



## NEWSLETTER

December 2023

### President's Ponderings

The 2024 Q1 program is brimming with great activities and I am really looking forward to many of them, especially the club's annual Pygmy Possum Lodge trips to Charlotte Pass in February. More than 60 members are booked over the two weeks! It is also pleasing to see a number of morning walks on the program. These Thursday walks are being led by Heather, Vicky and Annette. Thank you ladies for this great initiative.

The club's website is full of useful information, and I encourage all members to occasionally visit it to see new photos and refresh themselves on our guidelines. The guidelines for participants, and for organisers hold a plethora of information, as does the Activity Program. I especially like this from the program: *Thank the Activity Organiser & bring a sense of humour & adventure. The Activity Organisers are all volunteers, so please remember to be patient and kind.*

We have also linked the new Activity Trip Report and the Visitor Risk Waiver forms, which were successfully demonstrated at the activity organisers get together.

December brings around our annual free Christmas barbecue. This year it will be held on Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December at the Wattle Forest Picnic area in the RNP. February is the AGM, and the club is always looking for members to join the committee and help in keeping our club running smoothly. See the program for more details.

On another note, I found myself embarrassed a little while ago, when I neglected to bring some cash along to help out with carpooling costs. Easy

enough to do in our cashless society. Carpooling is a great way to lower our carbon footprint, and information is available on the Activity Program on the way to share costs. Just remember to bring some folding stuff!

This newsletter and the 2024 Q1 program are the very last that will be printed and posted. Over the last few years costs have spiralled and the number of members who elect to receive the program and newsletter by post has diminished substantially, making it no longer feasible for the club to provide this service. If this impacts you adversely, please email [secretary@sutherlandbushwalkers.org.au](mailto:secretary@sutherlandbushwalkers.org.au).

From the committee, I wish everyone a safe and joyous Christmas, and a wonderful New Year.

See you at the barbecue.

*Ken  
President*

### Congratulations to Leonie Bell

Sutherland Bushwalking Club member Leonie Bell has won the Bushwalking NSW Chardon Award for 2023.

This award was introduced in 2017 and is named after Harold Chardon, the first Secretary of Bushwalking NSW in 1932. The award recognises bushwalkers who have made a significant contribution to the bushwalking movement - both in their own club and through involvement in Bushwalking NSW.

Leonie was nominated for the Chardon Award for her long-standing volunteer role in writing content for the Bushwalking NSW website since 2014. Leonie has added and updated information as needed, as well as researching and creating new pages as required for almost 10 years.

The website has three aims: First to provide communication with member clubs, second to promote bushwalking and club membership to people considering engaging in the sport, and third as the state's peak bushwalking organisation, to be the go-to place for accurate and current information about bushwalking.

Leonie first became interested in bushwalking in 1991 when she joined Sydney Christian Bushwalkers, where she is currently club President. She has led bushwalks for various clubs in

Australia as well as in the UK. Leonie is also a long-term member of Sutherland Bushwalking Club, where she has served on the committee in the positions of Newsletter Editor, Vice President, and President, and is currently part of the Program Team.

Leonie loves researching and writing local history. She authored Sutherland Bushwalkers 50th Anniversary history and an e-book, 'Lost in the NSW Bush'.

Leonie has generously donated her time to support the bushwalking movement in many ways and is certainly a worthy recipient of the Chardon Award! Congratulations from all of us in Sutherland Bushwalking Club.

*Heather Hughes*



Leonie proudly displays her Chardon Award

### **August Guest Speaker**

#### **Mathew Mo - Dept of Planning & Environment**

Matthew gave an incredibly interesting talk about the Conservation and Management of the Flying-Fox. The talk was so interesting that most of us came away with a new respect for these amazing little creatures.



