

The Bushwalker



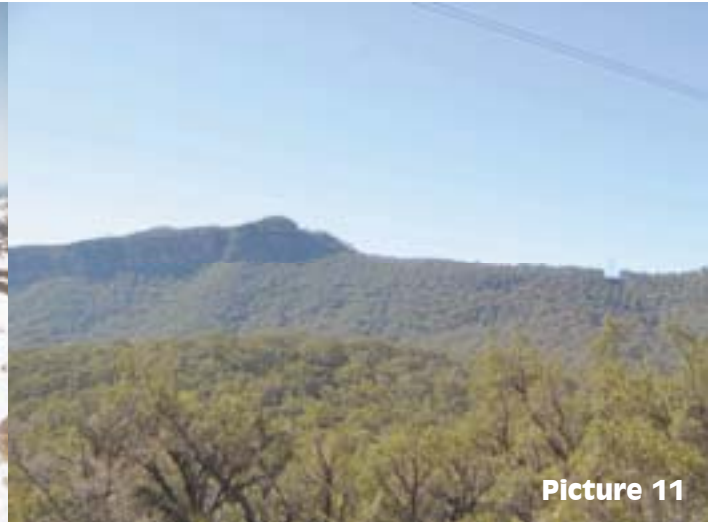
Upper Geehi and Tarn Bluff,
Kosciusko National Park

Volume 30
Issue 4
Winter 2005

The Bushwalker 'Where Am I' Competition



Picture 9



Picture 11



Picture 10



Picture 12

- Each Issue has four photos taken somewhere in NSW in places where bushwalkers go. These will NOT be obscure places.
- You have to identify the place and roughly where the photographer was standing for any ONE of the pictures. (You do not have to identify all four.)
- Send your answers (up to four per issue) to the:
editor@bushwalking.org.au as quickly as possible.
- Usually, only one prize per person will be awarded from each issue of The Bushwalker. You can score in successive issues.

Deadline for entries

The Editor may start allocating prizes as and when qualifying entries arrive. The competition remains open if there are no correct entries for a photo. If several really correct entries for a photo arrive together, one will be

picked out of a hat. So get your entries in as fast as possible! You can also see these pictures on the Confederation web site, along with descriptions and winners.

Entry requirements

Just saying something like 'Blue Gum Forest' would not be enough. However, something like 'Blue Gum Forest from the start of the descent down DuFaur's Buttress' would qualify. In short, 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.

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

per issue, Mountain Equipment has donated one \$100 voucher and their allied store Trek & Travel has donated one \$100 voucher per issue. Any financial member of an affiliated Bushwalking Club can enter. We may check with your Club membership secretary, so make sure you are financial, so you must include the name of your club with your entry. 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.

Results from last issue

Photo 5: Top of Slack Stairs, Wentworth Falls. Identified by Michael Keats, Bush Club.

Photo 6: ?? Identified by no-one yet.

Photo 7: Mt Solitary from near Wentworth Falls. Identified by Colin Wood, Armidale.

Photo 8: Gooches Crater from N end. Identified by Miss Robyn Hobson, Sutherland.

So you can still lodge entries for photos 2 and 6.

The Bushwalker

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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, helps to provide 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, but a more up-to-date version can be found on the Confederation website at www.bushwalking.org.au, broken up into areas.



Subscribe to The Bushwalker

Keep up with all the news and developments happening in the NSW bushwalking scene for only \$10 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 'Where Am I' Competition.

From the editor's desk. . .

Welcome to the third issue of the new colour version of The Bushwalker, the magazine of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW. The last two issues have been well received, with several people making suggestions for improvements. The principle one was that we should identify places mentioned in articles better - where IS the Serpentine River? (Armidale, actually.) This will be done in future.

Apology: The article on the Serpentine River was written by Colin Wood, not the author given in the previous issue. My apologies to Colin for this silly mistake.

In this issue we have yet another development. The last two issues were put together by the Editor using InDesign, but while the results were pleasing, it was clear to some that the editor was not an expert with InDesign. In fact, Barry Hanlon was moved to offer his assistance as an experienced graphics designer, and the layout of this issue is all his own work. I welcome Barry to the editorial team!

Now what we need is someone to help us with the advertising and marketing, both for this magazine and the nascent 'Bush Pages' on the web site. This magazine is expensive to produce and the colour advertisements help cover the costs. The web site also costs the Confederation money, and we have decided to have a commercial area under the heading 'Bush Pages' which can carry relevant paid advertisements. But we need an experienced marketing person to drive both of these areas. Enquiries please to admin@bushwalking.org.au.

We can't produce this magazine without something to print. Clubs and members are encouraged to submit relevant articles, with a strong preference for those with good pictures. We will also accept articles from outside bodies where the articles seem relevant to members. Articles may be edited for length and content to help fit into our page limit. Pictures should be sent at maximum resolution: 300 dpi preferred. Really long articles may not fit - sorry about that. Contributions should be sent to 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 Editor's opinions don't represent anyone at all.

Roger Caffin
Editor



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Pagoda Country

Michael Keats, The Bush Club

A Trip Report will normally identify the relevant area so the reader can do the walk. However, because this area includes some of the most fragile and ecologically sensitive areas of the Wollemi Wilderness, no Grid Reference readings are given. The route is perforce very precise and travel in the area without someone who has been there before is not recommended. - MK, RNC.

Enchantment! A word pregnant with anticipation - a word that conjures in the mind a complete seduction of the faculties - a word to transport the enchantee to other worlds. Believe me, our leader took us there today. The weather could not have been more perfect; a clear blue sky, zero wind, and a temperature range that kept the body and mind focused on the beauty around us while wanting to keep moving. It was a day when all the superlatives that are used to describe great walks were inadequate to describe the emotional pull that only nature can exert in Pagoda Country.

But let me start at the beginning. As we drove up to the meeting point at Clarence the trees and roadside herbage were dusted with ice

crystals in a scene reminiscent of an old fashioned Christmas card. The external car thermometer registered 3 degrees Celsius, yet on alighting to greet the rest of the crew it was not unpleasant - just fresh.

