



SUTHERLAND BUSHWALKERS

NEWSLETTER FOR THE SUTHERLAND BUSHWALKING CLUB

www.sutherlandbushwalkers.org.au P.O. Box 250 Sutherland NSW 1499

September 2015 NEWSLETTER



Under the Bread Knife

Trip to Lightning Ridge 17th May to 31st May 2015

Activity Organiser: Ann Jospe-Phipps

Participants: Eric, Lesley, Paul, Mary, Brendan, Carol, Ron W, Ron McM, Lyn, Pete, Becky, Jocelyn, Ray, Carl, Alan, Jean, Gisela, Arnold, Rita, Judith, Wendy, Ken C, Eileen, Lexia, Ken W, Jennifer, Robert, Filomena, Harold.

Coolah 17th & 18th May

It was quite a long drive getting to our first stop, Coolah 'Base Camp' Caravan Park. Memorable because of the huge fire lit every night for us, it was very cold so we gathered in very closely. Coolah is home to the Black Stump, past which was deemed in the early days to be beyond civilisation and where the wild things are. Today we enjoyed Coolah's other more peaceful side and went bush in Coolah Tops National Park, doing various short walks and driving to some great lookouts. Bundella Lookout gave us spectacular views over the Liverpool Ranges to the north and to Mt Kaputar and the Nandewar Range. The Pinnacle Lookout comes to a small almost sheer basalt outcrop and wide views to the north and west to the Warrumbungles. It was a squeeze trying to get us all out on The Pinnacle for a group shot but we managed it. It was interesting seeing the next 2

National Parks we would be walking in from a distance. The ancient Grass trees in Coolah are amazing towering way over our heads with their beautiful grass skirts, the forest is mainly stringy barks and lovely white snow gums. We had lunch at Bald Hill Creek Falls, with a little water, then some of the group walked the couple of kilometres cross country on a track to Norfolk Falls while the drivers came around in the cars and walked down to meet us. The recently restored and lonely Bracken Hut built in 1937 set amongst an old orchard with lovely autumn leaves, and a look into the Pines & Barrack campgrounds was the end to a great day of warming up for the rest of the trip.

Warrumbungle National Park 19th – 22nd May

It was only a short drive through Coonabarabran, (stargazing territory if the rain clouds would clear), to the next campsite in the Warrumbungle National Park and most of us were there before lunch. The group had to split up here as there is no cabin accommodation in the Park. The campers were very glad we hadn't gone with the rangers suggested grassy group sites as the clouds gathered and the rain came down in torrents, we reckon we would have all been underwater by the morning!

A few of us looking for something to do, put on our rain gear and did the 2 km walk up Burbie Canyon before retreating to our indoors and waiting for a break in the weather for Happy Hour to begin. We did manage a Happy Hour in the carpark but scattered shortly afterwards as it began to rain again.

Wednesday dawned fine but the heavy clouds were still hanging around. Our first big walk of the trip today and most of us set out planning to do what we could manage as it's a 12.5 kms steep climb up to the Breadknife & the Grand High Tops, with a lot of stairs! Congratulations to a couple of 80+ walkers who went an extraordinary distance before sitting and enjoying the amazing views and walking back down.

On the way down Lex, Ken, Alan and Becky decided we wanted more and included the Goulds circuit into the

walk on the way down. As we reached the top of Febar Tor the heavens opened up, lightning, thunder and hail pelting down saw three of us stop to put our coats on while Ken decided to keep going. We lost Ken. We started to worry when we couldn't see any footprints in the mud and were worried he had taken a wrong turn. We got back and had reported him missing and the search wheels were started as the evening was closing in. He turned up unharmed and dry –he had eventually sheltered under a rock and didn't see us go by.

Ann breathed a very big sigh of relief!

Some of the others took the opportunity to do some birdwatching and the short walks around the campground.

