

THE BUSH CLUB NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2017

www.bushclub.org.au

Walks Reports Summer p. 13
Walks Program Autumn p. 20

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CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

Please send anything you think will
interest our members to
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HIKING IN JAPAN - OCTOBER 2016

By Anne Armstrong

Leader: Alan Sauran

Walkers: Graham Conden, Kaye Birch,
Barbara Mitchell, Libby and Tim Dabbs,
Lynn Dabbs, Helen Fastovsky, Mark and
Anne Armstrong.

The trajectory of this great trip began north of Tokyo, arched broadly west through the mountains of the Tohoku region then further north-west, and ended twelve days later at Aomori, north Honshu. We saw first-hand the sources of Japan's energy - fresh air, fast water, hot springs, geysers, volcanic cones, calderas and craters, dikes and domes, magnificent lakes and beech forests. We walked in National Parks and World Heritage Areas. We visited temples, shrines and gardens, and vivid autumn leaves enhanced our journey northwards.

Our first destination was Nikko, the UNESCO World Heritage Site (Edo period) within a National Park (1934). This splendid place of pilgrimage, with Shinto shrines & Buddhist temples, traditional gates, bridges, portals, gardens and water gushing beneath the footpath, offers many insights into Japanese culture and spirituality.

We walked in the larger national park under glorious autumn foliage, past thunderous waterfalls. Ahead of us were amazing landscapes to explore.

We continued our journey by train across mountain ranges to Yamagata in Central Honshu. We stayed at Zao village, a ski resort where hot springs ran down the streets; Mt Zao is an active volcano.



Waterfall in river gorge

Boosted by a ski lift, we walked to the narrow edge of Ogama Crater Lake, a caldera 360m wide and 60m deep. This was exhilarating with a powerful wind behind; so we inspected some huts and a solid shrine to the local tectonic god, before descending 800m on grass meadows back to the village. It was an exceptional day walking through contrasting landscapes.



Ogama Crater Lake



Walking down to Zao village

After collecting hire cars at Yamagata, we stopped at the Yamadera Risshakuji Temple. This dramatic temple complex (founded in 860AD) sits on a steep rocky hillside in a high valley. Drums echoed round the hills as we approached. We passed a statue of Matsuo Basho, master of haiku, quietly contemplating his narrow road to the deep north. We ascended the stairway of 1000 steps through landscaped glades and cedar trees to further temples and rock faces with amazing views. Large drums boomed again round the hills as we left.

Early the next day we set off for Mount Chokai (2,236m) in the Chokai Quasi-National Park. An active volcano (1974) Mount Chokai has massive size and shape and displays curious distortions of scale from various viewpoints.

The day we climbed, Chokai sported an unexpected cap of fresh snow. Our team reached the summit in good time and had excellent views. Mark and I turned back 400m from the top; later, we saw our team moving up along the distant ridge.



Mt Chokai



Alpine swamp and cobalt pools

This report now morphs from a chronological format to a system of highlights, in the hope that the main features of our travels are conveyed more succinctly.

* Mount Akita-Komagatake (1,637m) lies in the Towada-Hachimantai National Park, a vast wilderness area. It is a complex stratovolcano with multiple peaks, including Onamedake and Otake. The landscape is particularly interesting, and includes an exposed lava dike (a place of wonder for geologists) and vast vistas in all directions. Unluckily high winds and deteriorating weather obscured some features on the day.



Lake Tazawa (left) a caldera lake, depth to 174m below sea level

*Mount Iwate (2,038m), also in Towada-Hachimantai National Park, is another stratovolcano complex. Alan and Lynn climbed magnificent Mount Iwate while the rest of us explored local attractions in bright sunshine.



Observation deck near lava field

*The Shirakami-Sanchi World Heritage area covers rugged mountain ranges with deep gorges, valleys and waterfalls, and unique beech (*Fagus crenata*) forests with exceptional walking tracks. The large local bears are clever and hungry, use cryptic territorial tactics and interfere with track signs; but they failed to associate our loud musical bells with an easy picnic opportunity.