09:00 Our leader had put away the paperwork, quizzed us on water supplies and we were off walking on Subsidence Row. The Row gets its name from the unstable ground caused by coal mining hundreds of metres below. When the final support columns of coal are removed, the ceiling of the mine collapses onto the floor under the weight of rock above. The settling process can take years and is often at different rates. No problems for us on the day.

Perhaps 800m along the track the first pagodas came into view. Several stunning examples to the east are part of Pagoda Gully. Needless to say the camera was soon out working and was rarely out of my hands all day. On the western side the views were equally compelling. From the end of the Row the route in was down into a dry creek bed before an easy ascent up Snake Hill. On top the views were stunning - what else! We intersected a disused road running east-west that probably served as a coal mining



Holts Heaven

exploration track. There was plenty of evidence that people moving through the area had not valued the intrinsic worth of this special place.

From a high point of 1020m we dropped down a contour to a rock outcrop for morning tea (09:50). The view ahead was of Coopers Ridge, which we were to climb. Between us and the crest of Coopers Ridge was a 100m descent into the Bungleboori Creek and then a 130m climb to the fire trail. Pagodas - lots of them, flanked our ridge. Of more immediate interest was the route for our descent. There was a lot of sidling back and forth as we negotiated successive cliff lines down. Whilst we had one eye on the way forward all the time, the views made it hard to not stop and take it all in.

We crossed the Bungleboori at 10:30. Both the going down and the climb up provided so many opportunities to stop and take in the pagoda views from Coopers Ridge - and yes, all enchanting ones. There was a real sense of anticlimax as the climb out ended at a fire trail. It was short-lived and in ten minutes we headed off down an unnamed ridge for yet more of nature's extravaganzas in natural stone work. An early lunch was taken on a very fine pagoda indeed.



Pagoda Land

A pagoda restaurant with a view that was superb. To the east were the profiles of Anthill and Stick Ridges; to the south the complex and intricate pagoda collection that filled the valley between the Anthill Ridge and Holts Heaven. Unnamed but equally deserving classic pagodas framed the eastern horizon. The lunchtime tariff - free to all who are prepared to come and pay homage. At this time we discovered that T was today celebrating her birthday. No cake! An offer of a candle from the safety kit to celebrate met with the derision it deserved. T expressed herself delighted with the setting for her celebration.

Lunchtime was extended a bit for whatever reason, although the best aspect was to have the time to spend just looking and trying to instruct one's senses that this was about as good as it gets. There is no place quite like this and certainly no day quite as perfect.

It was a somewhat reluctant group that set off at 12:15 to descend again into the Bungleboori Creek. This descent was marked by some slide sections where those with well-upholstered bums did best. We all managed. At the bottom the Bungleboori was at its photographic best - mirror smooth and a fine reflected colour play. More photos. The walk/sidle along the south side of the Bungleboori includes some swampy sword grass areas but also a succession of stunning views as you look up to the profiles of yet more pagodas.

As we ascended yet another unnamed spur, our leader revealed that we would shortly gaze on Holts Heaven, arguably the finest collection of pagodas in the Wollemi Wilderness. As we progressed up the spur the view that gave the name Holts Heaven began to display. It was hard not to keep pressing the take button on the camera. Then we were there. Our leader led us onto a viewing platform with all the prerequisites for taking perfect pictures.

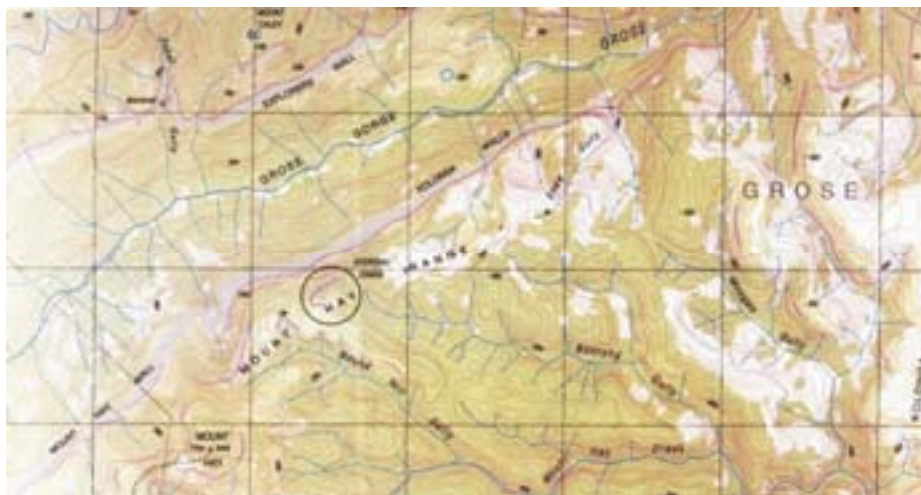
The enchantment of pagoda country reached a new zenith. This group of walkers were especially privileged to see the afternoon sun light up the pagodas with brilliant yellows, oranges and deep sepia. Those with hyperactive imaginations started to see all kinds of representations in the pagoda formations. After a stay in pagoda heaven it was time to thread our way up the successive crests of the ridge back to the fire trail and then the cars. 14:15 and our visit was over.

Venus Tor

The following is the edited text of a proposal put to the Geographical Names Board by Brian Fox, who coincidentally was part of the team that mapped the Katoomba and Mount Wilson Topo maps 1:25000. He informs me that the proposal was officially accepted on 30 May 2003. -RNC

Description of Feature:

Location 260500E 6277800N MGA Co-ordinates, Lat 33deg 36.5min Long 150deg 25min Isolated Sandstone Tor, 1.2 kilometres NE of Mount Hay and 400 metres SW of Boorong Crag. This Tor is approximately 40 metres above Mount Hay Range. The Tor covers an area 240 metres by 100 metres and is located within the Blue Mountains National Park, near to Leura and Katoomba. [Shown ringed below - RNC]



Reason for choice of name:

This Tor was named by Marie Beuzeville Byles (1900-1979) and Marjorie Shaw as Venus Beacon Tor in 1935. These two remarkable women were members of the Sydney Bush Walkers Club. They both had walked extensively in this area. A walking pass in Shaw Gully down to the Grose River from Mount Hay Range has been named Byles Pass, both names commemorating these women. Marie Byles' other claim to fame is that she was the first practicing female solicitor in Australia and was well known as a conservationist.

