



NEWSLETTER

September 2023

President's Ponderings

By the time you read this the Activity Organisers get-together will have been held, and a new Trip Report form and Visitor form launched. Our thanks go to John H for his hard work on simplifying the Trip Report and creating the new Risk Waiver for visitors' form. These get-togethers offer opportunities to share experiences, tips and generally catch up with friends and colleagues. Past get-togethers have been hugely successful, and I am sure this one was no different. Look for the new forms on our website soon.

It is very encouraging to see a full program for the September quarter, with a wide variety of activities, encompassing all levels of fitness and experience. Thanks again to the Activity Organisers.

It is worth remembering that all our Activity Organisers and committee are volunteers, meaning that they donate their time and resources for the betterment of the club and the enjoyment of club members. Recently there have been a few less than savoury responses to instances where members couldn't participate in a walk as the walk was full, or the organiser decided that the person was not experienced enough to do the walk. Since Covid days, walks are often booked very quickly so a few people have missed out. I ask for everyone's understanding when missing out, it happens to all of us!

Speaking of Covid, the club continues to follow the government's guidelines which now boil down to "please don't participate in an activity if feeling unwell". There have been some minor changes in our Guidelines for Activity Organisers and the

Guidelines for Participants. Please take a moment to re-acquaint yourself with these guidelines on our website.

For the cyclists among us, the good news is that e-bikes are now officially insured on club rides, with some minor caveats, the most important of which is "e-bikes must be ridden in a group together with conventional bikes and at the same speed as the conventional bikes."

Our membership officer, Tracy C, has unfortunately needed to step down from the role. The club thanks Tracy for her efforts over the last few years and wishes her all the best. We are very lucky that Sheree B has volunteered to step into the role. Thanks Sheree!

Hope to see you out and about.

*Ken
President*

May Guest Speaker

Deirdre Bowie - The Overland Track, Tasmania

Deirdre (SBC member) shared stories and photos from the 6-day club trip to walk the Overland Track in Tasmania, led by David Beck. Deirdre's beautiful photos showcased the spectacular scenery - majestic mountains, lakes & tarns, button grass plains, rainforests & waterfalls, historic huts and much more!



Deirdre with her 18.5 kg back pack



Iconic Barn Bluff

**June Guest Speaker
Chris D'Arcy - Search Dogs Sydney Inc**

Search Dogs Sydney Inc. are a specialist team of dedicated volunteers highly trained in canine handling, search strategies and lost person behaviour. They provide assistance to police and emergency agencies in the search for people missing in the bush, Alzheimer/Dementia patients who have wandered away, missing children, people trapped following natural or man-made disasters. Their search technicians and canine teams are on-call 24/7.



Emma & 'Jazz' at our June meeting

Team members Chris, Malcolm, Adele and Emma brought their specially trained canines 'Koa' (2 year old male Staffy-cross) and 'Jazz' (7 year old female Kelpie-cross) to the SBC meeting. The dogs were well behaved and welcomed by club members!

Chris explained the role of the organisation, the canine selection & training processes, and recounted some of the high profile cases they have been involved with. Did you know?... One trained search dog can cover the same amount of ground it would take about 30 humans to search!

Search Dogs Sydney Inc. relies entirely on donations, grants and fundraising for their training, equipment and operations. If you would like to become involved or make a donation, please see the SDS website: www.searchdogssydney.org



Adele & 'Koa' at our June meeting

**July Guest Speaker
Ken Newman - North Island, New Zealand**

Ken (SBC President) shared some pictures from his and Deb's many trips to the beautiful North Island of New Zealand.

The walks centred around:

- Great Barrier Island
- The Coromandel
- Lake Waikaremoana
- Tongariro and Mount Ruapehu
- White Island

Heather Hughes



Mount Ngauruhoe - Tongariro National Park



Emerald Lakes - Tongariro Alpine Crossing



Werewere-kokako or Blue Entoloma - native NZ fungus



Mount Ruapehu - Tongariro National Park

Newcastle Trip 1-3 May, 2023

Organisers: Ray & Lisa Madden, Margaret Dooley

On a beautiful blue sky Monday morning, 13 walkers set off by car from Sydney to Newcastle.

First stop was Gosford for a much needed toilet break and morning tea followed by our first walk - the Rumbalara Reserve just behind the Gosford CBD. After an uphill climb through stunning rainforest terrain, replete with leeches, we reached the summit which opened out to a panoramic view of Brisbane Waters. As we stared into the horizon that stretched as far as Palm Beach and Kuringai National Park, we were also treated to the local Probus club's 'hits of the 70s' guessing competition that blasted away whilst we ate our lunch.

Next stop was Newcastle beach youth hostel which was to be home for most of us for the next two days. The accommodation was extremely well located in the east end of Newcastle, close to Newcastle beach, the river front and parks.

