



Celebrating 50 Years 1970-2020

NEWSLETTER

September 2020

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The COVID-19 Pandemic continues but thankfully bushwalking remains a relatively safe outdoor activity. In June the restrictions in NSW eased and the number of participants increased at the discretion of our organisers, up to 20.

Interstate border restrictions have resulted in at least one multi week hike cancelled and lots of member's private overseas trips cancelled too. As a result, many of our program activities are filling fast as members look to get out in nature close to home. A big thankyou to our organisers who continue to put on multiple activities throughout the week.

The drought and bushfires have passed. As we get out it's great to see the rivers, creeks and waterfalls all flowing again. As we venture into the Blue Mountains and South Coast, the stark reality of the devastating bushfires with its eerie silence are everywhere but it's good to see the fresh regrowth and gradual reopening of tracks.

This quarter has also seen an increase in the number of our volunteers clearing the Anice Falls Track in the RNP as part of our club's Adopt-a-Track project. It's now a total of 1500 hours we've given to the project over recent years.

2020 marks the 50th anniversary of our club and its affiliation with Bushwalking NSW. We hope to mark

the occasion at some time with a celebration but that will depend on the restrictions and when gatherings can be safely held.

It's a fantastic milestone to have fifty years of continuous outdoor activities, run by volunteers, and all the friendships that have been made over that time.

Shaune Walsh



A bit of breeze in the RNP

COPING WITH CORONAVIRUS

After the first serious lockdown, Henry and I decided that, for our own mental and physical health, we had to “escape”. The Darling River Run had been in our minds and with water flowing after two years, it seemed the ideal place to start. Walking in the Warrumbungles and staying in the tiny historical town of Tooraweenaa got the legs moving and whilst there, we had a guided tour of an emu farm. We were introduced to some of the 1,200 emus on the property with all parts of them destined for jewellery, belts, oils or the abattoir. Rather sad after seeing tiny chicks emerging from large shells and one day chicks wobbling around on shaky legs. An Aboriginal guided tour of the Brewarrina Fish Traps en route to Bourke was our first sighting of the Darling.

On this trip, any national park anywhere near our destination wasn't safe! First off was Gundabooka with its Mulgowan Rock Art and a cruise down the Darling on the Jandra Paddleboat which has been laid off for two years. I should add that we had intended to camp on this trip but our tent never saw the light of day - electric blankets winning out when the temperature reached the minuses! At this particular property an interesting account of the Darling flowing past the property at 1 am and the scramble to raise pumps to higher ground had us entranced. We so take water for granted in our cushy, metropolitan environment.

So, our accommodation ended up being in cabins, on properties and farm stays where the only heat came from the camp fire, along with camp oven meals or our electric blanket! Toorale NP and homestead added more history when every day on the Darling was a history lesson. Peery Lake in Paroo-Darling NP, White Cliffs and a stay in Broken Hill to explore Day Dream Mine at Silverton all added more interesting days but unfortunately, our tour of the rock art in Mutawintji NP was closed, being unsafe due to wet rocks. Menindee Lakes was a grazing ground for cattle, with only two lakes in the area around Copi Hollow holding any water. The heritage listed Woolshed in Kincheg NP, along with a walk in the area were interesting. I have often heard Pooncarie mentioned and envisaged a tin-pot town in the middle of nowhere but we were pleasantly surprised to find a small town with pretty houses and nurtured gardens and public areas and a café producing great food and being run off their feet by visitors.

Around this time, Henry had a funny feeling about Victoria closing its borders so we moved down to Gol Gol in NSW. A good move and a lovely cabin on the banks of the Murray, opposite the enemy. The Darling merges with the Murray at Wentworth so our next walk was onto an island which ends right at the junction of the rivers. Mungo NP and the Walls of China, together with the amazing Perry sandhills which have swallowed up the trunk of a massive gum tree and a tour of Orange World provided more interest.

Darling done and dusted but with our annual cross-country trip to Falls Creek cancelled, why go home? In the last two weeks, we have explored Cocoparra NP, waterfalls, ridges, gorges and enjoyed birdwatching at Ramsar listed Fivebough Swamp and wetlands at Forbes, our destination for a week in a villa on the banks of the Lachlan River. Nangar NP and the standout Weddin Mnts had us climbing up escarpments for extensive views - worth the 200 km return drive each day, together with the very green Conimbla NP. The radio telescope at Parkes and the air museum at Temora, together with a rural museum spread over 3 acres also kept us busy when we had our first rain in six weeks.

Road conditions varied from low range 4WD, negotiating a gully along the track with a drop off on one side, to fairly good dirt. Always dirt but very little, if any traffic even on the tarmac.