This remarkable landmark feature with extensive views to the east has yet to be officially named and yet 400m South East an insignificant hill by comparison has been named Boorong Crag.

My recommendation to name Venus Tor as opposed to Venus Beacon Tor is because:

- * Simplifies the name.
- * The word beacon and Tor are analogous, that is almost using two similar words to describe the same feature.
- * The word Tor is the correct geological name for this natural feature.

References:

- * Venus Beacon Tor shown on the map "Central Blue Mountains Kurrjong Heights to Mount Victoria Tract".
- * "Northward of Western Railway only" compiled by Myles Dunphy 1965. (Copy resides in GNB files).
- * Description of this feature by Myles Dunphy "Central Blue Mountains Place Names" Section 3, sheet 28. (Copy resides in GNB files Bathurst).
- * References to all Topographical features can be found in the book "Upper Blue Mountains Geographical Encyclopaedia" 2nd edition by

Brian Fox, Blue Mountains Historian, Author and Cartographer.

Additional notes provided by Brian Fox: Marie Beuzeville Byles (1900-1979) was a solicitor, bushwalker and conservationist. The Blue Mountain Echo 14th February 1919 records her name on the Mount Hay Trig Station, meaning that she had walked to the Trig prior to February 1919.



Venus Tor

Culoul Pass?

Where is it?

This article was inspired by the book review of Briam Corlis' book in this issue. To explain: Bob Buck showed a 'Culoul Pass' on his famous map as Pass 4, and Brian also lists this. However, Bob Buck's notes say 'Culoul Pass (original) Cannot find actual route' and do not give a precise location. Brian places the label in a gully just south of Crawfords Lookout, at about the same place as Bob Buck's note sits on his map, but says of it 'Not used now as requires considerable amount of climbing for first 150 m'. I assume this refers to a route up the gully. But is this 'Culoul Pass'?

Some background is in order before going any further. There are a few well-known routes into the Colo, but none are what one might call 'natural routes'. The area is just too hard for that. I list them here.

- The track down from Crawfords Lookout relies on the old logging and farming road out along the Culoul Range. (John?) Crawford was a bushwalker many years ago. I do not know whether this route was used by aborigines. It is not passable to cattle.

- The Boorai Ridge track starts as an old logging road off the Culoul Range road. It drops easily into Boorai Creek at one stage before reascending to the ridge. This road was extended by the electricity commission out to the end of the ridge when they were investigating the possibility of a dam on the upper Colo. Some of their gear was still there until quite recently. From the end of the road there is a track across a very narrow saddle and along a knife-edge ridge, then steeply down the end face. I do not think it is passable to cattle, although I might be wrong.

- The current tourist track down Canoe Creek relies on the logging road from Grassy Hill to Alidade Hill. Bob Buck notes this route in passing, but it would seem that when he was active in that area the track may not have been all that good. It is not passable to cattle.

- The benched track called Bob Turners was found by Bob Turner (who else) near the end of a very early canoe trip

down the Colo from Canoe Creek. He used it to get out of the river, not realising how close he was to Colo Meroo. He subsequently cleaned it up. It is believed to have been a horse track put in a very long time ago as part of early prospecting for a low dam site on the Colo. (Wilf Hildur knew him, and was responsible for the name.)

- The T3 track from Mountain Lagoon is now staked by the NPWS. I do not know its origin. It may even have been an aboriginal route. The final descent to the river is down an unstable gully, and neither it nor



Colo River, Downstream from Boorai Ridge

the traverse half way down would be suitable for horses or cattle.

On the other hand, there is some evidence that men did ride across parts of the Wollemi Wilderness with cattle - cattle duffing was the name of the game. Of course, they were rather secretive about their routes: they didn't want competition or interception. It is amazing to see what they could get cattle up and down, both here and in the Kanangra Boyd region.

With that background, we must now consider the names given by Bob Buck to several Passes or routes. My understanding from one conversation with Bob

himself and several with some of his contemporaries is that Bob did not make up these names. He got them from other walkers or locals. So there are a couple of apparently quite old routes in the area.

Many of the other unnamed routes Bob lists on his map were explored by him and his friends, and you can tell which ones these were by their nature. There are many which were 'created' just for the fun, like Passes 15 and 16 around Canoe Creek for example. They are not the sort of thing you would normally bother doing. Others were attempts on every spur which looked as though it would go, and Savage Pass 17 opposite Canoe Creek is an obvious example. Many of these 'fun' routes require rock climbing with ropes: Bob and his friends were rock climbers.

So now we come back to 'Culoul Pass'. Is it likely that the locals would have given this name to a route which requires 150 metres of climbing? I think not. Is the location Bob gives necessarily accurate? I doubt it: he didn't know where the route was. I suspect all he knew was that there was a 'Culoul Pass' out at the end of the Culoul Range. I think he marked it a bit too far out.

But we can add some more thoughts here. It seems reasonable to me that the route would have been able to take horses or cattle for it to get a name. That means the whole line has to be of a reasonable grade. It also means that the cattlemen had to be able cross the Colo and go onwards - somewhere. This is possible, albeit with some difficulty. So we need a route which is roughly at the end of Culoul Range but easy.

I have walked up Boorai Creek to the point where the current logging road hits the bottom. It is gentle the whole way. Granted, there is lots of jungle in places, but jungle is transitory and can be cleared - just send a herd of rough cattle down there! From there it would be easy to get to the top of Boorai Ridge,

either where the logging road runs down or further up the valley, or even further down in the vicinity of The Pulpit. In fact, it is even possible that the logging road follows an old cattle track, but this is pure conjecture: we would never know.

Is there any other evidence to support this idea? Opposite Boorai Ridge/Creek we have 'Barakee Pass', another old named route. You could not get cattle up the route Bob Buck shows for this, but that simply means that Bob never found the proper route.

Comments are welcome.

Roger Caffin

Chris Baxter steps down from "Wild" magazine

After 24 years of hard work, Chris Baxter OAM, founding Managing Editor of Wild, says goodbye and thank you.

