

# The Bushwalker

The official publication of the  
Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW  
Volume 30 Issue 2 : Summer 2004/5



<b>Photo Competition - NEW</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Constance Gorge and Zobel Gully</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Beyond a Sandstone Curtain</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>BWRS Publicity</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>First Aid Training - 2005</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>BWRS - Map Sale - 1:25,000</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>New club in New England</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Book Reviews</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Risk Management Strategy</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Juizhaigou - China's Fairyland</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Draft Child Protection Policy</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Map Reviews</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>But will I be safe?</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Gear For Private Sale</b>	<b>14</b>

# The Bushwalker Photo Competition



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4

## New to The Bushwalker is a Photo Competition with real prizes.

The rules are simple:

- There will be four photos taken somewhere in NSW in places where bushwalkers go.
- You have to identify the place **and** roughly where the photographer was standing.
- First satisfactory answer to [editor@bushwalking.org.au](mailto:editor@bushwalking.org.au) for each photo wins a prize.
- Only one prize per person will be awarded in each Issue of The Bushwalker.

### The prizes?

Three companies well-known to us all have donated cash vouchers redeemable in their stores. The **Paddy Pallin** group has donated two \$50 vouchers, **Mountain Equipment** has donated one \$100 voucher and their allied store **Trek & Travel** has donated one \$100 voucher.

How close do you have to be with the identification? Well, just saying that photo 3 is of 'Grose Valley', or even 'Blue Gum Forest' would not be enough. However, something like 'Photo 3 shows Blue Gum Forest from the start of the descent down DuFours Buttress' would qualify. (It obviously isn't Blue Forest of course.) In short, you need to provide enough information that someone else could navigate to

that spot and take a close approximation to the photo. Of course, if you want to give a map name and grid reference, that would be fine too.

Any **financial** member of an affiliated Bushwalking Club can enter. So you must also include the name of the Club to which you belong as well. We may check with you Club membership secretary, so make sure you are financial!

The Editor's decision is final. After all, he took the photos. This does mean that some areas of NSW may not appear in the competition for a while. My apologies to Clubs in those areas.

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## SUBSCRIBE TO THE BUSHWALKER

Keep up with all the news and developments happening in the NSW bushwalking scene for only \$7 per year. This is to cover posting and handling: the magazine itself is free.

Send your name and address and cheque or money order to Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW, PO Box 2090, GPO Sydney 2001. Make the cheque or money order payable to the Confederation as well.

Also please indicate if you are a member of a bushwalking club, and if not whether you would like a copy of the list of our clubs. You do have to be a member of one of our clubs to enter the Photo Competition.

## The Bushwalker

Welcome to the new version of the magazine of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW. We have a new editor, new magazine preparation software (with the expected horrible learning curve), and a new style. And, you will quickly notice, we are introducing colour. Please forgive any errors and inconsistencies which may occur in the first few editions while the editor is learning.

The Bushwalker will continue to be published quarterly. The aim will continue to be to provide information to member Clubs and Club members. This will include Confederation activities, Club activities, and member activities. Relevant advertising will be accepted.

Clubs and members are encouraged to submit articles. There is a strong preference for articles with good pictures. We will also accept articles from outside bodies where the articles seem relevant to members. Articles may be edited for length to help fit into our page limit. Contributions should be sent to [editor@bushwalking.org.au](mailto:editor@bushwalking.org.au)

Please note that opinions expressed by authors do not always represent the official opinions of the Confederation or any of the Clubs.

## The Confederation

The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc represents approximately 65 Clubs with a total membership of about 10,000 bushwalkers. Formed in 1932, the Confederation provides a united voice on behalf of all bushwalkers on conservation, access and other issues. It runs training courses for members, provides a free wilderness search and rescue organisation, and helps runs bush navigation competitions.

People interested in joining a bushwalking club may write to the Confederation Administration (below) for a list of Clubs, or to go to the Confederation website at [www.bushwalking.org.au](http://www.bushwalking.org.au) for a list of Member Clubs.

## Correspondence, advertising, etc

Correspondence may be sent to the editor (email above) or to the Confederation Administration Officer at [admin@bushwalking.org.au](mailto:admin@bushwalking.org.au) or to PO Box 2090, GPO, Sydney 2001. All advertising is handled by the Administration Officer.

Deadlines for the magazine will be re-established by the next issue: quarterly publication is standard.

## Confederation Officers

Margaret Covi, [president@bushwalking.org.au](mailto:president@bushwalking.org.au)

Other officers may be found on the Confederation web site at [www.bushwalking.org.au](http://www.bushwalking.org.au)



## Beyond a Sandstone Curtain

### Our Forgotten Woodlands and Wetlands

The NPA is organising a major fundraising and awareness concert to put attention on the state's wheat sheep belt/central division, an area that has seen major environmental decline and is strongly underrepresented in the state's nature conservation reserve system. It has been very hard to raise awareness and gain support on the coast for the protection of these areas. They write as follows:



National Parks Association of NSW invites you to join us on a musical and visual journey through Western NSW.

A Musical Performance by TOPS Symphony Orchestra.  
Stunning nature photography projections by Allan Fox.  
Presentations by renowned Australians including Peter Sculthorpe.

