

The Bushwalker



**Above Blue Lake,
Kosciusko National Park**

**Volume 35
Issue 2
Autumn 2010**

**Don't you wish
you were here?**



Photo: Bob Cox,
Watagan Wanderers

The thin bit on Vengeance Peninsular, Blue Breaks

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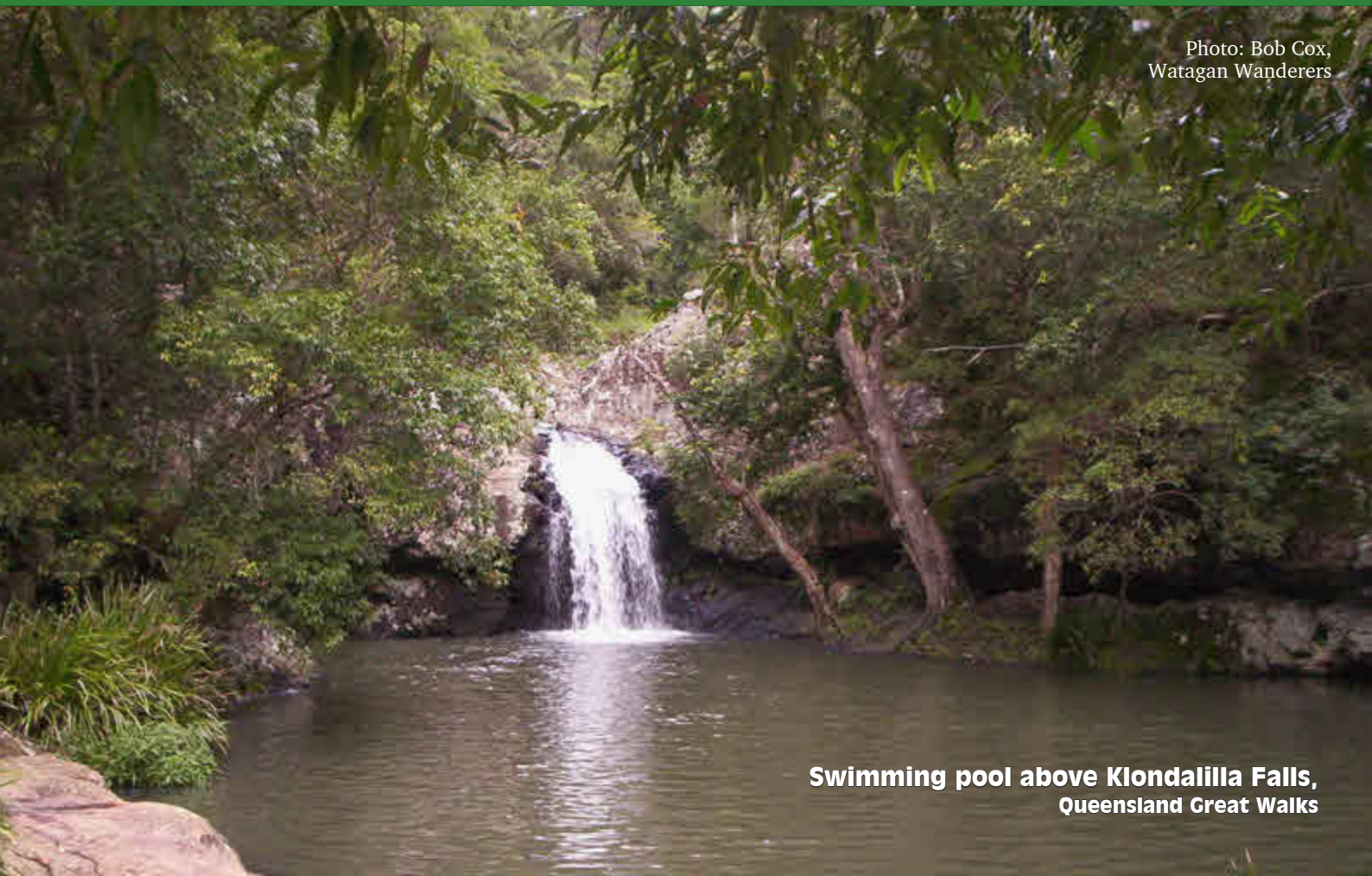


Photo: Bob Cox,
Watagan Wanderers

**Swimming pool above Klondalilla Falls,
Queensland Great Walks**

The Bushwalker

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Editor: Roger Caffin
editor@bushwalking.org.au
Graphic Design & Assembly:
Barry Hanlon

Confederation Officers:
President: Dodie Green
Administration Officer:
admin@bushwalking.org.au

Website: www.bushwalking.org.au

Address all correspondence to:
PO Box 119, Newtown, NSW 2042

The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc represents approximately 66 Clubs with a total membership of about 8,700 bushwalkers.

Formed in 1932, the Confederation provides a united voice on behalf of all bushwalkers on conservation, access and other issues.

People interested in joining a bushwalking club may write to the Confederation Administration admin@bushwalking.org.au for a list of Clubs, but a far more useful on-line list is available at the Confederation website www.bushwalking.org.au, broken up into areas. There's lots of other good stuff there too, including the bushwalking FAQ.



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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.

Volume 35, Issue 2, Autumn 2010

From the editor's desk. . .

We have two hot topics this issue, plus a sad note to the effect that Chris Baxter, founder of Wild and Rock magazines, has died. I knew Chris when both he and I were young - I was in the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club and he was active in the Victorian Climbing Club, editing their magazine. We often met at the cliff face. He went on to found and run Wild and Rock, and became known across Australia for them. We mourn his passing.

Now for the hot topics. The last issue had some articles about the proposed *Adventure Activities Standards*. I inveighed against the idea that they should be applied to any volunteer bushwalking activities. We are volunteer bushwalking clubs, not commercial 'Adventure Activity' organisations. I don't want 'adventures' on my walks! There is some hope that rationality might prevail, in the short term at least, here in NSW. Some details are given about this. Otherwise we might end up having to manage accidents as illustrated in the article about Muriel's accident. Perish the thought - along with the victim! Read on and see what you think.

The second item of really serious interest to all walkers is the action of the government in their management of conservation and National Parks. It would seem that there are malign forces in the system which are hell-bent on turning our internationally-renown icons of beauty and conservation into money-making exercises for the benefit of a small number of favoured developers and rip-off merchants. The latest planning document I have seen focuses wholly and solely on Tourism and Development. OUR National Parks are seen in this document solely as an opportunity for profit. No mention is made of Conservation or future generations. What do these turkeys think we pay all those taxes for? Boondoggles? What's more, your Editor actually has some first-hand experience of what is threatened. This must be resisted at all costs!

Articles for Publication

Clubs and members are encouraged to submit relevant articles, with a very strong preference for those with good pictures. Both the author and the author's club will feature in the Byline - this is a good way to advertise YOUR club. 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 available resolution: at least 300 dpi, preferably in their original unedited form. JPG, PDF or TIFF formats are preferred. **The text should be sent as a plain text file (*.txt), NOT as a Word file (*.doc).** I repeat, please send the pictures separate from the text file; do NOT send them embedded in a Word doc file. Pictures taken from a Word doc file are simply not good enough and won't be published. And, of course, the Editor is always interested in receiving bushwalking books and maps for review. All enquiries should be sent to editor@bushwalking.org.au.

