



NEWSLETTER

March 2023

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

TO THE AGM FEB 2023

In 2022 we finally had the Covid restrictions behind us and were able to participate in a full year of activities and volunteer work. The long periods of rain have been an ongoing test for our wet weather gear and many of our much-loved tracks were closed due to damage, but our activity organisers still managed to find plenty of alternatives.

Bushwalking continues to be the main club activity and it has been pleasing to see our kayakers and cyclists having regular well attended activities too.

This year membership renewals and new membership applications went online, and it has been very well received by our members and has reduced the volunteer work behind the scenes. An increasing number of members are choosing to receive the digital version of the program and newsletter which has reduced our costs.

Our audited finances continue to be in good shape allowing another year of the reduced annual fee for membership renewals.

Injuries were down with no rescues during the year. I encourage all our members to consider completing a First Aid Course (which our club subsidises), especially our activity organisers.

Our volunteer track clearing work in the Royal NP continues to be well attended and much appreciated by the management of the park as well as very satisfying for those doing the work.

Our website attracts those who wish to try out our club and is an easy source of information for our members. Our Facebook group is popular with members who like to share some great photos.

The Kosciuszko week staying at Pygmy Possum Lodge continues to be a very popular trip away. This year a second week was organised ensuring no one missed out.

The Activity Organiser Get-together and free Xmas BBQ Breakfast were well attended and a great opportunity to swap ideas and catch up with club friends.

Post Covid, the numbers at our monthly General Meetings have been down, and I encourage all our members to come along to hear some interesting and informative guest speakers, chat with club friends and find out what's happening in the club.

I would like to thank our Committee and Office Bearers for the work they do behind the scenes in their own time to keep the Club functioning efficiently for the enjoyment of all the membership.

Our volunteer Activity Organisers need a special mention and thanks too for the fantastic variety of places they take us to every week.

Finally, a big thanks goes to all our members for the enjoyment and friendships that you bring to our very successful Club.

Shaune Walsh

President



What to do when you are snowbound at Pygmy Possum. See the last page for the finished product!

Kanangra Boyd National Park

9 to 11 November 2022

Shaune Walsh (leader), Beatrice, Cheryl, Finlay, Fiona, Ken, Lesley, Lexi, Margaret, Paul, Pete, Phil E, Phil M and Vilma

The Kanangra Boyd National Park lies at the western fringe of the Greater Blue Mountains Heritage area. Shaune and Beatrice organised a two-night car camp to maximise the potential to reach some of the more accessible parts of a truly remote area only three hours' drive from Sydney. It was intended and we had booked to go the previous week, however, aerial pest control work, as well as the park being closed due to potential snowfall, changed that plan. Just as well!

The car camp was at the NPWS site at Boyd River about 6 kms before the Kanangra Walls car park. Although the facilities at the site are basic, everyone had a comfortable area to set up: tents (mainly), caravan and camper. The Boyd River was close-by for those needing water.