Chris Baxter founded Wild Publications in 1981, believing it was the perfect time for a publication devoted to adventure activities in the Australian bush. After almost a quarter of a century as Managing Editor of Wild, Australia's wilderness adventure magazine, and 27 years of sister magazine Rock, Australia's climbing magazine, it is clear that he was right. Much has happened in the Australian outdoors during this time — Mt Everest had its first Australian ascent, the Franklin River was saved and gear has been transformed from A-frames and Eindex to the lightweight equipment of today. Wild has reported on all this, as well as publishing hundreds of trip accounts, Track Notes, environmental updates and the latest ruck-sack-sports news, as part of its mission of being the voice of Australian outdoors adventure activities. In the process the magazine won many awards including the Australian Geographic Spirit of Adventure



Chris Baxter

Award and Telecom & Victorian Government Small Business Awards, and earned Chris the Order of Australia Medal for his contribution to the environment through publishing.

However, Wild No. 96, the autumn issue, was Chris's last magazine as Managing

Editor. In June 2004 he was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins lymphoma. He has now stopped work and sold his share in Wild to concentrate all his energy on fighting the life-threatening cancer. The winter issue of Wild, no 97, on sale mid-June, contains Chris Baxter's farewell editorial.

[Summarised from a message sent by Megan Holbeck, the new Managing Editor of Wild.]

Comment

My wife and I met Chris in the 60s when we were all mad-keen rock climbers, spending many weekends at Mt Rosea and Mt Arapiles in Victoria. He was the 'father figure' for a group of younger climbers in the Victorian Climbing Club, while we were in the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club. Competition between our two groups was fierce, but Chris was always a stabilising influence. Since then we have stayed in touch in a random manner, and at times I have written articles and gear reviews for Wild.

This news fills us with sadness, but we are sure he will run a good fight. I am sure that all bushwalkers of NSW will join me in wishing him every good fortune in the years to come.

Roger Caffin

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Patagonia. Our Spanish speaking guides have led 13 trips since 1990. Russell leads the 15th anniversary trip in late November this year.

Southern Africa. Russell's first exploratory trip in 1999 has been followed by six others – he will be in South Africa when this ad appears.

Arctic. Although we've only run two Arctic trips, Russell has been travelling to this region since 1971. The March 2006 trip will include 7-10 days on a dog sled with a local operator.



Aurora over camp on the frozen Great Slave Lake



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Nitmiluk National Park Land of the Jawoyn

Six Watagan Wanderers left Sydney in the evening of the 8th June, arriving in Darwin just before midnight. By 01:30 hours the next morning we had booked into our accommodation at Darwin's Central YHA with the humidity causing rivulets of perspiration to run down our bodies. Winter for the next ten days was gone and we were back into summer conditions. Next morning we picked up a Rent-a-car and toured the sights of Darwin. These included Cullen Bay Marina and Loch, East Point Reserve with its World War 2 gun emplacements, Fannie Bay Jail and the World War 2 Oil Storage Tunnels. The evening finished off at the Mindil Beach markets and dinner on the beach watching the sun set below the ocean.

Next day (Friday) we were off to Litchfield National Park where we spent the day viewing the magnetic termite mounds and swimming at rock holes and waterfalls. That evening it was out to the Darwin Wharf Precinct for dinner where 'Fish and Chips' means feeding the schools of Large Bat Fish and Barra with chips from the wharf. These large fish rise to the surface taking the offerings while illuminated by large lights below the jetty. A spectacular sight.

Saturday we drove out to the new Darwin railway station where at 10:15 AM we caught the Ghan for our 300 kilometres 4 hour trip to Katherine. At Katherine we were picked up and taken to the YHA. The rest of that afternoon we spent at the

Katherine Thermal Pool Springs before walking the 3-kilometre trip back to the YHA.

Sunday Morning we were up early and were taken to Katherine Gorge in the YHA bus where we registered and paid our camping fees, boat crossing costs and a \$50.00 holding fee to walk the Jatbula trail. Originally the trail followed a four wheel drive track down the river to a crossing before coming back along the other bank. Because of wild buffalo we were not allowed to walk this section of the trail. The boat trip has cut off around 3 kilometres from the start of this walk but nothing appears to be lost by shortening this section. We had to wait until 09:00 hours for a boat to take us across the Katherine River at the Gorge. While waiting for the boat we watched the large group of flying fox that had taken up residence in trees above the ticket kiosk for the boat and canoe hire.

After crossing the river, the trail followed 17 Mile Creek for a short distance before turning to follow the base of the escarpment. It is also a gentle incline to start the walk. 5.5 kilometres down the trail we came to the Northern Rock Hole. This reasonable sized waterhole is fed by a spring waterfall. Although not running strongly, it still had a small flow coming over the falls. As we had been walking just over the hour it was timely for a rest and a swim. Across the pool a green tree snake was on the rocks at the base of the waterfall. Fish, which had been part of the staple diet of the local Jarwoyn people, were plentiful in this pool. Leaving here the

track climbed much more steeply to the top of the escarpment. The heat and humidity had increased as we walked. Away from the waterholes the track had become dry and the rocky ground reflected the heat back up at us.

Four kilometres on we came to our first campsite at Biddlecombe Cascades. We even had a drop toilet. After a quick check of the cascades the decision was made to take our lunch down to the cascades and spend the afternoon there. We left our packs and headed for the water. We met five other people here who were in two groups and we were to become good friends with them by the time our walk finished. Biddlecombe Cascades consisted of four large waterfalls separated by pools, small cascades and natural spas. We spent the afternoon swimming and exploring the area and both Graeme and myself got down to the bottom of the lower falls. Later that afternoon we headed back to the campsite to set up and cook our evening meal. Our bus driver from the YHA had told us it would not rain and there were no problems with mosquitoes or flies. As a result, three of us had ditched our tents in Katherine to lighten our load. So that evening we three set up our sleeping bags while the other three set up their inner tents. As night descended on us that first evening so did the mosquitoes and they stayed with us all that night.

Next morning we were up at 06:00 but did not manage to hit the trail until 08:00. We packed and filled our water bottles where we crossed the river. This was a wet feet crossing so it was boots off for most of us. We were now on the escarpment and the track was reasonably level walking. A tree beside the track showed the scars where the Jarwoyn people had removed the bark to make either a shield or a carry tray. An hour down the track we came upon a series of rock pools and as we left these we found our first aboriginal art at a large rock outcrop. We had picked this outcrop as a likely location for an ancient art gallery as we approached it and were pleased to find out we were correct.

