



NEWSLETTER

December 2021

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

There were no organised club activities for 107 days due to the Covid restrictions and it was great news when we were finally able to restart our outdoor activity program from the 11th of October.

During this year's long lockdown, it was nice to see and hear about many members meeting up with their club friends for the allowed outdoor exercise in their LGA in nature and on local tracks wherever they could find them.

There seemed to be plenty of time to show numerous photos of spring wildflowers, especially the waratahs.

With the high vaccination rate and the easing of restrictions our club Christmas BBQ Breakfast on Sat 4th December will be a great opportunity to catch up as a large group once again.

As this year ends and we look forward to a year without lockdowns it is time to once again think about taking on one of the Committee positions at the AGM in February. Some existing positions will become vacant and our club needs some new members to step forward with the skills and ideas to keep the club running successfully.

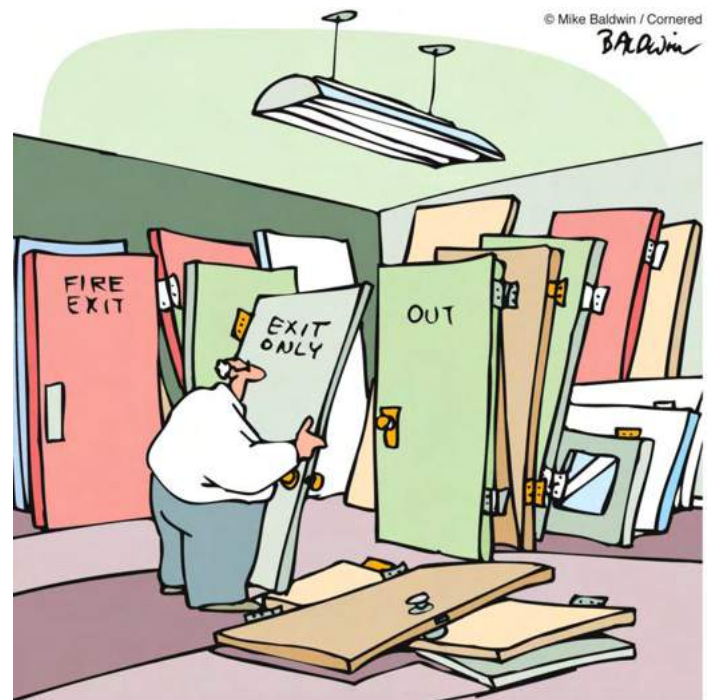
Membership renewals are being emailed to members and as the club is still in a good financial position, we have again set the low fee for existing members.

I look forward to enjoying the outdoors with many of you in 2022.

Shaune Walsh



Steps to Robertson's Knoll from the creek



Bob loved the outdoors. Wound up with quite a collection.