In addition, we need landscape-format photos for page 2 - inside the front cover. These should be originals, NOT shrunk at all. Otherwise I will have to use my photos.

Please note that opinions expressed by authors may not represent the official opinions of the Confederation or any Club. The Editor's opinions are his own.

Roger Caffin, Editor



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Proposed Rip-Off of our National Parks

Roger Caffin

This is quite serious. The Federal and State Governments are looking at turning our world-famous and World-Heritage National Parks into commercial enterprises - surreptitiously. Some recent planning documents obtained by the Colong Foundation have made this clear. These all focus on tourism and commercial opportunity for private profit, not on conservation.

First we have the "AUSTRALIAN ALPS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE TOURISM MASTER PLAN". While developed by a private consulting company, it was paid for by the Federal Government. This document is utterly focused on how the Tourism industry can make more money out of the Parks. The word conservation occurs 21 times in the document, although 9 of those are in the phrase conservation tourism. Can they be counted? On the other hand, the word develop (in form or another) occurred about 230 times. It draws heavily on the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service Tourism Strategy, Draft December 2009 which is similarly focused.

And just what is the focus? This quote from page 11 of the AAMLTMP covers much of what is being proposed: The proposed Australian Alps Brand promises the Experience Seeker a distinctive holiday with immersion in a high country lifestyle and landscape. Perhaps this clarifies it (page 14): Experience Seekers in general have higher expectations than traditional tourism markets across the Australian Alps. They want a mix of quality accommodation, good food and wine, service and information that is well organised and personal, and a choice of unique experiences geared to their needs. But there are problems for the tourism industry, as noted on page 86: For example, the construction of roofed accommodation within National Parks is prohibited or subject to significant restrictions. It has also been indicated that the current NSW leasing and licensing application/renewal process for commercial operations within protected areas is complicated for operators and can be prohibitive.

What does this translate into? On page 103 one option is spelt out for the Kosciuszko Main Range area: Charlotte Pass to Kosciuszko via the Main Range, guided walk with overnight camping accommodation, meals, transfers and guide (operated by Lake Crackenback Resort). There is potential to further develop this product into a high yield, iconic Alps experience by: * transitioning to luxury innovative and sustainable in-park standing camp accommodation (exclusive to product guests) instead of more traditional tent-based accommodation (the standing camp may be fully demountable, allowing for complete removal to rest the site during winter).

On page 54 of the Report we have: 4.5.2 Potential New Hero Experiences To address gaps in the current product

offering, priority projects for development include: PRIORITY A (PROJECTS THAT COULD BE DEVELOPED IN THE SHORT - MEDIUM TERM) These projects are: • Mt Hotham-Falls Wild Walk – has potential to be the brands lead product: multi-day walk with standing camps and ecolodge (outside national park). Currently subject to feasibility assessment • Rooftop of Australia Walk, Charlottes Pass-Kosciuszko – multi-day walk with standing camps • Mt Buller-Razorback Spur Epic Mountain Bike Ride – could be Australia's first Epic Ride; currently subject to feasibility assessment • Australia's highest ride – iconic mountain bike experience in Kosciuszko National Park

You have got to love the idea of Hero Experiences! But yes, this does mean they want to put luxury tourist accommodation right into the middle of the Kosciuszko National Park. The NSW Tourism Strategy document confirms this on page 10: Evaluation of priority multi-day walking opportunities in conjunction with tourism partners • Great Solitary Walk, Blue Mountains National Park – camping-based walk in Blue Mountains NP • Royal Coastal Track to Illawarra Escarpment – commercial guided experience • Bouddi Coastal Trail – links to existing accommodation • Solitary Islands Coastal Walk – links to marine park • Australian Alps winter/summer backcountry experience – commercial hutbased experience

The Colong Foundation has this to say on the matter: Garrett sells out Labors national park credentials by Keith Muir In 2004, a Colong Foundation brochure on Kosciuszko National Park claimed that the tourist industry would soon want to develop the Main Range. Critics alleged the brochure had grossly overstated the situation. Not any more.

Six years later, Peter Garrett, ex-ACF president and Midnight Oil singer, is Environment Minister. His appointment promised so much, but he has supported the worst sell out of national park principles to business interests in forty years.

At a National Parks Australia Council meeting last September, Minister Garrett said that national parks need to be less constrained by conservation. He thinks national parks need to raise more funds, rather than relying entirely on the public purse. He is equally insistent that the push to increase accommodation and infrastructure for high-end tourism is

needed in national parks to help them pay their way.

In 2009 the Federal Government commissioned an entity called Australian Alps Tourism Master Plan Incorporated to prepare a report. After getting past BRAND this and BRAND that you discover that this master plan report proposes to canvas resorts on the Main Range. For Victoria theres a wilderness eco-lodge proposed for a Great Walhalla Alpine Walk and wilderness accommodation for a Wild Walk over the Cross Cut Saw.

After protesting to Minister Garrett I was informed that the master plan was available online on the Tourism Snowy Mountains, North East Victoria Tourism Inc. and Destination Gippsland Ltd websites from Friday 18 September to Monday 19 October 2009. So if you, like me, missed out on providing comment on this tourist business grab, its your own fault, apparently.

Minister Garrett also sat on his hands while a tourism master plan for Kakadu National Park proposed several tourist developments for that parks Stone Country wilderness. And if you read the tourist promotion supplement to the Herald on Saturday 23rd January, you may have noted journalist Daniel Scotts description of his favourite holiday adventure: "I was trekking the Jabula Trail through Nitmiluk National Park (NT) with maverick guide Mike Keighley of Far Out Adventures, and we have just arrived at our camping spot - a dramatic single drop waterfall. As I cooled off in a rockpool I heard a helicopter. It landed and out stepped Snowy, with an esky full of cold beer and hot pizzas." Similar helicopter flights are proposed in the Kakadu tourism master plan. [and see below re KNP]

The connection between conservation and low impact park use is being overturned as some of the best bits of pristine nature within national parks are developed. Only last November seven Queensland national parks were announced for development by Premier Anna Bligh.

NSW national parks are slated to be next. There are four Federally-funded National Landscapes to promote tourism in NSW, the Blue Mountains, the Alps, the Far South Coast and the Border Ranges rainforests. Tourism master plans have been released for the Alps and the Far South Coast National Landscapes and both propose development in national parks.



The NSW Government is working on new legislation to cut the "red tape" that currently protects our national parks and a range of consultant reports to facilitate park development are in preparation.

Only your opposition can stop inappropriate national park development. Join the working group opposing national park development. Contact keith@colongwilderness.org.au

The Sydney Morning Herald on April 15 had this article 'Chrome dome in red frock shock by Elizabeth Farrelly. (I think she is referring to Peter Garret in the title.)

... Not until a fortnight ago, when Garrett launched the tourism master plan for Kakadu.

