

The **Bushwalker**



Coming off Coolara
Peak to Cox's River

Volume 31
Issue 1
Summer 2006

The Bushwalker

'Where Am I' Competition



Picture 17



Picture 19



Picture 18



Picture 20

- 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 13: Castle Crag from Ruined Castle, identified by Dave Noble (Ranger)

Photo 14: Schlink Hilton Hut, identified by Keith Maxwell (BWSR)

Photo 15: Narrownneck from part way down Devils Hollow, identified by Ian Partridge

Photo 16: end of Cattle Dog, above the Carlons Gully, identified by James Bevan

Photo 6: remains open

So you can still lodge an entry for photo 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. There's lots of other good stuff there too.

Correspondence may be sent to the editor or to the Confederation Administration Officer. Address details are given above.



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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.

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Please indicate which issue you want your subscription to start with. We don't want to duplicate copies you already have.

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 fifth issue of the new colour version of The Bushwalker, the magazine of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW. We are now into our second year of colour.

We still need 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. No pay, but plenty of glory! 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: (minimum acceptable 300 dpi, JPG or TIFF preferred). Really long articles may not fit however - sorry about that. And, of course, the Editor is always interested in receiving bushwalking books and maps for review. Enquiries 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

Apologies

This is getting to be a regular feature. I omitted the author details from the trip report from Armidale. The article was by David Lawrence, the president of the Armidale Bushwalkers, and the photos were by Colin Wood.

R.C.



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Coorongoooba Creek

Lisa McCarthy, October 2005

The weather forecast for this particular weekend sounded very promising – clear skies and temperate spring conditions, which had some of us very tempted to ‘leave the tents at home...’ However, no one was so bold as to tempt fate.

Saturday dawned bright and clear, there were a number of car campers set up at Dunns Swamp for the weekend/school holidays, but by no means was it packed out. After breakfast, we headed east, up the track - something or other about an easy *ridge walk*... At the end of the track the group dispersed, searching for a hut that was noted on the map. This remained a bit of a mystery, but during this search there were a number of native orchids spotted, which received as least as much attention as any hut would have.

This was new territory for all of this party, so maps were regularly referred to along with some new GPS

was steady, as was our water consumption. No doubt some of the late arrivals from the evening before were feeling these conditions more so....

What was supposed to have been an ‘easy ridge walk’ took us most part of the day. After some easy scrambling down a few rocks we found ourselves on the banks of the Coorongoooba Creek. The vegetation change was instantly noticeable, and the invigorating water of the creek was more than welcome.

Doug Floyd, who has walked extensively in this region, had mentioned that there was a very roomy overhang, or camping cave not



Waratahs in bloom

area that was not under a tree with suspect limbs.

Our camp was amongst enormous Blue Gums, these beautiful trees with their smooth trunks completely surrounded us. There were number of waratahs flowering close by, with native orchids, violets, silky purple flags and pea flowers scattered around. There was a profusion of boronia, fringed myrtle, hakeas, wattles, coachwood throughout this area. The bird life was captivating, and kept us attentive the entire weekend. With no shortage of wood, we had a good economical ‘cooking fire’ and built the fire up a little later, as the temperature dropped.

Our Sunday morning was enjoyed leisurely and a group decision was made to explore the Coorongoooba Creek, as opposed to any kind of ridge walk, due to the anticipated high temperature (for this time of year). So we set off downstream, and what a beautiful little creek it is! Quite easy terrain to begin with, although a bit further along we experienced a bit of vine, but not any of the nasty lawyer vine. There had obviously been a bit of rain: the creek ran clear and clean, with some quite deep pools.

Along a short bit further we came across what had to be ‘Doug’s Cave’ as we called it. It was a beautiful spot, a huge overhang that was unobtrusive but would provide adequate shelter from the elements. Theo decided to have a dip and spotted a good size yabbie in a deep pool, basking in the sunlight. Then there were a number of fungi and orchid photographic opportunities, so



Cliffs above Coorongoooba Creek

toys. All members took an active interest in navigating the route down toward Coorongoooba Creek. While no water was observed along this track, there had been good rainfall previously and the spring flowers were in profusion. The day had warmed considerably, and our pace

far from where we had descended. Without knowing exactly where, a couple of the party set off without packs on a quick scout for this location. On return after an unsuccessful search a very large grassy area was selected. With room to spread out, it was easy to find an

we ended up having early morning tea there.

Just after this, we came to a junction, so we opted to explore a tributary of the creek for a while, with the option of exploring the other arm on return. The creek continued to open up somewhat, then close in again a few times. We consumed our lunch at a very 'bouldery' part of the creek, with numerous rock orchids and ferns, mosses covering the rocks. It was a very pleasant spot.

We returned to the junction, where Lee decided to return to camp (and hopefully start the fire!) This part of the creek was somewhat lower in volume, but still very scenic. We followed its route for some time before making a decision – we could continue on and do a 'loop' around the cliff line to our left (all scrub/terrain unknown); we could find our way up and over this cliff line to our camp which was just over the other side; or we could retrace our steps along a known track, and return to explore another day. There was no opposition about returning: the day was unseasonably warm, and no one regretted the decision to remain in the creek for the day.

At the junction we had formerly noticed a possible cave on our left; we found a navigable path up to it, and there was another comfortable camping cave with outstanding views. This was duly noted also on our maps for future reference.

Our return to camp was without incident, and Lee was applauded for having the fire ready for us weary walkers to make tea upon. As it turned out, he had been extremely lucky. When sitting near the fire an enormous limb had fallen from one of these beautiful BIG trees and landed right next to him. I hope he bought himself some lottery tickets when he got home!