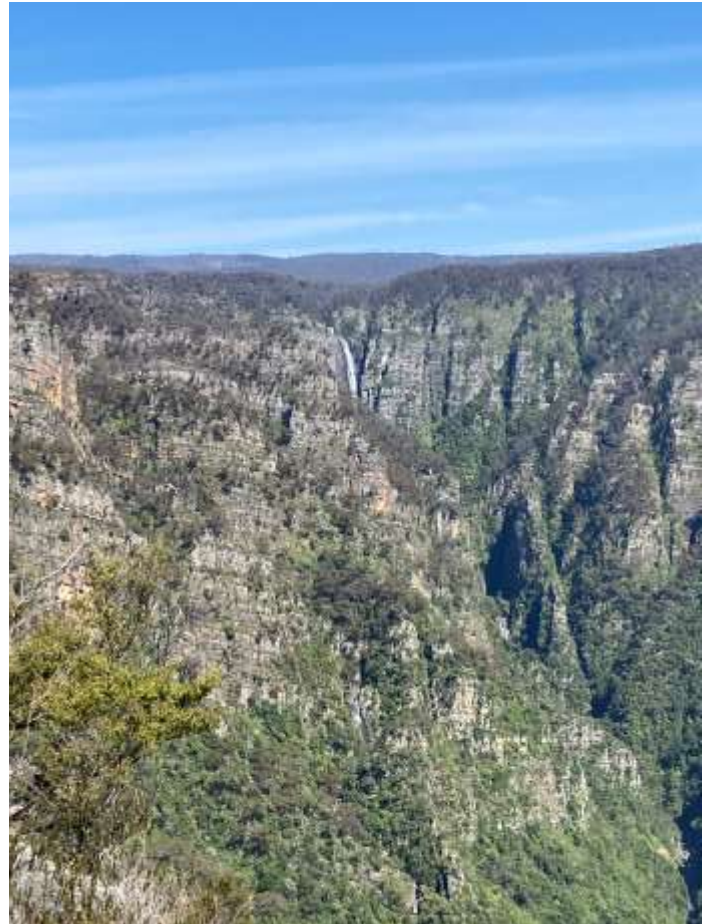
The walks were divided in two segments - the first on Wednesday afternoon and the second a full day excursion to the Kanangra Plateau and beyond.



Fortunately, the weather remained fine and mild, which produced ideal walking conditions.

Wednesday afternoon's walk, from the Kanangra carpark, took us first to the Kanangra Walls Lookout (spectacular views of the Walls and Mount

Cloudmaker), the nearby Thurat Walls Lookout and then to Kalang Falls - many steps! There was also time for a (slightly) longer walk to a point overlooking Kanangra Creek not far from Kanangra Falls. Total distance was an easy 6 km.



These two walks were a great introduction to Thursday's walk, which again took us from the carpark, for an out-and-back walk on the Plateau Walking Track, then to Coal Seam Cave and ending at Cottage Rock - total distance about 12 kms. The walking track varied from a wide and open trail on the plateau, to being narrow and overgrown in the sections beyond.

This thick vegetation is the result of rapid growth following the 2020 fires in the area. Near the southern end of the plateau and only a short deviation from the main track, is Dance Floor Cave. This natural feature was close-by the late 19th century stock route from the Burraborang Valley. In 1891 a dance platform was erected in the cave from local timbers, these have long since rotted or been burnt in camp fires.

As always, an essential part of a good camp is a good campfire, which we were fortunate to have on both nights. Lesley and Paul produced some very nice scones in a camp oven, which capped nearly two days of great comradery, fun and of course walking.



Thanks to Shaune and Beatrice for organising and leading two wonderful days of walking in a beautiful and remote area close to Sydney.

Phil Meade

The Heysen Trail, the final leg - Kuitpo Forest to Cape Jervis

17th October - 3rd November 2022.

Leader - John Holland

Participants - Marilyn Fooks, Becky Rae, Leonie Grimshaw - all 1200kms

Leanne Baird, Judy Turner, Pete Guest (to Victor Harbour) and supported by Henry Fooks.

This second trip to SA in 22 was our farewell to the Heysen. Again we opted for a base camp at Mount Compass and day walks to Victor Harbour through a variety of state forests, pastoral / cropping land and conservation areas...all quiet and beautiful so quite amazed to be overtaken by numbers of runners participating in an ultramarathon.

On reaching the Southern Ocean at Victor Harbour we had some "tourist time" to visit the mouth of the Murray...the Coorong and The Cube featuring Salvador Dali's work at McLaren Vale.

With car shuffles organised and booked campsites, we walked from Victor Harbour in mostly conservation areas on the Fleurieu Peninsula,

along tracks clinging to clifftops, rocky cliffs tumbling into the sea, long expanses of deserted beaches, pristine bush, up, down and around.



Newly established, very flash walkers only campsites were a bonus, especially when in bucketing rain we were able to put our tents up in the shelter! It continued very wet and cold, so much so that by 7pm the next day, we were soaked and freezing. It was 7degrees. John felt he was hypothermic and we all readily agreed to abandon tents and take our end of trip cabin earlier than planned, a good solution. And so the walk continued - every last step.