Day 2 saw us completing a walk from Newcastle beach to Adamstown Heights via Merewether baths and the Newcastle Memorial Walk, which was opened in 2015 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the ANZAC landing in Gallipoli. It was a stunning day and Newcastle was showing us its best.



Burwood Beach

We had a relaxed morning tea stop at Merewether baths before moving to the uphill section of the walk on the Great North/Yuelarbah/Fernleigh tracks. This interconnected path took us past some remnants of Newcastle's history as a copper and coal mining area and through some beautiful littoral rainforest land in the Glenrock State Conservation Area. Lunch was had at Leichhardt's lookout which overlooked Glenrock Lagoon.



Relics from the coastal coal railway

After a short rest and clean up we all shared a most enjoyable dinner at the Great Northern Hotel in Newcastle's east end.



Glenrock Lagoon

The final day saw us set out for our last walk at Catherine Hill Bay - the Moonee Beach trail in the Munmorah State Conservation Area. It was a short coastal walk to stretch the legs on our way home and to bide time before our lunch at Caves Beach Hotel. Thank you for the recommendation, Lou!



Fernleigh rail tunnel

A good time was had by all with enthusiasm for a further Newcastle trip to explore the city further in the future.



The Newcastle Gang

Ray Madden

A Stroll in The Park. 14th June

Leader: Allan Bunt

"A Stroll in The Park," we thought. It turned out to be no stroll, as The Royal National Park dished up a good challenge to the eight of us. "Why are we starting so early at 8.30am" was asked, little did they or I know!

Starting from Audley and heading up the Winifred Falls Track, we were delighted to find some recent track maintenance made the uphill easier going. On the flat, there was some mud and ducking under scrub, nothing to worry about! Things changed once we turned left down Muddy Creek, (which was running clear), but unfortunately the undergrowth was very thick and scratchy. From a previous walk my co-leader Phil and I had done, and with the aid of a tracking map, we managed to criss-cross the creek in nearly all the right places.



Picking our way through the scrub

AM tea was had short of our planned spot, (are we running late?) which was a shame as we weren't far off target of the large flat rock clearing with beautiful crystal-clear pools below. From here we headed to "the hills" where it was very slow going, trying to pick the least dense route. Oh, weren't we happy to see Muddy Creek end where it joins the salty tidal water of the Hacking River! Lunching in a good spot, on solid rock in dappled sunlight, but we are only half way and its lunch time! No worries, it'll be easy going along the shoreline of the Hacking!

The tide was low so we started walking in the muddy mangroves, until cliffs forced us into "the hills" once again. We made several attempts to get back to river level, some were successful for short periods of flat sand, muddier mangroves or tall reeds. Within sight of Reids Flat track on the opposite bank and the sun setting, there was a glimmer of hope we were getting there! Haha, we hit new regrowth and fallen trees that we had to negotiate, but finally a winner, some bits of track! Near the end, Pool Flat was in sight, the track took us to the base of a cliff and a stretch of water to be crossed. Not one member of the group questioned our decision to wade through the calf deep water.



Mud bath?

The sun had truly gone and winter light was fading when we reached Audley at 5pm, 8.5 hours after our start. Lucky we did start at 8.30am! A walk to be remembered for years!



Almost back!

Allan Bunt

Hartz Peak Walk Southeast Tasmania

The walk to the summit of Hartz Peak (1254 m) begins at the small visitor centre at the end of Hartz Road (C632), about 26 km from Geeveston, in southeast Tasmania. In fine weather, it's a straightforward walk of about 7.5 km (return) with an ascent of about 400 m.

I managed to score a day of brilliant weather when I did the walk last November. For the first half of the walk to the summit, it's relatively flat walking mostly on wooden boardwalks across alpine moorland. There are two short diversions in this section, to the alpine tarns Lake Esperance and Ladies Tarn. These are both in a beautiful setting and well worth the short detour off the main track. Both lakes would be ideal for a cooling swim on the way back from the summit, but I decided the water was still a bit too cool in November.



Hartz Lake from the summit

After the two tarns, the track gets a lot steeper and the rocky climb up to Hartz Pass is a good test for the thigh muscles. Once at the pass, a short, flatter section leads to the final ascent to the summit over rocky scree. Care is needed here, as quite a lot of rock-hopping is involved - my walking poles came in handy, providing the extra pair of legs to make it safer. In wet conditions, this section could be quite treacherous.

The 360° views from the summit were spectacular, made more so by the great weather conditions. There are not only views over many of the other peaks and tarns in Hartz Mountains National Park, but in good conditions you can see across to Southwest National Park and even spot Federation Peak.



Mt Snowy and the view south from the summit

I soaked up the summit views for 20 minutes or so before beginning the trek back down. I found the descent down the rocky sections much harder on my dodgy knees and ankles than was the walk up, but I was back at the car after about 3½ hours, with a brief stop at Ladies Tarn for morning tea.