### The Program

The Planets: Mars Venus and Jupiter - Gustav Holst  
Earth - Graham Howard - World Premiere!  
Kakadu - Peter Sculthorpe  
Spirit of the Pilliga - Graham Howard - World Premiere!  
Conductors Mal Hewitt & Graham Howard

The forgotten western woodlands and wetlands of NSW have inspired major classical pieces by award-winning composer Graham Howard. NPA is grateful to Graham Howard, Peter Sculthorpe, TOPS and Mal Hewitt for helping to communicate through extraordinary music, the beauty of Australia's Western Woodlands and Wetlands and the urgent need to protect NSW's threatened places.

Celebrate with us and be part of a stunning music event featuring full symphony orchestra, large projections of Australian nature photography whilst supporting NPA's vital conservation work.

Sunday 13 March 2005 2.00- 4.30 pm

Sydney Town Hall

Tickets \$25, Concession \$20

Ph 02 9299 0000

web [www.npansw.org.au](http://www.npansw.org.au)

Email [woodlands@npansw.org.au](mailto:woodlands@npansw.org.au)

Booking are essential.

## First Aid Training - 2005

### A Box Of Band-aids And A Couple Of Aspros

If this describes your comprehensive First Aid Kit then you haven't done an accredited First Aid course as offered by Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) at a special discount rate for bushwalkers. All conscientious trip leaders should have at least a Senior St John First Aid Certificate (or better). First Aid training is worth having in all sorts of situations - not just for bushwalks but also situations like car accidents. I always drive carefully to a bushwalk as car accidents must be considered as one of the most likely forms of bushwalking incident.

### Senior St John First Aid Certificate Course

BWRS is running a course on 28th / 29th May, 2005. The training will be from 8am to 5pm both days (with the exam on Sunday afternoon). Training with fellow bushwalkers must be the friendly way to learn First Aid! However, bookings are essential. Payment of the discounted full course fee of \$100 will confirm your place. Bookings are on a first come - first served basis so don't wait until the last moment to book into this course.

### Bookings

Please go to [www.bwrs.org.au](http://www.bwrs.org.au) and follow the link to First Aid Registration and the "Frequently Asked Questions" page where all your enquiries should be answered. First Aid course bookings will close on Friday 20th May.

Another course will be available on the last weekend in October (29th / 30th). Club Program Secretaries please pencil in the last weekend of May and October each year for a weekend Senior St John Ambulance First Aid course.

Other courses - The St John "Remote Area First Aid" course is a more detailed course that takes either 3 or 4 days, often over two weekends. These courses are run several times per year but not on fixed dates. All bookings for these Remote Area First Aid courses must be done through the Sydney Office of St John Ambulance in Surrey Hills. See [www.stjohnnsw.com.au](http://www.stjohnnsw.com.au) for full details of available courses.

### First Aid Kits

Bushwalkers who complete a St John Ambulance First Aid course can buy to St John Ambulance First Aid Kits at a discounted price. However, you may not need everything that is in a St John Ambulance First Aid kit, or you may find that you are already carrying some of the items (eg whistle or notebook). Thus you will need to choose what items to leave out or share the weight with other members of your bushwalking group.

Keith Maxwell, President, BWRS

## A new club is born in the New England

Two organisations led to the birth of Armidale Bushwalking Club. The first is Inverell Bushwalking Club, a great group of people who gave many of us some very happy memories, and the confidence to form our own club. The other is the New England Ecotourism Society. In a wish to provide outdoor activities for its members, NEES has sponsored the formation of our club. Like a good parent, NEES is supporting us in our first difficult steps, but is encouraging ABC to become an independent organisation with its own aims and activities. I would like to acknowledge both of our "parent" organisations, and hope we maintain close relations with them as we grow up.



One of our first walks was to Cathedral Rock National Park; this park hosts some of the most spectacular scenery in NSW, with granite tors like giants marbles thrown into a heap. The rock scramble up the first climb is finished off with an easy chain climb to the summit of Cathedral Rock, where there is a 360 degree view of the surrounding mountains and a great view of the highest point in the New England area; Round Mountain 1586 metres.

Then on to Woolpack rocks another 7km along the track between Barakee camping area and Native Dog camping area a distance of 13km. There is plenty of fresh drinkable along the track, with many creeks and springs, as there is on most walks around the New England area. This park, which has few visitors except those that live in the area is one of the best walking areas. New England boasts many national Parks including Cathedral rock NP; New England World heritage area; Oxley Wild Rivers NP; Cunnawarra NP; Guy Fawkes NP.

David Lawrence

## An Opportunity to have a Piece of History

The Bushwalker magazine has been published since 1937. If you would like a copy of every magazine/newsletter/annual published since that date, on 2 CD ROM's as PDF images, send \$35 inc P&H to:

The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW, PO Box 2090, GPO Sydney 2001

Read stories by legends of bushwalking: Dot English (Butler)

as well as many sketches by Dot, Dorothy Lawry, Marie Byles, Myles and Milo Dunphy, Horace Salmon, Gordon Smith, Else Mitchell, Beryl Thompson, Paddy Pallin, Ted Sloane & many more. There are also many of the modern authors of bushwalking stories and historical articles.