Overall, what a magnificent journey from Parachilna in the Flinders to Cape Jervis at the tip of the Fleurieu, and thankful for the companionship of those people who joined our group each leg of the way. And finally, hats off to John Holland for his detailed planning and giving us the opportunity to experience such an unforgettable journey.



Leonie Grimshaw

The Central West Cycle Trail

A 400km loop from Mudgee, Gulgong, Dunedoo, Mendooran, Ballimore, Dubbo, (Wongarbron, Geurie), Wellington, Gulgong.

Due to some of our group testing positive for Covid the April 22 ride was abandoned at the 200km point at Ballimore and the last leg was cycled in September 22.

Wonderfully organised by Gina Holloway, participants were Chris and Bruce. Tracy, Julia, Lauren, Leonie and John. For the 2nd leg, minus Julia and Lauren, add Jeff.

The moment I saw Gina's ride, I was inspired and challenged. My heart and mind said yes, my oldish and heavy mountain bike was dusted off and this not a bike rider began a training program - not without a mishap or two (yes, car doors are expensive!) during a continual rain event. Bike fitness was the goal.

Some highlights and thoughts

- The quiet and beauty of the countryside...and no it's not all flat!
- Real back in the day far flung pub accommodation.
- Group camaraderie, conversation and support.
- Staying on the bike, turning the cranks with the challenge of gravel, dirt, mud, sand, boggy bits, potholes, rain, cattle grids, flooded causeways and distance to dinner, bed and breakfast.
- Having a support vehicle, driving turns and cycling back to meet the group.

- Gina's delicious baked treats for morning tea.
- Gina waiting at a flooded creek so John could blast his Prado diagonally across...that is after walking across first.
- Meeting two groups along the way all praising the wonder of e-bikes now that's a thought.
- What a ride, with thanks to Gina (who trusted my determination) and thanks to John for all your training and to Lauren who made me raise my seat!



Leonie Grimshaw (perhaps now a bike rider!)

Kosciuszko Week Pygmy Possum Lodge - Charlottes Pass 29 Jan - 5 Feb 2023

Our club has been spending a week at Pygmy Possum Lodge, Charlottes Pass in the Kosciuszko NP every summer for more than thirty years. This year we had 35 members enjoy a fabulous week of alpine walks across many of the tracks in the southern part of the NP.

At times doubtful last year due to Covid-19, the week went ahead with the reduced restrictions and only minor inconveniences. It was great to have a number of members who hadn't been before join in with the regulars.



Mt Stillwell.

With an eye for the best weather, Becky led 13 of us on an overnight full pack walk to Wilkinson's Creek with a side trip to Mt Townsend and the return journey via Lake Cootapatamba.

Sandra led the evening walk to the summit of Mt Kosciuszko to watch the sunset, getting her group safely back by 10PM.



Henry shovelling snow.

The week's walks included:

Mt Stilwell

Mt Tate

Porcupine Rocks

Watsons Crags

Guthega & Illawong Hut

Horse Camp Hut & Whites River Hut

Thredbo Valley & Dead Horse Gap

Main Range walk

Mt Twynam

Blue Lake & Hedley Tarn

Sawpit Creek

There are some exciting new tracks under construction which will increase the possibility of walks from the lodge in the near future.

Thanks to the walk organisers and for everyone being such a social group.

Shaune Walsh

My very first trip to Charlotte Pass 5 February - 12 Feb 2023 (Week 2)

I had never managed to get a spot before at Pygmy Possum Lodge, but this year the club arranged a second week and I was in.

So, early on the Sunday morning I set off from 'the Shire' in my trusty old Corolla packed full of all the possible things I might need - but inevitably most of

which I didn't! Apart from an unplanned detour around Queanbeyan, the drive went well, and I arrived at Charlotte Pass.

The first thing I noticed as I got out of the car was how fresh and clean the air was. The second thing was the snow still on the ground in several places, including outside my bedroom window. I put a photo from this window on my Facebook page and totally confused all my English relatives who kept asking - but isn't it summer in Australia?