Like the rest of southern Tassie, the weather conditions in the Hartz Mountains can change quickly. Although I managed to do the walk in shorts and a T-shirt, I carried a warm jacket and wet weather gear just in case.



On the summit of Hartz Peak

I can highly recommend this scenic half-day walk if you're visiting southwest Tasmania. If you're in the area, Masaaki's Sushi in Geeveston has some of Australia's best sushi, and Cinnamon and Cherry is a great Turkish café in Franklin.

Geoff Stibbs

Kiama Coastal Walk 27 May 2022

Participants: Jennifer Whaite, Lesley Salzman, Warren Mizon, Lou Ryan, Irene & Barry Mann.

A repeat of last September's walk... a glorious cloudless day, sunshine with a slight cool breeze from the south. This walk has no shade, so it can be too hot in summer months. Irene (with a dodgy knee) met us at Werri Lagoon to enjoy the level bit at the end. Paul (with a very recent knee job) met us at the bowling club at the end!

We met at Loves Bay, at the end of Elanora Road Kiama where the walk starts. It then follows the cliff line to Werri Lagoon. The lagoon was checked earlier in the week to ensure a dry crossing could be made. The track had been "mowed"... a tractor/mower had run the entire length to make it a metre wide - thank you Kiama Council.

The track was mostly dry, but there were still some wet/muddy bits requiring care. We had morning tea on the move, with a brief stop at the 4 km mark. There must have been 50 - 60 walkers doing the reverse walk... very popular on this day. I saw a black snake, and Jennifer and Warren spotted some dolphins.



Snack time (morning tea?)

Down at Werri Lagoon we met up with Irene. The lagoon was fairly full, but a solid sand bar made it easy to cross. In the past, it has been flowing in a deep channel, necessitating shoes/socks off and a wade... sometimes up to the waist!



Approaching Werri Lagoon

After the lagoon, it is a 2 km walk along the pathway to the Gerringong Bowling Club. They have a great offer... have a lunch there after walking the track and they will provide transport back to the start of the walk! However, we did not have to avail ourselves of this service as we had 2 cars there to get back to the start.



Lunch time... Gerringong Bowling Club

At the end, again, there were various measurements of the walk... this time the consensus was 8.5 km, although there was one reading of 9.1 km.

Irene & Barry Mann

Carnarvon Gorge QLD 24 - 28th July, 2023

Organiser: Margaret and followers Muriel, Vilma, Hannah, Peter, Mark & Vanessa

So where are we going? 750 km NW from Brisbane. For how long? 3 days. Why we going? To walk our feet off up a long gorge that has good reviews and because it was also submitted as a trip suggestion by a club member. OK!

The trip was planned through Sunrover tours with a driver who doubled as the cook, as it was a catered tour. With an early start from Brisbane in the rain, we got to the campsite late and it was still raining! Thankfully we had our reserved Takka tents. A simple soup and toast supper filled us up before a comfortable night in our Takka's.

Eager to start next morning, we started to plan our day over a hot breakfast and realised that within our group there was a difference in walking abilities but this did not matter. Carnarvon Gorge has a main track through the gorge with side trips to various points of interest and with so many visitors, there is always someone about to talk to and be safe. The gorge is just full of cycad trees, cabbage palms and the tallest of ghost gum trees. Our group divided into two, on account of ability and preferred distance, and this worked well.

Day 1 - we all achieved the furthest point planned, *Cathedral Cave* (20 km return) and some went even further. We saw a platypus in a stream we were crossing and found some Nodding Greenhood orchids. There was a long overhang shelter with Aboriginal paintings 200 yrs or possibly thousands of years old. A long day but a jewel attraction.



Wards Canyon



One of many river crossings

Day 2 - our group divided again but we walked to the same places of interest in our own time. Muriel and I were the second group, walking at our own pace we still got there. This day was *Art Gallery, Wards Canyon, Amphitheatre* (15 km), the best part of the walk day. These attractions are a must and not to be missed. Art Gallery, with Aboriginal paintings, is similar to Cathedral Cave so the Art Gallery could be taken as the furthest walking point if limited for time. Everyone's top 1 & 2 amazing spots were voted as Wards Canyon & Amphitheatre. Do not miss these spots, they were the highlights of the trip. Back to camp for another good evening meal prepared by our driver and a hot shower, as my feet were sore. Up early again.

Day 3 - Muriel and I returned halfway back up the main track to visit the *Moss Garden*, as we ran out of time on the previous day. This was spectacular and worth the double back and on the return leg we added the *Nature Trail & Rock Pool*, past the Visitor Centre. The other group tackled Boolimba Bluff, 200 m up with lots of steps and ladders. My feet told me enough is enough, so we didn't go but we walked the Nature trail to Rock Pool. Here we saw a platypus, how lucky was that!

