



## NEWSLETTER

March 2020

### PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2019

What a way to start an exciting year, with 40 members going to Charlottes Pass for a week of day walks (and "happy hours" !).

Thanks must go to the following:

The committee members, Vanessa, Tim and Ken for all their help and support. Tim took the reins of setting up the very successful new on-line membership system. Our new Secretary Ken handled the position extremely well, with agendas and minutes for both committee and general club meetings each month. It was great to have Vanessa's wealth of club knowledge to be called upon whenever necessary.

To our program team of Bec, Lesley and Leonie who work very quietly and efficiently to put together the very important quarterly programs.

To Shaune for putting together the great newsletters and the members who contribute with articles for it. Shaune also continues to edit and update the Club's website.

To Margaret and Deb for looking after the "info line" with all its enquiries, questions and requests.

To Beatrice, Kerry and team for the club meetings suppers and washing all those cups.

To Allan Stone for sorting through the club's equipment and getting a new PLB and having the old one decommissioned

To Wendy for stepping up to be membership officer and handling the new system so well.

To Tony for continuing to manage "Adopt a Track" in the Royal NP and the willing workers who turn up to help.

To all 50 plus activity organisers who are the mainstay of any bushwalking club. Without these leaders there would be no activities and hence no club.

236 activities were held in 2019 with 2664 participants, which averages out to about 10 members on each activity. Participation was up by a staggering 900 compared to 2018.

The club hosted the second annual Activity Organisers Seminar and luncheon, this time at the Werne Bay Sea Scout Hall, Illawong. This is a twofold event, one to let the leaders know they are very much appreciated, and for them to share ideas and experiences with each other.

After a very worrying time with possible fires and park closures the club Christmas BBQ breakfast was a great morning. Over 90 members were there for sausages and eggs and much catching up with club friends. Year pins were awarded for 10, 15, and 25 years. This year we presented Maurie Bloom with a special gift in recognition of him setting up Sutherland Bushwalkers Club 50 years ago - and he is still a member.

Club meetings had so many great guest speakers and presenters on a variety of subjects. These meetings are where you can get to know other members who you don't see on the activities you attend

On leaving a recent Bushwalking NSW meeting I heard a club member say "these meetings always reassure me that Sutherland are doing everything right". To me that means thank you goes to all 350 members for making it so!

*By Allan Bunt*





Blue Lake area

## Pygmy Possum Lodge, Charlotte Pass Kosciuszko NP

2 - 9 Feb 2020

**40 members participated.**

Again this year forty club members made the trip down to Kosciuszko National Park and enjoyed our annual week of alpine walks

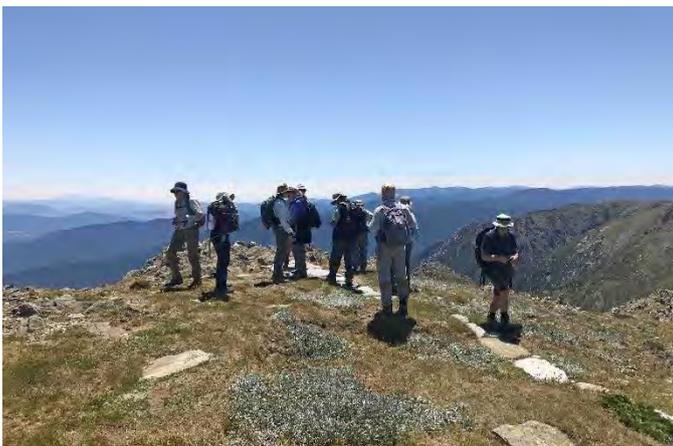
This year was quite different with bushfires in parts of the National Park, backcountry track closures, dense smoke on some days, on and off road closures with some members spending a night in Queenbeyan on the way down and then driving home a week later in torrential rain.

Even with all this, we managed to get out on walks every day and make the most of this fantastic area.

It was great to have a number of members come along for the first time and enthusiastically discover what we like about this area.

Thanks to the walk organisers and everyone for a very social week.