After 10 kilometres we came across another waterhole and two of us, who had been lingering behind, decided on a swim to cool down before heading on. At the 13 kilometre mark on the GPS we arrived at our campsite on the river at Crystal Falls to find the others cooling off in the water. This was day two and we had again made camp by lunchtime. At Crystal Falls the river starts to drop over a series of bars, rapids and small water-



Cooling off at Edith Crossing

falls that increase in height until it reaches the main falls that thunder into a canyon off the escarpment. This distance is approximately a kilometre long so it is a large playground and a great place to explore. There was plenty of spring-fed water coming down the river system. This area, like Biddlecombe Cascades, is a paradise with plenty of bird life and tree foliage supported by the watercourse. Once again we were privileged to have a drop toilet at this campsite.

Day three of our walk and most crossed the river before putting on boots. It was not possible to cross and keep dry boots. We passed the Crystal Falls waterfall taking our last view down the canyon before heading along the top of the escarpment. Seven kilometres along the track we came to the Amphitheatre, a horseshoe depression in the side of the escarpment. A set of stairs leads down through a crevice into this area. Entering this area takes us back into the Aboriginal Dreamtime. Around the base of these walls are examples of Jawoyn aboriginal rock art that go back thousands of years. Within the Amphitheatre there is also a rain forest and a permanent stream. It is hard to believe that these pockets of paradise exist in such a hot and dry landscape.

After 13.5 kilometres for that day we arrived at 17 Mile Falls. We set up our camp on a sandy patch of beach at the top

of the falls. Again we had the afternoon to explore and swam and walked our way up the watercourse past several small waterfalls and rapids to a canyon section where some of us decided to climb the narrow waterfall. The falls were covered in small frogs which had taken shelter in the cool walls of the small waterfall. There were hundreds of them. On top the land levelled out with a pool reflecting the large paperbarks on its edge. Back at camp, some of us worked our way down the cliff to the bottom of the waterfall and the large pool that it flowed from it. Pandanus Screw Palms edged this pool, which had sandy banks and crystal clear water. The others had sat at the top of the waterfall and watched us. That evening we sat on the rocks at the top of the waterfall and watched the dusk settle across the valley below as the stars appeared in the sky overhead. The mosquitoes gave those of us without tents hell again that night. For the first time we did not have a toilet and the flies were noticeably bad.

Next morning (Day 4) we set out for Edith River Crossing. After eight kilometres we reached the Edith River which we then followed for another two kilometres to the crossing. After lunch and another two swims we continued to follow the river downstream. We had now entered the area where the water buffalo were very common and, although we

never saw any buffalo, there were plenty of large scat pads along the track and wallows where the buffalo had stirred up the waterholes into mud pools. Navigation can be a problem as buffalo tracks continued along after the real walking track had turned off changing direction and it would be easy to miss the markers and follow the wrong track.

At 18.5 kilometres we came to our campsite for the night at Sandy Camp Pool. This beautiful large picturesque pool had shade trees and a sandy beach on one side and waterlilies around the opposite side of the pool. Dropping our packs we headed into the water to cool off. I swam across the pool to the water lilies and then climbed into the fork of a tree that had fallen in from the bank. I was about to dive back in and swim back when a crocodile surfaced around 15 metres out from me. I called out to the others who thought I was joking at first. I had only seen the top of its head and estimated it to be a fresh water crocodile around two metres long. I had always been told that freshies were not dangerous but I do admit to thinking twice before I dived back into the water and swam back across the pool. We did see him again a short time later but then he disappeared back into the waterlilies. For some reason the rest of the afternoon was spent in the rapids above the pool.

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Walk Safely—Walk with a Club

This was our last evening on the track and we all spent it around a small open fire with our fellow walkers.

Day five and we had a bus pickup arranged for 15:30 hours and 16 kilometres to walk. We set out at 07:20 hours and continued to walk parallel with the river down stream. The signs of buffalo continued but we still didn't see any. Sections of the track now passed through rocky areas for 10 kilometres until we returned to the river at a set of rapids. This was all that was needed for every one to enter the water and cool off. We were now a group of 11 people as we had teamed up with the other walkers on the track. Less than a kilometre downstream we came to Sweetwater Pool, which is another large deep pool similar to the one at Sandy Camp pool. Again every one was in the water. Day walkers are permitted to walk up along the track from Edith Falls to Sweetwater Pool so we could no longer expect to have the track to ourselves.

Three kilometres on we came to the Long Pool in time for lunch and another swim. Another two kilometres and we came to Upper Edith Falls, which was full of people, and where the smell of cigarette smoke polluted the air. From here it was another kilometre to Edith Falls, our pick up point for our bus. While waiting for the bus we enjoyed the drinks and food from the kiosk and were visited by a 2 metre



Crystal Falls Gorge

Black Whip Snake that was rounded up and bagged by the Park Rangers. That evening we had a farewell dinner with our fellow walkers in Katherine.

Friday 17th and we were booked to return to Darwin on the Ghan that afternoon. The morning was free and some went to Katherine Gorge while the others went to the Low Level Bridge Reserve. That afternoon the women drank Cham-

pagne in the lounge of the Ghan while the men celebrated with soft drink and juice. Back in Darwin we stored our gear at the YHA and went down to the Darwin Wharf for dinner. At 01:30 the next morning we boarded our aircraft to return home.

*Alwyn Simple
Watagan Wanderers*



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Search and Rescue

By J. H. Watson (Rover Ramblers Club)

from THE BUSHWALKER (1945)

Not once but on several occasions in the past eight years has the phone rung about teatime for members of the Search and Rescue Section of the Federation; lifting the receiver, a familiar voice is heard, "Hello! Paddy speaking. There's a party overdue: can you get out tomorrow?" In every such circumstance, the Section has been able to furnish valuable assistance.

The need for an efficient organisation for search and rescue work was first realised in 1936 following the big Grose River search. A party of four Sydney hikers had set out over the Eight-Hour Weekend to journey down the Grose from Blackheath to Richmond; by the following Friday grave fears were entertained for the safety of the missing youths, for whom planes and land parties (led by police) were conducting a search. Following a meeting of various members of the walking clubs of the Federation, convened by Paddy Pallin, an offer was made of a search party to enter the Grose Valley from Faulconbridge.