Group photo among beech trees

*The Hakkoda Mountain range consists of a dozen stratovolcanoes and lava domes, another special place for skiing and hiking. We set out from Sukayu Onsen, a remote hot-pool bathing complex, and walked over delicate bog vegetation on elevated boardwalks, then up wooden steps to a small meadow. A further climb through thinning pine forests took us into the alpine climate zone at 1300m, where snow and icy winds encouraged us into a convenient hut. Due to time constraints we decided to return to base. We were delighted that our last walking day was in such a vast and distinctive area.



Group with Hakkoda range in background



Walkers rest after main descent

Adding greatly to our adventure were the wonderful ryokans (Japanese inns) where we stayed, with onsens (hot-spring baths). The rooms had excellent

design and proportions, the hospitality was friendly and professional, meals were elaborate and sustaining, and communal areas glowed with rural charm and local crafts. The steamy onsen beckoned each afternoon: a vigorous cleansing and shower, then the luxury of the hot bath, an addictive ritual, often outdoors. We then donned a yukata (cotton robe) and enjoyed the evening.



Wearing our yukatas

Thanks to Alan Sauran for his inspired leadership and brilliant planning. This trip through central and northern Honshu was a spectacular combination of walks, natural wonders, culture and strategic mastery.

Hiking Resources for loan

Thanks to an alert from Keith Maxwell and Bushwalking NSW, the Bush Club now owns a superb collection of 116 French hiking Topoguides and maps. There is virtually no region of France not covered by the Topoguides and maps including some little-known regions.

The Topoguides consist of 1:25,000 maps and route notes in the one book, thereby avoiding the need to carry separate maps and route notes. Naturally the route descriptions are almost all in French. Given the high level of French language ability in our Club, we expect that this will pose no problem.

The Club also now owns 44 issues of Strider Magazine, the journal of the Long Distance Walkers Association (UK).

Strider Magazine is mostly UK-based, but it also includes international news and international long distance walk descriptions, mostly in Europe, as well as general articles about how to prepare for long distance walks.

These items were all previously owned by the late Bill Ormes of Neutral Bay, a prolific long distance walker with a particular interest in French long distance walks.

One of Bill's walks was from Brittany to Grasse, not in a straight line, pausing briefly in Grasse for a glass of red, then continuing over the Alps to Venice, as one does, for a total of 3,200 km.

Bill Ormes was a noted NSW civil rights lawyer in the apparently brief intervals when not on the track.

He also was instrumental in negotiating rights of way for Sydney's Around the Harbour walk.

The materials have been donated to the club by his wife Nedra, based on our Club's demonstrated interest and experience in leading walks in France.

The collection will be available to be borrowed by leaders who have an official walk in France on the Club programme. Any persons wishing to use the materials to plan private walks not on the club programme may consult the materials but will not be able to borrow them. Please contact Alan Sauran for access to the resources:

asauran@hotmail.com

Walks Reports

The Club has decided to cease publishing the Walks Reports with the newsletter from future publications. Walks Reports will continue to be published in the electronic program and the lengthy process of compiling for newsletter is a duplication of resources. Ron Mead has been compiling the Walks Reports for a number of years and the Club would like to express our thanks to Ron for his hard work.

First Aid Courses

Look out in the programme for the next First Aid Courses to be held in May. First Aid courses will give you the knowledge and skills to act in emergencies not just in bushwalking but in all aspects of your life. The Club reimburses half the cost of a certified First Aid training course to all members and the full cost for leaders.

*Flora and Fauna
Watch out for:
White Waratah*



White Waratah – courtesy Terry Redmond

One of our members was very fortunate to see this remarkable white waratah while walking in Dharug National Park.

The Australian Native Plants Society has an interesting article about how the White Waratah, now known as "Wirrimbirra White", came into cultivation and some of the early attempts at propagation:

<http://anpsa.org.au/APOL2008/oct08-s3.html>



**Save the
App that
could save
your life.**

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Robert Carter, Stephen Diserens, Ronald Smith, David Bennett, Marie Belcredi, Lyndy Lipman, Merridy Cairn-Duff, Miriam Bennett, Jann Martin

What's on our website?