*By Shaune Walsh*



Main Range Track

## **A member's bushfire evacuation from Kosciuszko NP.**

A Happy New Year to all my walking friends.

I wish to tell you about my shortened four day walk on the main range.

Four of my old walking friends from way back parked our car at Guthega on Monday morning after a very smoky five hour drive from Sydney.

We set out up the Snowy River past Illawong Lodge and crossed the suspension bridge (lots of people with children swimming there) and walked up to the base of Mt Twynam to an idyllic campsite on Pounds Creek next to a long snow patch.

After a very mild but windy night we set out at 7.30 and climbed Mt Twynam. We headed along the Main Range towards Mt Townsend with a screaming tail wind from the north which blew us off the track a few times. There were lots of other walkers on the track too. We decided to set up camp below Mt Townsend at 12.30 then climb it in the afternoon.

We were just about to walk down to Wilkinson's Creek to make camp when an RFS helicopter came up the valley with its siren blaring, circled us a couple times very low and waved us to get out.

Looking back to the north the sky was black with smoke coming up from Khancoban. Lots of walkers arrived at Rawsons Pass where national park vehicles were waiting. They gave us bottled water and ferried us to Charlottes Pass saving that awful road walk. For those like us who needed to get to Guthega they bought in a 20 seat bus to ferry us there.

Great service from NPWS. From Jindabyne to Cooma it was so smoky we could only manage 70kph. Arrived home at 11pm that night.

A very eventful day and I now have 3 days food and a pack full of clean clothes.

*By Alan Webb*





### Lake Toolooma Trail Heathcote National Park

Thursday 17 October

**Organiser:** Suzanne Boylan

**Participants:** Peter Jones, Ray Van Den Anker, Jim Plezer, Jenni Gormley, Graeme Booth, Kenneth Humphries, Steve Turner, Regina McGrillen

This walk started with trepidation and rightly so, this was my first walk as a leader for the Sutherland Bushwalkers! I drove nervously to our meeting point at the start of the Bullawarring Track.

What was I thinking, volunteering to lead a group of walkers I didn't know into the bush! Had I gone mad? I had taken my husband and a couple of friends on the planned walk over the weekend, just to make sure I didn't get lost!!!! As I drove to the end of the cul-de-sac I could see most of the group had arrived already, oh no, this is really happening! Do they know I'm a novice, what will their expectations be? The thoughts running through my head!

Quickly, after introductions, we began our descent and took a side trip to Kingfisher Pool. My concerns disappeared as the group chatted and we took in the beautiful bushland. I tried to educate myself a bit about the history beforehand, so I seemed knowledgeable, and it was actually very interesting, particularly that in 1937 a bushwalking group leased a section to protect this important area of bush once inhabited by the Dharawal tribe and the Aboriginal rock engraving sites, before eventually becoming Heathcote National Park in 1974.

We climbed Westmacott Ridge for spectacular views of the Park. Lake Toolooma remains hidden until you descend to Coutts Scout Camp, and then you are rewarded with its tranquil dam waters and Yellow-tailed black cockatoos. One thing I decided after this walk was to refresh my First Aid and learn Remote First Aid after an incident that fortunately was not too serious.

Thank you to fellow walkers for your assistance here and joining me on my first bushwalking activity.

*By Suzanne Boylan*



### Bottle Forest Trail to Karloo Pool Royal National Park

Friday, 18 October

**Organiser:** Peter Jones / **Led by:** Suzanne Boylan  
**Participants:** Tracey, Jennifer, Geoff, Erika, Taitana, Dianne, Wendy, Francis, Dane, Bronwyn, Daina

I had never walked the Bottle Forest Trail and found it beautiful with a long descent to Kangaroo Creek.

We had a large group, with three visitors, and Jennifer took tail, which was great! We enjoyed morning tea in the shade by Kangaroo Creek before walking along its banks to Karloo Pool. Along the way we saw newly flowering plants, water dragons, a brown snake, and on our ascent, a lace-monitor on a termite nest, high in a tree. Great spotting!