CartoonStock.com

Megalong Valley Hike

23rd - 24th October 2021

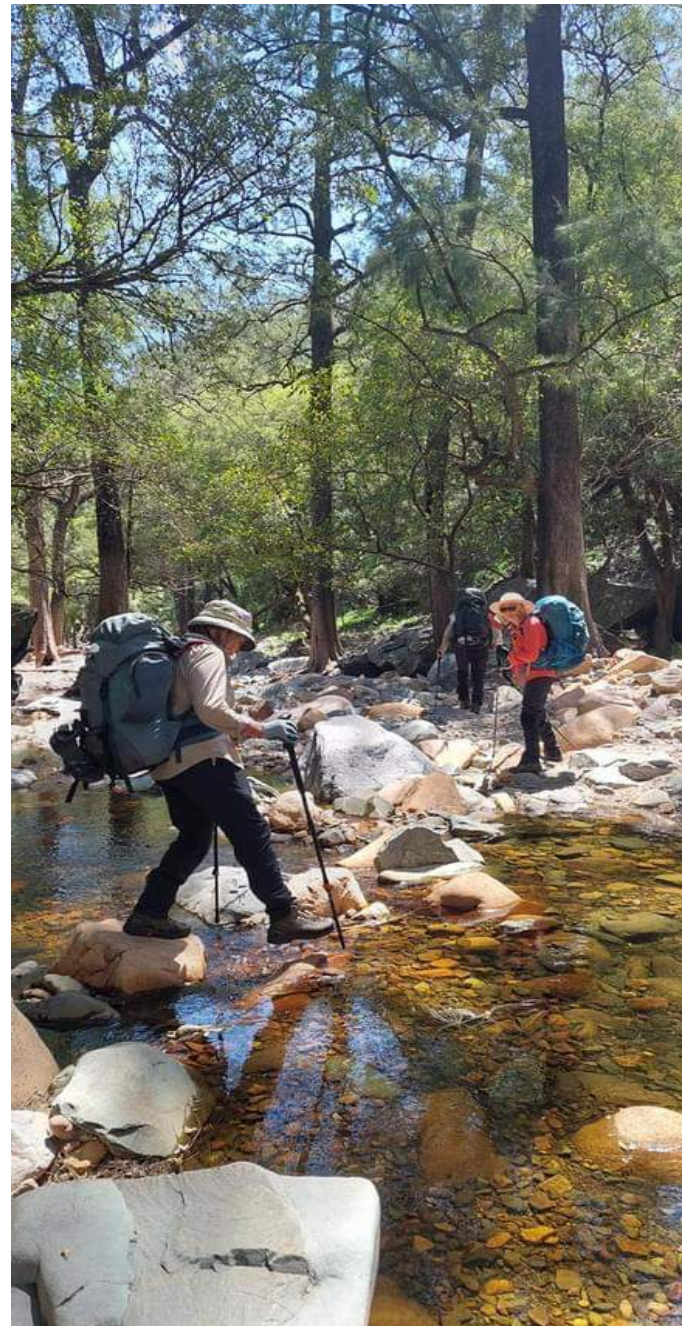
Thirteen enthusiastic and happy walkers met at 8am in Blackheath for an early start and to do the car shuffle.

Thirteen exhausted but still smiling walkers straggled back along the Six-Foot Track late Sunday afternoon. Well, I was straggling.

Alan Webb was unable to lead the walk due to injury, so we set off under Phill Escott's guidance. Leaving a few cars at the Megalong Pioneer Cemetery we drove a few kilometres more out to the Dunphy's picnic and camping area. The two campsites we passed along the way were full of weekend campers and Dunphys also had a lot of campers. Hopefully this situation will ease as restrictions lift. The views from Dunphy's to Mt Cloudmaker and The Wild Dog Mountains were fantastic.



We were on the track reasonably early for a long downhill to Carlons Creek which unfortunately has a lot of weeds in it, notably very unpleasant stinging nettles which needed to be avoided. After about 3km we came to the larger Breakfast Creek, which is usually flowing. The progress from here was slow with numerous creek crossings, little or no track and mainly walking on boulders and rocks in the riverbed. At a couple of points the track climbs high above the creek giving us relief from the rock



hopping, but not for long. The creek does a big loop near Frying Pan Flat where it's up and over the spur to come out on the large open flat area. This area would make a nice campsite. From here we stayed at creek level continuing the rock hopping and keeping our feet dry. A swim at morning tea and lunch cooled some of us down and luckily for us the predicted storms stayed away.

The water in Cox's River is polluted so we filled our bottles just before we reached the river and kept going expecting easier going along flat grassy banks. Not to be. Floods had scoured the bottom of sand, so the rock hopping continued with sand banks and fallen trees and some welcome grassy banks.

Our expected arrival time into camp had blown out and we were glad to see our destination nestled

below Scrubbers Hump and the Grand Bluffs around 5 pm.

It's always busy when you arrive at camp, setting up tents, organising dinner etc but it seemed the priority for all of us was to get the jobs done and get



into the water!! Nice sandy pool and cool water to ease our tired bodies. The clouds were gathering and darkness fell early. The rumbling started in earnest as the last quiz questions were answered and we hastened to shelter. A massive storm overhead lit up the tent with lightning flashes and the ground shook from the thunder as the rain pelted down. Exhausted, most slept well despite the noise.

We woke to a clear sky day, and that wonderful feeling the morning after a storm.

More rocks and obstacles to negotiate as well as 3 river crossings. No stepping stones here so it was wet feet or sandals, but a welcome cool off. Easier walking than yesterday with a few challenging sections.