The name says it all. Without wishing to harp, I feel obliged to point out the term master plan, like master bedroom, implies a dominance relationship, with a doer, and a do-ee. Here, naturally, Kakadu is the do-ee.

In 53 pages the word development appears 67 times, even across the Stone Country wilderness, and almost half the park is now designated developable area like amoebic dysentery across this remote complete, potentially, with helipads to deliver your pizza warm and your prosecco cold.

Then, just last weekend, Garrett launched another master plan, one of 15 in the pipeline, this time for Kosciuszko and the Australian Alps, or Kossie and the Aussies, as they'll soon be known by the global audience of high yield experience seekers to whom Brand Australia is addressed.

The Australian Alps national landscape strategy would be amusing if it weren't so tacky. Replete with random wordage - authenticity, respect, integrity, honesty, freedom, sensitive ... free spirit, larrikin, old, wise, craggy, strong, mystical, powerful, gentle, care for the environment - it reads like the butchers paper gleanings from SWOT Analysis 101, or the stimulus from the Third Graders Guide to Haiku. Except even in third grade they'd get their nouns and adjectives sorted.

They would also be warned off jargon as the camo of sloppy minds. For here in Kosciuszko-to-be, there are no villages or hamlets, just destination clusters and service hubs. Local culture appears as strong Aboriginal product and national parks themselves as brand-related market-ready product offering signature nature immersion experience.

Not that experience is recommended. Notes the strategy, international visitors

are drawn to the horseriding iconology ... they don't ... want to sit in a saddle. It's not about getting on the horse but getting into the lifestyle and the idea of it all. So, uh, maybe a virtual reality game would suffice, save on the greenhouse gases?

Tourism isn't even Garrett's bag. The only reason he's launching these things is the recent and unholy alliance between national parks and the tourism lobby. National parks are no longer conservation wildernesses or biodiversity reservoirs or refuges but profit centres. National parks must pay their way.

It's the same at state level. A 2008 report-to-government by John O'Neill cast national parks as state-owned tourism assets and criticised the authorities' uncommercial attitude.

Is this hot air, or for real? On a recent walk in the area my wife and I came down from Mt Townsend to Lake Albina and then continued along the Main Range to Mt Twynam. As we descended a helicopter landed at Lake Albina at the end nearest Mt Kosciuszko. The four passengers spent a lot of time (an hour or more) wandering around that end of the lake. What they were inspecting I do not know. The first two photos show this.

We headed off towards Carruthers Peak. While on the ridge above Club Lake the helicopter buzzed over us at an altitude of between 50 & 100 m,

inspecting us. The next photo shows this, and his registration marks.

Then the helicopter swooped down and landed at Club Lake. The passenger(s) walked around, and one of them went swimming in Club Lake. You can see a trail of turbidity in the lake leading to the bank where he is getting dressed.

We continued on over Carruthers Peak. After a while the helicopter took off from Club Lake and swept down the Snowy River valley towards Hedley Tarn. It descended below the hillside there, out of our sight. While we could not see it



land, I did hear the engine fade away as though it had been stopped. Some time later we heard the engine again as it rose and headed down the valley past Guthega.

I am appalled at the thought of helicopters flying around this area at such low altitudes, way below the 500 m normally allowed. We were buzzed in a manner reminding me of an American gun-ship. Landing passengers at the glacial lakes seems a travesty of the concept of our Alpine National Parks. I suspect they were interested developers inspecting possible delights for tourism, and possible sites for standing camps. My mind seethes with outrage. ♦

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Rowans Hole

Michael Keats, The Bush Club

Tarpeian Rock, Photo Ian Thorpe

The western edge of the Gardens of Stone National Park does not seem to enjoy the bushwalker patronage that it deserves. While it looks remote for Sydney-based walkers to access, the reality is that in less than 3 hours you can have parked the car and be walking in some of the most spectacular country in the Greater Blue Mountains National Park. I led a group of seven keen walkers on a 'tasting trip' to this area on 16th February this year. We had a fantastic time as recorded below.

First of all, where is Rowans Hole? The 'Hole' is located about 3 km due east of Ben Bullen and is accessed via the Moffitt Trail. It is also the headwaters of Coco Creek, a major tributary of Capertee River. Why is it called a 'Hole'? To find a credible answer we need to go back in time to the late 19th century when Joseph Edmund Carne, Government Geologist of the day, was busy mapping much of this country as part of his work in identifying the economic potential of the 'Western Coalfields'. The term 'hole' was usually reserved for a collapsed volcanic neck, and initially Carne thought that the over-deepened area at the head of Coco Creek was of volcanic origin. It is not. However the nomenclature has remained.

The walls of 'Rowans Hole' are surrounded on three sides by cliffs up to 100 m high that include the Tarpeian Rock and the Moffitt Pagodas. The two northern ends of the cliffs that are penetrated by Coco Creek appear to enclose the 'hole', reinforcing the dramatic effect.

Come now with me on our journey. It was one of those absolutely perfect late summer walking days, 14 C, the country green and freshly washed after days of rain with air clarity that occurs about 3 times a year. The walk as designed is in two discrete sections. Section 1 is a short but dramatic walk into the Moffitt Pagodas(1). The vehicles were parked at GR 244 209 on a bend on the Moffitt Fire Trail.

A long abandoned road leads generally southeast along the crest of a gently undulating ridge in open eucalypt forest. After less than ten minutes several large rocks appeared directly in front of us. The aim was to reach the very southern end of the ridge, so it was with discipline that we resisted the temptation to go directly to

the edge. The trade off would come later - stupendous views.

The end of the ridge is a maze of complex, interlinked pagodas with compound slots and drops and ramps. As we climbed to our first viewing lookout we were gob-smacked by the view. It is unique. The catchment of Coco Creek stretches before you for several kilometres. Pantoneys Crown is on the right with the escarpments of Mounts Genowlan and Airly on the left. The perfect cone of the Tayan Peak is firmly in the centre. The symmetrical knob of Cottage Rock on Mount McLean is clearly seen. On the far horizon Mount Never, Nullo Mountain and Mount Corricudgy and all their satellites are in perfect alignment.

Closer and directly north-east is Baal Bone Point and the Tarpeian Rock. A turn of the head to the northwest and Blackmans Crown comes into view. Panning south is Gardiners Hill and behind it Platform Rock. Rowans Hole lay as a green carpet some 200 m below - all this from our first vantage point.

Everywhere on this crest the pagodas crowd one another. The slots are convoluted and exciting. We clambered up and over and in and out in this vast natural playground until we reached the further most pagoda of the pagoda complex. Here at GR 249 203 is the full cyclorama of visual delectation. In addition to our earlier vision we now had the full 360-degree view. A member used the occasion and the perfect weather conditions to film the full circle view.

At 1000 am we located a pleasant spot for morning tea on the western side of the pagodas. Several members were delayed photographing an abandoned Lyrebird nest hidden in one of the elevated cave recesses. During morning tea several other members went on additional sorties of exploration. It is that kind of country - it was hard to sit still.