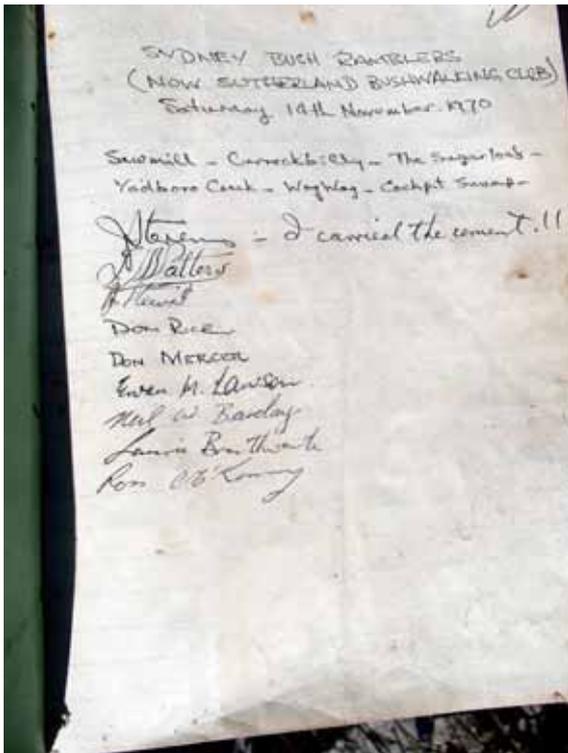
By the time this is printed, we should know if SA is going to open up its borders to allow us to complete another section of the Heysen Trail. Should this not happen, we will be on the road again, exploring more of NSW and feeling so much safer - no one on the roads and towns that we normally only pass through en route to somewhere else. So, when you feel like exploring further, there's a hell of a lot out there.

Marilyn Fooks



Currockbilly Mountain Log Book 50 Year Anniversary

1970 - 2020 The early history of our club



A bushwalker who lives near the Budawang National Park contacted Bushwalking NSW to see if he could make contact with the Sydney Bush Ramblers club. This was the original name of Sutherland Bushwalkers up until 1977.

He had recently been up on Currockbilly Mountain (1087m) and sent us photos of the first pages of the visitors log book from the summit. The log book was placed there by some of our original club members, with their names, in 1970 and shares our club's 50th anniversary.

The log book in its metal container has survived fifty years of extreme weather and bushfires. The mountain is not often visited and the log book only has a few entries each year.

Further investigation and contact with members Maurie Bloom and Murray Scott has revealed that our early intrepid club members led by Don Rice placed visitors log books on other peaks in the Budawangs around this time, namely Pigeon House Mountain and Mount Talaterang.

Possibly a visit to Mount Currockbilly will be arranged to view it and celebrate its 50th anniversary.

The inaugural meeting to formally establish a club was held at the 2nd Yagoona Scout Hall on Monday, 28th September 1970.

Before then, however, a small informal group had been conducting various activities whenever the chance arose. Around 1968 two local Scout Rover Crews ceased. Former Rovers were Alan Stewart, Ken Hogbin, Peter Burgess and John McIntyre. Two others associated with these Scout Rover Crews were Doug Bridge and Don Rice who worked at the Australian Atomic Energy Commission at Lucas Heights. Also at the AAEC was Maurie Bloom (still a club member) who was from the Caringbah Scout Rovers and hence had a link with Doug and Don.

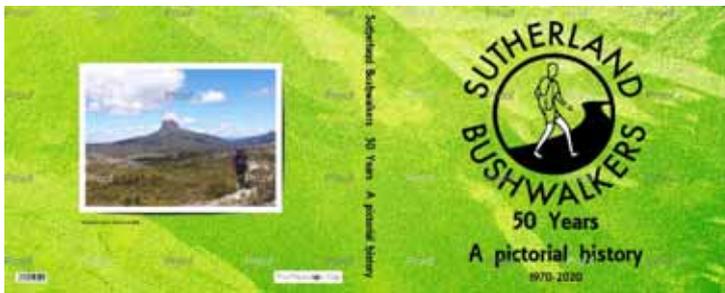
The first activity of this group that formed from Scouting and AAEC friendships was in 1969. The trip was to the Budawangs with a bushwalk from Yadboro up the Kalianna Ridge into the Monolith Valley and to Mount Owen.

In these early days it was an all male association because of the common Scouting and AAEC links. It didn't take long before girlfriends and wives were joining in.

