

The Bushwalker



Morning tea at Hohljoch Pass
under the Lailider Wall

Volume 39
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Wouldn't you like to be here?



Khumbu region of Nepal: Cholatse from Gokyo Ri, with the Gokyo Lakes in the foreground. Photo: Nina Gallo



Valentines Hut, Kosciuszko NP. Photo: Linda Groom

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

Formed in 1932, Bushwalking NSW 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 Bushwalking 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 Australian Bushwalking FAQ.



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Front Cover: Morning tea at Hohljoch Pass under the Lalider Wall. Photo: Roger Caffin.

Back Cover: Blue Mountains National Park, Mulgoa. Photo: Barry Hanlon.

From the editor's desk. . .

Well, really big news this time: we have a brand new web site! Done with all the latest (well, mostly) fancy web management programs, and much updated. It is at

<http://www.bushwalkingnsw.org.au/>

almost the same address but with 'nsw' tucked inside it. The new web site name reflects the new name - Bushwalking NSW, for what used to be the Confederation.

I must be getting old or something. I can't find an alternate name for us. So forgive me if I occasionally refer to the 'Confederation' still.

The front cover: part way along the Via Alpina Red Route, going from Trieste in Italy, over Triglav in Slovenia, over all sorts of mountains in Austria, to Oberstdorf in Germany. Took about 2 months walking. This was morning tea at the Hohljoch Pass under the Lalider Wall, a famous rock climbing region in Germany. If you look carefully at the saddle a little way up at about 10 o'clock from my wife's blue hat, there is a green grassy saddle with Falkenhutte sitting on it. The visible walking track leads to it.

We passed Falkenhutte in the middle of the day, when there must have been about 100 people having lunch outside - all served by the staff. Day walking over there is very popular: a short walk from a parking area up to a mountain hotel (not really a 'refuge' or 'hut' any more), a huge lunch, then a stroll back down to your car. Our morning tea was a lot more peaceful: the day walkers don't get very far from the 'hutte'. Tea and coffee - you can see our stove and pot, and BBJ - visible on the little white tablecloth. Also sausage and cheese - of course.

Articles for Publication

We are always happy to receive pictures for the Inside Front Cover - and elsewhere too. If you would like to see yours published, send them in. However, please note that little 640x480 photos and little photos from cheap phones are just not good enough: they simply do not print well enough at 300 dpi. We need the full-size originals, straight from the camera and uncropped and unretouched, so we can set them up for the printing process.

Apart from that, please keep those bushwalking articles rolling in. We need them. If you are describing a walk somewhere, it would really help if you could give the reader (who may be from far away) some idea of where the walk is. We don't need GRs, just a general idea. We need suitable photos for most every article, so please include a few. Once again, note that little, cropped or shrunk photos will rarely be accepted. If you want to include a DOC file or a PDF (in addition to the mandatory plain text file and full-sized photos) to illustrate how the photos fit into the text, that's fine but we don't use them.

However, photos embedded in DOC or PDF files are not accepted by themselves, and neither are scans of standard photographic prints - with the possible exception of historical items where the print is all that exists.

Finally, the opinions expressed by authors may not represent the official opinions of Bushwalking NSW or of any Club. The Editor's opinions are his own, are subject to change without explanation, and may be pretty biased anyhow.

Roger Caffin

Coast to Coast

The Coast to Coast (C2C) is one of the most well-known of the (Alfred) Wainwright walks and has, we were told, become increasingly popular with Australians since it was shown on TV in Australia with Julia Bradbury doing the walk and showing tantalising excerpts of the scenery. Starting on the west coast of the UK at St Bees, this walk is 192 miles long - about 315 kilometres - and passes through the Lake District, the Yorkshire Dales and the Yorkshire Moors before finishing on the east coast at Robin Hood's Bay.

Our trip had been organised through Packhorse – a company that specialises in transporting your suitcase to your destination each day. Packhorse also arranged the accommodation according to the number of days over which we planned to do the walk. If you had an injury or just felt like taking a day off, you could contact Packhorse (on the evening before) and book yourself on their bus. There are a few organisations that will transport your luggage, but only two that can transport individuals, too. Packhorse was particularly helpful and friendly; if anyone wanted to walk on a particular day, but didn't feel up to doing the whole walk, Packhorse would – more than willingly – provide advice about what one could do - for instance whether or not

there was the possibility of being dropped off/picked up half way along the route.

On Monday 05 May 2014 15 Aussies met up at St Bees, ready to undertake the iconic Coast to Coast walk together, with a plan to reach Robin Hood's Bay on 22 May 2014. About halfway across, at Kirkby Stephen, 2 people left (as planned) and another 4 people joined our merry band of walkers, making us a total of 17. Being such a large party - and primarily Aussies - we became "known" (and our visit "anticipated") along the C2C. The walk was mapped out as follows - with no lay days:

The weather started out somewhat grey, wet and windy and (thankfully) improved as we progressed eastwards, with the Sun God blessing everyone for a number of days. Rain jackets and overpants, beanies, scarves and even gloves were exchanged for sun hats, short-sleeves and sunscreen. However, on the last day, the Rain God decided to remind us that we were, indeed, walking in England, so everyone (excitedly???) went back to full wet-weather gear again! The walk was completed with a clean score-card in terms of broken limbs – and Mountain Rescue was not required by any of our walkers ... With so many in our group, this was considered quite an achievement.