This piece of history that has taken many 100's of hours to prepare can be yours. Buy one for your club's library. Price for Bushwalking Clubs \$30 .

# Confederation Policy Developments

The following policy documents have been developed by the Confederation and are commended to all member Clubs. The full text of the documents may be obtained from the Confederation Administration by email to [admin@bushwalking.org.au](mailto:admin@bushwalking.org.au).

## Risk Management Strategy for The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to formulate a recommended list of risk management practices and to establish a code of best practice for bushwalking clubs who are members of The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs Inc. This need has arisen from legal advice obtained by the Confederation which highlights deficiencies in the area of risk management for the Confederation and its member clubs.

Risk management is a term with different meanings for different people so it is important that the term be defined and understood. In the simplest of terms risk management when applied to bushwalking and other related activities is how we exercise our duty of care to fellow members and others around us in order to minimise the risk of personal injury and loss or damage to property. Risk management also requires that systems and procedures are in place to ensure that we keep our risk management practices up to date based on the experiences of our member clubs. It is an ongoing process.

The intention of this document is to

- Establish a risk management framework which can be adopted by the Confederation and its member clubs.

- Formulate standard documents.
- Formulate standard procedures to be followed by member clubs.
- Formulate standard reporting procedures to be followed by member clubs.
- Complement the Confederation's Bushwalkers' Code (revised February 2004) which covers ethical considerations.

The legal advice obtained by the Confederation makes certain recommendations which member clubs and the Confederation should attempt to adhere to in order to minimise the risk of law suits and to provide a standard for all clubs to follow.

In the absence of a consistent set of guidelines to prove what generally accepted practice in bushwalking clubs is, there is a risk that an external standard would be used as the benchmark for acceptable practice by external parties such as land managers or the courts.

The risk management processes set out in this document are the minimum that prudent bushwalking clubs should adopt. To minimise the risk of law suits and for the good governance of your club and the protection of your club members who participate in your activities it is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that the risk management processes in this document be implemented as soon as possible.

## Draft Child Protection Policy for The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Policy Statement

The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc is committed to ensuring that the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children are maintained at all times during their participation in activities run by The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc and its member clubs. The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc aims to promote a safe environment for all children and to assist all staff, volunteers, leaders, and members to recognise child abuse and neglect and follow the appropriate notification procedures when reporting alleged abuse.

Margaret Covi and Denise Kruse have been appointed Confederation's Child Protection Officers. These Officers are responsible for reporting any allegations of child abuse that occur in **The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc** to the local branch of the Department of Community Services (DoCS) and the NSW Police Service. Member clubs are to set up their own Child Protection Policy and appoint Child Protection Officer(s) who will in turn advise Confederation of any allegations and confirm those allegations have been referred to the local branch of the Department of Community Services (DoCS) and the NSW Police Service.



### Ideal for groups, overnight travellers and families.

#### Attractions and Facilities Include –

- The only pair of breeding Masked Owls in captivity
- A Wildlife Sanctuary for endangered mammals
- Spot lighting to observe native animals at night
- Over 8kms of graded onsite bushwalks
- Licenced restaurant and conference facilities
- Full range of accommodation styles available.

Located at Point Lookout, off the Waterfall Way, via Armidale, NSW.  
Situated amongst World Heritage-Listed New England National Park and Cathedral Rocks National Park.  
Yaraandoo Phone: 02 6775 9219 Fax: 02 6775 9216  
Email: [enquiries@yaraandoo.com.au](mailto:enquiries@yaraandoo.com.au)

[www.yaraandoo.com.au](http://www.yaraandoo.com.au)

## But will I be safe?

Steve Povey

Originally published in the SMH Heckler column and reproduced here with permission from Steve Povey for your entertainment - Ed.

In a couple of weeks I am heading off to Nepal to trek up to Mt. Everest and wonder how to achieve this without leaving the safety of New South Wales.

They tell me the rest of the world isn't safe! How can it be? It doesn't have OH&S legislation. It doesn't have Workcover and how many Nepalese Sherpas will provide a certificate of competency in Manual Handling. I imagine they will just pick up my kit bag and carry it! Just like that – maybe without even weighing it first – imagine that! Got to be worth a \$1000 fine for non-compliance.

The itinerary of the trek talks about river crossings – maybe even snow and ice – but no mention of approved handrails, much less accredited training programmes to be accomplished before putting my first step on the bridge. Surely they don't expect me to just walk across from one side to the other. How will I know that I will be safe? I've been brought up in NSW and I'm told I have to be safe at all times. Its illegal, not to be safe.



If I manage to get as far as Everest, will the advanced Sherpa party have erected scaffolding around it so that I can't fall off it? Or maybe they will have fixed Work Cover approved anchorage points on all four faces, so that I can attach my safety harness – that's the harness I keep in my garage at home so that when I am mowing my back lawn, which has a transverse slope of more than 4.5 deg, I can anchor myself to the nearest approved safety point.

I wonder if undercover Workcover inspectors are there right now, installing security cameras over dodgy looking crevasses to monitor the non-compliance of escaped NSW travellers. I guess there will be signs erected every 20 metres or so, warning me that the water in the rivers is not safe to drink since an incontinent Yak passed by, or that if I jump off the bridge into a raging chasm, I might hurt myself. I don't think they have too much electricity up above the snow line, which is probably just as well. I'll bet none of the Sherpas double up as qualified electric cable testers and taggers.