The rain was still around but clearing as we set off in the cars to explore the Pilliga Scrub. We took all the 4WD's as we were not sure of the road conditions. It's one of the good things about travelling with a varied group of people what ideas come up of where to go and things to do. Pete & I would never have gone into the Pilliga Pottery, but it was very interesting, we were given a throwing and carving demonstration of their trade mark Blue Wren pottery and enjoyed Devonshire tea with freshly baked scones, wandered around the workshops and yards and were interested by the short talk from the founder and her struggles with developing her dreams. After a few hours we moved on to the un-signposted Sandstone Caves. Wind and rain worn caverns of reds, yellow and white sandstone are the features of this 1.7km circuit walk with some aboriginal grinding grooves and rock art as testimony to the long history of the local Gamilaraay people who have lived in the area for 1000's of years.

It was then a long drive in to see some modern art sculptures deep in the Pilliga at Dandry Gorge. We were all disappointed we didn't have time to do the longer gorge base circuit but some of us have decided to come back and camp there , very impressed with the new BBQ'S and amenities.

It was almost dark and the roo's were emerging as we carefully drove back into the park.

Friday 22nd May. The group did all sorts of things today, birdwatching, resting in the warm sunshine or short strolls, and the 6.5km interesting and more difficult than expected walk around Goulds Circuit that has some fabulous views of the park's stand out features.

8 of us went for the longer 18.5km climb into the clouds almost to the summit of Mt Exmouth. Sense prevailed when we were almost at the summit and we turned around as we thought with the wet slippery

ground and poor visibility it was too dangerous to continue.

To make up for the disappointment we decided to come back past the Cathedral and Arch, two lovely features that are a short detour off the West Spirey Creek return track.

For those who have not been to the Warrumbungle National Park it is one of NSW's most scenic places to walk, with a huge variety of walks of all grades, and several good camp sites with hot showers. The area is the remnants of a large shield volcano that was active 13 million years ago. The lava from this volcano flowed over sandstone areas from the 150 million year old Pilliga sea. The amazing rocky spires, plugs and domes visible throughout the park are what remain of this ancient and beautiful landscape. The results of devastating fires in 2013 that impacted 90% of the park and destroyed an historic shearing shed and the park visitor centre as well as track infrastructure can still be seen, but things are recovering. The rangers have done an amazing job of reconstruction in such a short time.

This is a top recommendation for all to see if you can get there.

By Rebecca Rae



Near the summit of Mt Exmouth

Saturday 23th May our group left Coonabarabran for Narrabri; "Cotton Country" beautiful driving weather and interesting to see the vast cotton farms, other crops as well, but the cotton dominant. We settled into accommodation at Highway Tourist Village, after a bit of a hold up due to bridge works on the way into town. Some of us in cabins, others in powered sites, all of us able to stay in one spot. We had two newer members of the club arrive from Sydney later in the evening, Filomena and Harold, who very bravely slept in their tent.

Sunday: in the usual convoy and car share we left early for the drive up to Mt Kaputar National Park, 57K out of town on a steep winding road taking us to the 1512m summit and viewing platform with 360 degree view North West, we enjoyed the fantastic views on a cool clear morning. Afterwards down to Dawson Spring and then investigated Mt. Lindsay, more fantastic views from bald rocky area looking to the North East and South over fabulous farmland and the Nandewar Ranges. Our lunch stop was Eckford Lookout, sitting high atop the escarpment enjoying more fabulous views. Heading back down the mountain we investigated Governor's Lookout where those of us up for a challenge had the chance to scramble over rocks and climb a few ladders.

Monday: WAA Gorge; Starting at 8.30 we headed along a gravel road and through farmland, plenty of us to manage the farm gates in turn. Arriving at a well maintained picnic area and car park we headed into the Gorge, some just investigated the nearby large water holes others of us ventured 2 and a half km over enormous boulders and rocky creek beds to marvel at the towering walls that dwarfed us at the end of this spectacular gorge.