After morning tea it was time to explore an interesting isolated rocky knob to the north, GR 249 206. A short 200 m walk coupled with a 2 m ascent and we had an uninterrupted view north of the Capertee Valley, including Blackmans Crown, Pearsons Lookout, Mount Airly, Airly Gap, Mount Genowlan

and all the other magic mountains eastwards until they were hidden by Pantoneys Crown. Such a surfeit of good things.

Minutes later we were back in the vehicles and negotiating the deeply rutted section of the Moffitt Trail (about 1.5 km) to the turnoff to Rowans Hole, GR 250 192. Here began the more serious part of the walk. After checking water supplies we set off down a recently upgraded property access road. The cuttings are deep and show a good cross section of strata including a coal seam (about 50 cm thick) and split boulders complete with fossilised ripple marks that record when the tide went out on a sandy strand hundreds of millions of years ago. Great views of our earlier location on the Pagoda Maze were photographed, showing just how high and isolated the Pagoda Maze is.

Several minutes later we entered the private property known as Rowans Hole. I was hoping that the owner would be present so I could make myself known

Pagodas, pagodas



and explain our mission. (It is easy to avoid entering the property at all.) That was not to be. Although there is a fairly new prefabricated building it was locked up. There were no livestock apart from kangaroos and the place had the feel of being used as a lifestyle retreat on a very occasional basis. The residual stock-yards and other equipment looked old and unserviceable.

A very old track led away from the house, crossing and recrossing the boundary to the east. It soon disappeared, but the open forest was easy to negotiate and rapid progress was made. We crossed an unmarked creek at GR 265 196 and headed north, climbing steadily all the time to GR 266 199. Here we picked up an animal pad that at times had the makings of a walking track. From this point the rate of climb accelerated, 120 m being gained in the next 300 m. The now very well defined track hugged the base of the cliffs. The open forest provided fabulous views of the cleft-ridden pagoda cliffs to the immediate north – there is a lot of exploring to do in this country.

A saddle dividing the Jews Creek watershed from the Coco Creek watershed is where the track takes a 180-degree turn. The views to the north and northwest were just superb. Stephen had pushed on fast to get to this point, and was busy with his sketching pad when we arrived. Equally fleet of foot, Dave Dash

had gone off on a mission to find Tarpeian Rock.

A fascinating riddle immediately before us was part of a very old fence. It was a serious fence indeed, being nearly 2 m high and having 8 strands of wire including 3 of barbed wire, with the lowest three strands close to the ground and only 100 mm apart. It appeared to be designed to straddle the saddle although we did not bother to follow it. A check of the first edition Ben Bullen topographic map provides no answers. All shown surveyed portions are well to the west.

After a compelling photo session we went into climbing mode once more and headed to the top of what we initially believed was the Tarpeian Rock. You see, the first edition of the Ben Bullen topographic sheet shows the spot as Tarpeian Rock but the second edition has it relocated 400 m further south. While the name may have been in contention the position and the view were never in question.

It is glorious spot presenting a double head. The back head has a cave overhang while the front head is a massive, suspended rock platform with great views including the fabulous complex of pagodas that I had been previously advised were 'Moffitt Pagodas'. That is incorrect: they are unnamed and I am suggesting that this complex of pagodas be called the Pagoda Maze.



Yet more pagodas

Which of the two platforms to choose for lunch? The party was almost equally divided so I suggested we resume in 40 minutes giving everyone time to enjoy both spots. After consulting the first and second edition maps and seeing the difficulty in determining the correct

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location for the Tarpeian Rock, I determined to call this rock at GR 268 199 the Palatine Rock, after the Palatine Hill that adjoins the Capitoline Hill in ancient Rome. The Tarpeian Rock was located on the Capitoline Hill. It is a suitably appropriate and consistent classical name for a very magic spot.

Leaving was hard but we had lots more to explore. We followed the crest of the ridge headed southeast to GR 271 197. It was here on looking back that we realised that the real Tarpeian Rock was back a few metres and further west. At 1310 we stood on the true Tarpeian Rock(2) and gazed at the Pagoda Maze. The Maze makes an awesome sight and just begs to be explored. Dave advised that, based on experience, once you enter the this maze you need a minimum of 2 hours to get out, plus the necessary patience and strength to climb up and down many times to verify whether the way you are travelling will work. Before leaving Tarpeian Rock we noted some very deep and dark clefts within the Pagoda Maze and we also could hear but not see rushing water.

Very shortly we would have to make a decision as to whether to enter the Pagoda Maze complex or merely skirt around the edges. I did have with me a copy of an orienteering map, scale 1:10,000 with 5 m contours that would help if we 'went in'. Ian was all for going in deep and after consultation we decided to give it a go.

It was real adventure land stuff. There are pagodas on pagodas and a criss-cross

of slots and runnels and points and caves and overhangs. Keeping each other in sight was a major exercise and auditing that we were all together took time. The most complex section is close to the northern cliff edge. Lots of testing preceded each move forward with some of the party climbing high for a view and some testing long slots for ways down. A lot of these exploratory adventures simply ended in unscaleable drop-offs.

After about 20 minutes in the 'deep part' it was clear that a lot more than two hours would be necessary to really find a way through. Regrettably we had to abandon a full-on exploration, and ultimately headed out along a north south trending ridge towards the Moffitt Trail. Even doing this was exciting and we enjoyed a lot of very special experiences. Planning a base camp and really spending time could be very rewarding to explore and map the pagodas and a way of route. Very detailed aerial photos would be a useful aid.

For the record we entered the pagodas at GR 271 193 at 1340 and exited them onto the open spur at 1425 at GR 269 190: a distance of maybe 800 m in 45 minutes. At 1446 we emerged onto the fire trail at GR 266 181. A brisk walk along the road had us back at the vehicles at 1515. ♦

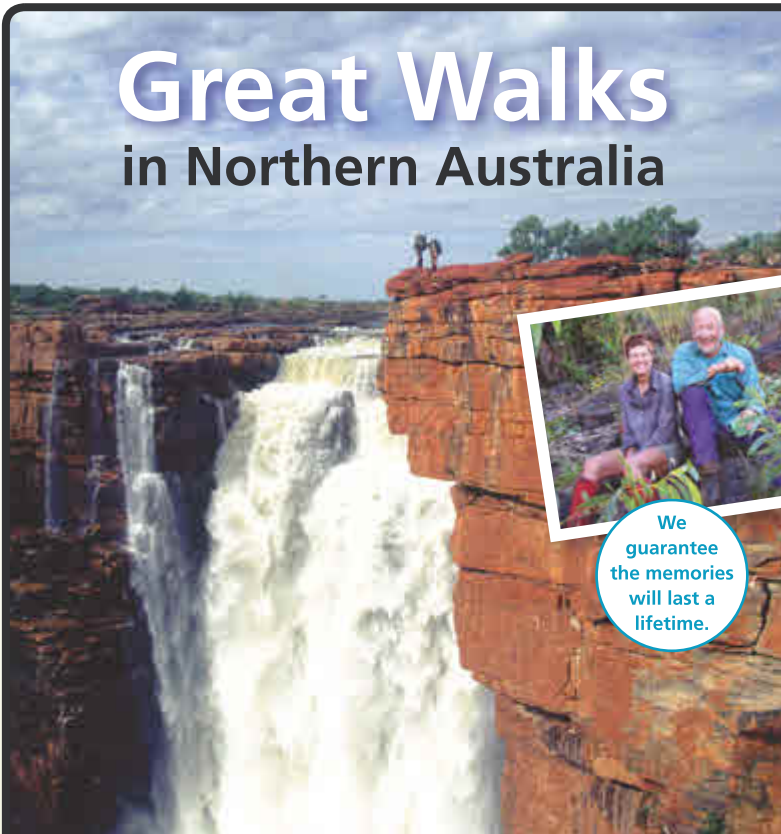
1 The Moffitt Pagodas were named after Joyce Grace (28/11/1930 – 31/07/1999) and Vern Busby (20/03/1924 – 15/09/2001) Moffitt who