Although the cave was extremely comfortable, I don't think anyone regretted camping where we did – the wildlife really was fantastic. Our keen birdwatchers had found for us numerous nests: some still being built whilst others essentially 'flew the coop' as we watched. We discovered a Satin Bower Bird's bower, with all his collected blue treasures. Among the birds observed were Boobook Owl, Grey Mountain Fantail, Eastern

Yellow Robin, New Holland Honeyeater, Black Chinned Honeyeater, Eastern Whipbird, Gang-gang and King Parrots.

And around the 9 o'clock mark, the possums made their presence known. A small party had gone 'frog spotting' in the creek, and we had heard one from a distance, none were seen. During the early hours of the morning, I was awoken by very strange UN-possum-like noises, and next day Phil observed some Koala scratchings on some trees. Disappointingly, none were seen, although I got up several times in the night trying to capture sight of them.

Our last day was an uneventful walk out, which was far easier than most of us anticipated. Although it was quite warm, we were in no hurry and took our time. Once at the cars, most of the party stopped off at Dunn's Swamp for a swim (sorry, should change that to a very quick dip!) before meeting Roslyn and Phil at Rylstone for a counter lunch.

This was our departure point: after consuming more than elegant sufficiency, we set off for home, another great walk with a great group. Thanks to Theo for getting us out there & back!



Nesting in the rain forest

Note:

This region is on the edge of the NPWS Wollemi Wilderness Area, and as a matter of policy The Bushwalker does not publish access information to such areas.

Editor.

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Phytophthora hits Wollemi Pine

Andy MacQueen

With great fanfare, October 2005 saw the release of the first generation of Wollemi Pines propagated from the trees in the wild. They sold for thousands of dollars each. Unless you are an unusually wealthy bushwalker (with a very big backyard!) you probably dipped out—but you will get further chances when much cheaper second and third generation specimens are released in future years.

A few days later the Department of Environment and Conservation revealed that the plant pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi* had recently been found in one of the trees in the wild. It is understood that a second tree nearby is also showing symptoms. Tests on cultivated trees have indicated that the pine is susceptible to the disease, though the effects are not necessarily fatal. DEC Deputy Director General and Parks head, Dr Tony Fleming, said “*Phytophthora* is a soil-borne fungal-like disease that causes root rot in many native and introduced plant species,”

There are three separate stands of the wild trees. Hopefully the disease is confined to one stand. However, as it can take years for the symptoms to become apparent, this cannot be guaranteed. The Department has embarked on a program of detailed testing of the soil and trees. Strategies for combating and isolating the disease will be implemented.

The big question is how the disease came to be at the site. The answer may never be known. It has possibly been dormant in the soil for many years, and only recently triggered by the right conditions—perhaps the drought. Or it may have been introduced only in the last few years. The spores can be transported by humans or animals, or carried in a watercourse. [In fact, it is proving quite widespread at a low level around all of Australia – Ed.]

The risk of human visitors importing *Phytophthora* was recognised—and publicised—soon after the pines were first discovered. Since then scrupulous measures have been taken to

minimise the number of official researchers visiting the pines, and to disinfect boots and equipment. And of course, unauthorised visits were banned under the Threatened Species Conservation Act.

The Department considers it likely that the disease was introduced by an unauthorised visitor. It is known from surveillance of the area and from second-hand reports—not to mention a notorious article in *Wild Magazine*—that there has been a number of unauthorised parties. Most of the people involved probably took inadequate precautions against importing the disease.



Phytophthora infection

When rumours started to appear about bushwalkers visiting the pines, the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs took a stand on the issue. In *The Bushwalker* of November 1997, Conservation Officer John Macris stated “Legalities aside, the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs believes that responsible people should clearly avoid attempting to discover the location or visit the pine. With the best will in the world to take precautions against causing damage, you cannot be sure that the friend you take with you or tell about it - or his friends or their friends - have similar good intentions.”

Any bushwalker who happens to hear of the supposed location of the Pine should keep it to himself, and not attempt to visit it. Any other course of action would be contrary to the conservation objects of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs.

Though it is to be hoped that a bushwalker was not the culprit, that possibility has to be recognised. The truth will never be known. This surely underlines the importance of the ‘leave the pines alone’ policy: hopefully two of the three stands of trees have been untouched by the disease, and will remain so.

Much as we might enjoy the challenge and adventure of wilderness bushwalking, we must never lose sight of the fact that the primary purpose of wilderness areas and National Parks is to conserve biodiversity.

Andy MacQueen is a Springwood Bushwalking Club member and Chair of the Blue Mountains Region NPWS Advisory Committee



Wollemi Pines

Gear For Private Sale

If you have more gear than you need but don't want to throw it out, advertise it here. No charge for club members.

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.

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

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

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

Scarpa Lady Trek boot \$150
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Magellan 2000 XL GPS \$60
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Black Wolf Grand Teton 65 L Travelpack \$160
Bought for hostel tour of Europe in 2000. Proceeds to Confederation in memory of Prudence Tucker, former Confederation Admin Officer.

Salomon Gore-tex boots \$150
0409 701 749
Dark blue, size UK 7, US 8 1/2 - too small for me. Julianne Sandison, PO Box 880, Bowral. N.S.W. 2576

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Green Gully

Wilf Hildur, Nov-2005

Carlons farm, also known as Green Gully or Packsaddlers, has been a popular bushwalker, honeymoon and holiday destination from the early 1930s until the 1960s. The guesthouse was a tiny cottage of unique construction – pise (rammed earth) covered with weatherboard, now reduced to ruins.