After morning tea our convoy headed to "Sawn Rocks" in the northern section of Mt Kaputar NP. Here we experienced the 40m high pillars of basalt rock resembling the inside of a church organ and explored the intriguing rock formation which starkly juts from the creek bed and polygonal impressions visible where piers go 60m underground.

Tuesday: heading today to Burren Junction, many of us visiting the CSIRO Australian Telescope with its six 22m wide dish antennas sited on large tracks and enjoyed the video of its formation and function. Arriving at Barren Junction for a swim in the therapeutic Artesian bore baths and a great pub where the chef fed our group of over 20 single handed some enormously good meals. Wendy Tatolli told us of her years as a child growing up in such an unusual place when her dad was stationed at the local bank.

Wednesday: The final leg of our trip was Lightning Ridge with most of us staying at the Opal Caravan Park, with its pristine amenities and access to Artesian baths. Myself and Ken bravely staying out at my brothers opal mine 18k out of town, a mine he has had for 20 years and I had yet to visit. This is where all the

old caravans, rusted trucks, cement mixers, dilapidated farm machinery, and corrugated iron end up and is recycled for use in opal mining.

Thursday: our group came out to visit his mine and met a few of the interesting locals. Roger shared with us the running of his mine (don't think he has found much, just likes to get out there). We saw the pits, heard a few yarns, then drove over to where the opals were washed and had a bit of a fossick before heading back along a red dusty road into town.

Friday: Black Opal Tour which took us past various interesting points in town also the Chambers of the Black Hand mine where we saw an extensive collection of sculptures carved and painted into underground mines.

Saturday: our last day and we all enjoyed visiting places of interest and opal shopping for some; getting vans ready for trips home or further afield, and saying goodbye to a great group of people.

Sunday: heading home after a wonderful trip and skillfully organised by Anne our leader, who we give much thanks to. For leaders that put on trips such as this there is an enormous amount of ground work and research to make it a success. Thanks Anne.

By Lexia Duncan



Lapstone to Glenbrook

Tuesday 12th May

Activity organiser: Di Turner

Participants: Tim Flannery, Jennifer Whaite, Judy Turner, Helen Alexander, Wendy Rayner

Six of us met at Lapstone station. After a short walk through the streets, we headed to the top of

Glenbrook Gorge going via Bluff Reserve to Chalmers Lookout, where we enjoyed morning tea and a spectacular view from the top of the escarpment stretching all the way to Sydney. We then followed the old tunnel gully back to the M4 underpass. Here we came onto the track of the old Zig-Zag railway, which was built in 1867. We passed through old railway cuttings and the remains of the Lucasville station to the Siding Lookout with views to the Penrith lakes and beyond.

We then followed the track down past the old Knapsack Bridge. Many club members will remember this bridge as it used to be used for the highway before the Motorway was built. Completed in 1864 it is 121m long, 39m high and has five arches 15m high, plus two smaller ones. It was completed in 1864, but in spite of its age its sandstone blocks look almost new and are amazingly clean.



Knapsack Bridge

The final stretch was a climb that our leader assured us was 5,000 steps to the Elizabeth Lookout and after a short time we were having coffee at Glenbrook. A most interesting walk with very different views from those we usually see in the Blue Mountains and the added attraction of various historic sites.

By Jennifer Whaite



Rock Columns Kakadu

Kakadu

7th June – 19th June, 2015

Activity Organiser: Steve Deards

Participants: Di Bradbury, Jeff Cosatto, Garry Keir, John Morris, Ray Van Den Anker

We started our walk from the Jim Jim Falls carpark. The carpark was jam-packed because it was the June long weekend & the road had just been opened to the public after the 'Wet'. The crowds quickly thinned out though as we made our way up the escarpment to our first camp beside Jim Jim Creek. It was a tough 200m climb in the hot afternoon sun, especially with our full packs, & we weren't acclimatised to the heat. This was the only time on our walk where we followed a marked track. From here on, it was all navigation by map, compass & GPS. Ray had down-loaded the Jim Jim map & our campsites onto his smart phone & he was our 'backup' navigator. We camped beside water every night & there was usually a hole deep enough to swim in after the day's exertions. Sometimes we camped on a sandy creek bank or at other times, flat rock slabs. Most of us cooked on the camp fire, but 2 of us carried fuel stoves.