OK mighty leader, how do we get out of here?

were environmentalists associated with protection of the Gardens of Stone National Park. The name was proposed by the NP&WS in January 2007 and has been adopted by the NSW Geographic Names Board.
2 As determined by the NSW Geographic Names Board

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Donald Finlayson, NZ, Kakadu Circle 1 – May 2006

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Book Review

The Upper Grose Valley - Bushwalkers Business

Michael Keats & Brian Fox
ISBN 978 064 647 319 2

There are Guide Books, and there are massive tomes. 'The Upper Grose Valley - Bushwalkers Business' definitely falls into the latter class, at 570+ A5 pages, in full colour. It includes detailed maps and descriptions of 59 walks all around the Upper Grose Valley - even a few which I haven't (yet) done. Each walk has access details and a route map based on a proper topo map with contours. In addition the book has the origin of every place name, the European history of the valley and many of the people involved since it was first discovered, comprehensive notes on flora and fauna, climate, fires and floods and much more. Six years of research went into this book: it is very comprehensive.

At A5 size it could go in your pack, but I suggest it might be much better if you photo-copied the pages for the walk you want to do. It would be a pity to damage the book

after all, and you would sure save a lot of weight!

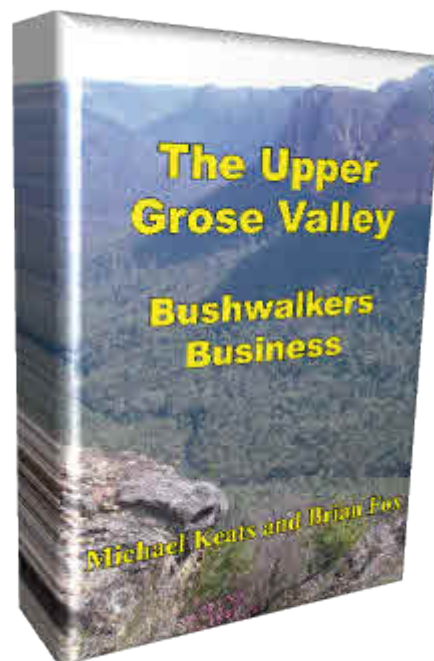
I have to admit some bias in this review, as I spent many months helping Michael and Brian with the book, doing my usual edit and typeset thing for them. Never mind: it is complete (and indexed too).

The price is \$45.00 per copy plus postage and packing. In the Sydney metro area P&P is \$9.00 per copy; elsewhere in NSW it is \$10.00 per copy. Copies can also be purchased from the address below without postage (or probably by arrangement from either author on one of their walks with The Bush Club).

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On 19 May 2009 I achieved my lifelong dream - I stood on top of the world and became only the 49th Aussie to do so. How did I get there? An apprenticeship in our very own Blue Mountains became the stepping stone to my personal achievement.

At first, this may sound bizarre. What possible skills can the bush give you that prepare you for weeks of sub-zero temperatures, fixed ropes and icy snow slopes? How can our hot and dusty tree-lined Bluies even remotely compare with the barren landscape and deprivation in the high Himalayas? The answer is simple; it's all in the mind.

A bushwalker or climber must possess many important skills, including footwork, balance, navigation, fitness and

toughness. They've pushed my boundaries in so many ways and allowed me to understand my comfort levels - all of this to the point where I could descend from the summit of Everest alone, with little concern or anxiety. I've actually been far more out of my comfort zone in the Blue Breaks and Budawang than on Everest!

What is all this mental toughness talk? Mental toughness is all about controlling your fear and anxiety, being able to stay calm and as in-control as possible when things around you aren't going as planned and when you're close to your 'edge'. Not necessarily at the limit of your climbing ability or climbing a run-out line, but dealing with certain situations without panicking.

Many bushwalks occur socially and relatively close to roads. As such, there's a low level of fear in a day's walk. Things can go wrong, but with a low probability. But what about embarking on a more adventurous and ambitious journey? A week through the untracked Wollemi wilderness? What if you undertake the walk solo? The fear levels rise, the solitude and silence heighten your senses. There are so many more things that can go wrong: snakebites, falls, broken limbs, sprains, getting lost, running out of water or food. Being solo means you have no support network (EPIRB aside); you need to deal with problems and anxiety alone. You constantly question your own

decisions, and only have yourself to blame and only you to comfort your own concerns.

It's important to know your boundaries. From going bushwalking to the Ruined Castle in a merry group to a solo attack on the Three Peaks is a big leap: it's a leap I wasn't ready for at first. I turned back on my first two attempts, finding an obscure reason both times requiring a retreat. A higher

level of flow in Cox's river, then the lack of drinking water in my pack seemed a justifiable reason to fail. But the real reason was my fear, my fear of the unknown and whether I was equal to the task. I turned back then, and I've turned back on various routes at various points since then. I just couldn't settle the demons in my own mind. But each failure adds more determination to return and succeed in that challenge next time, and each successful completion of a new route and new challenge is empowering and pushes your boundaries further as you gain trust in yourself for what you can deal with. It's amazing, suddenly you see yourself with new eyes as you complete a once-terrifying proposition with ease, clearly demonstrating your progress. Your plans become more adventurous, and dots on the middle of the map with interesting names become realistic not futuristic. Trips like Possibility Point, Sluice Box Falls and Colo river paddling become the weekend norm and traverses of the Broken Rock Range are a standard Easter programme. I was in awe of bushwalkers undertaking these trips 5 years ago; now I am one of those bushwalkers.

I climbed Everest by the south col route, the route pioneered by the British and Swiss in the 1950s which culminated with the first ascent of the mountain by



Everest top camp

strength. These must be honed for optimum performance, safety and to maximise enjoyment. One skill often taken for granted or overlooked in training schedules however, is the mind. How well do you know your boundaries? How do you cope with fear in difficult situations such as steep terrain, getting lost, or racing the gathering dusk back to the car on a new route? How is your mental toughness?

My experiences in the Blue Mountains have greatly developed my mental



On oxygen on Geneva Spur

Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tensing Norgay in 1953. It amazes me that man stood on the moon only 16 years later: it was almost easier to reach the moon than the roof of the world!