- Leader profiles and volunteers who will help new leaders. The list is at the end of the online program.
- Information and forms for leaders.
- Guidelines for all members.
- Photo gallery (enormous) – see photos of walks from the last 6 months.
- Tips on all sorts of things related to bushwalking and the website.
- Archives of previous newsletters as well as historical Walks & Talks.

Just browse through the menu at
www.bushclub.org.au

Bush Club Committee plus contact details – see contact us on the website.

Bush Club PLB Personal Locator Beacon

The club has a PLB for use by leaders on walks.

Tony Hickson is custodian of the PLB. Contact him at any time to make arrangements to borrow it.

bushclubwebmaster@gmail.com

For more information see the **Information for Leaders** page on our website.

www.bushclub.org.au.

A bushwalking proposal for the Shoalhaven region

with thanks to Barry Tomkinson, NPA Milton Branch

Photos by Jill Green



Meroo National Park

A group of people living in the Shoalhaven region have already seen the potential of the bushwalking boom.

The Shoalhaven region is an ideal area to promote bushwalking. There is a multitude of choices ranging from beach walking to coastal bushland with lovely lagoon views and inland there are the spectacular Budawangs. Most of the walking possibilities are in national parks such as Morton, Murrumurang and Congola. There are already many towns, caravan parks and camping areas providing an extensive choice of accommodation. Strangely the area does not seem to be very well known so it is very quiet outside the warm weather holiday periods.

A proposal has been developed by the recently formed Shoalhaven Bushwalking Advisory Group (SBAC), which has a membership from right across the Shoalhaven and includes Shoalhaven Bushwalkers; Milton National Parks Association and other related groups. The group represents a wide-spectrum of interests; including bushwalking, cycling, kayaking and bird-watching. The group is united by a desire to protect and preserve the unique natural environment of the Shoalhaven while encouraging minimal impact recreational access to this remarkable area.

This proposal document outlines an opportunity to develop sustainable walking tourism in the Shoalhaven; promoting the beautiful natural environment as a year-round national and international iconic walks destination.

Walking tourism has the potential to extend the existing peak season and smooth the influx of visitors over the entire year. This has obvious advantages for infrastructure planning but also ensures that local businesses have more predictable revenue throughout the entire year, rather than the current 'boom and bust' cycle. Research demonstrates that for every \$1 spent to establish and maintain walking tourism facilities such as walking tracks, as much as \$600 is generated for the economy of the region.



Point Upright rock platform walk

However, the availability of bushwalking and other minimal impact visitor experiences and recreational activities in the natural environment is a serious gap in the current tourism product offering in the Shoalhaven. Significant evidence exists to indicate that visitor access to these opportunities is constrained by lack of readily available information, coordinated visitor support services and poorly signed and maintained tracks and access points.

The group's proposal is for a series of iconic walks to be developed and promoted to specifically position Shoalhaven as a national and international walking destination. The proposal will commence with the work to brand, improve facilities and promote the Southern Shoalhaven Coast Walk (SSCW), a 40 km walk from Narrawallee Inlet to Merry Beach. The Southern Shoalhaven Coast Walk development project will act as a pilot for a new, collaborative approach to Walking Tourism development in the Shoalhaven

How to Sh..t in the Woods (with apologies to Kathleen Meyer, author of the book by that name)

By Kaye Birch

We all need to do it some time, but no-one ever wants to mention it. I'm sure that we've all seen toilet paper - or worse - besides, or even on, the beautiful bush tracks we are fortunate enough to be able to enjoy in Australia. I have often cursed this unsightliness, but it has occurred to me that sometimes the perpetrators may be unaware how to 'do it'. And there is no reason to assume that we bushwalkers always do the right thing.

So here goes

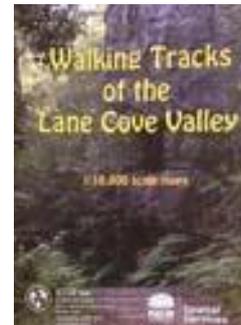
Unfortunately I suspect that we women are the worst offenders. If you need to stop for a quick pee, put your toilet paper (if necessary?) into a clip-lock and take it out with you. Don't just leave it, bury it, or hide it under a rock or branch. Urine is sterile, so even putting the paper straight into your pocket won't hurt.