Daytime temperatures in June are 30-32 degrees, dropping to around 16-17 degrees at night. Most days are clear of cloud, but on this trip we had a couple of showers around lunchtime on one day. Quite a bit of the park had been burnt along our routes, which made walking easier. The spear grass can get very tall & thick in un-burnt areas. On most days, there was a gentle breeze blowing & this helped keep walking conditions more

pleasant. On most days, we started walking at around 7.30am & had set up camp by lunchtime. It's best to limit walking between 11am -3pm. Our longest day was 10hours duration & we had walked only 14kms.

Overnight walking in Kakadu National Park is limited to approved routes & details of proposed routes & camp sites have to be submitted to the Permits Officer for approval before a permit will be issued. This was all arranged months before our trip date, but two days before I was due to fly to Darwin, I was told that our route was no longer allowed because of controlled burns in the upper Jim Jim Creek area. We could walk up to day 6 of our plan, but after that, a new route had to be approved. Of course I wasn't very impressed, because it took me 4 hours of re-scanning maps and altering spreadsheets to re-submit the new route for approval.



Twin Falls Creek Camp

I was surprised at the number of feral animals that we saw. These included water buffalo, feral cattle, pigs & cane toads. The toads were dispatched using Di's walking poles. Dealing with the buffalo was something altogether different. There are large areas of the park that show signs of trampling, mud wallow & pig damage, caused mainly during the wet season. A new Plan of Management is being formulated for the park, so hopefully the feral animal problem will be addressed.

We found 14 art sites during our walk. Some of them were quite extensive & well preserved, while others were just a few drawings that are fading away. Some attempt has been made to protect them by placing silicon drip lines along the roofs

of the overhangs to divert water away from the art. We became quite good at picking areas that might contain art, and I also had some information from others who had walked in the area.

We didn't see many native animals during our walk, excluding birds, which were numerous. John said that he saw quite a few fresh water crocs on his last walk along Twin Falls Creek some years ago. The absence of them & water monitors are typical of areas that have been infested by cane toads.

When we reached Maguk at the end of our walk, we had a swim in the beautiful warm pool at the bottom of the falls. It was like bath water. Uschi, our charter bus driver, was waiting for us & she laid out a beautiful chicken & salad lunch, including cold drinks & fresh fruit. It was like manna from Heaven after 13 days of biscuits & peanut butter. We finished off our drive back to Darwin with a visit to Nourlangie Rock with its famous art sites. In Darwin, the place was buzzing due to the V8 super cars racing that weekend.

By Steve Deards



Paddy Pallin Rogaine at Bendalong Sunday 14th June

Activity Organiser: Graeme Rayner

As a new member to the club, I participated in the Paddy Pallin Rogaine event at Bendalong on the South Coast in June taking my 27 year old son and his good mate. This was a first time adventure for the three of us. Bruce was good enough to meet me for a coffee and give me a quick bushman's instruction on how to use the compass, which we put to good use on a

couple of occasions.

This was a novice event so we felt right at home, but there was varying depth of experience in the wide age range.

The weather was sensational, bright sunshine and more like a spring day than middle of winter. The check points were mostly navigable along roads, paths, tracks and fire trails. We did take to the bush on two occasions and used our compass to good effect; feeling quite chuffed with our new found skills. Thanks Bruce. But we will not be putting it to too grand a test, just yet.



The scenery in the area along the foreshore of Manyana and Bendalong was absolutely beautiful. The Bendalong Tourist Park was first class and their late check out to allow us to have a shower after the event, at no extra cost, was a service not normally afforded to city dwellers so we highly recommend this park for that added hospitality and service with plenty of kangaroos to photograph.