My expedition took 2 months in total: the long duration provides the necessary acclimatisation required due to the lack of oxygen. The summit of Everest has just 29% of the oxygen compared to here at sea-level. If someone was transported from sea-level to 30,000ft they would become unconscious in minutes and die soon after. But spending time at altitude, gradually gaining more height, your body has time to adjust to the lack of oxygen by creating more red blood cells. In effect you can carry more oxygen. There is also a physiological change in the way your body deals with oxygen. It is possible to climb Everest without the use of supplement oxygen from bottles, but only a small percentage of humans are strong enough or capable of this. Doing so increases the level of risk to attract a high altitude illness such as a fluid in the lungs (HAPE), swelling of the brain (HACE), extreme fatigue or poor decision making.

Even with supplemental oxygen, on summit day you still need between 8 – 10 full breaths just to make the next move forward. Progress is painfully slow, and simple scrambling is a major effort in clumpy boots and big puffy down-suits. The climbing has an added element in that you can't see your feet because of the oxygen mask. For safety, sherpas from different teams join forces to fix ropes to the mountain in the most exposed and

difficult areas, although looking at the anchors used I wouldn't trust many to hold a fall.

I joined an international team of 6 climbers and 2 climbing sherpas, the cheapest expedition on the mountain. Over the 2 months you become a close-knit group, relying on each other for social and moral support. The sherpas were incredible, carrying our oxygen bottles and tents to higher camps, yet we still struggled with 16 kg packs in the rarefied atmosphere. The more expensive expeditions have 2 climbing sherpas for each westerner, and carpets in their base camp tents!

It was special to follow in the footsteps of Sir Ed Hillary. I was in awe of their effort and bravery in their exploration, their summit attempts were so 'out there'. I could hardly imagine their feelings as they pushed the limit of human understanding and endeavour along the south east ridge with 10,000 ft dropping away on either side. No-one had ever been there, everything was unknown, they might as well have been on the moon, and the nearest support for rescue was at least a week away down in the western cwm. Their exploration and courage inspires me, it inspires me to seek out and visit remote areas myself here in



On the summit of Everest

the Greater Blue Mountains - maybe one day I'll discover my own Wollemi Pine or Eagle's Landing.

So there I am, on Everest at 8,848 m above sea level, the cloud and snow moved in without warning, reducing visibility to about 20 m. I drew on all of my bushwalking experience in the remote areas of the Blue Mountains to face the increasing anxiety of my predicament. Not once on my descent to our high camp at the south col, or the subsequent two-day descent to base camp, did I feel scared or out-of-control. The Blue Mountains have been my test-ground, and in my toughest exam yet, in the death zone of Everest, I passed. ♦



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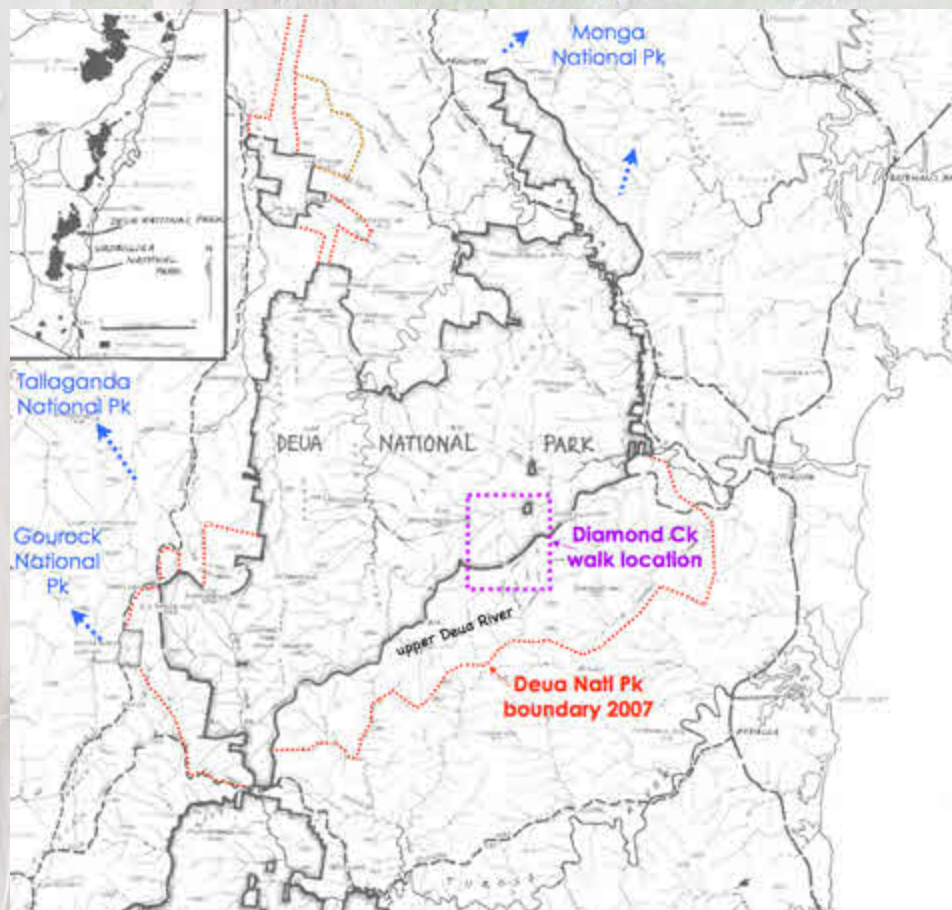
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Diamond Creek

Deua National Park

Rob Jung



Deua National Park with approximate present boundary in red overlaid on original gazetted 1980 boundary in heavy black. The base map is Nick Fisher's from the National Parks Journal, April-May 1979. Newer adjacent national parks are indicated in blue.

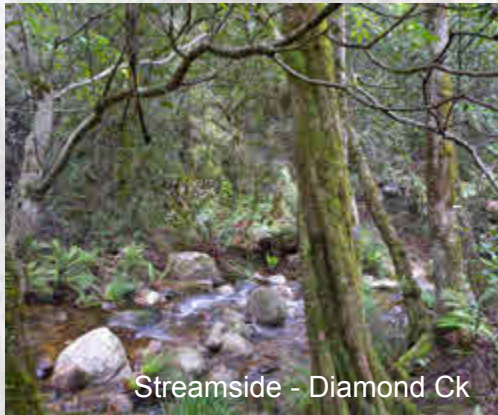
Inland from Moruya on the NSW south coast, lie the rugged escarpment forests and ridges of Deua National Park. Its wonderful country, the kind that Myles Dunphy thought compared in quality with his beloved Kowmung, on his walk through there enroute from Nowra to Harrierville in 1920.

Later Dunphy proposed a reserve for the area - "the Moruya Ranges and Upper Deua Primitive Area", but it was not until much later that a National Park was gazetted - Deua National Park in 1980. Initially the Park area was 803 km², but that was drawn up after protracted negotiations with the previous land manager, Forestry. Important though this was, the Park boundaries were expedient more than logical, and did not include important headwaters of stream catchments, such as the upper Deua River and upper Diamond Ck. It was only after years of protracted argument, including through the Regional Forest Agreement, that these areas finally were merged within the National Park. For Diamond Ck this happened in 1994 and the upper Deua in 2003.