The walk was mapped out as follows - with no lay days:

St Bees to Ennerdale Bridge
Ennerdale Bridge to Rosthwaite
Rosthwaite to Grasmere
Grasmere to Patterdale
Patterdale to Bampton
Bampton to Orton
Orton to Kirkby Stephen
Kirkby Stephen to Keld
Keld to Reeth

Reeth to Richmond
Richmond to Danby Wiske
Danby Wiske to Ingleby Cross
Ingleby Cross to Clay Bank Top
Clay Bank Top to Blakey Ridge
Blakey Ridge to Egton Bridge
Egton Bridge to High Hawsker
High Hawsker to Robin Hood's Bay

Karen Ireland

Northern Rivers Bushwalkers Club

Other "interesting" statistics (painstakingly captured each day) - written in no significant order - are as follows:

tonnes of moo-poo danced around = 34
tonnes of sheep-shit avoided = 476
new pairs of boots purchased = 2
new Goretex rain jackets purchased = 2
new walking poles purchased = 2
scones consumed at Ravenseat = 14
cups of whipped cream consumed on the scones at Ravenseat = 10 (3 of them on one person's scone)
blister-packs and bandaids used on the walk = 82
% increase in share price of organisations selling blister packs during our walk = 36%
stiles climbed per day (average) = 26
bogs negotiated = 33 (although it felt more like 3,333)
of different shower systems to master = 27
narrow stairs climbed (up) to the bedrooms each night (average) = 32
nights one man had to lug his and his wife's suitcase up to the top floor of their accommodation = 16
times stickers were not put on suitcases = 1
eggs consumed at breakfast = 426
bluebells, daisies, buttercups, forget-me-nots and gorse seen on the walk: 385,792,581
"bacon/sausage on cold toast" (from the breakfast table) lunches consumed per day: 15
cute lambs spotted: 34,062,489

One of the walkers who completed the whole walk was wearing a Fitbit (Google it) and has been able to provide his own personal statistics from the first day to the last day, reflecting all activity undertaken over 24 hours each day:

Total # steps: 540,712
Total # kilometres: 400.17
Total # calories burned: 58,309
Total # number of very active minutes: 3,640
Most # steps walked on one day: 37,393
Most # kilometres walked on one day: 27.66
Most # calories burned on one day: 2,747
Most # very active minutes on one day: 262



Green English Uplands

Awards:

Best range of earrings: Fay
Best at finding shortcuts: Tom
Biggest harem (2-footed and 4-footed): Tom
Best at making each day look like a Sunday stroll: Ian, Brian, John F
The non-stop talking-whilst-walking Award: John F
Most stylish and musical stile crossings: Karen
Biggest camera: Judy S2
Biggest bridge fanatics: Ian, Brian, Judy S2
Best taxi tours: Paul & Judy S1
Sexiest walking attire (skin-tight leggings and shorts): Gail
Most determined to complete each inch of the C2C: Ian, Ken, John R and Gail
Most inspired to do more walking trips: Paul & Judy S1 and Ken & Christina (and Ray & Karen)
Most medicated walker: Tom
Most photographed wife on the walk: Judy S1
Best "Sara Lee" dresser: Christina
Most # km walked: Lexie (the dog of a fellow walker we met on the C2C). Lexie would run between the front and back of the walking party.
Least # km walked and wimpiest walker: Karen
Best immersion in a bog: Gail
Most mud collected in a bog: John R
Most # kisses exchanged at each kissing gate: Ken and Christina
First with boot/pebble in the sea at Robin Hood's Bay: Ian
Most bandaged foot: Judy S1
Most-often licked (by a female) ear: Tom (the female was Lexie, the dog)
Most song renditions: Karen
Road Runner Award (ie fastest gallop for the B&B towards the end of each day's walk): Ken
Fashionable Filly Award: Kerry
Official Ale Taster and Chief Ale Consultant: Ray
Heaviest suitcase for shortest time on the trip: Lynda
Sexiest night-time shoes: Dianne
Best height calculations: John L
Best suntan: Vicki
Least amount of sun-exposed skin: Gail
Best colour co-ordination - orange shirt, watch and glasses: Ken
Most # days spent in rain-protection pants: John R
Most spectacular, air-borne fall: Kerry
Most spectacular blister: Christina
Most topics covered without taking a breath (or so it sounded): John F
Greatest ice cream lovers: Lynda and Dianne



Foot problems, or ill-fitting shoes

Somewhere down there is dinner and a bed

Leafy and mossy



What we learned:

Know thine limitations.

Best way to identify the Poms and Aussies? Those who sit in the sun at lunchtime are the Poms; all the Aussies sit in the shade.