The event consisted of 40 checkpoints and we were very happy finding 19, coming third in the novice group of about 12 team entrants. The boys were highly chuffed with their first time result, covering about 12km and scoring a creditable number of points with no penalties, returning to the hash house for a hot meal before presentation.

Overall a fantastic day, great experience and we'll be back, to further our rogaining skills and get some use out of our new compasses.

By Graeme Rayner



Vanuatu August 2015

August saw the sixth SBC trip to Vanuatu but the first one after Cyclone Pam. Many members were moved by media reports and some made donations available for us to take over. The Club also made a monetary donation so with the help of Pascal we bought and packed suggested items and headed over. The main items were bedlinen and towels. All 7 tour participants crammed their bags with donations at the expense of depriving themselves of a few luxuries. A couple of sunny days in Port Vila then the rain. Who said it was going to rain?..... that was one of my luxuries left behind, a good rain jacket. Ah well we were swimming anyway, then the wind came. Really wish I had that multipurpose jacket now. The cyclone has removed the "dark jungle" canopy opening up the ground to thick vegetation on some walks needing a machete to get through. All very interesting and challenging, part of the experience.Ecotour@vanuatu.com.vu with Pascal.

Tanna Island was the trip highlight for everyone to focus on donated goods presentations. Seeing the damaged properties at Lenakel we were not sure how the other side of the island, where our bungalows were located, survived the cyclone. Before getting to the bungalows there was the road or should I say lack of road to endure. Good local drivers in 4x4 utes did get us there but it was not all smooth travelling; glad I wasn't in the back. Oh by the way, just to mention, there is no OH&S in Vanuatu.

Then the rain and wind came, gee I'd like that jacket! Off to the Mt Yasur volcano evening spectacular, which by now is in the downpour and strong winds. Did I mention we left behind some really handy appare!

Rustic accommodation with winds blowing through the timbers and open windows, but this was nothing to what the Island people must have endured in Cyclone Pam. Some of the huts had indeed blown

away and they are slowly rebuilding or repairing. More work will be done when supplies become available on the next ship due, so we are glad to have some facilities at least.

Then the reason for going the donations. I was excited to distribute what we had to various recipients guided by Pascal. Some sheets went to our accommodation bungalows, some to a school along with towels and clothing. The sisters at LAMLU School were very grateful and surprised we had brought this to their outpost. The rain just would not let up so everyone sloshed about regardless. One member donated some books which were warmly received in the library. Schools are held in UNICEF donated tents all across the island so education continues and it is obvious the children are happy even in hard times. Another highlight was the singing & dancing put on especially for us by the village which made the earth move more so than the volcano. We were treated as special guests and this is what will remain as my personal highlight but all of us were affected. Totally wet to the bone we had to leave after lunch to cross the rising river so it was a reluctant group heading off towards the airport and one last look back to Mt Yasur. Bags are empty; hearts are full; what a trip this was so worthwhile. Still wishing for that jacket, but then the sun starts to shine now of all times as we leave. On behalf of the Club we can be pleased to have made a small contribution to their recovery and my thanks to the entire group for filling their bags with this pleasure. So much more to tell but the memories are ours.

Oh by the way the group featured in the local newspaper in the French and English versions saying "big hearts have arrived". Thank you Pascal, Bosco, Paul and my fellow adventurers.



By Vanessa Hicks



**The Burgh Track – Royal National Park
Monday 10th August
Organiser: Tony Larkin**

SBC has "Adopted a Track". It is the Burgh Track that connects Helensburgh to the Coast. This is a project in conjunction with the Royal National Park Office. The first day was 10 August 2015 with several members meeting at Garrawarra Farm, the start/finish of the track. This year strong winds caused many trees to fall and so it was our aim this day to see what was to be done. National Parks supplied most of the tools, so armed with saws, clippers, some muscle power and lots of enthusiasm, off we went and cleared as we walked the track. It wasn't all work..... there was talk and morning tea on a rock, lunch and review on another rock, but what a difference at the end of those few hours. Great satisfaction knowing OUR track was looking like a track again instead of a storm affected path. The next work day is Sat 7 November, so come along and enjoy a few hours helping to maintain this historic track.