Perhaps there will be trekkers from other States, maybe even from other countries who have not yet been admitted to the

Duty of Care fraternity. The Americans will know all about it – we bought the package from their lawyers. But what about the really developed nations who still allow their citizens to make informed choices in their lives?

Hard for the bureaucrats to believe, but some of us just do not want to be suffocated with safety. Hard to admit that after all the years of brainwashing, but let me say it again. "There are times in my life when I do not want to feel safe". I do not want to endanger others, but I reserve the right to take the occasional risk for myself. The adrenaline rush of having a bandaid applied to my non-compliant body as a result of this defiance is quite overwhelming.

I thought of asking if they could solve my problem by bring Everest to me - here in NSW. It would be such a safe option- and we do like safe options don't we?



### VISIT THE CLOUD DWELLERS OF THE HIMALAYA With Lyn Taylor's Adventure Travel



#### AN ADVENTURE INTO REMOTE VALLEYS OF NEPAL AND TIBET: BHAIRAB KUND

Duration: 23 Day      On Trek: 11 Day Hike  
Departure Date: Ex Syd Oct/Nov 2005  
Grade: Moderate/strenuous  
Group Size: Small Personalised Group  
Cost: Ex Kathmandu: \$3500

This Tibetan journey is staggering for its scenery and wilderness as these trails are not frequently visited by Westerners. Some companies drive or fly straight onto the Tibetan Plateau, but by trekking in it gives plenty of time to acclimatize before we move on up to Everest Base Camp North. This vast plateau, endless mountains and beautiful turquoise lakes will take your breath away. The journey is punctuated by visits to major towns and monasteries and two highlights - Everest Base Camp North and Lhasa. We take a last look at Tibet before flying to Kathmandu. This is an experience to behold! A mystical destination that will remain in your mind forever.

Contact : [lyntaylor51@aol.com.au](mailto:lyntaylor51@aol.com.au) or 0418917342 (02)9997 7442

Lyn Taylor is a 12 year veteran of trekking in Nepal and Tibet. Lyn is the Australian representative of the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG) and is involved with a number of other organizations in Nepal in a voluntary capacity.

## Constance Gorge and Zobel Gully

### The Bush Club

Trip Leader Mike Napper

Author Mike Keats

### Short Notice Walks Program

This Bush Club program is extra to the published program and is all conducted by email. Some 120 members receive the service. The impact of the initiative has been to increase the number and variety of walks available to the members.

### The Party

Mike Napper (leader), Michael Keats, Bruce Farmer, Dave Dash, Bob Taffel, Trish Molinari and Suzanne Aubrun

### The Trip

At 08:30 we assembled at Clarence to drive the long dirt road north to commence the walk. The road was mud from previous rain and pock-marked with vicious potholes that threatened suspensions. By 09:20 the cars were parked at the gate (423180) on the Old Coach Road, leader Mike had delivered his briefing, we were hydrated and on our way.

An unmarked fire trail was our way of route for about 3 kilometres. This took us through open woodland rich in spring flowers, particularly *Boronia* and *Pultenea* sp. At its northern extremity the fire trail becomes a track and after five minutes further walking it divides, with the Tiger Snake Canyon track heading due east (435202).

At 10:10 and 200 m in there is a fine pagoda with commanding views of the Deanes Creek gorge and canyon. It is magnificent country: one can sit and just gaze in awe. This we did whilst having morning tea. A spiritually lifting 20 minutes was permitted (it would be easy to sit there for hours).

By 10:45 the scrambling descent (443207) into Tiger Snake Canyon was under way. It is both safe and rapid and at 11:00 we were in Tiger Snake Canyon creek, gazing in awe at the



cliffs above; the magnificent stands of coachwood and sassafras; the pure, clear crystal water and an ambience that only nature undisturbed can deliver. A refreshing drink of this water reminded us that there still are places where you can drink water that tastes so good it needs nothing to supplement it.

Our way of progress was over a rich bed of humus, surrounded by abundant bird life and flanked on one side with a clear stream running over a bright sandy bottom. Onwards 200 m or so and Tiger Snake Creek joins Deanes Creek (446207). Whilst moving down Deanes Creek Dave found a beautiful Green Frog (*Litoria* sp). He posed for pictures. The rain forest is a rich tapestry of life with mosses, fungi, ferns and variety of tree species. The birds continued their calling to each other oblivious of us. At 11:30 we reached the junction of the creek draining Constance Gorge with Deanes Creek (448209). Our route was into Constance Gorge and into an extension of this same glorious rain forest.

For some 2 kilometres we moved through this special place. As we progressed northwards the gorge becomes shallower and the rain forest gave way to dry sclerophyll forest. We reached the saddle (439221) that divides the watersheds of Zobel's Gully and Constance Gorge at 12:25.



The climb out of Zobel's Gully involved some active climbing with plenty of leg stretching. The views at the top were panoramic and riveting. You can gaze forever over serried rows of pagodas and unique, detailed rock formations that conjure up mythical animals and Eastern deities. 13:00 saw us all on top of glorious pagoda (439223) having lunch. Our leader certainly knew where to take us.