How to operate the different showers in the UK.

By day, pain can be overcome with lots of blister packs, bandages and drugs; by night, a medicinal ale goes a long way.

Not all "waterproof" clothing and footwear is actually waterproof after a day of drenching rain around Black Sail and Honister Pass in the Lake District.

That when you have walked the 'last 3 km' you find there are still another 4 or 5 to go.

The apparent height (in metres) of a stile = # kilometres walked, divided by 10.

A reliable way to get a heavy bag up and down stairs is to sit on your bottom and pull it up and push it down.

The night before the next day's walk, our team leader/organiser described it as easy, but in the morning, when about to embark on the walk, he warns everyone that it will be a hard day. Something mysterious happened to these 'easy' walks overnight!

Not all blister packs are created equal - Compeed, Tesco's and Lloyd's Pharmacy ones are the best brands. Leave Boots' own brand alone...

Tom is a magnet for distressed damsels, dogs and doctors.

The number of words per minute emanating from one of our walkers was generally inversely proportional to the

number of kilometres walked. However, there were days when this was, mysteriously, not the case and the number of words remained a constant.

The Wainwright Walk became increasingly referred to as the Painwright Walk as Robin Hood's Bay got closer.

Good walking poles, boots, day-packs and lots of blister-packs are a walker's best friends.

A "real ale" has amazing medicinal qualities at the end of each day.

Women always welcome a wee moment in a real "convenience" in any/all villages they come across.

Heroes:

Paul S1 and Tom for walking with such damaged ankles.

Fay for arriving with a really bad cold that persisted for the whole walk, yet she insisted on walking almost all of the walk.

Accolades:

In conclusion, when a big trip runs as smoothly as this one did, it is easy to underestimate how much time and effort it took to get this outcome. A number of us had not done a walk like this (ie multiple-days), before. It took us outside of our comfort zone - and we loved it. A huge 'thank you' therefore goes to both Gail and Ian for all their hard work, care and good humour in doing everything possible to make this a safe, fun and memorable experience for all. ♦





Lower Portals

Ian Smith

(Being part of a sort of blog by a grey nomad - RNC)

The view from Mount French

The outrider peaks stood stark before the misty soft white doona that enveloped the otherwise commanding Mount Barney (Qld). The reason for the area not being farmed was clearly evident in the ruggedness of the facade, a veritable rock climbers' delight.

The walk was underwhelming; one gully succeeded another and I longed for some sign of the promised gorge. Continually negotiating exposed tree roots and stranded rocks meant there was no respite from the varied terrain. Most of the trees were straight, which surprised me given the seemingly poor nature of the soil and the variance of the weather.

Yet another gully, then another until, at last, a sound rent the air; sounding like a large waterfall. There are few sounds in life that lift the spirits like rushing water; hopefully the gorge wasn't far away.

Not long after I reached the thrashing stream where the water bounced off one rock after the other, creating the roar I'd heard earlier. It had been written somewhere that you don't stop here. No indeed, you have to cross the stream.

Though I looked up and down the waters there was no easy crossing so I removed the lower part of my trousers after divesting myself of shoes and socks. The water, though bracing, only caused problems because of the force and at one spot it was upper thigh deep. Maintaining my footing despite the flow was a brief, if disconcerting, issue and soon I was across and heading west.

It's only a few hundred metres further on before you come to the original Lower Portals camp site, my goal for the day. I saw a lesser-used track heading steeply away from the camp and decided to tarry a little longer in the region.

It's only about 4 minutes to the top but I had to stop three times en route to gather my breath. As I rolled across the apex I was glad I had made the extra effort. Here the mountains were seen at

their majestic best, part bare buttresses, part cloaked in hardy vegetation, all the way to the raging waters that echoed around the granophyre rocks.

A shaft of light, like a lecturer's highlighter, drifted slowly across the walls of Barney, taunting me, luring me, but to no avail. I simply sat and watched the show from downstream, filled with awe at its ruggedness and full of admiration for those who have climbed it, something I would never do.

Thus sated, I retraced my steps, finding an easier crossing downstream, only getting wet up to my knees this time and then pacing it out as I longed to return to the motorhome. A cup of tea, a rest and hit the road; it's almost formulaic for me when I'm touring.

I grafted my way around the countryside, seeking and ultimately finding, Lake Moogerah Caravan Park. Research had indicated this would be a nice place to stop; at \$20 a night with unlimited water views and a decent shower I thought it was all a bit special. The backdrop of the mountain ranges only served to enhance just how good it was. The quietness of the night air and the clarity of the stars were almost hypnotic; it was a hard place to leave.

Next day I motored off, with Mount French across the lake beckoning. I expected to be walking up a steep hill but,

no, you drive to the summit of the plateau and walk to the lookouts. The expanse from Logan's Lookout was impressive and, when I moved around further on unofficial tracks, the drama of the fluted cliffs became apparent.