Some eleven walkers then caught the Mudgee Mail as far as Faulconbridge, to move off at 12:30 am and stop for the night at 2:40 am just above the river. Up again at 5:30 am on the Saturday to descend to the Grose for breakfast and then move upstream to find a cave marked with the names of two of the missing lads. Nearing Linden Creek we heard the planes roaring up the valley and attracted their attention; they thought that we were the missing party until we signalled to the contrary. We reached Wentworth Creek at midday to find that the police had been through the same morning. As the afternoon wore on, lack of sleep on the previous night began to exact its toll and we made camp at 5:30 pm as another plane passed over. We lit a smoky fire to attract attention and on the return journey the plane dropped four paper bags to signify that the missing party had been located.

Thereafter chief interest was in the speediest means of leaving the valley.

We continued upstream on the Sunday and about 8:30 am, beyond Porcupine Creek, we met three bushmen from Bilpin who had just descended via Tomah Creek; they informed us that the police were taking the missing youths back to Blackheath, and gave us notice of an easy way out along the spur between Hungerford and Porcupine Creeks. We followed this route and after some bother with bushfires, reached the Bell Road at 1 pm and followed it to Bilpin for lunch and a wash. Thoroughly refreshed we returned by car to Kurrajong for the train home.

The Search and Rescue section then came into being and its first call to take the field came in January 1938 when two hikers were reported missing after their failure to return

home from a hike through the bush near Heathcote on a Sunday. The request for assistance was received at 5 pm on Monday and at 4 am Tuesday eight members of Federated Clubs met at Railway Square to travel by lorry to Heathcote. We ate and drank; meanwhile police and relatives of the missing pair had arrived.

After consultation police and relatives moved down the regular track and Goondera Ridge. The lorry continued along the highway to drop walkers in pairs to descend Goongal and Kangaroo Ridge and to cross Uloola Heights. Two of the parties converging at the junction of Goondera Brook found a note to the effect that the missing walkers had proceeded downstream; hastening downstream, they found that the lost walkers had already been found by the police and relatives at Karloo Pool.

The activities of the Section commenced to arouse considerable interest among the various clubs, which in some instances arranged club exercises, using pigeons as message carriers, and gathered some valuable data. In August 1938 an extensive exercise was carried out in the area between O'Hare's Creek and Princes Highway with about sixty searchers covering the allotted sections - and finding the 'lost party'. A subsequent valuable exercise operative from a base at North Springwood also attracted much attention.

With the outbreak of war, walking activities were restricted and the Search and Rescue Section (many of whose members were serving at home or abroad) was not called upon to assist the police in finding lost hikers. With the recent improvement in the war situation and the resumption (despite travel restrictions) of walking in its various forms, it has been considered opportune to quicken interest in the activities of the Search and Rescue Section of the Federation.

Further valuable experience was gained in a recent exercise and it is hoped that the support so readily accorded the Section by members of the Federation will continue - and so enable it to operate efficiently should the call arise. Volunteers should register with their Club representative, or direct with Paddy Pallin.

Map Sale

\$2.00 (or less)

Fund Raising for BWRS

Many people and organisations have taken full advantage of the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) map sale, to stock up on inexpensive maps. There are still about 3000 maps left in this fund raising event. These are the normal 1:25,000 (plus a few 1:50,000) topographic maps used for bushwalking. All maps are 1st and 2nd edition maps which most of us still use. While, there are no 3rd edition maps there are about 260 individual map titles, from around NSW; all good bushwalking country. Visit the BWRS website to see a list of the map titles available & purchasing details at www.bwrs.org.au/map sale.

All maps are \$2 each but the discount for bulk buys of maps grows as you increase the size of your order in this run out sale. Don't miss out!

BWRS is the Confederation volunteer remote area wilderness search and rescue squad. It is a member of the VRA (NSW Volunteer Rescue Association Inc.) Proceeds from this fund raising sale will be used to purchase necessary equipment.

At this price, you could wallpaper a den with them (and daydream about future trips).

Book review

Colo River Passes and Routes

Brian Corlis, 2005
ISBN 0-646-44721-11

Many of us know the old Bob Buck sketch map of the Colo River, with the passes shown rather roughly on it and the very brief notes at the bottom. Well, this book is an update on that map, but in a different format.

The book itself is printed in large (12 pt?) font on rather heavy glossy A4 paper and bound with a plastic lay-flat binding. There are heavy clear plastic covers front and back. I think it was printed with a colour laser printer.

Brian starts the book with a short introduction to the Colo River region and the standard access routes - Coulou, Canoe Creek, Bob Turner. He does add, very wisely in my opinion, that 'It is recommended that people with little experience of rough and rugged terrain should not enter this country'. He goes on to describe a number of one and two days walks into the river via the Passes. These descriptions are not track notes (there aren't any tracks for most of them anyhow), just very brief outlines of the routes. Many of them include the phrases 'experienced walkers only, rope essential'. I know those routes, and I endorse his comments.

After this the book lists the Passes themselves, but with far more detail than the notoriously brief notes found at the foot of the Bob Buck map. That said, these are not 'track notes': you need to be able to read this country for many of the more difficult routes. Bob Buck simply noted in places 'rope handy': this was a clear signal to those familiar with the area that serious rock climbing was most likely involved! Brian does give more detailed warnings of such hazards.

I understand Brian has actually checked every one of the route descriptions himself - I met him at the foot of Big Pass one day when he was checking out the final one - Pass 20 I think. Bob Buck gave names to just a few passes - names he had learnt from others. Brian has added his names to every other Pass, usually based on features or events encountered during his explorations. 'Wounded Knee Pass' does have a certain ring to it, but I do wonder about 'Death Adder Pass', not to mention 'Snake Bite Pass'.

Brian has added a few extra Passes to the list. Thus for example Pass 11 is followed by Pass 11(a) and Pass 11(b).

when I had the first colour edition of this magazine printed. My pictures were too dark as well. There are also a few typos here and there, including an unfortunate misspelling of Wollangambe. One wonders how that one got past the two proof readers who helped Brian! But, these things happen. Brian acknowledges these problems in an included Errata. This is Brian's very first go at publishing, and all things considered he has done a good job.