By Vanessa Hicks

Aussie long distance walking tracks

Camino Australia – MacKillop -Woods Way is a pilgrimage route running from Portland in Victoria to Penola in South Australia inspired by the life and journeys of Australia's Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

<http://www.aussiecamino.org/wordpress/>

The Federation Track is a 3,000 kilometre bushwalking route from Circular Quay in Sydney on the east coast of Australia to Adelaide on Gulf St Vincent with a 200 kilometre spur to Canberra. It traverses coastal areas, native bushland, alpine plateaus, eucalyptus forests, open plains, rainforests, rich farmland and historic towns. Track guides are available on-line.

<http://federationtrack.com.au/>

By Leonie Bell

Useful map websites and tools:

Mapometer - <http://au.mapometer.com/>

NSW Gov - SIX maps - <http://maps.six.nsw.gov.au/>

Topo notto - <http://topo.notto.be/>

Welcome to new members:

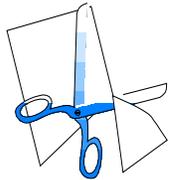
Ida Zhou, Jeff Cossatto, Donald Johnson, Maria D’Angelo, Lee Fanning, Yvonne Warren, Paul Warren, Alice Wang, Carolyn Moore, Louise Birnie, Amanda Stevens, Jessica Wang, Jeanete Hrvatin, Kim Pastor, Rosalind Ti, Jayne Butler, Vanessa Truitt, Graeme Rayner, Jenny Giles, Josephine Cheah, Helga Dott, Judith Phillips, Connie Smith, Frank Carmody, Monica Moore, Karin Inman, James Johnson, Phillip Escott

(Quoted from Wild.com.au)

“Lightning can be a major hazard for bushwalkers, campers & skiers. In Aust there have been between 5 to 10 deaths from lightning strikes annually and over 100 injuries. Strikes were found to have occurred in late spring/summer. Of the victims, 7.4% were in tents. A sobering thought for bushwalkers since all tent poles whether aluminium or carbon fibre make for excellent conductors of electricity. While you can never predict exactly where lightning will strike there are several areas of the country that show higher propensity towards electrical storms.

So when planning a trip check your hot spots on the www.bom.gov.au home page under National Warnings

Vanessa Hicks



COMMITTEE ROOM SNIPPETS

President’s Report

Things are happening

A new Club website is being designed at present and is now at the testing stage. This has been discussed for some time but became necessary when our web manager sadly passed away earlier this year. The new website will be designed to allow us to manage our own content and updates in a timely manner.

Job Advert...It is new and exciting but a little unknown for most of us so if any member in the Club has experience in CMS systems and is a little IT knowledgeable who would be interested in helping us with this “project” please contact Vanessa .The committee would appreciate some expert help to assist if you can.

Coming up will be Renewal of membership. This is a big job so look out for your notice soon and remember to fill in the renewal form both sides correctly and return with payment confirmation promptly.

Stats Half year ended 30th June

	Activities	Participants
	2014/2015	2014/2015
Walks	62 / 58	619 / 587
Cycling	12 / 5	73 / 33
Kayaking	4 / 2	12 / 6

Bookings for Activities

Members are reminded that bookings to participate in activities should be made directly with the Activity Organiser, preferably giving at least 4 days’ notice for one-day activities and 10 days for overnight activities.

Activity Organisers:

Activity email alerts for alterations /cancellations please notify

Items for the next Newsletter:

Write an article about a bushwalk, bike ride, paddle or trip you have enjoyed for the next newsletter. Please email newsletter items and a couple of photos to your editor,