However, the rest of the mountain was verboten! Phytophthora had struck. For those of you who aren't yet familiar with it, let me say right here it puts climate change and introduced pests in the shade. An insidious soil-borne mould, it has the capacity to wipe out half of the vegetation in any given area by attacking the roots. It is related to what caused the potato famine in Ireland and in WA. I have witnessed the destruction it causes and it's pretty scary. Over there it's called the Biological Bulldozer. I left the mountain in a sad state, knowing that this mould was in the area.

Then I was rolling on towards Toowoomba, not always sure of what route I should take, aware that I had to get to a bank at some stage. I'd like to say the seemingly endless roadworks on the Warrego Highway caused me to be late, and that would be partly true, but my mind was in a vacuum, partly missing home and partly still trying to work out what route to take.

When I reached the city, 4 pm had passed and thus the bank option. So I started looking for a place to camp. It



Boulders at the Lower Portals



took me nearly two wandering hours before I rolled into Nobby, a quaint village from the past where you can stop for the night. If you want to hook up to power they charge you the ridiculous fee of \$3.50. I didn't need power and thus made a great saving.

That night, the weather that had flashed and blazed on the horizon came to pass. The wind gusted and the rains came, soon after turning into mild hail, if there is such a thing. The awfulness of such a thing can only be imagined if you haven't been in a caravan or motorhome when it happens. There's a vulnerability, an exposure to the elements that are but a few centimetres away. Sleep comes late but, in the morning, the rain has stopped and I tarry awhile in this

historic centre before heading back to Toowoomba yet again.

This time, yet another storm front has moved in, and it's worse than last night. The rain is heavier and, in some suburbs, hail carpets lawn like a snowfall. I couldn't wait to move on, this time aiming for Broadwater Conservation Park, another waterside gem about 20 km south of Dalby. The rain followed me, though it was a milder version than previously.

I figured I had to head west after a nice morning by the lake and plunged on till I got

to Miles where I thought I'd see if they knew about Isla, since the Dalby Info Centre hadn't even heard of the place. The enthusiastic lady at Miles had, and then gave me a map, 10 other assorted brochures and, before I could blink, had convinced me to have a look at their historic museum. As I parted with \$10 (she gave me \$4 discount, can't argue with that) she waxed lyrical about the Norman Donpon lapidary collection. Apparently this guy had around 4,000 items and a special house (one of thirty) had been built just to house it. She said it was at the end of the street of the historic village that contains 30 homes.


Walk Safely—Walk with a Club

En route I saw much more of interest; indeed, they've done a fantastic job of setting up this place. Walking past one building I noticed some people busily engaged in something; transpired that they were putting on display a unique numismatic collection. Donated anonymously by an old lady whose husband had died, it came in bags about once a month and, so far, it's taken a lady at the venue (who works two days a week) one year to catalogue and sort it all out. I happened to be there when it was finally being put on display.


There was so much to see I couldn't begin to do it justice in the hour I spent there, the polished rocks were worth that much time alone. Of all the towns I'd been in, Miles was, pardon the pun, miles in front when it came to tourism. ♦

Lake Moogerah







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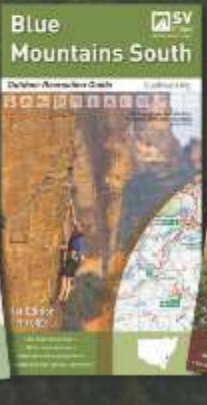
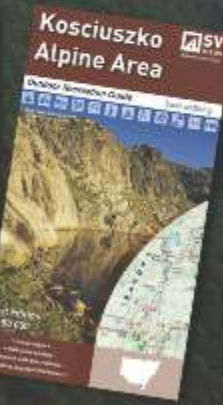
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Evening, in scrub, on the Berrima River

Pilot Wilderness

David Morrison

Back in 1993 I read an article about the source of the Murray River. This is not just a point of interest - it is the start of the straight bit of the NSW/Victoria border (the Black-Allan Line), which goes from Cape Howe to 'the source of the nearest tributary of the Murray'. This seemed like a worthwhile goal, and would allow me to tick a few other boxes on the way: The Pilot (highest mountain in the south-east part of Kosciusko National Park), the wreck of the Dakota at Cowombat Flat, Tin Mines Huts, and of course see some country I had never seen before.

The obvious route to this wonderland would be along the fire trail from Dead Horse Gap near Thredbo. This would have been a three day walk each way, plus time for exploring. Maybe a bit long, and possibly a bit boring walking back the same way.

So I started looking for alternatives. One that appealed started from Pinch River, a tributary of the Snowy River, and followed fire trails to Tin Mines Huts then

to Cowombat Flat. It then went back to Tin Mines and out to Dead Horse Gap. Well, the trip was put on the program for October 1996 and we were all ready. Unfortunately there was a lot of snow that year, and at the time we were to go, there were still several metres on the hills near Dead Horse Gap. Not a pleasant prospect, so we went elsewhere that year.