One has to ask whether this is a complete listing of all Passes into the Colo. The obvious answer is no: there are many which are not included here.



Walking the Colo

Staws Gully is listed, and he has added a route which bypasses the 'impassable 25 m waterfall' in Pinchgut Creek. (It isn't impassable, but never mind.) On the other hand, he has not included the Wollangambe Passes as they don't access the Colo.

Finally, Brian has shown the Passes as dotted lines on enlarged colour copies of the relevant topo maps - he managed to get permission to reproduce these from the CMA. There are 8 of them, covering most of the Passes.

Included in the book are a number of dramatic colour pictures of the Colo region. One could wish for a slightly lighter rendering of some of these pictures, but such matters are rather tricky for a novice publisher, as I found out myself

In addition the routes given are not the only possible ones: I have used slightly different routes for some of the Passes. Some are quite different from Bob Buck's version, especially Canoe Creek. The now-standard tourist track there is just a footnote to the description of a 'steep scrambling' Pass 13 on Bob Buck's map, while Brian has omitted that rather useless route and given the name Pass 13 to the tourist track. But that is part of the fun of the area. However, I will repeat Brian's warning: this area is very rough, navigation is very hard, and there are many dangerous cliffs and gullies. Go very carefully.

Roger Caffin

The book is available direct from Brian Corlis for \$35 including P&P. You can order from Brian via email: briajen@optusnet.com.au or by snail mail at 35 Camellia Ave, Glenmore Park, 2745.

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Book Review

Day Walks in the Lower Grose River and Tributaries

(with particular reference to the Engineers Track)

Michael Keats, for The Bush Club
ISBN 796-51099445

This guide book is probably the first to focus on day walks in the Lower Grose Wilderness, and certainly to the first to focus on The Engineers Track. It is an A4 size with a stiffish cover and black and white printing inside. Ten walks are included as the original track notes from The Bush Club, They have been supplemented with pictures and maps. The maps are scans from the Kurrajong and Springwood topo maps and have the routes shown on them. Grid references and times have also been included from the actual trips.

These are all day walks of a medium to tough grade. There is a fair bit of

climbing involved, and much of the hard work is off-track - through scrub which at times can be a bit thick, depending on the regrowth from the fires. Navigation is required in many places. Experienced walking parties would have no trouble, but I would hesitate to recommend many of the routes to novices. (Yes, I have been over all the ground mentioned with my own walking.)

A major reason for the author's interest in the area is The Engineers Track.

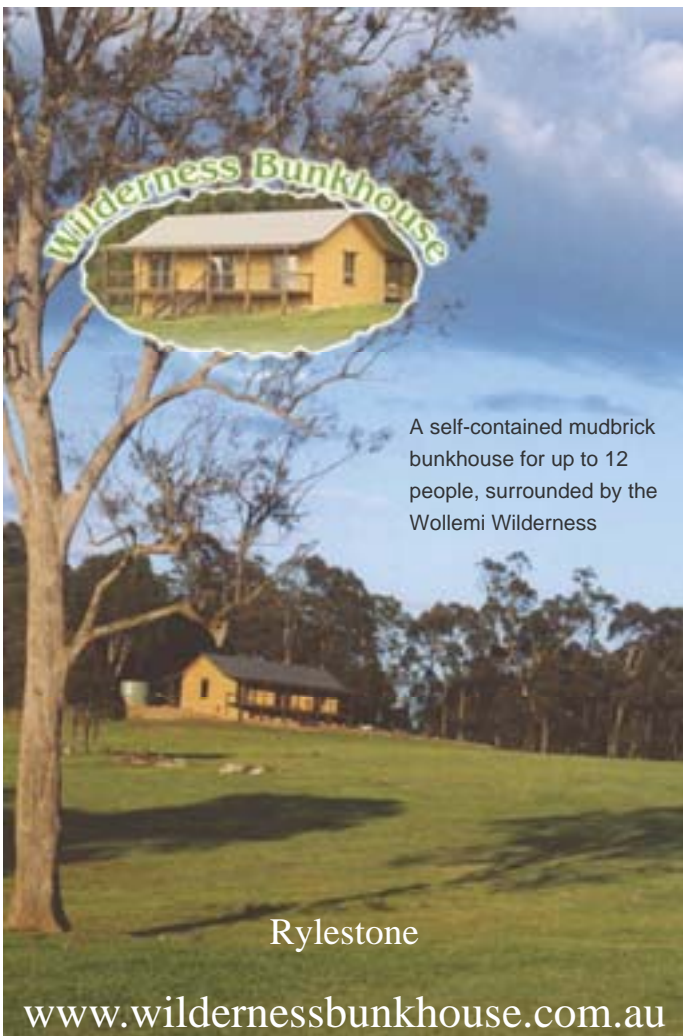
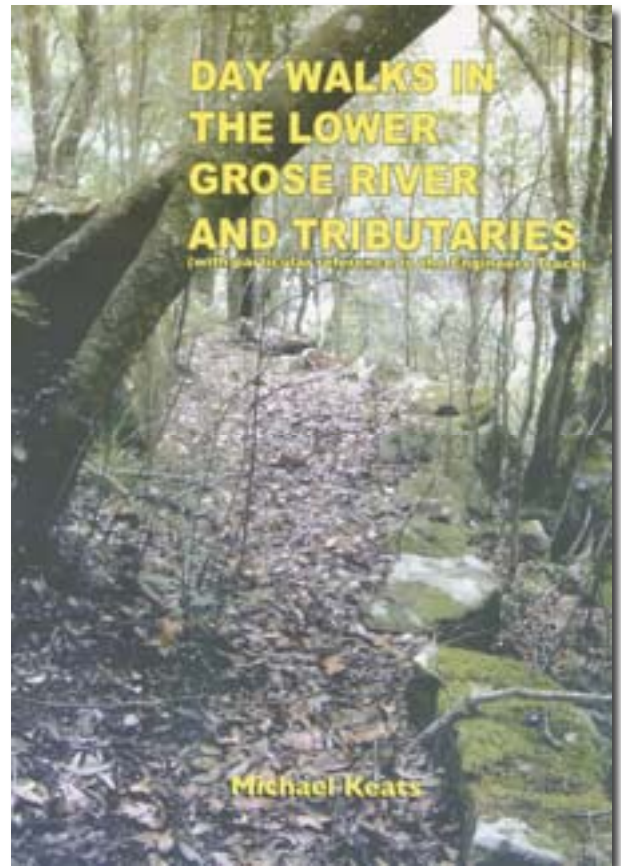
This was a major engineering work done very early in the history of Australia, in 1858-59, by the Army Royal Engineers at a time when they were just starting to get their own identity. They ran a survey track up the entire length of the south bank of the Grose River in the Blue Mountains to see if the valley might be suited to a route over the mountains. It wasn't, of course, but it was a huge undertaking in itself. When the decision was taken to run roads and railways over the top of the mountains, the Track was forgotten.