Full of lunch and intoxicated with views we went exploring the unnamed head to the west of our ascent and lunch spot (438222). Not 200 m distance (436223) and we were looking down into the verdure of the Wolgan Valley. Picture-perfect views of Donkey Mountain and the Wolgan River just added to our euphoria. Why would you be anywhere else?

This is bushwalker heaven.

The ridge from our position south to pick up the Tiger Snake canyon track required very careful negotiation. Keeping to the eastern side was essential as there are three re-entrant gullies/ ravines with huge drops that drain into the Wolgan Valley. There is some scrub bashing required but only for a short distance until the Tiger Canyon track is encountered. The views at every vantage point are stunning.

At 15:15 we had reconnected with the fire trail (435206). Blown away with all we had seen and done the kilometres passed quickly and by 1545 we were back with our cars.



### Table of times, localities and Grid References

Time	Location	Grid Ref
0830	Clarence	
0920	Cars parked at the Old Coach Road gate	GR 423 180
1000	End of fire trail	GR 435 202
1005	Track junction for Tiger Snake canyon	GR 435 206
1010	Morning tea	GR 438 205
1045	Descent into Tiger Snake canyon	GR 443 207
1115	Junction of Tiger Snake Ck and Deanes Ck	GR 446 207
1130	Junction of Deanes with Constance Gorge	GR 448 209
1225	Saddle between Constance and Zobels Gully	GR 439 221
1300	Lunch	GR 439 222
1345	View over the Wolgan Valley	GR 438 223
1515	Reconnect with fire trail	GR 435 206
1545	Return to cars	GR 423 180

Michael Keats  
Short Notice Walks Co-ordinator

## BWRS Publicity

### Blackheath Rescue Expo.

Keith Maxwell, President, BWRS

Involvement in Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) requires regular training by our members. There were two great training events close to the end of 2004. The first event was a simulated large area search in the Buda-wangs that also involved South Coast VRA (NSW Volunteer Rescue Association - BWRS is also a member of the VRA) and National Park Rangers. Teams searched the plateau near Mt Bushwalker as well as the Clyde River and Claydon's Creek.

The second event in mid November was a simulated canyons search off Newnes Plateau. The stretcher and cliff rescue gear had to be transported to above where the "lost party" were found at a remote location (off Rail Motor Ridge). A stretcher lift through three cliff lines was required to retrieve the "patient" from Bungleboori Creek. BWRS learnt a lot about the logistics of moving the extra equipment (tapes, ropes, karabiners, pulleys, whailets etc) required for light-weight vertical rescue.

Another great program of training is planned for 2005. BWRS is always keen to have experienced bushwalkers join our activities. Contact our BWRS Secretary at [secretary@bwrs.org.au](mailto:secretary@bwrs.org.au)

Good realistic training is always essential ("train hard - rescue easy") but the effort is wasted if the general public are unaware of your search and rescue group. This is why I always produce and distribute the BWRS pocket Calendar. As usual, Calendars were sent to all Clubs of the Confederation and a range of rescue groups / outdoors shops throughout Sydney and NSW. I try to make the Calendar invaluable by including a range of information that can be hard to find. On the BWRS Calendar you will find School Holidays, Public Holidays, Full / New Moons, BWRS training dates, some basic safety information and web addresses for the Confederation & BWRS.



On 19th December 2004 the Gardners Inn hotel at Blackheath held a mini rescue expo as a local Christmas Party / thank you to the local emergency services. This was a good opportunity to network to other local emergency services and show BWRS to the general public. Also present with BWRS on this warm day were Katoomba Police Rescue Squad, CareFlight (helicopter rescue) State Emergency Serv-

ices (SES), National Parks & Wildlife Service and RSPCA. The BWRS Toyota Troop Carrier and rescue trailer were an impressive backdrop to our display material. See the photo nearby. Lots of the just-published BWRS Calendar were distributed by Thais Turner and me.

### BWRS Alert

#### Even On New Years Eve!

Keith Maxwell, President, BWRS

Being a volunteer is a 24 hour job. Fortunately the workload can be shared around. On New Years Eve my wife and I were sitting quietly at home when around 9:15 pm she said is that your BWRS pager beeping? The message just read BUSHWALKING LOST - NAME - MOBILE

I contacted the NAME via the mobile no. English was not his first language so I had to ask careful questions to determine that he was a friend of five Asian persons who had gone on a day walk in the Nightcap National Park (near Lismore in northern NSW). They had gone on a short walk to Pholis Gap to see the terrific views of Mt Warning and surrounding valleys. Unfortunately they were now off the track. I determined the five names and reassured their friend.

The most appropriate response was to involve local rescue resources so I then passed the details onto the Police Bomb and Rescue Squad.

While the missing group had a mobile phone for some reason the Police were unable to talk to the mobile phone but were able to communicate via SMS text messaging. Thus early on New Years Day around 20 local Police and volunteers were able to quickly locate the missing group. They were all well but a little cold. The helicopter on stand-by was not required. Five very relieved persons were all able to continue home.

A mobile phone should not be seen as a fail safe rescue device. A good bushwalker should still avoid rescue from good trip planning and navigation en route. The mobile phone did help in this search. However, you need to remember that mobile phones have a limited battery life. As the phone ages the battery life (between charges) tends to go down.

