



NEWSLETTER

June 2019

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The last quarter has been very busy with great numbers participating in walks, kayaking and cycling. Wednesday and Saturday walks frequently have 18-20 people on them. There have been trips away to the Heaphy Track NZ, Norfolk Island and the Three Capes walk in Tassie.

This year we hope to conduct activities under the heading of "Walk with a Purpose" (one has already been programmed). These walks could be shorter than normal but with a purpose, ie: history, wildflowers, whale watching, photography and geology. Other suggestions are always welcome.

Another day is programmed for Activity Organisers, following the success of last year's get together. This is a day when both experienced and newer leaders meet to learn and exchange ideas on a range of topics. Without our great volunteer leaders there would be no program.

Club meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month from 7pm to 9pm. We endeavour to have guest speakers from within the club as well as from outside. Topics are wide and varied but usually pertain to bush walking in some way. Over the five years I have been a member I have enjoyed every presentation, even when I thought it may not have been of interest to me. Thank you to the 20-30 people who attend club meetings regularly. With over three hundred members it would be nice to see a greater attendance to support these speakers. Besides the speakers, the meetings are a great opportunity to catch up with other members over a cup of tea and discuss their recent walks and experiences.

A big thank you goes to Lynn Smith for the fantastic job she has done over the past 7 years as

Membership Officer. Lynn always did the job quietly and efficiently and her services will be missed as she steps down from this important role. We welcome Wendy Raynor to the position and thank her for re-joining the team once again. Thanks also to Deb Coutinho for stepping up to offer assistance to Margaret Dooley in managing the information line.

The track maintenance program, under Tony Larkin, is on its fourth track, the Couranga Track. After two days work, our club volunteers have cleared and tidied about 2km so far, which is a great effort. The great news is that our club through Tony has received a grant from the Federal Government to purchase tools and equipment for the track work. So watch out for the gold plated secateurs and pruning saws!

Enjoy the third quarter program and keep an eye out for the "Walks with a Purpose"

By Allan Bunt



Coledale to Thirroul

Hi,
Just wanted to say how excited I am to join the club. After two great walks with Gina and Shaune and meeting other members that made me feel very welcome and supported. In this new adventure it was an easy decision to continue as a member.

These photos taken on Gina's walk, Coledale to Thirroul, where it was blue skies ahead leaving the rain behind us until the very end when we had to get the rain gear out.

By Kim Sharp

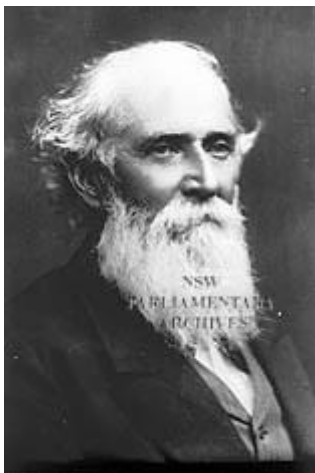


Minnamurra Headland

140th Anniversary of the Royal National Park

On April 26th 1879 land was dedicated “for the purpose of a National Park for public health recreation, convenience or enjoyment”.

Sir John Robertson was the President of The Legislative Council at the time of the proclamation, when New South Wales was still a colony. From the original 18,000 acres reserved from sale in 1879, the National Park has now grown to 151 square kilometres. It was renamed in 1955 to become known as the Royal National Park.



Sir John Robertson

Our club marked the occasion with a Wednesday walk from Engadine to Loftus with stops at Robertson’s Knoll (named after Sir John), and Audley for the purpose of hearing about some of the early history.

By Shaune Walsh

Kiama Coastal Walk

Saturday 2 February 2019

Organisers: Barry & Irene Mann

Participants: Jennifer Whaite, Robert Gallant, Hanna Yudhistira, Natasha Farley

Persistence pays off - after cancelling 2 previous Kiama walks (18/11/17 and 25/2/18) due to extremely wet weather (on the 25/2, 18 walkers turned up in Kiama before the walk had to be cancelled and all adjourned to various cafes), this walk finally went ahead. We had six walkers.

It rained overnight, and cleared up to be a sunny and hot day at the finish. We met at Shellharbour Junction Station for the 15km walk to Kiama Lighthouse and Blowhole. At the start most utilised the new high-tech toilet at Shellharbour Junction Station, complete with verbal instructions and music....very memorable.

The walk took us up the hill past the Shellharbour Anglican College, then down the hill to cross the railway and enter Dunmore Swamp. It was a lovely, cool walk to cross the Minnamurra River and then have morning tea. Then along the river and up and over Minnamurra Headland for great views to the north where the Minnamurra River joins the ocean.