We reached the intersection with the Six -Foot Track after lunch but had forgotten that from here it is about 6km uphill and the big National Park steps.

We saw 2 black snakes, a large python and several huge



goannas, a kangaroo, lots of little fish in Breakfast Creek and unfortunately lots of carp in the Cox.

The last few kilometres were hard as there was no shade and the expected cooler day was well into the mid 20's.

Thanks for the great company on the walk and for Phil's leadership, and Alan's planning.

Rebecca Rae



Urban Walk Thursday 14 October

Walkers; Marilyn, Henry, Jennifer, Robert, Beck, Alan, Kay, Annette, Judy.



This is an easy Grade 2 that I have previously put in the Program. Unfortunately, with club activities on hold for nearly 4 months, it was so good to meet up with a few familiar faces and get back to some regular walking.

Meeting at Gymea we walked towards the Highway and over the footbridge to Manooka Place and the main entrance to the gardens.



Sir Joseph Banks Native Plant Reserve is a 2.2 hectare area of remnant bushland established in 1969 as a tribute to Sir Joseph Banks the Botanist. The Council has upgraded the gardens, paths, seating areas and view points in recent years and it is also maintained by volunteers. There are nice views over Kareela Golf Course to the water and city.

We wandered down the various paths to the themed garden beds including Acacia garden, Fern garden, Cycad garden, Rainforest garden admiring the large collection of native species. And took advantage of the comfortable seating area for morning tea.

We exited the garden on to Bates Drive and headed back to Gymea through Kareela Oval. As Hazelhurst was still closed some of us drove to Camelia Gardens for lunch and a wander through a very contrasting garden. The predicted thunderstorms did not eventuate, so it turned out to be a great day.



Lexia Duncan

Weekend Surprises

My first job after school was a cadetship on the local newspaper. I mention this because some artistic licence may creep into the following narrative based on the first thing I learned, i.e. never let the truth get in the way of a good story.

So here we are, off to Newnes for a weekend of camping and walking, The weather is perfect and on our arrival, we set up the tents and spend the afternoon exploring the ruins of the shale works and the evening drinking a little, well a lot actually, and telling progressively outrageous stories.

The next day we set off to walk in the direction of Glen Davis, which involves a very steep climb up the valley. Our route was impeded by a number of large fallen trees which could only be crossed by sitting astride them and swinging your legs over. While most of us were admiring the views we heard a cry of alarm and saw one of our friends sitting astride a tree which had started to slowly slide towards the sheer drop. Many shades of human nature soon became evident as some raced to help our sliding friend while others took photos and the rest of us fell about laughing. Luckily the slide stopped before reaching the cliff edge.

We decided to head back to camp and on the way, Becky suggested walking on the other side of a shallow creek. Our tree riding friend volunteered to go first and promptly sunk up to her thighs in quicksand - more cries for help, more photos, more laughter. We contemplated leaving her there as it was getting close to happy hour but eventually we got her out.

Fast forward to 3am and suddenly Becky is shouting that there is something on the top of our tent, and there was! I suggested she go out to investigate but she made me go, where I discovered a feral cat with its head stuck in a can and carrying on like a cat with its head stuck in a can.

Eventually we cornered it under a picnic table and, with a brave soul leaping on it with a car mat, the can came off and he headed for the hills like a cat without a can on its head.

Phew, peace and quiet at last and the next day we headed for home, glad all the dramas were behind us. Until, just outside Lithgow, Beck said "Pete, I think we've got a puncture".....

Pete Guest



A Virgin Walk Leaders Experience...

After participating in a number of walks with the club over the last few years, I decided I should probably get off my rear end and put a walk or two on the program. I have been lucky enough to learn from great leaders like Tony L, Shaune W, Becky R, Tim G, Vanessa H, Lexia D and many others - but it still seemed like a lot of work ...

How wrong could I have been? As it turns out, very very wrong. So, what was the process?

Firstly, I picked a couple of local walks that I knew were well within my capabilities, then during the Covid Lockdown did a recce, taking along the Child Bride, to make sure that I knew where Morning Tea and Lunch would be. I also decided on the Grade of the walk, guidelines for this can be found on the program and the club's website.