You also need to remember that the mobile phone network is very "line of sight" and designed for urban (not bush) areas. Thus unless you are on a high point, such as the top of a hill, your phone signal may be blocked by the immediate terrain. Mobile phones rely on a system of phone relay towers. Even if you are on a high point there may not be a phone relay tower close by to pick up and retransmit your message.

Our BWRS pager person was very pleased with the successful outcome. If only all callouts could be so easy.

### BWRS - Map Sale - 1:25,000

Many of the original stock of maps have been sold and the available range is now greatly reduced, but you could still score a bargain in our runout sale!

See the BWRS website <http://www.bwrs.org.au/mapsale/index.html> for sales details

## Somewhat perilous - the journeys of Singleton, Parr, Howe, Myles & Blaxland in the Northern Blue Mountains

Andy Macqueen

2004, ISBN 0-646-43827-1

The Editor was sent a copy of Andy Macqueens' latest book. It's about the very earliest white explorers of the Wollemi and Yengo areas in the early days of Settlement. Few bushwalkers go there today, even with good maps; these explorers went there with no maps and hazardous conditions. For instance, Parr seems to have spent a lot of time dodging some major bushfires, comparable to recent fires in the area.

It is interesting to compare the routes those explorers took with the routes we (Editor and wife) have taken ourselves in the area. We recognise so many of the routes taken. Of course, some of the major routes turned into tracks and then roads, but even so the evolution is interesting.

Andy has included some fascinating stories from historical records, and equally fascinating and provocative thoughts about fires and erosion in the areas. He questions whether the erosion we see in the Colo was started by white man: maybe not. Some wonderful sketch maps of the area are included, including outlines of recent and early wildfires.

The Editor has to admit a degree of bias here: he took the pictures of Doyle's Ck Arch which Andy features.

It has since collapsed. That in itself shows that erosion and change have not stopped.

The book may be purchased from

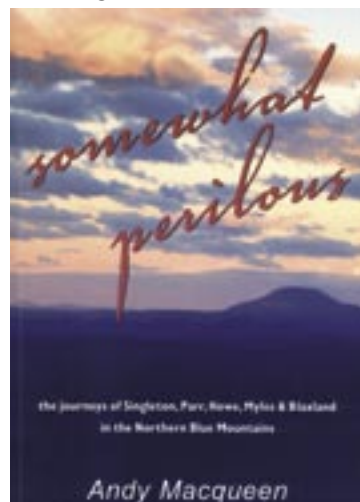
Andy Macqueen

8 Angel Place

Wentworth Falls. 2782

or [andymacq@pnc.com.au](mailto:andymacq@pnc.com.au).

Send a cheque or money order for \$25 for each copy you want. Delivery is free between Katoomba and Emu Plains; elsewhere add \$7 postage for any number of books.



## Blue Mountains World Heritage

Alex Colley & Henry Gold

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness.

2004, ISBN 0-85881 201 0

The Editor was sent a copy of this book as well. It's a rather large book in definitely 'coffee table' format, but with the stunning pictures you expect from Henry Gold. Alex Colley has written a lot of the text, but he has drawn on other authors for some chapters as well.

The book outlines the saga of this World Heritage area from

the very early days. It is saddening to read about so many short-sighted, narrow-minded, greedy and petty government and company officials hell-bent on preserving their minor kingdoms and profits in the face of such a magnificent wilderness. It is also inspiring to read how the efforts of a few dedicated (some might say bloody-minded!) individuals contributed so much to the preservation of this area.

The book deserves to be read just as a reminder of how bad



things could have been but for the efforts of those few. My great great grandchildren should now be able to see this area as I have seen it. Eternal Vigilance is the price for Wilderness.

The book is obtainable from the Colong Foundation, [foundation@colongwilderness.org.au](mailto:foundation@colongwilderness.org.au) or [www.colongwilderness.org.au](http://www.colongwilderness.org.au). The price is \$50 including post and packing.

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## Juizhaigou - China's Fairyland

Marjory Kirk

As spectacular as The Great Wall but more remote than Shangri-la, China's "Fairyland" of Jiuzhaigou or 'Nine Strongholds Gorge' lies in the north of Sichuan province, at an elevation of up to 4300 metres. The area of some 720 square kilometres is home to people of Tibetan and Qiang minority nationalities.

As a scenic area, Jiuzhaigou is famous for its many pristine lakes, waterfalls, rivers, snow-covered peaks, Alpine plants and forests, and local Tibetan customs. The 60 km long valley cradles over 100 lakes with 140 different birds and 170 species of animals, including the Giant Panda and the Golden Monkey. Because of its remoteness the scenic reserve is seldom visited by overseas tour groups who can ill afford the 13 - 14 hour bus journey each way from the



Reflections at Juizhougou

city of Chengdu, which is the nearest available transport. Roads are rough tracks carved into the mountain sides, and buses are people-movers of the most basic kind, making the journey a marathon of jolting, swaying, bone-jarring horror, laced with terror at the sheer cliffs and hairpin bends of the terrain.