About May 1970 the group chose the name "Sydney Bush Ramblers" and activities were notified in a program. During 1970, as membership increased, Don Rice and Graeme Carter attended a meeting of the Bushwalkers Federation to learn about the possibility of affiliation. On the 28th September a general meeting was held resulting in agreement to join the Bushwalking Federation (now Bushwalking NSW) and function as a formal club. Don Rice was the President and Maurie Bloom the Secretary/Treasurer.

By 1971 membership had grown to 41. There was ongoing confusion between the names of the two clubs Sydney Bush Ramblers and Sydney Bushwalkers, so it was decided at the AGM in 1977 to change the club name to the Sutherland Bushwalking Club to better reflect the membership.

From past notes by Don Rice and Horst Bardorf



50th Anniversary Photo Book

Leonie Bell has put together an amazing, high quality 100 page photobook of the club history including stories from past and present members, to celebrate the club's 50th Anniversary. The book is available for all club members to purchase and will cost between \$40 and \$50 depending on the number of copies ordered. We will have a copy of the book which is already receiving rave reviews, available to peruse at the next club meeting. If you would like to order a copy of the book please e-mail secretary@sutherlandbushwalkers.org.au with your request. You will then be notified of how to pay, and an approximate date of delivery.

Our thanks go to Leonie for her wonderful efforts in creating this masterpiece.

Track Work - Anice Falls Track RNP

Have you ever wondered what track work involves? When I first joined SBW, my first "walk" was doing some track clearing, and what a great introduction to the SBW club, and its friendly members it was.

Our Adopt a Track program is organised by Tony Larkin who liaises with NPWS. Volunteers use saws, loppers, secateurs, hedge trimmers, and shears to widen and clear tracks that have been overgrown. Initially, this felt like environmental vandalism to me, but the widening ensures walkers don't form their own tracks, causing far more erosion than if staying on the designated track. Hard hats, long sleeve shirts and long trousers help keep everyone safe. No power tools are allowed.

Our current venture is the Anice Falls track near Maianbar, and what a difference a few hours work by a dozen or more people can make.



Before



After

Three Views Trails - Brookes Plateau Kangaroo Valley

Some few years ago, I scheduled this walk in the Kangaroo Valley, attended by a dozen or so walkers. It provides views of the Tallowa Dam, part of the pump storage system feeding Fitzroy Reservoir and hence Sydney Water Supply. It also creates a favourite waterway for canoeists.

In recent wet weather, the Shoalhaven River was in flood, and the Dam was 100%+ full, i.e. overflowing, so Irene and I decided to do this walk again. We had not been there since the fires, so were surprised at the extent of the recent bushfires. Some houses had been lost in the Valley, and the road out to Tallowa Dam, some 20km from the Valley, showed the extent of these fires. Both sides of the road were burnt up to and over the adjacent hills and cliffs, as far as the eye could see.

The dam was spectacular and noisy, the downstream a torrent. The bush was showing spectacular signs of recovery, and one advantageous aspect was that adjacent hills which were previously hidden by bush, were now visible on the walk.

On the Three Views Trail, there was actually a fourth view to an eastern viewpoint down the river. On a previous Club walk, we attempted this fourth walk. While the rest of the walk was on fire trails, this section was a narrow, hard to find, overgrown "track". We attempted it at that time, but lost the way in the overgrowth, and a coming thunder storm encouraged us to give up after half a kilometre.

Well, now it is easy. Also, some helpful body has marked it with a series of bright pink ribbons. So we did this return stretch of 2km. The tall blackboy (grass trees?) stems were very evident of a plant which loved the fires....and we found the "window in the rock" shown in the book "Best Bush, Coast & Village Walks of The Shoalhaven". We will schedule this walk again in a coming program.

Barry Mann



Window in the Rock



Tallowa Dam Spilling



Burnt Bush Regenerating



Have you seen our Members Only Facebook Page?

So far more than 90 members have joined the Facebook group, sharing walks and photos and generally keeping in touch during isolation. If you would like to join in on the fun then:-

- 1) Go to your own Facebook page,
- 2) Search for Sutherland Bushwalkers in the Facebook Search,
- 3) Click on the page that has Eagle Rock as the photo
- 4) Hit "Request to Join".

You should have access within 48 hours, usually much quicker though!

A warm welcome to our new members

Isabell Carleton
Robyn Pooley
Claire Allan
Bob Allan
Sharon Cameron
Glenn Conyard
William Douglas
Marie Zammit
Paul Zammit
Annette Mathews
Lisa Lovehill
Janelle Brown
Francesca Malatino
Barbara Tinker
Cheryl Meade
Catherine Carmichael
Jennifer Kalgovas
Margaret Mallinson
Susan Mudge
Jean Cooper
Carol O'Connell
Julie Standen

SBW Bike Riding

Just to let you know that all is well in the bike riding ranks with many rides completed whilst keeping socially distant. The weather has been kind to us on our rides with the exception of the middle of August when the wind made life a little difficult.