Mathew Mo - presenter

I for one, didn't appreciate the vital role these little nomadic animals play in our ecosystem. Flying-foxes are the largest flying mammal in Australia. They're critical in ensuring the survival of our Eucalypt forests and the overall health of our ecosystem. They're keystone pollinators of the Australian bush, pollinating flowers of over 50 native trees. The pollen sticks to their fur while they're feeding on the nectar of flowers, and then as they fly off, they're able to pollinate many trees over long distances. Each flying-fox can spread up to 60,000 seeds across a 50 kilometre stretch of land in one night.

During the day, flying-foxes gather in roosts or camps, such as the ones at Karella and the Miranda Camellia Gardens. Some camps are occupied permanently, some seasonally and others when unpredictable flowering leads to the sudden arrival of thousands of flying-foxes. They're constantly on the move from one flying-fox camp to the next, up and down the eastern seaboard.



Grey-headed flying fox roosting

Flying-foxes face a number of threats. The most significant threat is the loss of foraging and roost habitat. This plays a role in times of food shortage, during which large numbers of flying-foxes may die from starvation. Flying-fox deaths also occur from a range of human-induced threats such as entanglements in barbed-wire and large-aperture fruit netting, electrocutions on powerlines and extreme heat events.

Matthew was keen to dispel the myth that they're dirty, disease carrying animals. Firstly, flying-foxes are exceptionally clean animals and they invert or hang right side up in order to avoid soiling themselves.

Like all wild animals, flying-foxes may carry diseases, but the risk of spreading those diseases to humans is extremely low. In fact, they pose no major health risks unless you are scratched or bitten by one. Even then, the Australian Bat Lyssavirus is only present in about 1% of the entire population, and it is not spread through droppings or urine. However, although Australian Bat Lyssavirus is extremely rare (there have only ever been three reported cases in Australia) it is a deadly disease, so never touch a flying-fox unless you're trained and vaccinated against Australian Bat Lyssavirus. Provided basic hygiene measures are taken, and you never touch a flying-fox, there is no reason for the public to be concerned.

Hendra virus cases in humans are also very rare, and there is no evidence humans can contract the virus directly from flying-foxes. Hendra virus is, however, a very serious and life-threatening disease, and it can be transferred from horses to humans through exposure to the body fluids of infected animals. The most effective way to protect humans from Hendra virus is to vaccinate horses against the disease.



Grey-headed flying fox (*Pteropus poliocephalus*)

Matthew also spoke about the Department of Planning and Environment's camp management program, which aims to help conserve the habitat of the threatened Grey-headed flying-fox while at the same time balancing the need to help communities co-exist with the creatures. Matthew said that relocating bat camps is only used as a last resort as it is largely ineffective, with the bats returning to the camp over and over again. For example, in order to protect their rare trees, the Sydney Botanical Gardens has an on-going weekly program to move bats on, but they return (or more likely, new ones arrive) within days.

For more info visit:

<https://littleaussiebat.com.au/>

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/wildlife-management/management-flying-foxes>

*Annette Mathews*

### September Guest Speaker

#### **Margaret Dooley - Carnarvon Gorge, Queensland**

Margaret (SBC member) shared stories and photos from the 5-day club trip she organised to Carnarvon Gorge in July. The seven participants camped at Takarrakka Camping Reserve and did a series of day walks from there. The trip was supported by Sunrovers Tours.

Margaret's presentation highlighted the spectacular scenery of the area. Photos and two articles were previously published in the Q3 September Newsletter.



## October Guest Speaker

### John Zagame - Yacht Ocean Racing

John shared his wealth of knowledge and experience in yacht ocean racing with club members, providing us with a fascinating insight. He covered key aspects of performance, safety at sea, weather navigation and crew management.

John's yacht 'Kite Runner' recently achieved an impressive podium finish in the 2023 Pittwater to Coffs Harbour Yacht Race, with SBC club member Greg Spencer a key member of the crew - he is in charge of the mainsail. John explained the importance of specific crew roles and teamwork during both training and racing conditions. He also demonstrated the wealth of live data available through specialised software that can assist in decision-making during a race. The excitement, camaraderie and high level of skills required for yacht racing were obvious as John's presentation highlighted various stages of the 2023 Pittwater to Coffs Harbour Yacht race.