It was built by the Tolhursts of Megalong Valley who still have a similar building on their farm. In 1908 Bernard Carlon purchased the Tyrol (later called Green Gully) property from the Tolhursts, for his son Norbert who was 24 years of age. The Carlons thus acquired this unique homestead and in later years the hospitality of Alice and Norbert Carlon became legendary amongst bushwalkers.



Green Gully (photo by Editor)

Thanks to Jim Barrett and Jack Tolhurst for this information.

Editor's Note

A old bushwalker friend of mine tells how he and his mates used to walk out from Katoomba railway station to Carlons Head on Friday night, come down the chains, and arrive late in the evening at Green Gully. They would spend the night on the verandah. He said that at one stage Bert had an automated arrangement

for the fireplace. He would feed a long straight dead sapling through a window opposite the fireplace, and every now and then he would pull on a block and tackle arrangement to feed a bit more of the log into the fire. No chopping!

The property has since been acquired by the NPWS, and it seems that they have done some preservation work on it. Well, the roof now seems watertight, anyhow. And the 'new' house there has been removed.

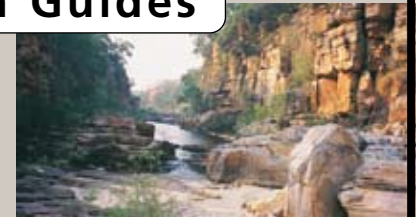
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Vera Falls, Valley of the Waters

By Brian Fox

As a keen bushwalker the heat of the summer days confines my walking to the cool of the mountain valleys, creeks and waterfalls. The Valley of the Waters is just one area which ranks high on my list. It can be accessed from the western end of Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls. The well worn track next to the Conservation Hut leads to Queen Victoria Lookout and Empress Falls Lookout. From here the track goes via steel ladders and a track junction to the left to another set of stairs. This old, well preserved wooden staircase is called Mrs Murrays Staircase (not the original staircase). It is here that we reach the base of the first main waterfall on the Valley of the Waters Creek, Empress Falls. Walking downstream on a well used track, we find Empress Falls quickly followed by Sylvia, Edith,

Lodore, Flat Rock, Britannia and Red Rock Falls. There is quite a gap before the next and what is the last waterfall on Valley of the Waters Creek is reached, that is, Vera Falls.

Vera Falls has track access both to the top and the base of these falls and has the longest fall of water of all the waterfalls on this creek system.

But how did the name come about and who is it named after?

The Wentworth Falls Trustees in May 1897 appointed a sub committee to name the waterfalls in the Valley of the Waters. One of those persons selected was Frederick Moore. Frederick Henry Moore (1839-1934) was born in Perth, Western Australia and was sent to England in 1854 to complete his schooling before joining

his uncles firm, Dalgety & Co. When he was about 25 years old Dalgety & Co sent Fred to New Zealand to be head clerk at their Dunedin office. In a short time he was managing the company branch at Invercargill. Later he went to Launceston, Tasmania to be the manager there. Finally at the age of 39, he opened a branch in Sydney, for which he was initially resident partner, later General Manager.

Fred married twice. His first marriage was on 10th June 1865 to Jane Williams. She bore him a



Vera Falls

son, Frederick Dalgety 22nd April 1867, but unfortunately Jane died shortly afterwards. He later married Alice Ffrench (yes, the spelling is correct) by whom he had a daughter Vera Gascoigne born in 1888. Vera went on to marry R B Murray of the Royal Engineers and died 17th November 1972.

Fred was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, a Fellow of the Royal Society, a member of the Union Club of Sydney, the Union Jockey Club of Sydney and the Melbourne Club. He was a director of both the Imperial Insurance Co. and the Union Bank of Australia, Sydney. Quite obviously Fred was a very influential man and the choice of naming Vera Falls after his 9 year old daughter was readily accepted when the sub committee presented their report back to the main body of trustees in January 1898.

Of course those wishing to visit Vera Falls must remember that all the steps and downward slopes to reach the falls have to be retraced, but the reward is well worth the effort.

References:

Personal Correspondence from Richard Moore (descendant of Frederick Moore) 23rd January 2005.

"The Moore's of Derry and Oakover", 2003 by Richard K Moore.

"Wentworth Trust Minutes Book".

"NSW Register Births Deaths and Marriages", Registration No. 7099/1972

"Sydney Morning Herald", Death notices, 18th November 1972, p132, col 6.

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Big Yango

Queen's Birthday, 1954

as recalled by Darby Munro in 1975

This belated walks report will give a few old timers a nostalgic reminder of the days before the Club was ten years old and give present Club members a chance to judge whether bushwalking has changed much in 20 years.

Anne and I left Merewether, on foot, for the 12:50 am train to Singleton from Broadmeadow station. It was such a cold clear night that we were confident that the weather would be good for the weekend. The train was crowded but we found a seat in a Ladies' Only compartment and slept for the two and a half hour journey.

At Singleton we found the Waiting Room floor completely covered by the bodies of bushwalkers - apparently with the blessing of the Station Master. The fire was burning very brightly, but so was the usual 500 watt globe in the ceiling, and the constant coming and going of the locals made sleep hard, even at 3:30 am. Accordingly, Anne and I left for the cold and windy, but quiet, conditions of the park opposite and slept until daylight.

Amuster showed a total attendance of thirteen, including some beginners. With the sun came the problem of providing transport - George, the leader, hadn't been able to settle anything finally with the local truck owners. We found the Howes Valley carrier skulking around the corner, unable to take more than two and unwilling to take any at all. Consequently, George drove a hard bargain with another truck owner who agreed to the price of "ten bob" (one dollar) a nob for the 35-mile trip. After losing the entire party down the street, we left at breakneck speed for the Macdonald River. The driver dropped us and without drawing breath, raced back to Singleton.