Come along and join in a ride when you get the chance. If you learnt as a child it might be a stretch to jump straight on and peddle away but with a little practice I'm sure most of you active members could enjoy the freedom of cruising along on some of our easier rides. Happy to discuss at any time.

Greg Johnson

We look forward to seeing you out on the track soon!

Sutherland Bushwalkers On-Line

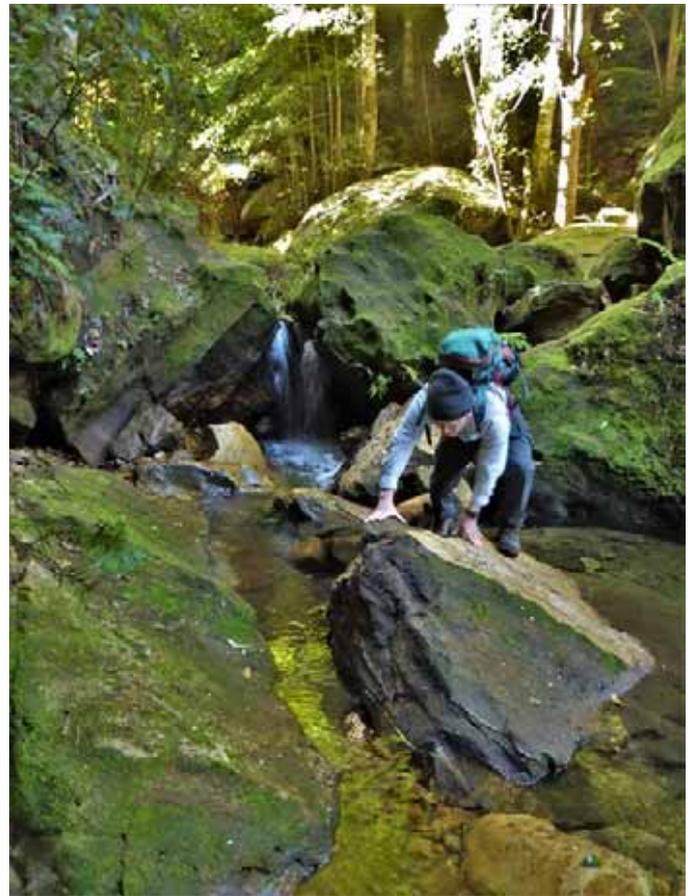
Website

Don't forget to check our website. All the important information is available on the site.