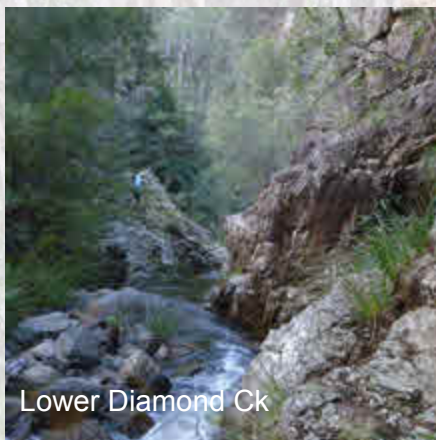
The upper Deua River and upper Diamond Ck have sections of rainforest, featuring in particular Pinkwood or eastern leatherwood (*Eucryphia moorei*). Some areas of former freehold land, such as the Bendethera caves area, have also been purchased, although the extent of



The Coondella Fire Trail follows part of the watershed of Diamond Ck.



Streamside - Diamond Ck



Lower Diamond Ck

Signs of recent high flow
in Coondella Ck

these acquired inholding areas, is not as extensive as suggested by the recent South Coast Forestry Map. The Park's area is now 1220 km².

The wild nature of Deua is recognised through its two declared wilderness areas: Burra-Oulla in the NE, which includes Diamond and Burra Cks; and Woila-Deua in the SW. The latter features that intriguing peak Mother Woila, as well as the upper Deua River. Many excellent

walks of 2 days or longer duration, are possible within these boundaries.

In the early 1990's I walked quite extensively in the part of the Park accessible from Moruya, in particular the Upper Deua River, Georges and Diamond Cks. Recently I revisited the area on a weekend walk to Diamond and Coondella Cks. This was in mid March 2010, about 3 weeks after very heavy rain - Moruya's rainfall for February was 420 mm.

We followed these Creeks, using the Coondella Fire Trail and its offshoot (GR 612 171) to access Diamond Ck. The old track leading into the upper part of Diamond Ck from the Bendethera / Lt Sugarloaf road (GR 598 133) which I had used previously, is no longer very obvious. Although this upper part is where the most of the rainforest is, it is the lower section which contains all the major waterfalls and with the recent rain they were well worth coming to see.

Traversing the creek was a slow process, but we found bypassing all of the drops a straightforward matter. Finding places to camp was not so simple - suitable places were scarce and they were only small and rough. We camped near the junction of Coondella and Diamond Cks. The most pleasant campsite on our walk route was near the area marked as freehold land on the topographic map. This was not marked (incorrectly) on the South Coast Forestry map. One surprising feature of the walk to me, was how little signs of visitation there were now, apart from the campsite on Diamond Ck at the end of the Coondella Fire Trail branch track (GR 598 170).

Our weekend was pleasantly cool, but on a warmer day the many plunge pools would make swimming tempting. It was obvious the stream flow had recently been so much higher; the stream side vegetation was flattened with many tree-limbs piled up. It would have been a place to avoid during the storms! The trip turned out to be a mycologists delight - with many different types of fungi visible.

Coondella Creek was different. Its rocks were granitic, rather than sedimentary and its course was rather more gentle. Nevertheless it still contained rough sections to traverse. It was also a bigger creek with greater flow. We left it via the ridge at the junction of its first major tributary (GR 574 185). This NE facing ridge was a good one, typically consisting of tall open forests with little scrub. One half km further upstream at the next major junction, is reputedly another good exit ridge. The grid references refer to the Bendethera 1:25,000 map with the 1966 grids. The South Coast Forest Map (1:150,000) shows land tenure, bush camping and picnic areas and is a useful road map for access. Wild Places (P Prineas and H Gold, 1983) remains a useful reference on the Deua Wilderness area. Further information about Deua can be found in the NSW Wilderness Red Index. ♦



A Diamond Ck waterfall



Forest adjacent to Coondella Ck



Open forest on the exit ridge



Muriel's accident

We welcome the progress made from Draft 1 to Draft 2 of the AAS documents. Specifically the Confederation welcomes the inclusion of the Independent Participant definition, and the explicit statement in the Introduction that the NSW AAS does not apply to Independent Participants. We are very pleased to see the replacement of Leadership Qualifications with Leadership Pathways which provides for Organisational Accreditation and Peer Recognition of Leader skills. It is still the Confederation's view as stated in Draft 1 comments that there should be a clear distinction between Commercial and Non-Commercial Operators throughout the guidelines and that the guidelines should not apply to Not For Profit Organisations. We are of the view that it is the role of the Confederation as peak body of Bushwalking Clubs in NSW to provide guidelines to clubs on operational issues and risk management. This is consistent with our view, as expressed in Draft 1 comments, that it is the role of the Volunteer Peak Bodies of each Adventure Activity to write activity guidelines on behalf of Non-Commercial organisations. These peak body guidelines would provide for all Participants.

Clearly the Adventure Activity Standards issue is an ongoing saga. I have collected and paraphrased some bits and pieces here for your edification (or amusement). The responsibility for anything taken out of context is mine.

Adventure Activity Standards Part 2

Roger Caffin

Please note that I do support the idea that commercial service providers and those offering to look after children should have to have some qualifications.

First we have the opening pages of the NSW AAS document where terms are defined, with some comment. Then we look at other parts of the document.

Adventure Activity

An outdoor pursuit requiring a wide variety of skills and equipment to engage in activities that have inherent risks and uncontrolled hazards, usually in a natural environment.

Comment: an incredibly vague and all-encompassing definition. I could make a case for bush football being included here. For that matter, having a picnic at your local park could qualify.

Leader

Person upon who dependent participants rely upon for the provision of adventure activities. Two types of leadership are applied to adventure activities.

Adventure Activity Leader

Is a person who * Applies technical skills and knowledge to conduct (without direct supervision) an Adventure Activity for dependent participants. * Provides a reasonable level of guidance or instruction to Dependent Participants to enable supervised participation in an Adventure Activity.

Supervising Leader

Is a person who * Provides a reasonable level of supervision for Dependent Participants during Adventure Activities * Exercise a Duty of Care for Dependent Participants * Initiate an appropriate emergency response as required

Dependent Participants

A person who depends upon the leader for supervision, guidance or instruction to support supervised participation in an adventure activity.

Independent Participants

A person who possesses the skills and knowledge to participate in an adventure activity without dependence on a leader. A person who acknowledges the inherent risk and assumes responsibility for their own safety and welfare.

Comment: Fortunately the NSW AAS is now starting to recognise the idea that club members are **not** 'dependent participants', but free individuals who accept full responsibility for their own actions.

Introduction

The New South Wales Adventure Activity Standards (NSW AAS) provides guidelines for organisations and leaders in the planning and provision of Adventure Activities for dependent participants in NSW.

Comment: Bushwalking clubs do **not** 'plan and provide Adventure Activities' within the meaning of this. We are volunteers going bushwalking with friends.

* The NSW AAS apply to Dependent Participants engaged in adventure activities in NSW. * The NSW AAS do not apply to Independent participation in adventure activities.