Back to Brisbane. A long drive but with better weather it seemed to be quicker. We must be getting older, as we had dinner at the hostel and we didn't go out raging on Friday night but an early night seemed a good idea.

Summing up, it was an adventure worth the time and effort. Our driver did a wonderful job catering with breakfast, lunch, snacks and evening meals. My feet are sore and when I stop, I know I have some aches. I thank Muriel for walking at my pace and so glad she achieved her suggested "wish to go to Carnarvon Gorge" and help in researching for the trip. Big thank you to Margaret who actually pulled it all together and to my companions who made the days away pleasurable.

To quote actor Sam Neil, Carnarvon Gorge was "MAJESTICAL"

Vanessa Hicks



Amphitheatre

Carnarvon Gorge 24 - 28th July, 2023



Trip members

It really is impossible to show Carnarvon Gorge just through photos. You know you can never capture what you are seeing. Places such as Cathedral Cave - wow - you have to actually be walking there to 'feel' the atmosphere. Our 2nd walking group also completed a few extra walks:

On the first day we walked (nearly 24 km return) to the end of the gorge - to the 'Big Bend' in Carnarvon Creek. Both Cathedral Cave and Boowinda Gorge were highlights. Boowinda Gorge is a narrow, twisting gorge with moss covered sandstone walls.



Proof we reached Big Bend!

The second day we did the Middle Gorge walks (The Art Gallery, Wards Canyon, The Amphitheatre, Moss Garden) - another 18 km return.



Boowinda Gorge

Our third day was about 17 km all up. First, we climbed Boolimba Bluff (hundreds of steps) to have an outstanding view of the mouth of Carnarvon Gorge.

We then followed the Nature Trail and track to the Rock Pool, being lucky enough to see a platypus on the way. After lunch we tackled Warrumbah Gorge. Here we enjoyed being 'off track' and the challenge of making our own way up the gorge until it narrowed to a slot canyon. To complete all the walks at Carnarvon Gorge we then backtracked and walked up Mickeys Creek Gorge as well.



Moss Garden - Carnarvon Gorge

We calculated that in 3 days we completed well over 50 river crossings! The outstanding vegetation was cycads, fan palms, river she-oaks, and blue gums.

I thoroughly recommend a visit if you haven't already been there.



The mouth of Carnarvon Gorge as seen from the top of Boolimba Bluff (the gorge is behind us)



Warrumbah Gorge



In places the Carnarvon sandstone is very white

Margaret Dooley



A warm welcome to our new members:

- John Bowen
- Dorothea Oehme
- Janelle Malone
- Lindy Maroney
- Narciso Cerpa
- Paula Argall
- David Gormley
- Michael Davies
- Kim Housein

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

Q2 Club Activity Stats (Apr, May, Jun)

Sutherland Bushwalking Club had 354 registered members at the end of July and we participated in 49 club activities during Q2 2023.

Activity Type	Number of Activities
Day Walks	37
Multi-day Walks	0
Multi-day Trips	1
Cycles	4
Paddles	5
Track Work	2
TOTAL	49

(Data from Activity Organiser's Trip Reports)





Orkney Islands Scotland trip in July (Leader: Michele Howie)



Early Waratahs
Curra Moors walk in August
(Leaders: Marilyn & Henry Fooks)



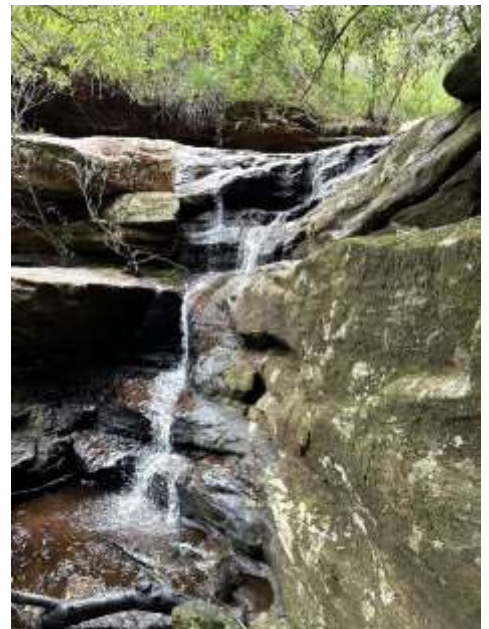
The Spit to Manly walk in August
(Leader: Kerrie McLean)



Circular Quay to Mosman walk in June (Leader: Lexia Duncan)



Overland Track Tasmania walk in March
(Leader: David Beck)



Falls on Palona Brook in July
(Leader: Shaune Walsh)

A selection of photos from posts on the Sutherland Bushwalkers Facebook group.