The walk down the Macdonald River, which kept us busy all morning, was slow and difficult but quite

entertaining. Periodically, walkers would disappear up to their knees in the yielding sands. There was barely any flowing water in the sand-choked channel. We had in mind the junction of Waring Creek as a suitable stopping place for lunch, but this turned out to be too far in spite of strenuous efforts to achieve it. We stopped short and had a long drawn out lunch on the sunny bank of the river and hurried on at about 2 pm.

Waring Creek was anything but 'just around the corner' and the long shadows from the surrounding hills had filled the riverbed before we arrived. It was agreed to go on for a



MacDonald River (photo by Editor)

mile before leaving the river and striking off east to Mount Yengo. After reaching the top of the ridge we found that several gullies lay between the mountain and us. (Note: we were using the only map available, the OLD four miles to one inch Singleton sheet, which is not much better than a school atlas. The owners of these maps don't practise precision navigation!) We crossed one of these gullies and promptly arrived at the brink of a second. Mount Yengo was by now in plain view and a great discussion ensued as to whether we should stay on the ridge top or go down and up again. While the argument continued, I offered to 'find out' if it was crossable and descended to find a good campsite and water on the opposite side.

The night was cold enough to freeze up water bags (-2 C) but we

slept in fair comfort. After a very social breakfast next morning we crossed the following gully and made our way along a long ridge leading to Mount Yengo, which was slowly growing larger on the eastern skyline. At close quarters it was beginning to look dry and brown.

Quite suddenly we left the scrub and entered a small grazing property through which a small stream flowed. A rest gave us an opportunity to find a whole pond full of baby tortoises, which frustrated all efforts by the photographers to catch them in action. Keith took one, young in years but mature in odour, home to Marie. [Not today! - Ed] We had lunch in the shade of a rock outcrop, still some distance from the mountain, which we reached at 2 pm. In spite of the impossible task we faced next day,

at least half of the party decided to climb to the top. We made our way up the steep sides to the flat top. At least two trig points are needed to give a full view from its flat top. We had good views of Warrawolong, Coriaday and other peaks to the west.

When we started off again, we began to notice the deficiencies of the map. A long ridge walk in growing darkness brought us to the brink of a valley, which at first sight seemed to be the one visited in

1947. However, we decided that it led back to Howes Valley and followed another on our right hand side where there was a cleared area in which we camped for the last night (we hoped). It had been a long day and by now the new members were looking a bit stunned. To bed with the prospect of more than 20 miles to walk before 4 pm.

We rose at 6 am after another frosty night and, after a quick breakfast, followed the valley, which ran around the mountain to the south, soon becoming a clifty gorge. Discouraged, we climbed out to have a look. We had wasted energy, moved in the wrong direction and wasted valuable time.

Now we started a compass course - east -, traversing an endless series of

Continued on page 12

Corang Circuit, Budawangs

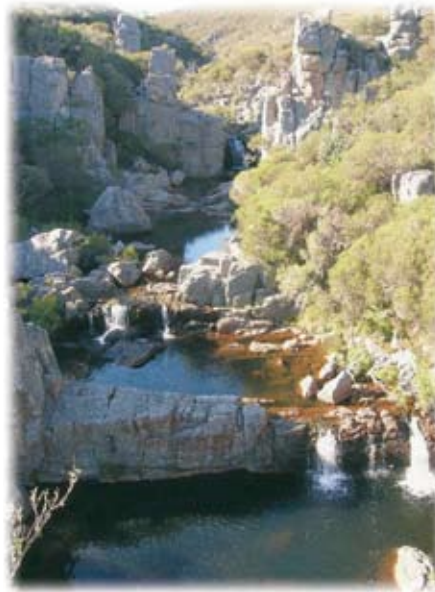
Paul Ellis, May 2005

One Saturday in May I joined up with the Shoalhaven Bushwalkers for two days walking in the Budawangs. It was 9:20 am when we finally arrived at the car park at the Wog Wog trackhead. It was decided to have an early morning tea here before moving off down the track 20 minutes later.

We passed the rock slab with the bronze plaque commemorating the 1998 addition of Corang Peak to the National Park at the trackhead and descended to Wog Wog Creek, crossing this narrow stream using small rocks as stepping stones. Then it was the ascent along a narrow and overgrown track onto the ridge above before the track opened up after passing through an old fence line. This is an old vehicle track that has now become no more than a narrow foot track. We found ourselves walking through eucalypt forest with some species of snowgum and later, stringybark. Our walking group had split up, some of us putting on some pace to warm up in the chilly air, some content to take their time and set an easy pace.

We soon arrived at a series of rock outcrops known as Tinderry Rocks and we stopped at the first of these for another short morning tea break, taking the chance to climb up and take in some views south across the farmlands and pine forests. About 100 metres further on we noticed a small track heading uphill to our left leading to another outcrop. We dropped packs and went to explore, finding an easy climb up onto the top at the rear of the outcrops we found ourselves on a large flat area with even better views, including the distant Corang Peak to the south east. It is thought that this is the proper Tinderry Lookout despite the sketch map stating it was at our earlier stop. After descending and completely circumnavigating the large outcrop we returned to our packs and continued on. Very shortly we arrived at a small track intersection marked by the letter 'T' on the trunk of a large tree. The track to our left was the one we would be returning on tomorrow, but for

now we now continued straight on, heading uphill to a large conglomerate outcrop. The track makes its way through this outcrop, descends the other side and then ascends gradually onto Corang Plateau. We had climbed onto the plateau without realising it. The narrow track occasionally gave us glimpses of views on either side - north towards the Goodsell Basin and south towards Wog Wog Mountain and the pine forests around it.



