both in Australia and overseas, will be launched in April.

The beautifully illustrated book, is a lasting credit to the many members who arranged and undertook walks, wrote reports and submitted photographs. A copy of the book will be distributed to all members.

Hall of Fame

Four members have been inducted into our equivalent of the Hall of Fame, ie have been given Life Membership:

Jacqui Hickson: For enhancing and improving the club's website, updating the information it provides. She also finds time to lead walks and publishes the club's electronic Bulletin.

Tony Hickson: The power behind the electronic walks program and leader of GPS training sessions. Also, leader of logistically complex overseas long distance walks and treks that would have most of us tearing our hair out.

Carol Henderson: For her various committee positions and creative initiatives – eg the *Valued Former Members Register*, an initiative of Trevor Brown's, which she implemented and managed as secretary. She has also organised a stream of events including 70 Rivers birthday celebration in Lane Cove NP and is a regular walks leader.

Bob Taffel: For his team-approach work on the committee, including as President and Vice President and his role in updating the club's Constitution. His willingness to take on tasks, including chairing the editorial committee producing 75 National Parks book to be launched in April. He is also a regular walks leader.