For a more 'lengthy' stop, use a strong twig or short branch to dig a hole, approximately 15cms deep and if possible, over 50 metres from water or campsites, then cover it completely with soil perhaps topping with a rock when finished. As it is usually the toilet paper that is the most unsightly, and takes years to degrade, I usually wrap it up in a layer of unused toilet paper and take that out with me in a clip lock then flush it at home. If on an overnight walk, it is not too difficult to put it into the campfire when everyone has finished with the fire after breakfast and before departure. Simple!

Thanks Kaye for that helpful advice. Any activities in the natural environment will have some impact. Leave No Trace was founded to assist with minimising this impact with a simple code of 7 principles:

- ❖ Plan ahead and prepare
- ❖ Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- ❖ Dispose of Waste properly
- ❖ Leave what you find
- ❖ Minimise Campfire Impacts
- ❖ Respect wildlife
- ❖ Be considerate of your hosts and other visitors

For more information visit the Leave No Trace website at www.lnt.org.au



The new STEP "Walking Tracks of the Lane Cove Valley" map is now available from the Step website.

www.step.org.au.

Cost is \$15 for non-members with a 30% discount for members.

The map shows bush tracks, cycleways and firetrails and is an excellent reference for anyone wanting to explore this area of Sydney.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **1st December 2016**

The Bush Club AGM was held at McMahons Point Community Centre on Thursday 1st December 2016. It was very well attended with over 70 people in attendance.

President Cavan Hogue welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting before introducing Committee members to present their annual reports.

Barbara Mitchell presented the Treasurer's Report and financial statements. Our members and Emirates continue to be generous with donations and the Club was able to make contributions to the following organisations:

- Blue Mountains Conservation Society
- Kosciuszko Huts Association
- Colong Foundation
- Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife.

Walks Secretary Colin Reid acknowledged the contribution made by all of our leaders who provided a full and varied program in 2016. Chris Edwards reported that 17 new leaders led

walks with one lapsed leader. During the year the Club introduced a register of experienced leaders/members who are willing to do pre-walks with new leaders and support them on the day of their walk. This initiative was welcomed by prospective leaders.

Diane McPhail presented the Membership Secretary's Report and opened by explaining the slight drop in member numbers was due to the removal of all non-financial members.

Cavan Hogue presented the President's Report which is reproduced in full below. Cavan will not be standing for another term and was pleased to see that nominees for the incoming committee consisted of a mix of older and younger members which should provide a new approach and will be instrumental in implementing the suggestions of the "Refresher Group".



All Committee members thanked the many helpers who have assisted them during the year for their help and support.

All positions were declared vacant and the new committee was elected, see list below. The newly elected President, Robyn Christie, expressed her thanks for the nomination and thanked the leaders, outgoing and incoming committees with a special thanks to Cavan for his wonderful job during the 2 years as President.

The evening wrapped up with a sumptuous supper prepared by Shirley Hart and her team.

Outgoing President's Report:

Over the last year, your committee considered the report of the group chaired by Graham Conden and prepared it for full implementation next year. There were a number of valuable suggestions which we think will improve the workings of the Club.

We are in the process of implementing some of the recommendations. For example, we are putting together a list of mentors to help new leaders. We are also preparing a data base of leaders with the kinds of walks they do. In the past, regular walkers have found out which leaders put on walks that suit them by a process of trial and error but now newcomers will be able to see who is likely to suit them right from the word go. For privacy reasons, leaders' profiles

will only be available to Club members and the leaders will decide what to include. You will be kept informed of progress on other recommendations.

We also looked very carefully into the question of providing hard copies of the regular program in this digital age. It is as much a question of workload as of money. Most members have access to the internet and if they want a printed copy can easily print one off. Therefore the Committee decided not to provide hard copies of the program to people with access to the internet. We do have a small number of people who do not have access to the internet and we will continue to provide hard copies for them at no cost.

We have found that the short notice walks are growing while the regular ones are declining. Where most members are on the net, this is inevitable. It is clearly easier for leaders to put on short notice walks instead of committing themselves months in advance. We can expect this trend to continue and the terminology will change.