We could see many parallels with the skills required for undertaking more challenging bushwalking expeditions. These include organisation and planning, risk analysis and safety aspects, map-reading and navigation skills, the impact of weather and importance of appropriate equipment.



Kite Runner - 2023 Pittwater to Coffs Harbour Yacht Race

*Heather Hughes*

### Morning Walks are Proving Very Popular

The club is lucky to have a growing number of leaders who enjoy hosting short morning walks in a variety of locations, distances, and grades. Morning walks are proving so popular that most have waiting lists. In the last few months morning walks have explored Cronulla, the Woronora River, Lucas Heights, the northern side of the Georges River, the Royal National Park, the city, and more.



Morning walk around the Gundamaian Fire Trail

Kite Runner	
Type:	Hanse 430e (11000)
Skipper:	John Zagame
Position at:	02/04/23 01:39 AEDT
Position:	30° 18.23 S, 153° 8.85 E
Speed/Direction:	0.1 kn @ 35 degrees
Finished in 1d 11h 43m 49s	
2nd	in PHS Overall
2nd	in PHS 2
19th	in Line Honours Monohulls

I've enjoyed using morning walks as an opportunity to become a walk leader. It seemed less daunting leading a short walk in the RNP near my house rather than an all-day walk in an area of the park that I didn't know as well. I've now led three morning walks in my favourite parts of the RNP. Leading walks is so much more rewarding than I anticipated. My first walk was literally in the bush behind my house. So, if you're thinking about



becoming a walk leader, I encourage you to think about hosting a morning walk in an urban or bush location you're familiar with. Once you've led one, you'll quickly think of more locations that you'll want to share with club members.



Heather, Vicky and Annette doing a morning walk recce

Vicky Turner and I have joined forces with Heather Hughes to make Thursday morning walks a regular event. We've got lots of walks planned for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2024 including some easy urban walks and some short but solid grade 3 walks. We look forward to seeing you on one of our walks.



Morning tea time - Royal National Park



Morning walk to Karloo Pool

*Annette Mathews*

### **The Red Track Bungonia**

Bungonia National Park is about 30 km East of Goulburn. Once you've walked the Red Track, you'll always remember it! Even though this track is only about 4 km long, we allow 6 hours to do it.

After registering our names (plus age and sex!), where we were going, and start and finish times at the Bungonia National Park office, we had a short flat walk on the Green Track to loosen us up. Now it really started! The Red Track takes you down approx 380 metres on a steep slippery shale covered track, which was not liked by some of the group. On reaching the creek floor, the magnificent Slot Canyon is there towering over our adventurous group of seven.





Bungonia Gorge

Further into the canyon one comes upon the main attraction of this walk, huge pale grey boulders, which are very smooth. These we have to navigate our way though, sometimes over them, sometimes under them, sometimes squeezing between them. Oh, and sliding down some! As there is no obvious path, teamwork comes into play, one person looks for a possible route on the left side of canyon, another to the right and third one down the middle. Between the three of us, passages are found, and we cautiously get everyone through the "fun" part of the walk.



Negotiating rather large boulders

Onto "normal" sized rocks and a bit further down the creek we take a well-earned lunch break. While quietly resting and taking in nourishments (lunch, energy bars and hydrolytes) we had a visitor, a red belly black snake came quite close before he was spotted, and I might add startling us. After looking at us briefly he slowly took himself off into rocks a little higher.



Tim works his way through the boulders

The climb out! Oh yes, the climb out! It's very steep, especially to start with. This older less fit leader feels it within the first ten minutes. The ridge up doesn't have much shade and the sun to the west streaming down adds extra unwanted warmth to our bodies!

After lots of mini breaks for me and a couple of longer ones for us all it's a relief to get over the steep part and join up with another part of the flattish Green Track, taking us back to the start. No doubt there were some stiff legs, as well as arms and shoulders the next day, but all worth it when one walker commented on the walk saying - "I don't think I stopped smiling all the way through those big boulders".