I forgot all about the trip after that, until something reminded me of it last year. So I did a bit of research and decided I could cut a day out of it by going cross country instead of following the fire trail to Tin Mines the first time. This was a bit ambitious, perhaps, seeing as I knew nothing about the country, and my enquiries revealed no-one else did either. Strangest of all was that six other mad people decided to come with me.

We drove to Jindabyne for our last night of luxury, before getting Jindabyne Taxi to drive us out to Pinch River. (Otherwise it would have been a car shuffle of about four hours. He would

pick us up from Dead Horse Gap too. Total cost \$300.)

It was a beautiful day, with just a few clouds to take the heat out of the sun. Just as well, as the first day climbed 850 m up the very steep Nine Mile Fire Trail. There were wonderful views, but! Most of us have tried to put that day out of our memories. The hill looked like it would never end. But it did eventually, and we came to the Ingeegoodbee Fire Trail. Leading off opposite the intersection was a track to Ingeegoodbee Hut, a pleasant spot with plenty of grass to camp and a quite big hut.

This was our first encounter with the feral horses that plague the area. A stallion must have thought we were invading his territory, and ran beside us for a while, snorting and carrying on. He was only one of thousands reported to inhabit this part of the park. One of our party made the mistake of drinking straight from a stream here, and had diarrhoea for most of the rest of the trip.

We did contemplate camping here, but decided to push on a couple of kilometres to the Ingeegoodbee River to shorten the next day. Due to recent rain the river was quite full, but we did manage to scramble across on fallen timber to an open grassy plain on the other side to camp. Again, the horses made their presence felt. Waterholes beside the river were muddy and trampled, and dung was everywhere. During the rest of the trip, we could hardly walk two metres without walking on, smelling or seeing horse dung, even in the thickest scrub.

Day 2 started along the fire trail north, until just past Freebody's Hut ruins we climbed the spur west into the scrub. There is not a lot to say about this. It was thick scrub and rock outcrops, similar to Sydney sandstone country, but not as prickly. The ridgetops were easy enough to follow, although at one stage we went across to Omeo Flats where the aerial photos showed it was open. It was indeed an open plain, grassy, and much easier to walk through than the scrub. Sadly the horses loved it too, and the pigs, and we also saw a deer here. The creek that ran through the middle, once half a metre wide, was now a mudhole up to five metres wide.

We covered a couple of kilometres fairly quickly before entering the bush again, and heading down 350 m to the Berrima River, our target for the day.

I was not sure what to expect of this river from the map. Maybe a nice open valley, perhaps a bit boggy, could even get our feet wet? No! The river turned out to be only a metre wide but with a good flow from the rain. There was no other water than the river, nor even much moisture. Beside the river it was fairly scrubby, but we were able to follow horse trails for a while until we found a place



Going up Nine Mile Hill - and it IS that steep

we could pitch our tents near the river. The night was again very pleasant, and not even that cold. There was a lot of condensation on the tents the next morning though.

The plan for day 3 changed a bit. We had intended to continue west to the Cowombat Fire Trail up the First Creek valley. Then we would follow the fire trail to Cowombat Flat to camp and explore the Dakota wreck and the source of the Murray. Instead, given the thickness of the scrub so far, we would head south along the Berrima to where the border line went up a spur of Forest Hill (up 400m) to the first survey station marking out the border, then go to the fire trail and Cowombat Flat. The other side of the Berrima river did indeed become a wide and open valley as the map implied, with large grassy areas that would have been wonderful to camp on. Maybe next time.

Careful navigation following a compass bearing was required from the Berrima to find the bottom of the spur on Second Creek. This was especially deceptive as there were two similar bends in the creek, and we had to make sure we were on the right one. We weren't sure, so went upstream a bit to start the climb. Again the scrub on Forest Hill was thick, and progress was slow. The worst bit was near the top where trees were down everywhere, requiring scrambles over/under/through the debris, or detours

around the end. By the time we reached the top, we calculated we had achieved 1km/hour for the last two days. [There are some nice fire trails ... RNC]

We popped out of the scrub on top without realising we were actually there. The next job was to find the cairn marking Station 1 of the border. The documents I had read were a little vague about where this was, and we prepared to spread out along the ridge to find it. Then I noticed a structure poking over some bushes nearby - it was the cairn! Great relief all around, and cause for celebrations as we had lunch around it, taking advantage of the sunshine to dry out soggy tents.

The cairn itself was about 1.5 metres tall, a wooden structure with stones piled in between. It had been rebuilt a few years ago by a team from a Victorian university. There were also rows of stones either side along the line of the border. Obligatory photos were taken with people standing with one foot in NSW and one in Victoria, in front of the cairn.

Having got this far, we now had to find the tributary that marked the source of the Murray. There was a well-used track heading in the general direction, but we took a bearing and followed that 400 m to a small soak with a galvanised pole in it. A well-trodden-down soak. Many people had visited it and trampled the soft



mosses underfoot. A small tin attached to the top of the pole contained a book and pen recording various people's visits, and we added our names.