We had chartered our bus through China Travel Service, who in turn had handed us over to the tour agency operating in the area. We were a party of friends, seven Australians and five Chinese nationals. The driver was Tibetan and our local guide a Chinese lass who spoke very limited English and had scant knowledge of the area. She laboured to read out statistics from her Guide's Handbook in mangled English, so unfortunately neither we nor our Chinese friends could gain much information from her.

At mid-day we had a lunch stop in a village restaurant - quite a good lunch of local cuisine. Then back to the bus, until about 5.00 pm, when we halted at the entrance gates to the Tibetan Autonomous area. No, no dinner here - no food, nothing. Dinner would be at 11.00 pm or midnight! Back on the bus and up over the mountains. Luggage for 12 of us was piled on the back seats, limiting the available seating to uncomfortably cramped conditions. In darkness we stopped at another township. Dinner? No, No. By now, our Tibetan driver nearly had a riot on his hands, but we were off again. For miles and miles the road now appeared to be under construction. How he coped with that drive in the darkness it's hard to imagine.

At last we reached our hotel and wearily we congregated in the foyer with our bags. Rooms were allocated, and dinner served. Being a remote area, neither the hotel rooms nor the meal had much going for them. We were numb with exhaustion.

Bright and early next morning we were taken to the marshalling area for the bus to Jiuzhaigou. To help preserve the pristine ecology of the area, only battery-driven official vehicles are allowed. Wow! The Chinese are really 'on the ball' here, we thought. Each bus had a guide, and our charming girl spoke good English and took good care of us. We drove nearly 40 Km up the valley through the most amazing scenery any of us had ever seen. Lakes and streams with waterfalls between, sheer mountains covered in bamboo forest and rising to snowy peaks, brilliant blue sky - Fairyland indeed. Here the lake waters have the most fantastic colours due to the calcium carbonate suspended in the water. Blues, greens and turquoise of the brightest hues delighted our eyes at every twist of the mountain road.

We alighted from the bus to begin the descent of the valley on footpaths and bridges. As we dropped down with the lakes and rapids we could see fish in the clear water. Notices ask visitors not to feed the fish as this ruins the water quality. Walkways had been built over the water and under cliffs in many places to give access without damage to the environment. Litter-bins in the shape of Pandas, rather ' twee' but a necessity, as the Chinese as yet have little notion of caring for their beauty spots. They are at the bottom of the learning curve as far as 'keep China clean' is concerned.

A couple of hours walking, a break for lunch at the well run canteen/shop, and eventually back by bus to the gateway. We had spotted only one or two western visitors all day - only the hardy Chinese tourists who were eager to practise their English with us, and find out where we had come from. A long walk back to the hotel dinner, then bed. We knew we had an early start next day.



Cascades at Jiuzhaigou

Early morning, and we were headed for Huanglong (Yellow Dragon), 120 km away. On the way we picked up two beautifully dressed Tibetan ladies who wanted a lift to town. They entertained us with their songs and displayed some fantastic local jewellery. An indication of a person's wealth is the huge chunks of turquoise, red coral and ancient coins worn in necklaces and hair decorations. We were invited to

purchase anything we wanted, but they were very charming, and did not pressure us. Mid-morning we pulled in at a "Supermarket" where we were told we could eat all we wanted for free! What? There had to be a catch somewhere.



Tibetan ladies with jewellery

The supermarket sold only products made from yak meat - even down to yak lollies. A huge store with aisles of quite incredible looking items. Dried meat came in a thousand flavours and guises. I chose a pack of what looked like sliced silverside. Others bought packs of yak jerky in various flavours, which we shared around, and yes, there were free samples of everything, to entice you to buy. There were souvenirs of yak horn, yak hair, yak butter, yak fur, yak hooves, little toy yaks, big toy yaks. To the Tibetan people the yak is a complete source of life's necessities. It is their beast of burden and a measure of wealth.

We were now on our way to Mount Hua Shan, the highlight of our day. Our next halt was at a little village where we had a light meal, and walked along the street to the local shop to purchase oxygen for those who wanted it. The oxygen came in a large spray can with a mouth/nose piece to direct the spray, and was easy and convenient to use. It cost around A\$5. We all had to sign an undertaking that we would not hold the bus company liable for any illness if we did not use oxygen.

It was a glorious afternoon as we started our ascent of the mountain. Here again were well made pathways and steps, ever upward, minimising the impact of tramping feet, with rest and view stops at intervals. Hua Shan means Flower Mountain, and wild orchids were among the many flowers bloom in between the rocks and along the pathways. There were several varieties and colours, purple, brown, green and cream. We climbed up alongside a mountain stream. The calcium carbonate in the water formed huge semi-circular basins here and there, glittering white basins brim-full with blue/green sparkling water. What a wonder of nature!

At this elevation, way over 3500 m breathing was laboured and our progress slow. The rarefied atmosphere went to the head like wine. Without oxygen, I don't think I could have managed.

Earlier, we had met up with a group of quite elderly Chinese ladies from Guangdong Province in the south, all on a happy outing together. They had their oxygen in large bags like air cushions, and climbed steadily and strongly, calling out to each other, laughing and chatting. Only the youngest member of our party, 23 year old Alexander, managed to reach the very top of Hua Shan, but the rest of us did not feel disgraced. It takes time to become acclimatised at such a

height, and my lungs are certainly not what they used to be. As the day was clear and fine, all around us we could see mountains stretching to the distance, fold upon fold in the soft afternoon light. The view made one feel such a tiny speck of humanity in the vastness, and yet there was elation at having conquered the mountain. It is no wonder that beautiful Hua Shan is venerated as one of the holy mountains of China.