Comment: This is where we have to make damn sure that the wording does not get changed to remove this distinction.

1.1 Activity Description

Bushwalking is the activity of walking in the natural environment that may include walks for pleasure, challenge, experience and/or educational outcomes.

Comment: This seems pretty fair. However, it is my contention that this definition of bushwalking is in direct conflict with the common meaning of the term 'adventure'. We are not out for 'adventure'. In this context, note that even the AAS recognises that some walking is done in an urban environment, and admits that the AAS would not normally apply. Such a fine distinction!

Extended comments by Editor

On page 8 of the document there are a series of bullet points. Nowhere is it made

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clear what these points mean or how they are to be interpreted. The same applies to following sections. Further, many (most) of these points are ridiculous. I will give examples from this first page:

1: Accurate, up-to-date maps, charts and guidebooks are available for the intended route and area of operations

Comment: Oh yeah? Much of our walking is done with old unreliable maps and no guidebooks. We went through SW Tassie with a sketch map taken from a Tasmanian club magazine.

2: Walking tracks are of suitable construction and/or condition to cater for ...

Comment: Huh? Much of our walking is done OFF track. Now what?

3: Leaders have recent local knowledge or have appropriately researched the intended area

Comment: Many of our walks are into unknown areas precisely because we have never been there before, and because there is very little published information available. Is this to be all killed?

4: The method and style of route finding and navigation is appropriate to the intended

Comment: A totally pointless statement - how else do you navigate? Follow the McDonalds wrappers?

5: Identify significant "Catching Features" along the intended route

Comment: Definition of 'catching'? Does this mean pointy dead sticks or lawyer vines? Or is this simply a normal part of competent bushwalker navigation?

6: Overnight or Multi-day Bushwalking Activities – overnight supervision, sleeping arrangements and personal hygiene systems allow for mixed gender groups and/or participants under 18

Comment: I'm still trying to work out what this means. Just who is meant to supervise me overnight? Are the supervisors meant to be awake all night supervising?

7: Overnight or Multi-day Bushwalking Activities - Determine the suitability of

natural water sources in the area and devise an appropriate water collection and/or supply strategy

Comment: Beforehand???? When we have never been there before? What a stupid and valueless comment. But wonderful bureaucracy.

8: Assess the hazards at specific campsites and activity areas

Comment: Oh, Drop Bears and AAS bureaucrats, definitely. Mumble....

Now this is what I managed to get from the very first one of these sections. It would be boring and futile to prolong my onslaught into the stupidity and inanity of this document right through every section. My point here is that this document is in many ways a farce. I hate think what a QC would do with it.

Fortunately, some sanity is creeping in. Further on in the document it discusses forms of accreditation. I suspect some Confederation influence may be showing up here, and will cover that in a moment.

Examples of how leader recognition pathways may be applied

* a club or community group may consider Peer Recognition and Verification an appropriate means of recognising leaders within their context and expectations

Key factors of peer recognition and verification process may include but is not limited to

* Recognises the skills of the leader using an informal process * Assessment is often informal and conducted in-situ during participation * Is based on the experience and judgement of the peer who is recognising the leader * Is benchmarked against organisational context, expectations and other related experience

The Confederation has been involved in fighting this insanity off, as recent Minutes of correspondence show:

'We welcome the progress made from Draft 1 to Draft 2 of the AAS documents.

Specifically the Confederation welcomes the inclusion of the Independent Participant definition, and the explicit statement in the Introduction that the NSW AAS does not apply to Independent Participants. We are very pleased to see the replacement of Leadership Qualifications with Leadership Pathways which provides for Organisational Accreditation and Peer Recognition of Leader skills. It is still the Confederation's view as stated in Draft 1 comments that there should be a clear distinction between Commercial and Non-Commercial Operators throughout the guidelines and that the guidelines should not apply to Not For Profit Organisations.

We are of the view that it is the role of the Confederation as peak body of Bushwalking Clubs in NSW to provide guidelines to clubs on operational issues and risk management. This is consistent with our view, as expressed in Draft 1 comments, that it is the role of the Volunteer Peak Bodies of each Adventure Activity to write activity guidelines on behalf of Non-Commercial organisations. These peak body guidelines would provide for all Participants.'

Contrast this with the expected target for the AAS:

An adventure activity leader

* Applies technical skills and knowledge to conduct an Adventure Activity for dependent participants without direct supervision. * Provides a reasonable level of guidance or instruction to Dependent Participants to enable supervised participation in an Adventure Activity.

Comment: Somehow, this seems utterly disconnected from how a typical Club trip is run. It's relevance to us?

I could go on for pages, but perhaps that is enough for now? Hopefully our Confederation will keep us out of the claws of the bureaucracy. You need to emphasise this to your club delegates! ♦

Letter to the editor

On Nomenclature

Jim Smith
Wentworth Falls

Colin Gibson's research on the naming history of the Venus Beacon Tor is impressive (The Bushwalker, Spring 2009). However, the big unanswered question of his article is why are there names like Boorong Crag, Kolonga Walls and Moogan Gully in this section of the map and hundreds of other Aboriginal names from many different parts of Australia on maps of the Blue Mountains? How long do we have to live with the nomenclatural fantasies of Myles Dunphy?

I recently discovered where Dunphy got his names from. In the early 1900s there was an anthropological magazine

called Science of Man. The editors of this magazine invited readers from all over Australia to send in Aboriginal place names from their area. They also sent a form to police stations throughout Australia asking them to write out lists of local Aboriginal place names. Sometimes these lists were published, as submitted, in the magazine. However, often the editors would literally cut and paste the place names sent in to create alphabetical lists. In many cases these lists failed to give the area or Aboriginal language that the words came from. Some publishers created booklets of selections from these lists so that people could use them for naming their houses and boats etc.

Dunphy did not use these popular booklets but went directly to issues of the Science of Man. Like the editors of the magazine, Dunphy did not care much

about what part of Australia the words originally came from. When he was filling in the apparently "blank" spaces on his maps, Dunphy would select words that he liked the sound of and whose alleged "meaning" seemed, to him, appropriate to the topography. That is why we have Aboriginal place names from languages used in other States on our Blue Mountains maps.

In some cases, Dunphy would combine words from two different languages to create his double barrelled names. Recent linguistic studies have discovered many hundreds of authentic Aboriginal words in the languages of the Gundungurra and Dharug people who lived in the Blue Mountains. Surely it would be more respectful to Aboriginal people to use these truly local words rather than the translocated words of Myles Dunphy.

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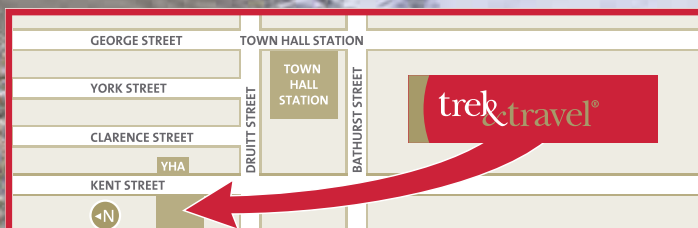
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