After stowing everything away in the right cupboard space or fridge and freezer spot, it was nearly time for happy hour. Dinner was easy as I had cooked and brought a whole lot of frozen meals, although it was a bit hard resisting other people's meals in the freezer that looked much more appetising than mine!

My first walk was from Guthega back to Charlotte Pass. Perfect weather, the most beautiful scenery and just a few steep bits. Who would have thought walking in the mountains involved a fair few ups and downs! The sound of running water was a constant as was the snow on the mountain tops. It was also great to see no rubbish at all along the track. There was a single file cable suspension bridge near the Illawong hut which we crossed (me with some trepidation!) only to find out that after we had had our morning tea we had to cross back over it!



The snow gums with their stripy trunks, which were cold to the touch, were always a special sight along the way.

Back at the lodge and relaxing with a happy hour drink, we were able to watch with amazement as other groups got back after walking 28+ kms across country. I felt tired, but full of admiration, just looking at them.

Day two was a lovely walk along the Thredbo river track, a ride in the chairlift up the mountain

accompanied by some famous mountain bike riders, and then a walk back via Dead Horse Gap. I must admit that there were times when my lack of fitness gave me a fair bit of empathy with those poor horses.

On the third day, we walked up to Porcupine Rocks and watched as the magnificent scenery around us changed in the blink of an eye as the mist and cloud swirled across and then disappeared. We then walked to Rainbow Lake for lunch followed by afternoon tea at Jindabyne.



Unfortunately, I had to leave for home on Thursday, but I had had a great introduction to the Kosciusko area. I also came home with two important but inexpensive souvenirs - a fly net (which proved invaluable on Day 2) and a whistle for my pack. I am currently practising playing 'wait for me to catch up' on my whistle!

I would like to thank everyone who organised this trip, the walk leaders, the people who volunteered to be drivers for the day, and all my fellow walkers who helped and encouraged me along the way.

Janice McLeod

Cycle Tempe to Hyde Park War Memorial 4 February

Early February, a group of SBW cyclists rode from Tempe to the Hyde Park War Memorial where we were treated to a free guided tour ending with a sombre remembrance service.

It is an impressive complex with a huge amount to offer, much of it is underground. It is like a scaled down version of the Canberra Memorial and well worth the visit.

Afterwards another route was taken back to Tempe. A great way to spend a morning.

Bill Lewis



A warm welcome to our new members

**Clifford Hobden
David Chitty
Davina Theodore
Janet Chaplin
Rhonda Daniels
Geoffrey Peach
Jan Campbell
Michael Katsin
Christine McColl
Carol Cartwright
Stephen Cartwright
Stuart Paterson
Patricia Hill**

We look forward to seeing you out on the track, on the water or on the road soon!



Snowy River with snow capped peaks

Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on Wednesday 15 February at the Stapleton Centre, Sutherland. 29 members attended and voted on the new committee.

The results are as follows:-

President	Ken Newman
Vice President	Shaune Walsh
Secretary	Vanessa Hicks
Treasurer	Tim Gardner
Assistant Secretary	Kay Manning
Membership Officer	Tracy Cleary
Newsletter Editor	Heather and John Hughes
Website Admin	Ken Newman
Program Secretary	Rebecca Rae and Team
E-mail Administrator	Margaret Dooley and Team
Equipment Officer	Heather and John Hughes
Supper co-ordinator	Beatrice Walsh and Team
Friends of RNP	Tony Larkin

The club sincerely thanks those members who have stepped down this year for their efforts and all the members who have joined the committee for the first time. Without these volunteers, our club would not survive.

Finally, many thanks to Phil Meade for his excellent effort as returning officer.



A snowbound Pygmy Possum from the first week



Yellow Brick road!



Mt Tate



On Townsend



Blue Lake from Mt Twynam walk



Restaurant ruins near Mt Stillwell



The end result - nearly 2 weeks later



Looking towards Victoria