It was a blue-sky day and Karloo Pools looked very inviting. It was a great spot for a relaxing lunch. The ascent home along the Karloo Track offered scenic views along the cliff edges.

A really enjoyable walk with interesting conversations along the way.

*By Suzanne Boylan*



## Best of the Southern Alps

### New Zealand

2 - 7 Dec 2019

**Participants: Tracey Cleary, Sandra Kennedy, Jennifer Whaite, Michele Howie, Ray van den Anker, Anne Brian, Terry Hatton, Margaret Dooley.**

This was a 6 day supported trip in the Southern Alps of New Zealand, mainly doing day walks in the area between Christchurch and Queenstown.

It started with a 4 hour walk through tussock grass to the Rex Simpson hut, an isolated hut where we were to spend a night. In a foretaste of what was to come we had no sooner arrived at the hut than it began to rain. Since we were already there and a meal was being prepared this was no inconvenience. The hut was basic but it had everything we needed including several pairs of gum boots, so that we could get to the outhouse without slipping in the mud.

It rained without stopping all night. In the morning the party set out to do a circuit round the nearby hills, but half the group decided that walking in the cold rain with any view having disappeared into the mist was no fun and returned early to the hut.

And that was the weather for the rest of the week. While the South Island of New Zealand is known for its unpredictable weather, we were unlucky enough to strike the worst December period of rain for 20 years. While New South Wales sweltered and burned, we walked in the rain. In the Hooker Valley, supposed to be the prettiest walk in the Mt Cook area, we saw nothing except sodden tourists. We wore our wet weather clothing all day and at night we tried to dry out our sodden gear. There were occasional patches of fine weather, but many

of the planned walks had to be cancelled. Ash and Pete, our guides, tried to keep up our spirits with a procession of Plans B and C. On the second last afternoon, in a spirit of desperation, they offered us a choice between Puzzle World - a tourist attraction about illusions, or a trip to Wanaka to wander around taking photos of sandbags trying to hold back the rapidly rising water as Lake Wanaka made a valiant attempt to move from NZ's 4<sup>th</sup> largest lake to its 3<sup>rd</sup> largest.



The itinerary on our last day involved a helicopter ride to a beech forest and a 3 hour walk to the Shotover River where we would catch a jet boat back to Queenstown. The Shotover had risen far beyond the jet boat ride being possible, but Pete tried to convince us that the helicopter company might possibly, just possibly, drop us off on top of a ridge and we could walk from there to Ben Lomond. He trudged into the helicopter office and returned with a stunned expression on his face and the news that the helicopter company would do just that.



In a couple of minutes, we were up in the air flying over the mountains, close to rock faces and finally perching on an inaccessible ridge. As the only one of the party who had never been in a helicopter

before I found it totally thrilling, especially with the voice coming from their headquarters asking "Where are you going? What are you doing?" thus giving us a sense of getting off the beaten track.

Then the ride was over and we had to walk along a very exposed ridge. Luckily it was not raining, as with the ground becoming wet and slippery, the walk would have been harder and more nerve-wracking. After two hours we reached the path leading to the peak of Ben Lomond, which was only fractionally less rough and exposed than the ridge. We finally reached the top, where we sat and shivered while enjoying the best view of the week and our lunch.

And then, for the complete South Island experience it began to snow. Luckily the snow only fell for a short time, the sun came out and the path improved as we made our way down. And down. And down. Having spent the past week doing only short walks this was rather painful, but we eventually reached the top of Queenstown's cable car for a magnificent view and an easy ride to the town.

There's no point in complaining about bad weather, but it had been a bit disappointing. As we rode the cable car down to Queenstown there was a general sense of joy that we had finally got one really great day's walking.

*By Jennifer Whaite*

## Minnamurra to Kiama

Sat 1<sup>st</sup> Feb

**Organisers: Irene and Barry Mann**

**Participants: Donna Mulholland, Carol Westen,**

The forecast for Sydney was 42 degrees, and with national park closures and bushfire threats, we changed the walk from McPhails Fire Trail (in Morton NP) to this coastal walk from Minnamurra to Kiama. The McPhails walk will be rescheduled to a later date.