*Allan Bunt*



## Adopt a Track Program

Our club members have again been active volunteers over the last few months, helping clear tracks in the Royal National Park, under the guidance of Tony Larkin. Our club has now cleared several walking tracks including Burgh, Engadine, Lilyvale, Uloola, Couranga and Anice Falls Tracks.

In August, SBC members worked on the Anice Falls track near Maianbar. As usual, the Anice Falls track was very wet. Our main aim was to 'try' to drain some of the water off and tidy up of the vegetation on the sides of the track. Armed with hoes, mattocks, secateurs, loppers, grass shears and folding saws, eight of us set to work on the track. To cover more ground, we split into two groups.



Trimming the scrub over the track

Except in periods of drought, drainage on this track is a constant problem. We did our best to clear the drains we created last time we were on the track as well as digging new ones. Needless to say, we all had very muddy boots and, by the end of it, we didn't bother trying to step around the mud and puddles. Finding a dry spot for morning tea was a bit of a challenge.



Too hard to avoid the mud!

After several hours of toiling in the muddy conditions, the team enjoyed lunch together at one of Tony Larkin's favourite spots, Flat Rock Crossing on South West Arm Creek.

September saw the team move down to the Burgh and Lilyvale tracks to do a light tidy up of work completed last year. Using mainly secateurs, loppers and bush saws we were able to quickly tidy up the tracks while enjoying a pleasant stroll and chat with friends in a lovely part of the park.

The track maintenance in October was postponed till early November as the tracks were closed due to the total fire ban on that day. These track closures are likely to become more common as we head into a period of hot dry weather. When Total Fire Bans are declared, all walking tracks in the Royal and Heathcote National Parks are automatically closed due to safety concerns. The focus for this track maintenance day was the Uloola track, heading out from Audley. The tools of choice were the secateurs and loppers to clear the new growth and fallen branches covering the track since the maintenance day.



Hmmm!

Please look out for track maintenance days in the upcoming program for 2024. It is certainly a worthwhile program to be involved in and no previous experience is required. Our thanks to Tony for his on-going organisation in the Adopt-a-Track program.

*Annette Mathews, John Hughes*

### **Kayaking with SBC**

Returning home from a recent trip overseas - "the wettest July on record" they said - I was keen to catch up with my SBC kayaking buddies. Within days of getting home, I found them on a sparkling Sydney August morning, paddling from Wally's Wharf at Dolans Bay to Cabbage Tree Basin and return. No heavy, damp clouds here, only an expanse of blue sky and the turquoise green of the water in the Port Hacking estuary.

In the traverse across to Bonnie Vale in a kayak, you can sense the buoyancy of the water and look into the depths below as you ride over the incoming swell. The entrance to the basin is tricky with small breaking waves but some in our party of five whooped as they surfed into the shallow entrance channel. Navigating under the footbridge where the fish sit in schools to feed in the current draining the basin, we worked our way up into Cabbage Tree Creek, congratulating Alan W on his pick of the very high tide.

Up in National Park, the sounds of small waterfalls and bird calls mingle with the regular creaking and sloshing of our paddling. Morning tea is a chance to catch up on what I've missed while I was away - a seal spotted on the last trip - and share travelling tales. The return trip to Dolans Bay delivers a group of swans amongst other water birds and a pair of honking pelicans.



A seal waves good-bye!

The first Spring paddle of the year was from Swallow Rock Reserve, Gray's Point. A perfectly still morning greeted us as we departed the sandy beach and headed downstream. Deb C was the leader of our all-female quartet, which included a new face in our paddling ranks. (Great to have you on board, Heather H!)