Cascades on the Corang River near the junction with Canowie Brook

Most of the track here is rock platform, though the scrub on the dirt track does crowd in on you as you fight your way eastwards. Corang Peak now appeared in the distance. Some of our group were getting quite hungry and called for an early lunch. A spot was found with a sizeable rock platform on the cliff edge with views south which included some interesting rock platforms. No sooner had we dropped our packs than the sun appeared from behind the clouds to warm us up as we enjoyed our lunch break.

From here the track ascended briefly to the northern side of Korra Hill where duckboards allowed us to cross the boggy ground. At the eastern end of Korra Hill is an open flat area which is used as an emergency campsite. The area has

great views of Pigeonhouse Mountain to the south east. The track now ascends steeply to the top of Corang Peak, passing a right hand track for those not wishing to climb the peak. The track to the top of Corang Peak has been extensively repaired with timber to reduce erosion. This would be the steepest ascent of the entire weekend and we were glad to get it out of the way.

At the top we emerged to find two young bushwalkers enjoying lunch with 360 degree views of the mountains and valleys of the Budawangs in this area. We could see as far as Currockbilly Mountain, Mount Budawang, Admiration Point, Pigeonhouse, Corang Arch, Burrumbeet Brook, Goodsell Basin, Broula Brook, Canowie Brook Valley, Quiltys Mountain, Hoddles Castle Hill, Mount Haughton, Mount Tarn, Bibbenluke Mountain, Mount Cole, Donjon Mountain, Mount Owen and The Castle. The two young bushwalkers must have been miffed as the serenity of their lunch break was interrupted by the appearance of 9 chattering Shoalhaven Bushwalkers. We had a short rest break to admire the views before we again shouldered packs for the descent on the other side.

I found myself in the lead as we made our way across the plateau, now heading north eastward on rocky ground as the track took us towards Corang Arch and the descent down the conglomerate slope. Corang Arch is found on the western side of the northernmost tip of Corang Plateau, not far from the descent on the conglomerate slope. It is easily found if walking close to the cliff edge. Access is through a small cave (forming another smaller arch) in the rock platform at the cliff edge. An easy scramble through the cave and down to the arch itself reveals a short easy climb onto the top of the arch or a short descent to a cave in the cliff between the arch and the plateau for excellent views through the hole to the valley below. We sat or stood on the arch while other

members of our group took photographs from above. Colin surprised everyone by gaining access to the arch from the harder northern end. We now moved on to the descent down the conglomerate slope. The route is not marked, but common sense shows the way. During the descent to our right we had a great view of Pigeonhouse, framed through a gap between two large rock monoliths. We also had a great view of Profile Rock Hill below us. From this point the track becomes quite steep and some care needs to be taken. At the bottom of the scramble a track on the right descends steeply to the campsites on the Canowie Flood plain. Here, a faint track to the left is seen. We would be taking this track tomorrow, but for now we continued straight ahead. We crossed the very swampy Canowie Brook Plain on old rotting duckboards before ascending the small ridge next to Profile Rock Hill, taking note of the face-like features on the southernmost point of Profile Rock Hill which has given it its name.

As we reached the top of the ridge we came to one of my favourite views in the Budawang: up and across the Burrumbeet Brook Valley, flanked on both sides by large rocky ridges. We followed the track around the south western end of the valley before heading between the two ridges. We stopped at a track intersection. Below us was an open campsite, while the track above led to some camping caves under the cliffline along the southern end. We ignored these sites, continuing on up the narrow valley. After some deliberation over which track actually led to the camping cave we finally found our selected spot, not too far from where the track ascends out of the valley and onto the Bibbenluke Ridge. In an area noted for its virtual maze of walking tracks, we dropped our packs under a large overhang at the bottom of the western ridge.

The large cave had ample firewood, was sheltered from the wind, but had a very dusty floor. It was obvious that some form of mining had been done here as horizontal shafts have been dug into the cliff line, both next to the

cave and further around. The lines of these shafts were too perfect to be caused by nature. We now selected our sleeping spots, most of us dirty about carrying tents this far (though a necessity just the same) and helped in collecting firewood. Some of us took the short walk down to the creek to collect much needed water. The creek was hardly flowing, but there were a couple of spots where small cascades allowed clean water collection.

We spent the next couple of hours preparing our sleeping areas, cooking up dinner and collecting more



Corang Peak across Corang Plateau to Corang Arch,

firewood. This was interrupted by Colin's sighting of a bright red sunset in the west. We all made our way along the base of the cliffline to get a better look. Unfortunately trees blocked the best views, but some climbed up the rocks to the top of the escarpment for a better look. It wasn't the perfect red sunset and it didn't last too long and we were soon back at the main cave organising our meals and starting the campfire. It was well and truly dark by the time we had finished our meals. Although the cave was well sheltered from the wind, one soon felt the chill when venturing outside. By 7.30 pm most of us had started to get into our sleeping bags. The clear night sky was now shrouded in heavy cloud and I hoped tomorrow wouldn't bring rain.

I awoke at around 6.45 am next morning. For breakfast I cooked up some bacon, eggs & mushrooms on my Trangia stove. One thing I do like about two day walks is the chance to carry such luxuries in my rucksack. As there were no tents to dismantle, packing up was quite speedy and by 8.15 am we were back on the track

and heading back to the campsites on Canowie Brook where we stopped for a short break. The sky was again overcast but occasionally the sun would break through. It looked like the clouds would clear and we would experience a sunny day for viewing the cascades.