We walked along the pathway past Jones Beach, then past Cathedral Rocks, the Boneyard and Sewage Plant (which smelt rather nice) to Bombo Beach where we had a brief lunch break. I always wondered why the boneyard was so called - in talking to a local, Irene found out that in early days, it was an extensive cattle farm, and the bones of deceased stock were disposed of by throwing them over the cliff.....ugh....

The walk along Bombo Beach was refreshing, then as the tide was out, we walked around the rocks and up to the lighthouse. A nice cool drink was much appreciated at the Visitor Centre, then a short walk to catch the 3:05pm train back to the city.

By Barry Mann



CLUB KAYAKING

About twice a month we paddle from various points around the Shire on Port Hacking, Georges River or Botany Bay.

The paddles are rather leisurely affairs lasting about three hours with a 20 minute break for morning tea. We often explore some interesting inlets and creeks inaccessible by walking tracks.

We are always looking for more paddlers to join us and sometimes leave from a boatshed where kayaks are available for hire.

We usually do not know from where we are leaving until a couple of days before each event depending on the weather report. If strong winds are forecast, we will leave from more sheltered spots in Port Hacking or Woronora River.

With safety of utmost importance PFDs (life jackets) are compulsory and a minimum of three kayaks are required on each trip. Unfortunately, because of their safety record sit-on kayaks are not permitted.

I hope our photos may enthuse some more paddlers to join our enjoyable morning trips on our beautiful waterways.

By Alan Webb



Reflections at Dunn's Swamp

Dunn's Swamp Car Camp 5 - 7 April 2019

Organiser: Allan Webb
12 Participants

Start with a WOW then ask why is Dunn's Swamp called a "swamp" when it is an oasis in the Wollemi National Park.

Near Rylstone, it is situated on the Cudgegong river. The lands of the Wiradjuri, Dharug, Wanaruah and Darkinjung people.

The waterway was created when the Kandos weir was built in the late 1920s. The banks are lined with the native plant the *bullrush* and the place is perfect for a fresh water swim.

Allan guided us one by one in a kayak with a paddle up the river to see amazing aboriginal art works and a hermit's house. Don't ask me where it was located so the secret is safe not to be found again.

Imagine a hermit house built under a rock ledge made of mud brick, with carved front steps up to a wooden door properly set in a door frame, then carpet, a bunk bed, glass window and a cello but without strings. Where else would you find this in the bush off the grid?

Pagoda Lookout walking track is a short but steep walk with incredible views over ancient pagoda rock formations and the Cudgegong River.



Pagoda Track, Dunn's Swamp

We enjoyed two nights camping in a national park watching millions of stars while sitting around a fire. When finally, off to bed, it was to be entertained by the Possum Orchestra playing a pots & pans concerto in minus key most of the starry night. The camp fee is cheap, the facilities good, the scenery spectacular, and the company great.



Long Cave, Dunns Swamp area

A big thank you to our activity organiser Allan for showing me this region and I hope to get back soon for more WOW experiences.

By Vanessa Hicks



Frank Baliotis
Sharyn Barrett
Lloyd Cuerel
Yvonne Cuerel
Robyne Gardem
James Goh
Mark Harper
Beth Haynes
Carol Knaap
Marita McInerney
Karen McLaren
Mary Monaghan
Russell Nicholson
Suzi Rowe
Julia Safonova
Martin Wagner
Margaret Ward

Adopt A Track

Burgh Track, Uloola Track, Lilyvale Track, Couranga Track - the list is growing! Since 2015, when Sutherland Bushwalkers started the project, we have cleared over 13 kilometres of overgrown walking tracks in Royal NP.

Our Club chooses the tracks in conjunction with NPWS. We look for tracks that need a bit of attention. If they have a link to history, perhaps some great vegetation or a point of interest all the better. Each track so far has been a pleasure to work on. It can be surprising what you learn when you move slowly along a track.

The track we are currently working on, Couranga Track, has a great variety of vegetation, as well as a section of forest road constructed in the 1930s. The track starts about 1 km from Waterfall, follows Couranga Ridge before descending steeply along a section of the old forest road. It then follows a small brook down to the Hacking River with its lush rainforest. The track is about 3.75km long, ending at McKell Avenue.

What do we do when we are working on a track? In the main we walk the track, stopping when the track is obstructed or ill defined. We use secateurs and hand saws to clear the track to make it more navigable for fellow walkers. Sometimes we need to clear heavier obstructions such as large fallen trees. This can add a dimension of interest to our day!