Paddling on a windless and calm Port Hacking

The tide was too low for a short cut today, so we paddled in the channel and explored the fringes of Gymea Bay and Yowie Bay. We marvelled at the construction of houses perched high above the bay and wondered what it would be like to negotiate steep inclimators and steps up from the water's edge. We wove our way around pontoons, moorings and vessels of varying sizes. In stark contrast, on the other side of the estuary we found Dark Bay, a small wedge-shaped inlet cutting into National Park. It was a shady, secluded spot for morning tea with a small strip of sand on which to beach our kayaks.



Morning Tea in Dark Bay



Deb led us up a steep hill through the bush to find a rocky overhang that formed a cave - a campsite for those who don't want to be found.



Rock overhang cave

On the way back, we paddled slowly and effortlessly in the windless conditions around the bushy edges, Deb looking for Kingfishers and other birds seen on previous trips. Rounding the corner to Swallow Rock we were stopped by the yells from a fisherman on the riverbank. He was excitedly displaying his catch - "the biggest flathead I've ever seen" he announced. We dived out of our kayaks to take the fisherman's photo with the fish he struggled to lift and left him trying to remove the hook and return it to the water. "A breeder", he said. In perfect conditions with friends, this was an easy, enjoyable paddle and hard to believe we had covered the 12 km registered by the GPS.

Many, many thanks go to Alan W (and Deb C in Alan's absence) for organizing our fortnightly kayaking adventures.

*Robin Gordon*

*Photos courtesy of D. Bowie and D. Coutinho*

## An Orkney Adventure

A group of eight of us hardy souls ventured to Orkney, Scotland in July to explore. Our hope was to make the most of the Orkney summer (top temperatures predicted to be 15C and breezy) to see as much of the Egypt of the north as possible. We were met by our guide Richard from Argyll Walking Holidays in Inverness with a van. From there, we drove north to Gills Bay (not far from John O'Groats the northernmost point on the mainland) to catch a ferry to Kirkwall, the capital of Orkney on the main island.

We settled into the Orkney Hotel (dating back to 1671) and had time to explore Kirkwall before dinner and our first orientation by Richard (who was a very knowledgeable, friendly and well organised guide). Kirkwall is a charming port town with the medieval St Magnus Cathedral, a ruined Earl's Palace and Bishop's Palace, many 17th and 18th century buildings and lots of shops with beautiful Scottish handicrafts and cute pubs. There were lots to see and even a nice coffee to be had!



Earl's Palace, Kirkwall



The next day we visited Skara Brae, a 5,500-year-old Neolithic settlement, uncovered by a storm in the 19th century. It's in amazing condition and it is possible to see very clearly how these people would have lived in this place so long ago. We then walked along the very spectacular coast (many cliffs and sea birds) to the Brough of Birsay to see the remains of an old Norse settlement. Along the way we had lunch in an abandoned fisherman's hut during a rain squall and were treated to the sight of seals, skuas and puffins.



Stones of Stenness

Day three saw us head to the island of South Ronaldsay across the Churchill Barriers. We walked along the dramatic South Ronaldsay Coast to Newark Bay. We passed the Tomb of the Eagles which sadly closed in Covid and then along the cliffs and saw Eider Ducks, Fulmar chicks as well as gulls and skewers. We ended the day with a visit to the Italian Chapel built by prisoners of war during WW2.

On day four we explored Neolithic Orkney, visiting an active archaeological dig - the Ness of Brodgar, the Ring of Brodgar and Stones of Stenness (both older than Stonehenge) as well as doing a tour of Maeshowe. Maeshowe is a 5000 year old Neolithic chambered cairn built from enormous sandstone

blocks and graffitied with runes by Vikings trapped there during a snowstorm in 1153. We also managed to squeeze in a walk up to the Tomb of the Dogs.

We caught a ferry to Westray for the Noup Head Loop walk past a large bird colony and a lighthouse on day five. At times the weather lived up to its reputation being cold, windy and rainy. We despaired of being able to see any more puffins than the few we had seen. However, it cleared up and we were able to do a short walk in the afternoon along the cliffs to the Castle o'Burrian where we saw oodles of puffins. We were able to sit quietly and see them near their nests, socialising, some chicks and lots in flight - all very close. They are very cute birds and their antics was one of the highlights of the trip.