Then the descent and return to earth, where our bus and driver waited, and down the perilous mountain passes to civilisation and our beds for the night.

On this journey we were much impressed by the efforts being made by Chinese authorities to preserve and care for the natural environ-

ment of the area. The Chinese are not generally known for their regard of the environment, but awareness is certainly creeping in. We were in a fragile and sensitive region, which could easily be destroyed by the impact of tourism. Where roads had to be cut into the hillsides, teams of workers were consolidating the slopes with mesh reinforcing, and spraying on a mixture of soils containing locally gathered seeds. Others were planting grasses and shrubs on the slopes. We saw whole hillsides covered with re-planting of trees, even fitted with automatic irrigation systems to ensure the survival of the trees.

Jiuzhaigou was declared a scenic reserve back in 1978, and so in spite of the pressures of the 21st century and tourism the traditional life continues in China's Fairyland, much as it has done for centuries. The yaks are herded, prayer wheels turn in the streams, shrines are adorned by prayer flags fluttering in the wind, and clear water sparkles in the fairy pools of the valley.



Tibetan girl with pet goat



The writer with guide Chen Hongyu

## Walking Tracks of the Middle Harbour Valley & Northern Sydney Harbour Foreshore

Published by Step Inc, PO Box 697, Turramurra NSW 2074, or [www.step.org.au](http://www.step.org.au) in conjunction with the Dept of Lands

STEP, a community-based environmental conservation organisation, has recently published four very detailed maps of the Middle Harbour Catchment with every local walking track and walking route they can find. The streets are all shown of course, but in addition the map has contours pitched at four (4) metres and a scale of 1:10,000. I gather the base data has been provided by the Dept of Lands.

For someone used to the 20 metre contours in the old topo maps of Wollemi and Kosciusko, this level of detail is amazing. In addition, descriptions and history of some of the areas and pictures of representative places are also given. Admittedly many of the walks include a substantial amount of street-walking, but if you live in the area and want a short walk of only an hour or two these maps will keep you busy for ages.

Two maps are included in each sheet: they have been printed on both sides of the quite large sheet of tough paper are used. It's about the size of a standard topo map in fact. The Bushwalker was sent a review copy of one of the two sheets on sale: Northbridge and North Harbour. The other sheet covers the area to the north of this. The sheets/maps are available from Step via their web site at \$20 each.

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## Gear For Private Sale

If you have more gear than you need but don't want to throw it out, try selling it through The Bushwalker. For club members selling excess gear the cost of the advertisement is zero. Descriptions should be short but complete, and the advertisers location and contact details should be given. No guarantees are offered by The Bushwalker for any of the gear: that's between the buyer and seller.

Example adverts follow: (but the gear really IS for sale.)

Macpac Cascade #3 pack \$100 ad1  
2-compartment internal frame, 90 litre, well used, one small patch, but still going strong. Shoulder straps replaced by Macpac recently. Suit all big trips, summer and winter.

Tatonka Bushwalker pack \$100 ad1  
2-compartment internal frame pack, about 70-80 litre, waterproof Cordura body, used a few times, in very good condition. Suit big trips.

Berghaus Cyclops II Alp pack \$50 ad1  
Single compartment internal frame Cordura pack, good design but well used. Fabric in good condition, padding on back a bit compressed, some recently replaced. Suit shorter person.

Trangia cooking pot 602515 \$15 ad1  
1.75 litre non-stick cooking pot, in original packing, never used. RRP about \$29.50.

Ultra-light 2-man tent \$150 ad1  
Early prototype, dark blue silicone-coated nylon, groundsheet, full mosquito netting, carbon fibre poles included, generous floor space, one good vestibule. Used on a few trips.

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Synthetic sleeping bag \$50 ad1  
Zip right around, opens into quilt. Suit car camping or novice walker for warm conditions.

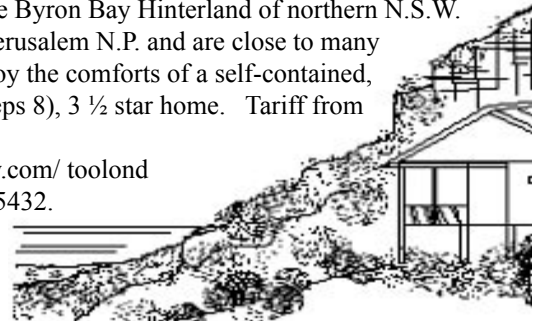
MSR Simmerlite stove \$150 ad1  
Complete with MSR bag etc. Weighs about 325 g empty. Left over from stove review, only used for review tests. Goes well.

For items under 'ad1' contact [editor@bushwalking.org.au](mailto:editor@bushwalking.org.au). Gear in Sydney, Hills District.

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Cameron Barrie crossing the Snowy River en route to Blue Lake.  
Photo: MVP / Taryn Miller



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Hiking in the Chilime Valley on the border of Nepal and Tibet. Photo: Robin Boustead

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