We now followed a defined track across Canowie Plain. The track becomes quite swampy as it nears the large pool and cascade where water can be collected for the remainder of the walk. A little further on we pass an excellent campsite big enough for about three tents and here we need to find the correct track as there are quite a few. The main track from here has deteriorated quite considerably and we have to force ourselves through thick scrub that is often head high or taller. The track ascends gradually to a rocky ridge and around the other side it ascends further and we can hear the sound of waterfalls. We dropped packs on an open rocky area that had views down Broula Brook.

We backtracked to a small side track that descended to a large rock rib, from the top of which we all gathered for one of the best views on the Corang River. The rib drops precipitously to the river far below, but the views include three impressive waterfalls just below the junction of the Corang River with Canowie Brook. Colin again amazed us with his temerity by scrambling to the narrowest edge of the rib for better views.

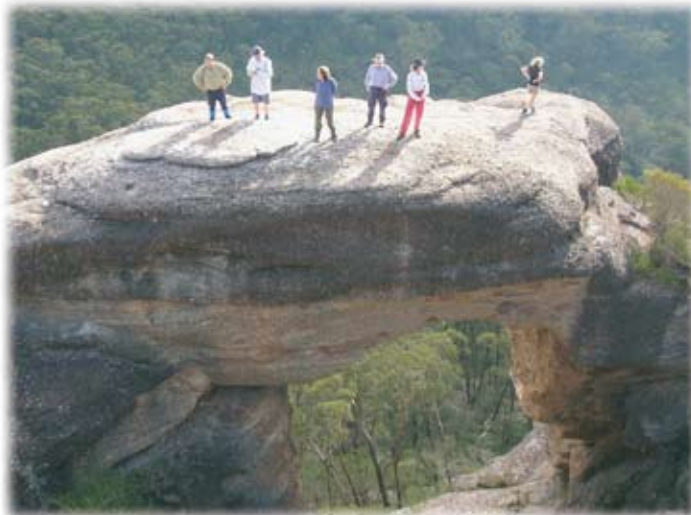
Returning to our packs we continued uphill for a short distance before finding the cairned route down to Broula Brook. We crossed the brook and ascended the next small ridge. On top was another rocky platform where it was decided we would stop for morning tea. With the sun shining down on us we relaxed with views of the Corang River and the Goodsell Creek area. The track from here descended to a small campsite next to a dry creek. We crossed the creek and ascended a small rocky slope. It was here 3 years ago on a previous walk that we had needed to take a compass bearing to take a negotiable route to the

cascades on the Corang River. Brett was even commenting that after this ridge, there would be no track. However, to our immediate surprise upon reaching the top, we found ourselves on a well defined walking track. Surely this track hadn't been here 3 years ago, if so, how could we have missed it? Incredulously we followed the track through the scrub and it wasn't too long before we arrived at the large campsite near the lower cascades. It was only 11.00 am, too early for lunch, so we dropped our rucksacks, grabbed our cameras and went to explore. Next to the campsite the river forms a large pool that would provide an excellent swimming hole in summer.

We followed a small track along the river bank to the first of the cascades. Here the Corang River drops in a series of spectacular cascades, creating cool rock pools. There are about 4 series of cascades, all very photogenic before the river makes its final drop via a spectacular cascade. Access to all cascades is via a negotiable route either along the rocks on the river, or the narrow rocky river bank. Above us

was the corrugated remains of an old water race that was used in the 1880's for gold sluicing. Of course Colin played Mountain Goat, amazing us with his agility as he climbed up the steep rocky incline to locate the water race. He signalled to us confirming he had found it.

Returning to the rucksacks we had



Our group on top of Corang Arch

our lunch break. The clouds were starting to gather at 1.55 pm as we headed out back to the cars. From the campsite the track (one of many) ascends onto the ridge heading out along the Goodsell Creek area. It quickly levelled out. The track is well defined and passes through open

timber for 3 km descending and ascending only at 4 creeks, the major one being Goodsell Creek before the track arrives at the intersection with the tree marked with the letter 'T' we had passed yesterday.

We had a quick break at the 'T' junction before heading the last 3km back to the cars at Wog Wog trackhead. This was basically the most boring part of the weekend as we were now walking back along a section we had walked in on yesterday. Sue and Peter took this chance to stretch their legs and put a bit of speed on while everyone else kept up a nice steady pace.

It was a most enjoyable 2 day walk in one of my favourite walking locations. Is it any wonder I return to the Budawang time after time, year after year. Many of our group enjoyed the steady pace and the fact there were many stops to take in points of interest. There was certainly plenty to see and there was much more we didn't, but there's always next time.

*Photographs - Courtesy of
Colin Taylor*

Continued from page 9

deep gullies. Mount Yengo seemed rounder and closer than ever but at 12 pm we struck a fairly promising ridge above a small valley in which a small road could be seen. The sight of these hopeful signs encouraged us to have lunch after which we thrashed along the ridge to the spot where we knew the Yengo Track must be. There were loud cheers when we finally stumbled onto it. Now it was only a matter of time before we finished - but how much time?

After a pause we set out, hopelessly, for Laguna and the 4 pm bus. After three hours of road bashing at high speed, we were all cursing the road we had previously longed to reach. To make matters worse, it began to fade to a grassy, unfrequented track, wavering in its direction and apparently not interested in arriving at Wollombi. Darkness came and we

mechanically continued our tedious march, knowing that we had no hope of getting back. Hours later, when our spirits were at their lowest, the headlights of a truck came in sight behind us and when the driver stopped, he told us that Wollombi was still 14 miles away. It was 8 pm so the news was received with little joy. The car owner took our packs, the two girls and one with badly blistered heels, leaving 10 desperate and blasphemous characters to continue. More hours of walking followed until we reached civilization in the form of a confusion of branching tracks - and thus another crisis.