The track continued downhill, following the watercourse as it became more prominent, although even where it was quite wide and open there was no visible running water. We theorised the track was going to follow the Murray to Cowombat Flat. Inspection of the map showed this was 150 m lower, and would mean a 150 m climb first thing in the morning! A quick decision was made to look at the Dakota next time, and to head directly for the fire trail and north towards Pilot. This was not as easy as it sounded. The road was only supposed to be about half a kilometre away, but with fallen trees, rocks and scrub, it took us an hour.

About a kilometre up the road was a large grassy plain, the only likely campsite in the area. A dam at the bottom provided somewhere to have a wash, and the small

The Wet!

You have to experience it to believe it.

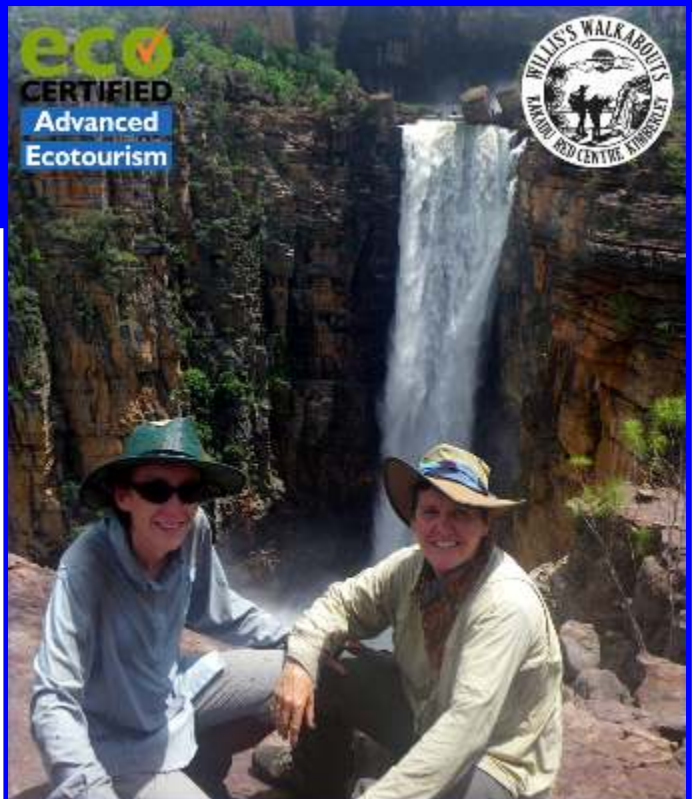
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Photo: Jim Jim Falls in January.

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Sub-alpine scrub on the side of Forest Hill

The cloud which had been low and thick when we set off gradually lifted as we climbed, and by the time we reached the top (1830 m) there were extensive views over this part of the wilderness. It did not last long, and before we got back to our

which was still only 3 - 4 m high. How long would it be before these young trees reached the 30 - 40 m of the dead giants? Not in our lifetimes!

Cascade Hut had residents already. Three people from the Shoalhaven Heads Intrepid Trekkers had cycled in and taken up residence. They delighted in telling us they were SHITs and SCUM (South Coast United Mountainbikers). Two of them decided to ride down to Tin Mines for the afternoon, promising to be back by 4 pm. By the time they arrived back at 6 pm, not having actually made it to Tin Mines, we were getting a little worried as they had taken only water with them, and little protective clothing.

The evening was spent with the sound of rain on the roof in convivial company reading poetry aloud. Several tents were leaking by this stage, and three people slept in the hut.

Drizzle again for the start of day 6: a big climb to Bob's Ridge then across to Dead Horse Gap. One thing to be said for rain and cold is that it motivates people, and we got to Dead Horse Gap late morning. I had rung the taxi from Bob's Ridge, and he arrived to pick us up shortly after we arrived.

Back at Jindabyne, showers, lunch, relax (watching TV, reading, doing Sudoku), before going out to dinner. ♦

Day 1: 12 km	Day 2: 7 km
Day 3: 8 km	Day 4: 14 km
Day 5: 16 km	Day 6: 9 km

Maps: Suggan Buggan, Thredbo 1:50000

Booklet *Surveying the Black-Allan Line*:
http://www.dtpli.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/110743/Surveying_the_Black-Allan_Line.pdf

creek that fed it was a reasonable source of water.

Day 4 did not dawn. We could not see the sun at all through the thick cloud and drizzle. This was probably the best time possible for it to start to rain, as the rest of the trip was along fire trails. Rain on the first three days would have just been horrible!

I had read once about how to get up onto the Pilot, but had neglected to reread it before this trip and was relying on a memory of many years ago. This was to climb to the saddle between Pilot and Little Pilot, and to climb Pilot from there. Near the bend in the trail just before it joined Snow Gum Fire Trail, there was a cairn at a small gully. Good enough! And indeed there was a sort of a track going up, but fairly indistinct and we lost it before long. But it was fairly open, with big clearings in places, and quite easy to find a way upwards.

packs, it was raining again.

After a quick lunch sitting on sawn logs placed under a tree, it was a trudge through quite pretty country to Tin Mines.