Then came the hard part - picking dates! Yes, it can be a little daunting when you need to pick a date a few months ahead, but as a great philosopher said, "lock it in Eddy". Fortunately, we are such a friendly club that any postponements or delays are readily accepted, so while it is preferable to stick to your dates, it isn't really a problem to make a change.

After that, simply e-mail Becky at peteguest@bigpond.com with all the info and voila, the hardest part is done!

I found it a good idea to keep a list of participants when each request arrived and then a week prior to the walk e-mailed all the participants with details of start location and time. 10 minutes work the night before the walk filling in the trip sheet and printing it off and we were all good to go.

The day of the walk it is a good idea to do the traditional circle and outline the walk again so that everyone is on the same page.

So how did it go?

The first walk was a 14km wander along Forbes Creek down to the Woronora River, then back via Woronora Heights lookout. With the exception of a couple of large unruly dogs visiting while we were having morning tea, a good time was had by all.

Having led a couple more walks since that day, I have found leading walks to be a very fulfilling and enjoyable experience, and one I recommend to everyone.

Requests for activities for the Autumn program will come out in late January, which gives you plenty of time to do a recce or two! I am happy to chat with anyone who would like to hear more.

It might be time to do a Nike - and "Just Do It!!!"

Ken Newman



A warm welcome to our new members

Gareth Denyer

Joseph Oliveri

Karen Wyers

Gary Morris

Helen Morris

Glenn Lenton

Charlene Gordon

Carmel Nolan

Denise Nolan

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

Sutherland Bushwalkers On-Line

Website

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

Have you seen our Members Only Facebook Page?

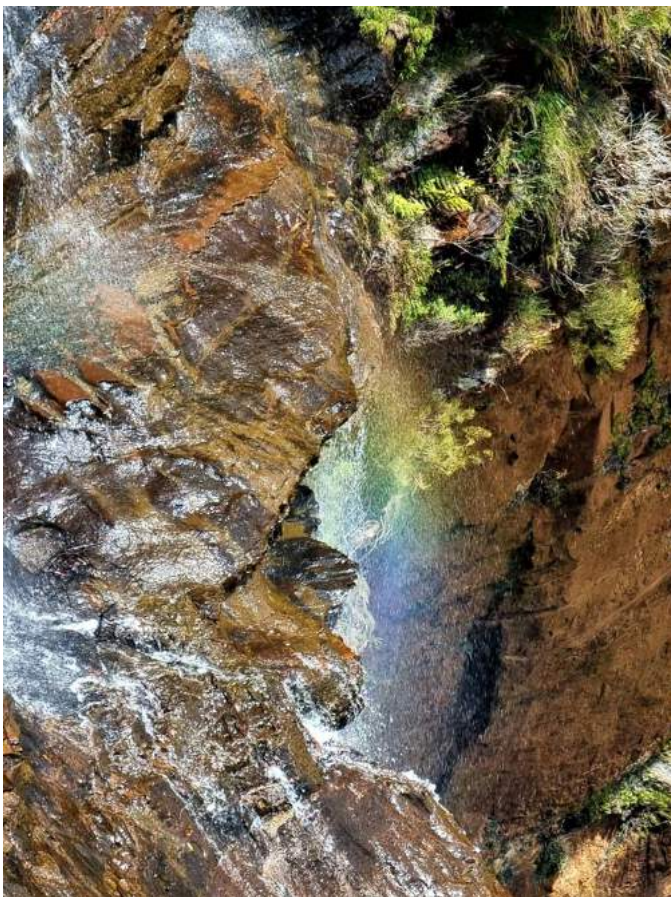
So far, nearly 130 members have joined the Facebook group, sharing walks, rides, kayaks and photos and generally keeping in touch. If you would like to join in on the fun then:-

- 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!



Treasurer Tim



A rainbow in a waterfall



One of many Heathcote East waratahs



Crossing the river on the Megalong Valley trip



John's Waterfall Wonder walk



First walk back after lockdown! A tad damp ...



Christine on the stepping stones on the Winnells Wander walk



Spot the walker!