You may have noticed that we are providing more things for free. Our finances are in good shape and I only wish that the Federal Treasurer did as good a job as the

Bush Club one does! I would remind you that first aid courses are available for free to leaders and at half price for others.

I have now walked with the Club for all of this century and led walks for most of that time. Leaders are the backbone of our club and we now have a range of things to help new leaders. When I started you just set off and hoped for the best but we now have mentors, training walks, free first aid courses and an atmosphere of encouragement for new leaders. It really isn't that hard so I would encourage those of you who haven't yet led walks to take advantage of what is offering and take the plunge.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Committee members for putting up with me and to remind you all that our Committee members do a great job and, like our leaders, are all volunteers. There is a position of ordinary member in 2017 for which we have no nominations so that would be a good way of seeing what the Committee does before thinking about taking on something with a fixed workload.

I will turn 80 next month and have back problems which prevent me doing any serious walks. It is therefore time to hand over to someone younger and more

energetic so I will not stand for another term as President. Being unable to do the walks I used to enjoy so much has brought home to me what a wonderful activity bushwalking is and what a great Club we have.

So make the most of it.

Enjoy!

Cavan Hogue

Incoming President's Report:

Hello Everyone

I know quite a few of you, but there are obviously quite a few I don't know. For those of you I don't know, I left work just over 3 years ago from a company I had worked with for 35 years. I didn't actually retire and was intending to go back to some sort of work after a short break, but as many of you would have said yourselves "I'm that busy now I don't know how I fitted work in" and so I am now officially retired!

It was quite flattering to be suggested as the new President, although quite a daunting thought. Many said to me "it's easy - you don't have to do anything". Ha - if it's that easy why isn't anybody else putting their hand up but nothing ventured, nothing gained. As some of you know I was part of a sub-committee earlier this year to brain storm about where the Bush

Club sits with members, leaders, prospectives, luring new members, what our age demographic is among other things.

It was exciting to get input from our group of 5 and some of the ideas have already been implemented such as Leader Profiles, and a stand-in leaders list when a leader can't make their walk. Of course there are things like should we have a Facebook page that keeps getting asked, and the answer is yes - but there are logistics to this as to who will run it and control it, how will it work. So it will happen, but just needs a bit more research into it.

This is a great club - everyone is always friendly and happy to help each other - there is no competition to be the best walker, or the fastest walker - everyone just gets on with it, which I love. And it is all of you which make the club, without you - the walkers, our Leaders and Committee members - the Club would not run. So thank you to the Leaders, and many thanks to Cavan who has done a wonderful job throughout his 2 years of Presidency and all the outgoing and incoming committee members.

Enjoy the night, have a wonderful Christmas, and see you on the track somewhere, sometime.

Robyn Christie

Office Bearers 2016-2017	
President	Robyn Christie
Vice President	Helen Kershaw
Vice President	Jan Mathieson
Secretary	Ingrid Radford
Assistant Secretary	Katherine Gloor
Treasurer/Public Officer	Barbara Mitchell
Membership Secretary	Lydia Chua
Walks Secretary	Colin Reid
Events Co-ordinator	Shirley Hart
Ordinary Member Responsible for New Leaders	Chris Edwards

Other Office Bearer Positions Determined by the Committee	
Webmaster	Jacqui Hickson
Ordinary Member	Walter Baer
Ordinary Member	Anthea Michaelis
Honorary Auditor	Bob Wood

Other appointments to assist the Committee	
Electronic Program Coordinator	Jacqui Hickson
Walk Updates Coordinator	Lynn Dabbs
Insurance Officer	Alan Sauran
Newsletter Editor	Colleen Loudon
Newsletter	Bev Barnett Tam Khuat
Librarian/Archivist	Michael Keats
Training Officer	Walter Baer
BWRS representative	Keith Maxwell
Confederation Representatives	Dick Weston
Search and Rescue Representatives	Graham Conden Keith Maxwell Dick Weston
Updates Program Approval Sub-committee	Graham Conden John Cooper Lionel Sonntag Bob Taffel
New Members Approval Sub-committee	Graham Conden Ron Mead Lydia Chua
Advisory Panel	Graham Conden John Cooper Bob Taffel