So far, we had not seen a single soul out here, but into the huts sped a German on a mountain bike. He thought this was the main fire trail. We set him straight and off he went again.

There are two huts at Tin Mines, and a huge grassy area for tents. Apparently there are some workings in a neighbouring gully, but we did not see them. [They are some distance away - RNC]

Drizzle again overnight meant very wet tents for day 5. It was a fair climb to Cascade Hut (240 m with a few ups and downs), but the mistiness gave it such an atmosphere. Relic tree trunks from before the fires would loom out of the mist, towering over the regrowth

Near the Ingeegoodbee River



The border cairn on Forest Hill



Karen swimming
part way up
Kangaroo Creek

Linda Groom
Canberra Bushwalking Club

Exploring the Carr Boyd Ranges

The Carr Boyd ranges lie to the west of Lake Argyle in the Kimberleys, NT. They contain many temptations for bushwalkers – gorges bounded by orange cliffs, plateaus with extensive views, and abundant bird life. They also have reliable water through the dry season and, though the days can be hot, the nights in June and July are pleasantly cool. Access is simpler than many Kimberley destinations: a flight to Kununurra, a bus or taxi ride to Lake Argyle Resort, then a boat trip with Lake Argyle Cruises.

With a party from the Canberra Bushwalking Club I walked for eight days across the Carr Boyds in July 2014. We saw no-one else and found campfire remains in only one place. We arranged for a boat to drop us at a place which the locals called Kangaroo Creek (563E 875N AGD84), where the topo map, Cooe Creek, shows a gorge full of intriguing twists and waterholes. After a few minutes walk up dry river bed we came to a compulsory swim at the mouth of the gorge.

On the boat ride there we had pestered Greg Smith, manager of Lake Argyle Cruises, on the topic of crocodiles. No,

there were no salt water crocs in the lake, yes there were 'freshies' – about 25,000 of them. The larger ones 'would not do a death roll, but could still do you some damage'. Lulled by the several hundred metres of dry creek bed between us and the lake, we started waterproofing our packs for the swim. Karen, a person with a great affinity for water, was first in. Half way across the pool she turned, pointed to the left bank and quietly said 'croc'. It was grey, on grey stones and over 2 metres long. Karen is a former scuba diving instructor for whom large things in the water are familiar; she swam on calmly. We followed, keeping close together. Although I tried hard to imitate Karen's calmness, I spent some minutes speculating whether my pack would still float if I tried to stand on it. The croc continued to sunbake on the shore and did not move.

We spent four or five hours going up the gorge, with several more swims in the 40 to 120 metre range. Though the air temperature climbed to near thirty degrees, the water was cool. We stopped part way while Philip and Peter warmed up, and found climb-arounds for some pools. Karen swam wherever possible. By

mid-afternoon we had left the gorge behind and found a campsite on large gravel flats at 548E 897N.

On day two we headed further up Kangaroo Creek to an unnamed tributary at 536E 912N. The lower part of the tributary was a swamp; graceful paperback trees rose from pools of oily orange ooze. We were surprised to find the tributary quickly turned into a small gorge of orange, white and grey rock, with clear running water. We found a camp site that could just fit our three tents (near the creek junction at 528E 918N) and spent the rest of the afternoon exploring small canyons in the area.

I had set my heart on exploring a green ravine to the east, visible on Google Earth at around 454698E 8193362S (Google Earth co-ordinates) but I had to accept that, viewed from a hill near our campsite, it looked unreachable in the time that we had available. The interesting part of the ravine was blocked by a dry waterfall of black rock, at least 80 metres sheer and flanking cliffs. So on day three we continued north, found a straightforward route on to the plateau, and a loose, steep route off it down a



Fresh water croc,
shore of Lake
Argyle.
Photo K.Cody

First compulsory
swim, Kangaroo
Creek





Unnamed tributary of Kangaroo Creek



Start of day 3 through the spinifex to the range

narrow ridge at 513E 966N. We crossed to Revolver Creek, where we started a group of brolgas by one of the lily-fringed waterholes. There was a choice of campable sites along Revolver Creek and we had the pleasure that night of camping on sand rather than pebbles.

Day four saw us again climbing up on the plateau, through a break in the cliffs at 515E 016N. We crossed the tops with marvellous views on our left into the broad valley of upper Revolver Creek. We descended to a set of falls where an unnamed creek meets a cliff line at 512E 065N. These falls drain a startlingly green swamp full of paperbarks, pandani and green ants. We avoided the swamp by crossing right at the top of the falls, where the clear water from the swamp tumbled into a chasm. We continued north to another set of falls marked on the Carlton Gorge map at 507E 081N. These were dry and the rocky gorge above them was a series of pools of dubious water quality. We found a good camp site, however, about 1 km upstream, on broad pebbly creek-bed flanked by clear pools.

On day five we turned east then south, down the ridge which begins at 533E 076N (i.e. the ridge about 300 metres west of spot height 393) dodging bluffs to reach the valley floor. We continued down the valley to 550E 057N where the

Carlton Gorge map shows an intriguing group of centipede-like black lines. These turned out to be razorbacks. We followed the western-most one, some of us taking the skyline route while others took the faster and more straightforward route up the small valley to its east. We camped that night at around 565E 058N in a broad valley in which a clear running creek linked many pools.