The air-conditioned train arrived at Minnamurra Station just after 9.35am. There was a slight NE sea breeze which made the start of the walk comfortable, and kept the temperature down to a pleasant 27 degrees or so. We walked through Minnamurra to the mouth of the Minnamurra River, where there were many family groups enjoying

swimming and kayaking...the car park was virtually full.

Next it was up and over Minnamurra headland, with panoramic views north and south.... the breeze had picked up here right on the coast. Then down to Jones Beach...shoes off for some...and a paddle along the edge...we found the beach exit to a children's playground where Kiama Council has put a "water Station" with outdoor shower, tap, and dog accessible tap. These have been placed near every beach exit in the councils' area.....a great opportunity to remove sand, shower off the salt and water the dog (if you have one). We had a morning tea break here.

A section of pavement walk followed, up and down until we reached the inlet known as "the boneyard", a nice place to swim, surf or snorkel, especially when there is a southerly blowing. Today with the north easter it was fairly flat. Again, temperature was pleasant and the sea breeze much appreciated. A steep scramble uphill to a track leading out to the headland, with great overviews of the Bombo Quarry, an area extensively mined for blue metal for many years for use in the railways and building industries...now a photographers paradise....then a track leading around Kiama's sewage plant down to Bombo beach...here a nice set of sheltered benches for a leisurely lunch. A pleasant spot, with 2 of our troop enjoying a surf.



Bombo Beach

The final part of the walk was along Bombo beach for 2km.....very cool. Then a walk up and over the headland into Kiama ( the tide did not permit us to walk around the rocks)...here it was unpleasant, sea breeze dropped, and heat got up to a possible 33 degrees.....but then....we arrived at the rock pool next to the blowhole....fantastic place for a cool swim and shower afterwards. An ice cream was appreciated and then we dropped off our visitors in time for the 4 o'clock train.

It was a 10km walk, done in a leisurely 5 hours, much appreciated on this hot day.

By Barry Mann



Michael Cook  
Kristina Czaban  
Geoff Scanes  
Paul Freed  
Diane Anderson  
Carol Cartwright  
Stephen Cartwright  
David Riches  
Stephen Miller  
Bernie Baliotis  
Bonnie Hillier  
Carolyn Thrum  
Philip Thrum  
Greg Spencer  
Joanne Booker  
Neil Cowley  
Warren Powell  
Sue McGrath  
Garry Webb  
Jennifer Bryan  
Kevn Bryan  
Donna Mulholland

If I had to have an injury that prevents me from bushwalking, now is not such a bad time with high temperatures, disastrous bushfires, poor air quality, high winds, ferocious thunderstorms and now glorious rainfall. Since I have been out of action with an injury, I have lived vicariously through other walkers bushwalking reports.

In particular, I had a good laugh reading the December 2015 issue of the Sutherland Bushwalkers Newsletter. Two tales, one from Allan Bunt and his suffering through a walk in the Blue Mountains National Park from Mt Victoria to Perry's Lookdown led by Tim Gardner, and Jennifer Whaite's hilarious account of a trip to Hinchinbrook Island in Queensland led by Lesley Salzman on the Thorsborne Trail.

The accounts expressed the struggle, the mishaps and misadventures, and whoops missed the track, or uh oh the track is over there, but both ended with reflection, once safely back, of what a great time was had and how supportive everyone is. And isn't that what bushwalking is all about, and being part of a Club enhances these experiences. Jennifer very aptly ended the recount of the walk with, and I quote, "*The question is, of course, does bushwalking cause short term memory loss, or does short term memory loss cause bushwalking?*" Touche!

By Suzanne Boylan





Woronora lilo trip



Circ Quay to Greenwich walk



Cronulla walk



Kiama to Minnamurra walk



Gooseberry Bay RNP walk



Martins Lookout Falconbridge to Springwood walk