Puffins

Day six was a walk from Skara Brae to Stromness past Yesnby Castle and the Broch of Borwick along the coast. We saw rare flowers, lots of birds and some ruins from WWII. Stromness is the other town on the island and afforded us a chance to do a bit of exploring along its historic main street and around the port. Also, a lovely drink in a local!

We headed to the island of Hoy for day 7 to walk up to see the famous Old Man of Hoy sea stack. Before we set off we were able to investigate an old



schoolhouse and farm that have been preserved and are open to the public. As an ex-teacher I cannot imagine the conditions. Students were required to bring a certain amount of peat to school each day to heat the classroom which looked incredibly cold, dark and bare of resources. The walk was beautiful with lots of heather in full bloom turning the hills purple.



Sea stack

On day eight we walked to Ophir and up to Ward Hill, the highest point on Orkney mainland. After lunch, where as usual, we engaged in much trading of our packed lunch accompaniments (plain crisps were much more highly sought after than salt and vinegar) we visited the Orkneyinga Saga Centre. There we learned about the history of the area as told by the Norse through their sagas. The sagas are full of battles, betrayal and brotherhood.

Day nine was the warmest and sunniest of the trip. We went to the isle of Rousay and up Trumland along Blotchnie Fiod amongst the heather and the island's highest point. Later we walked to Midhowe Broch and saw another huge chambered cairn from above. It was such a lovely sunny day some of the bravest amongst us (Jeanette, Lou, Ray and I) took the opportunity to swim in a little cove with a friendly seal.



Ring of Brodger

In addition to all of this Sheree, Gina, Jennifer, Trevor, Jeanette, Lou, Ray and I managed to do a whiskey distillery tour and tasting at the Scapa Distillery, visit the museum, tour the Earl's and Bishop's palaces, have many convivial meals, and generally enjoy ourselves. Some of us swam in the North Sea and some even tried neeps and haggis. The main issue, toward the end, was that we were so busy with all the walks that there was very little time for browsing the shops of Kirkwall for presents.

*Michele Howie*

### **Kiama Coastal Walk Sunday 27 August 2023**

Participants were Jennifer Medcalf, Lesley Salzman, Warren Mizon, Paul Trudgeon, Leonie Bell, Sue Celkys, Jill Stanton, Wendy Rainer, Jim Orr, Lexia Duncan, led by Irene & Barry Mann.

This walk was threatened by earlier forecasts of up to 8mm rain! As the week progressed, the forecast reduced, until the day before, it was forecast to be a sunny day ... thank goodness.

We met at Minnamurra Station, 12 walkers, the most we have had visiting Kiama for some time. Some partook of coffee at Minnamurra before we really started. But the first break was to visit the toilets at Charles Park Minnamurra ... it was, after all, a long train trip from Sutherland.

Then it was up to the Minnamurra Headland, with fantastic views over the Minnamurra River as it

enters the ocean. There was a lot of activity here as the local surf club was having a "training day". We paused halfway up the Headland for a morning tea stop and to admire the view and the activity.



At the headland overlooking Minnamurra River

Next it was over the headland and around the track to Kiama Downs ... no whales to be seen, and another pause for a toilet stop at Jones Beach. I must add that Kiama Council have upgraded nearly all their toilets in the Council area ... nice white/grey tiles, new wash basins, bright interiors ... second to none.

After this, a solid uphill walk, then an up/down section to reach the Boneyard, a small rocky beach facing north, sheltered from the southerlies, and popular with sunbathers and families. After this, a narrow winding track took us up the hill to Bombo Headland. There we met up with Irene who had taken a short cut. Great views over the quarry. Some stairs have been constructed down into the quarry ... however, bureaucracy has prevailed, and despite having been completed some 2 months ago, they have still not been "officially" opened ... alas. So, we walked around the sewage farm to the north end of Bombo beach for a lunch stop.