But the Track is still there! Granted, in many places it has been

eroded or damaged, but much of it can still be walked, and the author has been involved in the creation of the Engineers Track Heritage Infrastructure Committee (ETHIC). (See The Bushwalker vol 30/3 for more details of ETHIC.) The committee's aim is to see the Track restored as part of our heritage, and so that walkers can enjoy it as well. Many of the walks in this guide have been along the Track, seeing what state it is in and documenting it. When the full length of the Track from Yarramundi to Darling Causeway has been restored I believe it will be a world-class walk, on a par with the Overland Track.

The book is self-published. Frankly, I think a second version with some serious editing, a smaller format (to fit in my pack) and hopefully a few more walks along the length of the Track would be welcome in a few years. But in the meantime there is no other published way to find out about this area and the Track, and the author is to be highly commended.

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Farewell Ray Tyson

Keith Maxwell, *President BWRS.*

On Monday 30th May, I attended a special funeral. It was a full NSW Police Funeral for Mr Ray Tyson. This funeral was special because of the calibre of the man being remembered.

Ray Tyson was a part of Sydney history who moved on to become part of the fabric of NSW. Ray was one of the founding Police Officers of the NSW Police Rescue Squad. It is hard to believe that as late as World War II there was no dedicated, skilled rescue squad for the people of NSW. A rigger from the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Harry Ware, was asked to join the NSW Police as the rescue officer for the NSW Police Cliff Rescue Squad.

In 1943, Constable Ray Tyson was selected to train with Harry Ware in cliff rescue. In this far smaller Sydney city and less populous NSW Sgt. Harry Ware and Constables Bill Fahey and Ray Tyson performed many rescues throughout Sydney, the Blue Mountains and beyond.

'The Gap' at South Head became known as 'the suicide spot' for Sydney. Body retrieval was real hero stuff. Many memorable press photos were taken of Ray as he descended the cliffs seated on the wooden plank of the boson's chair (no safety harness around the body) within the cumbersome cliff rescue machine.

Modern materials have made rescue equipment comparatively light and compact. Far stronger nylon Kermantle rope has replaced the thicker, heavier manilla rope that teams of Policemen would hold. Modern climbing ascenders (Jumars etc.) and descenders (Whaletails, Racks etc.) were yet to be invented so brute force was used to control ascent and descend of the boson's chair. More manilla ropes would control the heavy three metre high 'A' frame of steel poles as it was made to lean out over the cliff so as to get the boson's chair clear of the rock face.

Police Rescue was not just cliff rescue but included rescue of persons trapped in motor vehicles, trains, industrial and domestic situations. On many occasions bushwalkers from the Search and Rescue group of the Federation (now Confederation) of Bushwalking Clubs were called upon by Ray Tyson of the NSW Police Rescue Squad.

In 1960 Sgt. Ray Tyson became Officer in Charge of the NSW Police Rescue

Squad and his name became synonymous with rescue. Around this time concerned citizens in some NSW country towns sought to establish volunteer rescue squads. The State Emergency Services (SES) was yet to exist. NSW was still in the era of 'Civil Defence'. Sgt. Tyson was called upon to help train these volunteer rescue squads. Ray saw that some formal organisation of these volunteer rescue squads really was required to standardise training and provide a representative voice to the NSW Government.

In 1969 he played a major role in assisting four country volunteer rescue squads (Albury, Dubbo, Parkes and Wagga Wagga) to establish the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA). Ray liaised with the NSW Police Commissioner to arrange for the first VRA Annual Conference to be held in the NSW Police Training Academy at Zetland. In May 1970 the Search and Rescue Section of Federation (now known as Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad - BWRS) joined the VRA. The VRA now represents 74 volunteer rescue squads and is presently the second largest provider of primary rescue in NSW!

In 1976 Ray retired from the NSW Police and was appointed the honorary Director of Training and Patron for the VRA. He shared his vast rescue experience with VRA Squads all over NSW via his 'TTT' (Tyson's Terrific Tours). Ray's TTTs continued for seventeen (17) years during which time he typically would drive 70,000 or more kilometres per year as he helped nurture the VRA. 'Father' was the nickname he acquired and answered to. The current VRA Director of Training, Harvey Black was guided and nurtured by Ray to a standard he could not have envisioned. It was my pleasure in the early days of NavShield to introduce Ray Tyson each year to present the major awards. Ray remained a proud Patron of the VRA up to his death.

The NSW Police Commissioner, Ken Moroney and the foundation President of the VRA, Max Walters, both spoke with feeling at Ray's funeral. Traffic was halted outside the church for the guard of honour of Police and VRA personnel. Two VIP Police motor cyclists lead the hearse. It was a privilege to represent BWRS in this guard of honour.

Ray TYSON OAM, ESM, KPFSM,

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. No guarantees are offered by The Bushwalker for any of the gear: that's between the buyer and seller.

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

Fairydown sleeping bag \$200 ad1
Suit winter trips down to -20 C, good condition, high loft, centre 3/4 zip, hood, medium length.

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

SCARPA "Lady Trek" Leather Boots \$150 ad2
Size 37, tread as new, stitching perfect, only worn on approx. a dozen day walks - leather slightly sandstone scuffed.

SCARPA SL Mens Leather Boots \$75 ad3
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Cameron Barrie crossing the Snowy River en route to Blue Lake. Photo: MVP / Tanya Miller



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