Suddenly, relief arrived in the form of a bouncing bus from Wollombi, manned by the driver and our walkers and well supplied with food, good news and optimism. We bounced back to Wollombi where the Pub was reopened in our honour, and after

refreshments, we were driven to Cessnock bus depot. A further bus took us to Maitland where there was a 2-hour wait for the 6 am train to Newcastle.

Out of trips like this, the 'sickie' must owe its invention but as far as I know, we all resignedly had our showers and went off to work. It must be admitted that we never saw the beginners again.

Bushwalking Yarns

In September 2005 the Newcastle Bushwalking Club celebrated its 60th anniversary. To commemorate the occasion the Club produced this book of walks reports taken from our magazine over the last half century. This report gives modern walker an insight into bushwalking half a century ago. Copies of the book are available by sending \$15 to;

The Secretary
Newcastle Bushwalking Club
PO Box 554, Charlestown NSW 2290

A Walk in the Victorian Alps

Mike Sawatske & Graeme Mee,

Watagan Wanderers, December, 2005

Photo:
"The Razor
And
The Viking"

This Watagan Wanderers walk was planned as a repeat of a section of the Australian Alpine Walking Track from Mt McDonald to the Viking in Victoria, accessed via the town of Mansfield, which the club had walked in Nov/Dec 2001. Once in the mountains it is a ridgeline walk at elevations between 1400m and 1750m with splendiferous views of wilderness mountains, valleys and rivers but most especially the Terrible Hollow. It is obvious that the gentrified explorers did not get to name much in the area. Descriptive names such as Mts Buggery, Speculation, Despair, Viking, Razor, King Billy, Nobs, Howqua, Wonnangatta and then Horrible Gap and Terrible Hollow, leaving the imagination to run riot speculating the reasons for these names.

During our longish car shuttle on the first day the rain began, which was a pest. The fickle alpine weather which one plans for and one warns people about the possibility of – actually turned nasty on us – how dare it? T'aint cricket! So with brave heart and optimism our hardy group of sightseers climbed the 400m elevation on a rough fire trail into the clouds for a first night's camp with almost continuous rain. Surprisingly, to me anyway, there was only one person who was at all disheartened by this change in our expectations and acquisition of wet gear. We all set off into day 2 with cold winds and occasional light showers but fleeting glimpses of the views which might have been and a realisation that the alpine flowers were treating us to a beautiful display. We climbed High Cone, contoured around Square Top and then

crossed Mt Clear. Often we had views across to Mt MacDonald. Steeply we went down a ridge to a grassy cleared area with an old dam, and picked up a fire trail to our camp at Chesters Yards, a grassed area where a creek crosses the track. Old wire on some trees showed it had once been cattle yards.

Day 3 was a long, hard walk to the Vallejo Gantner Hut at Macalisters Springs. This sapped the energy of most and caused the leader to plan some 'energy saving' alternatives to our original plan, which proved irrational and were rightfully ignored. The weather was improving and allowed us to cross the mountains of King Billy Nos 2 and 1, which were bypassed in 2001 due to low cloud. Here we had our first views of the Cross Cut Saw. Hells Window, a rocky split in the hill with views through the split, was passed on the way



Cross Cut Saw and Mt Speculation

down, & then the track contoured around Big Hill before ascending Mt Howitt. During the day, we had a succession of magnificent views from first the King Billys and later Mts Magdala and Howitt.

There was heightened anticipation as we set out on day 4 for the 'jewel in the crown' - the Crosscut Saw, under a cloudless sky with a light blue haze on the distant mountains. The views afforded on this section of the walk are amazing for those of us hooked on 'eagle views' and this is rated as one of the best walks in Australia by many good judges. Me? I'm just biased and love the area.

The Cross Cut Saw is a series of 13 peaks which look like the teeth of a

saw. Even though there's a lot of hills they are not particularly tall as they are at a high altitude already, so it wasn't a specially hard walk. Sometimes the ridge is only a metre or two wide, but the sides slope off so it doesn't feel precarious - more a feeling of being on top of the world. Lunch was at the top of Mt Buggery at the end of the Saw. On we went, down to the Horrible Gap and up Mt Speculation, overlooking the Terrible Hollow. We went down to campsites in a saddle where a track leads down to water at Camp Creek.

Our two night camp on Mt Speculation heralded the return of some tropical weather changes with a 3 am light and thunder show for free. Here was a planned spare day, with various options. Some walked as far as the Razor & back, some conquered Mt Koonika (the easiest option

but a very nice walk through a carpet of wildflowers) and one discovering the pleasures of a day in camp, apparently never having experienced a lazy day in her life before this. Hope this was a wake up call? The drizzle returned on this day spoiling the photographic opportunities the area offers.

However the highlight of the walk for some was their walk on this day to the Viking & return. As we had crossed the Crosscut Saw we had excellent views of The Razor and The Viking, both very impressive landmarks, so the group was keen to set off for the day walk to The Viking. We were told it could be a up to a twelve hour day so we headed off soon after seven in the morning and walked quickly down the northern track on Mount Speculation past many beautiful snow gums. At the bottom we met an old four wheel drive track that was overgrown with pea flowers. The air was very still and quite warm and the grey sky to the west was an indication that a change was on the way.

The track branched off across Catherine Saddle and the scrub was quite thick.