Stack Island off the Minnamurra River mouth

Next it was a slog along Bombo beach with the tide coming in ... then around the rocks to Kiama (the tide was still low ... this avoided a slog up and over the hill to Kiama). After a walk around Kiama's "new" foreshore we met at the Blowhole. Irene and Sue had gone ahead and found us a table at Diggies at the Blowhole ... a welcome coffee and relax. Some opted to go downtown for an ice cream ... but the 3:05 train was the ultimate end.

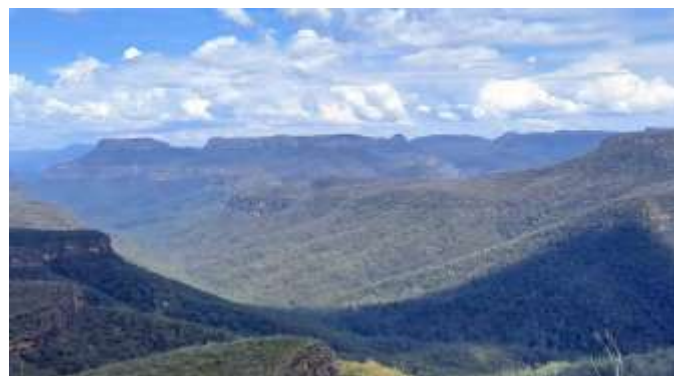
At the end, most agreed with their wrist bands/watches we had walked 10km+, in approx. 4 hours. A great walk on a fine and sunny day. (As an aside, one of our walkers was charged \$7.22 for a small coffee at Diggies and was most indignant. We questioned this and found out the charge was really \$4.50 ... something wrong somewhere ... we told the restaurant to keep the extra as a tip!)

*Irene & Barry Mann*

### South Coast Day Walks Morton and Conjola National Parks 8-10 November

Leaders: Heather and John Hughes  
Participants: Lisa, Ray, Vilma, Phil, Margaret, Vicky, Craig, Caron, Trevor, Donna, Paul, Lesley, Helena.

Day 1 (13km): 15 people met at 9am at the turnoff from Princes Hwy to Sussex Inlet. Bundling into 5 AWDs we drove partly on unsealed roads to Mt Bushwalker carpark in Morton National Park then set off along a mixture of boardwalks and bush tracks. Mt Bushwalker lookout was our morning tea stop with magnificent views to The Castle and the Budawang Ranges.



View to the Budawangs from Mt Bushwalker

Further along we could see Pigeon House Mountain, which we would climb the next day. We



visited Ngaityung Falls with a very steep cliff face drop and then onto a cave for lunch. Sitting on rocks above the cave as we ate, the temperature dropped, we could see dark clouds, rain looming and we could hear thunder. We had a hasty pack-up of lunch as the storm hit (earlier than the forecast late afternoon!). Lightning, thunder and heavy rain increased as we quickened our pace for 5-6km back to the cars. We were all drenched. Back to the cabins/tents for showers and dry clothes and a fabulous BBQ dinner hosted by Heather and John, finishing with Lisa's delicious sticky-date pudding.



Ngaityung Falls

Day 2: (8km) started with a drive again in the AWD's on some unsealed roads. Our goal, to climb Pigeon House Mountain (Didthul - Aboriginal name). The first section was up the new switchback section of track, plateauing out to a flat section and a magnificent view from a rock platform - we could see the top of Pigeon House Mountain. Back on the track it was steps, stairs and ladders, some of them almost vertical! Challenging for anyone with a fear of heights. Vilma's chocolate slice fueled us at morning tea. Finally, we reached the summit (720m) - a magnificent, clear 360 degree view from the new viewing platform. We could see to the Budawangs and beyond, and also the ocean. A definite highlight of the trip! Descending we heard some large claps of thunder and then the onset of

another storm like the previous day. We made it back to the car park only a little wet this time, before the main storm hit and enjoyed a late lunch under the picnic shelter. Plans to stop at Granite Falls and George Boy lookout were abandoned on the drive home as the storm intensified. Dinner at local Thai.