We will have our next track work day on Monday 3 June 2019. Why not come along and join in the project and see what it is all about.

By Toy Larkin



Couranga Track RNP



Kingston & Philip Is in the distance

Norfolk Island

Sun 24th March - Sun 31st March 2019

Organiser: Vanessa Hicks

17 Participants

For some of us this was the first time to Norfolk and for others a memorable return journey to this tiny speck of paradise in the Eastern Pacific. Norfolk lies 1422Kms directly east of Evans Head so enjoys that subtropical climate that doesn't change a lot throughout the year, making it a great place to visit any time of year.

We all arrived on the same flight and were taken to our conveniently located accommodation close to town. There was a line-up of colourful hire cars waiting for us, and once settled in, Vanessa set us free to do as we liked for the week.

Not how most club trips work but we all loved the freedom to roam at our own pace and visit the historic Kingston and Arthurs Vale Historic Area (KAVHA) at our own pace. It was interesting to catch up with everyone most nights for dinner and to see what had been explored and to talk over tomorrow's plans.

By the end of the week I think we had all done the same things all at different times. Most afternoons there was a group of us who usually ended up at the only safe and absolutely magnificent Emily Bay for a swim and snorkel over the enclosed reef. Just magic.

One now rather shaggy and old looking Norfolk Pine stood sentry at the water's edge, it has been there before Cooks time as it was drawn in some of the first sketches of the Island, and was an established tree then.

For the history buff and anyone even remotely interested in history, Norfolk has a lot to offer.

The first settlers were the East Polynesians but very little evidence of their time here remains. They were thought to have been here in the 13th and 14th centuries.

The Island remained hidden until Captain Cook landed in Oct 1774 on his second voyage of the Pacific on the Resolution.

It was only weeks after Captain Arthur Phillip had arrived in Sydney with the first fleet in 1788 that he despatched Phillip Gidley King, 15 convicts and 7 freemen to start a commercial settlement harvesting hemp for the British rope industry and Norfolk Pines for ships masts. Both these endeavours failed as the hemp and pines were not as good for purpose as expected. More soldiers and convicts arrived over the following years but by 1794 there was talk of closure as the settlement was too remote, and had no safe harbour and was too costly to maintain. By 1814 after destroying everything they had built, and killing all livestock to discourage anyone else settling, the Island was abandoned.

Like all Governments, things change, and by 1824 the remoteness of the island now looked perfect for a place to send the worst and reoffending convicts. The time was a cruel and savage existence for both soldiers and convicts alike and the cemetery and museums echo with many gruesome and also inspiring tales of survival for these cast outs and their guards.

By 1855 the last of the convicts were sent to Tasmania as transportation to Australia had ceased in 1853.



2nd Settlement Convict Ruins

The next chapter for Norfolk is the Pitcairn Islanders arriving in 1856. They had outgrown their even smaller Island and Queen Victoria “gave” them Norfolk as their new home. Luckily for us modern day tourists the buildings from the second settlement were not destroyed so there are quite a few beautiful colonial warehouses, homes, churches etc that are open for us to explore. The museum runs great free (with your museum ticket) tours and talks around the settlement which most of us did over the week.

Other things of interest on the Island includes the small Norfolk Island National Park covering the northern more forested section of the Island and two of its peaks, Mt Pitt with amazing 360 Degree views and the slightly higher Mt Bates at 319m. So not too many mountains to climb but a lot of hills!

The friendly locals rely on ships for all their supplies, and as there was a problem with unloading all the supplies from the last boat, supermarket shelves were bare. All fruit and veges are grown on the island as they can't be imported because of their bio security laws, so it's eat what is in season and the only green vegetable on the supermarket shelf was cucumber, so we all ate cucumber! We are so spoilt here and it makes you think how it used to be.

We all managed to walk most of the nature and coastal trails on the Island and even found ourselves birdwatching and looking for the elusive Norfolk Parrot, an endangered species we were lucky enough to see in the mountain forest.

There were a lot of Norfolk pines. I don't know what I expected but they are beautiful as a forest tree as we usually only see them lined up at a beach.

Thanks, Vanessa for letting us loose to learn and discover.

I know Vanessa will be back as she is chasing her relatives!

By Rebecca Rae



Lone Pine at Emily Bay



No boat ramps or harbour



Guided trip to Phillip Island



Spit to Manly



South West Arm RNP



Spit to Manly



Pierces Pass to Govetts, Blue Mtns NP



Woronora Kayak Trip



Ikara Head, Blue Mtns NP