Walk Safely—Walk with a Club

There were also many fallen trees which impeded walking as we headed for the top of Mount Despair. The track then headed out towards The Razor. As we approached we gained some excellent views of both The Razor and the western side of The Viking. The track became quite difficult to follow as we made our way around The Razor because it passed around and over a number of rocky sections which involved some climbing as well as a long conglomerate scree slope. There were a number of Australian Alps Walking Track markers in this area and although we lost the track at one stage we soon found our way back. Below the rocky areas ferns grew in sheltered sections where the water dripped over the rocks. Then we reached a cleared area covered in beautiful flowers and daisies. As we left the Razor and headed across the Viking Saddle the weather changed and the wind suddenly started to blow. Walking became difficult because of many fallen trees, however we soon reached The Viking. We found some water dripping off the rocks and as we had been consuming lots of water along the way we left empty bottles under the drips to collect fresh water while we climbed The Viking.

The track led up through a steep chimney where rocks have lodged in a gully and we gradually manoeuvred our

way through the gap, then headed up to the rocky ridge top. The wind had turned cold and it began to spit so we quickly took photos of the Razor and other prominent features before seeking shelter under a rocky overhang for a twelve o'clock lunch.

After lunch we headed back down the chimney and found our water bottles



Richies Hut

almost full of sweet fresh water. Then it was back over the saddle through the fallen trees to The Razor. Once again we had difficulty finding the track across the conglomerate scree slope but after keeping to the high ground we regained the track. We had a short break on the Razor before the long climb to the top of Mount Despair, then down through the scrub and across Catherine Saddle, getting quite wet. We soon regained the four wheel drive track and eventually found the track up Mount

Speculation. The start of this track was very steep and very tiring, especially after a long day involving a number of steep climbs. However eventually we all returned to camp on Mt Speculation after a very rewarding day.

All good things come to an end and we left Mt Speculation with the spectacular mists dancing in the valleys below under a blue sky. The mountain ridge was left via the Queen Spur track off Mt Buggery and onto a closed road that is reverting to bush. This travels through beautiful forests of tall straight eucalypts, hopefully saved from the axeman forever, to the Howqua River. The Howqua featured in a TV series "A River Somewhere" and deservedly so. Many pretty sights are seen on the traverse of this river to our cars at 8 Mile Flat.

Our final camp at Bindaree Hut on the Howqua heralded my 61st birthday which was gratefully spent walking and then celebrating in grand style at Wangaratta.

I hoped the introduction of this area to a wider base of members will result in more club activities there. The Victorians certainly get out there in numbers. I thank my companions for their efforts and camaraderie, their safe walking practices and their obvious enjoyment of the area – a leader's dream.

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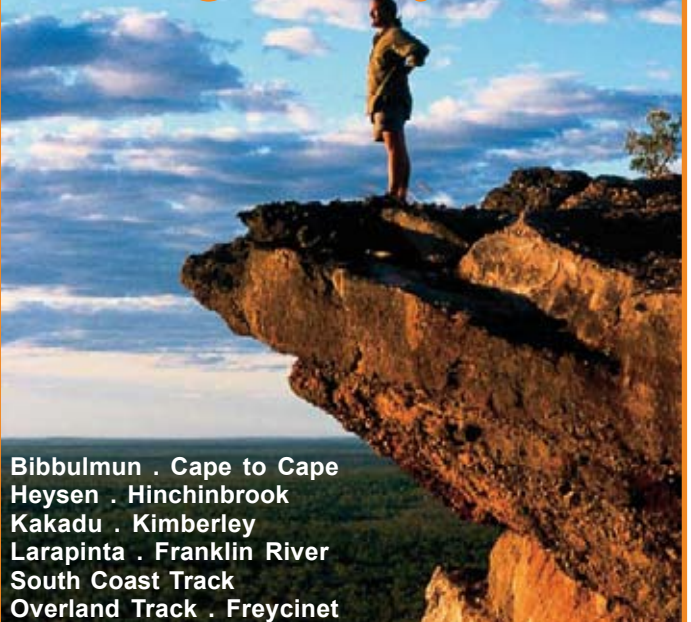
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Cameron Barrie crossing the Snowy River en route to Blue Lake.
Photo: MVP / Taryn Miller



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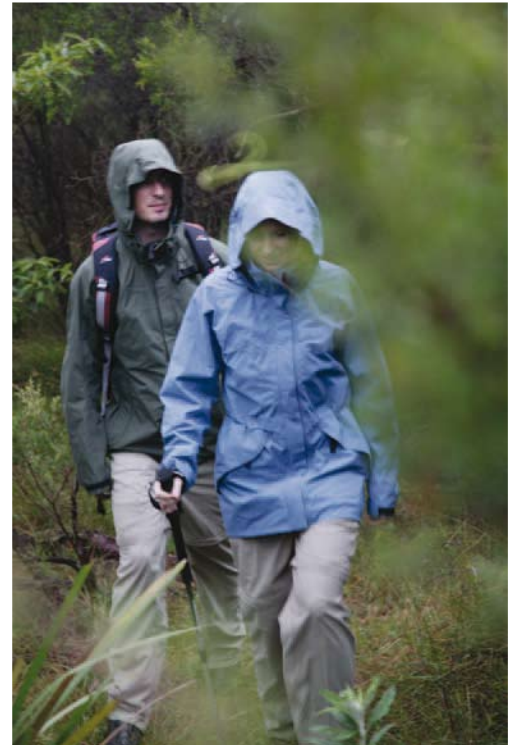
Hiking in the Chilime Valley on the border of Nepal and Tibet. Photo: Robin Boustead

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