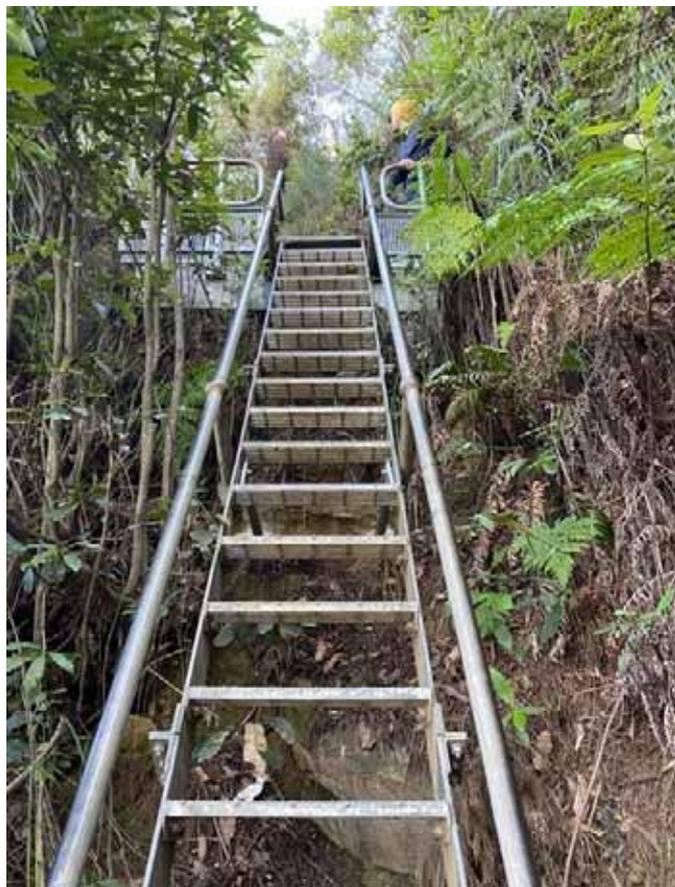




Bike riding in an iconic setting



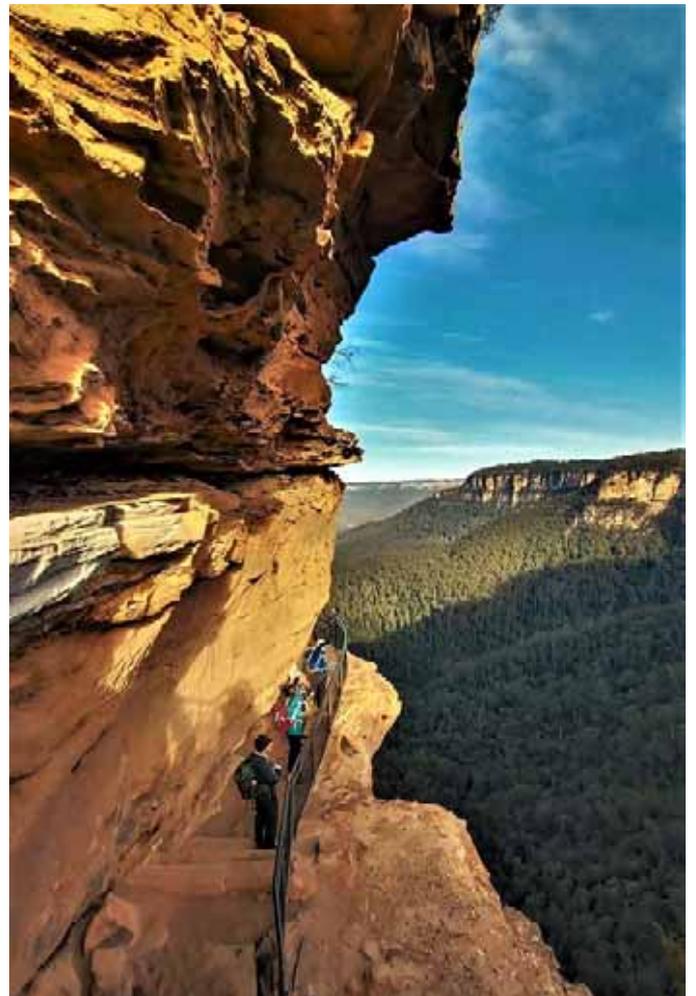
Blue Mountains creek crossing



Coffee at the top anyone?



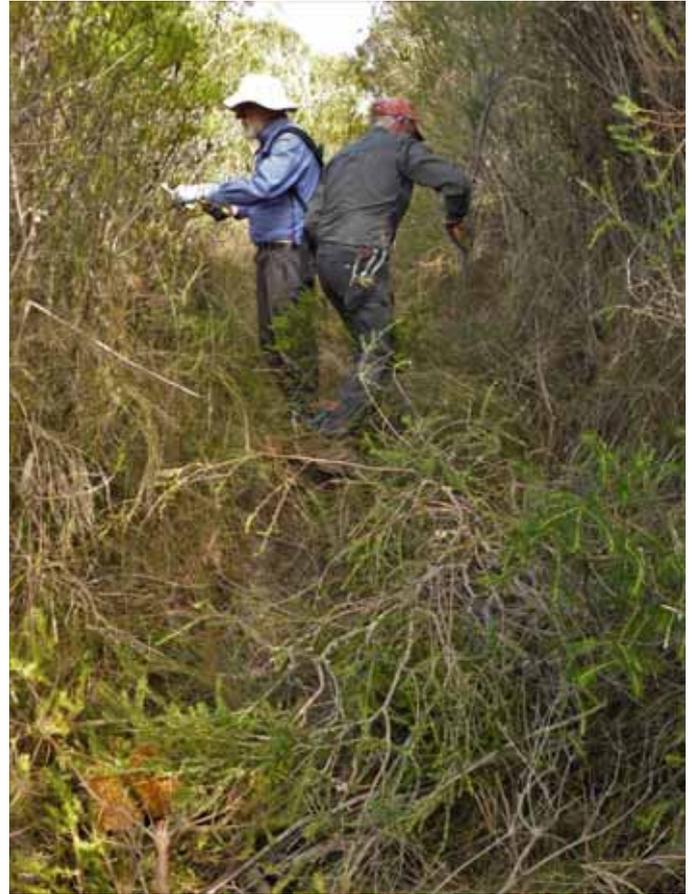
Tim - Our esteemed treasurer in his element



A beautiful day in the Blueys



Art, Industry, Commerce - Kamay NP



Trackwork Anice Falls Track



Icicles at the Pinnacles in the Blue Mountains