View to Pigeon House Mountain

Day 3: (12km) The last day was a relatively flat loop walk from Berrara village through Conjola National Park. We followed Berrara creek, past Berrara waterfall, finishing with a walk along the beach and a swim for some. Lunch on the beach - no thunderstorms! A lovely, clear, sunny day and a perfect finish to 3 days on the South Coast. Thank you to Heather and John for all their organization and navigation.



Climbing the ladders on Pigeon House Mtn

*Vicky Turner*

**Mystery Walk  
5 Sept 2023**

Participants: Jill, Jenny, Halina, Nancy, Vanessa and two visitors Debbie & Pat

The walk turned out to be Waverley Cemetery to Bondi Beach along the coast path, with seven ladies enjoying the day. My “mystery” walks mean I was asked for a program submission 5 months ago but I was not sure where to go until closer to date. So, my theory is to see how the weather is doing, where I now feel like going and who will blindly follow my lead! The other criteria include, grade 2 +/-, distance about 5 km +/- and something of interest. This day we split up in Waverley Cemetery to find some notable people, look at the various headstones and comment on and read some history related to some cemetery residents. There is a huge memorial to the Irish Easter Uprising of 1916, Henry Lawson and his son killed at Gallipoli, Dorothea Mackellar and Malcolm Young (ACDC) and many, many more with stories. After some time there we walked along the coast track, winding around Bronte Beach, Tamarama and Bondi Beach before catching the bus back to Bondi Junction and then home. Not a long day but a day out in the sun which I think we all enjoyed. Thank you, ladies, for coming along to somewhere new for me.

*Vanessa Hicks*



No-fly zone?



A warm welcome to our new members:

<b>Diana</b>	<b>EMAN</b>
<b>Jenny</b>	<b>BECK</b>
<b>Niki</b>	<b>KOUKOULARIS</b>
<b>Patty</b>	<b>BIANCO</b>
<b>Penny</b>	<b>BRETT</b>
<b>Yanti</b>	<b>NORTON</b>
<b>Nita</b>	<b>KAMBOURIS</b>
<b>Ian</b>	<b>POULTER</b>
<b>Michael</b>	<b>MCGRILLEN</b>
<b>Natalie</b>	<b>BENTLEY</b>
<b>Gregory</b>	<b>MELROSE</b>
<b>Pamela</b>	<b>MELROSE</b>
<b>Gordon Yuen Tai</b>	<b>LIU</b>
<b>Shaun</b>	<b>LENNON</b>
<b>Jennifer</b>	<b>BLACKWELL</b>

We look forward to seeing you out on the tracks, on the water or at monthly meetings soon!

**Q3 Club Activity Stats  
(Jul, Aug, Sep)**

Sutherland Bushwalking Club had 369 registered members at the end of October and we participated in 54 club activities during Q3 2023.

Activity Type	Number of Activities
Day Walk	40
Paddle	5
Multi-day Walk	1
Bike Ride	0
Multi-day Trip	5
Track Work	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>

(Data from Activity Organiser’s Trip Reports)



## 2023 Activity Organiser's Lunch

SBC Activity Organisers were invited to attend a 'thank you' lunch & discussion at Sutherland Community Centre on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> August. There was a recap of standard procedures for leaders and an opportunity to share experiences of leading club activities. Participants discussed ways to attract and support new activity organisers. New versions of the Trip Report & Visitors Form were also demonstrated. The lunch was both helpful and an opportunity for activity organisers to socialise.

*Heather Hughes*



A group of Activity Organisers at the 'thank you' lunch.



Flinders Island



Just because!



Climbing out of the Woronora valley



After the storm - Mt Bushwalker

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





Mt Strzelecki - Flinders Island



Mt Meharry, highest in WA - Karijini National Park



Coffee at Audley



Jobs for the boys (and girls)? Track maintenance



Great views south on the Coast Track



Thursday Morning Walk - Blakehurst

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