On day six we took to the tops again, following a narrow ridge north, past spot height 446, and then descended into another creek which would provide our campsite for the last two nights, at the creek junction at 574E 134N. On the descent to our camp site we happened to look backwards, and discovered a huge rocky arch over a series of dry waterfalls. We were intrigued by it and on the morning of day seven we went back to explore it. We managed to climb round the lowest fall on ledges on the true left. From that point on it got complicated. The black rock in the bed of creek was solid but vertical; narrow ledges to left and right were tempting, but they consisted of brittle orange rock garnished with spinifex. Jan found a way up on one side. Philip found another route, but had a scare when he dislodged a large chunk of rock. Karen exited via an exposed

ledge. I confined my exploits to photography.

We also explored upstream of our camp to the creek junction at 569E 130N, but apart from a section a hundred metres upstream of the camp, which had a delightful swimming hole and cliff shade, the creek was uninteresting. Our camp site was, however, very pleasant; others had used it before and had kindly cleared away small stones to make several comfortable camp sites amidst flowering acacias. We spent the afternoon swimming and investigating a bower bird bower.

On the last morning we walked down the creek to the shore of Lake Argyle. There are large flat areas there suitable for camping – dry leaf litter in eucalypt forest within 100 metres of the lake edge. By the lake we slowed to photographic pace. Where the edges were swampy, golden festoons of dried waterweed draped the trees. Birds were everywhere – magpie geese, rainbow bee-eaters, glossy ibis, egrets, ducks, cormorants and snoozing boobooks. We also saw a large freshwater crocodile, stretching its jaws and sunning itself on a bank. Fortunately there were no more compulsory swims. When our boat arrived to collect us (at 615E 123N), we were able to step on board with dry feet. ♦



Rock arch above Little Revolver Creek



Rainbow bee-eater, shore of Lake Argyle. Photo: K.Cody



Sandstone Caves near Coonabarabran

A Well-Kept Secret

Yvonne Lollback

If you're on the way to Mt Kaputar or The Warrumbungles, you can't miss this fabulous place just a km off the Newell Highway, 35.5 km north of Coonabarabran. It's not marked, at the request of the Aboriginal Elders, so you have to look out for a small sign that says Yaminba[h] Trail on the right. The



COMING EVENTS

28 February - 6 hour, Pennant Hills

29 March - 3 hour, Sydney area

www.nswrogaining.org

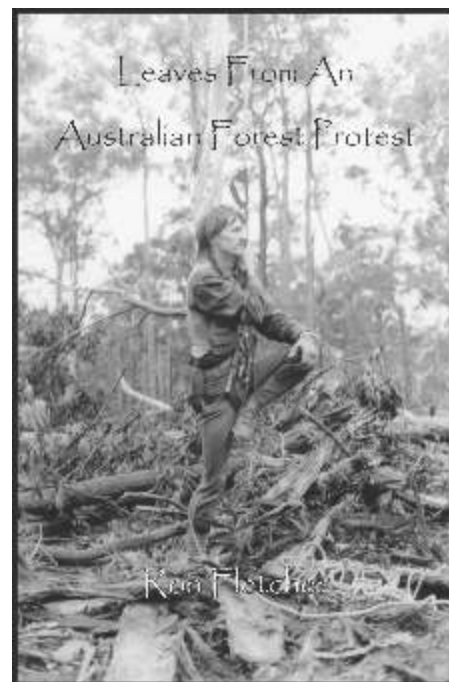


dirt road leads to a good carpark and the easy 1.6 km circular walking track takes you around the caves. But leave at least an hour as you need time to take in the shapes and colours of the cliffs before you. Further around the caves become deeper with windows and arches and the ceilings are just works of art. There are also some aboriginal relics behind grills. You can obtain a brochure from the National Parks Office or ring them at 6843 4011.

Another great place to see while you are up there is Dandry Gorge in the Pilliga Forest, on the left. Turn left onto No 1 Break Road and follow the 'Sculptures in the Bush' signs. There is a lovely free camping area with gas BBQs, shelters and toilets. The 3 km walk takes you above the gorge, past 5 sets of sculptures done by locals depicting the aboriginal connection to the area. Then you descend into the gorge which is very pleasant. The sculptures are all made from different materials and are beautifully situated with boards telling the story behind each of them. I spent ages gazing at them, all the time seeing something different. A great place for a sunrise walk. ♦



Book Reviews .



Leaves From An Australian Forest Protest

Review by Colin Gubra
ISBN 978-0-9803145-0-2
price \$15 inc post

Tree sitting in the South East Forests in the late 80's was largely a symbolic affair for which the chief 'crime' was trespass in a prohibited area. Sitters were less likely to get arrested than those doing support on the ground, where the name of the game was 'cops and loggers'. Ron was arrested several times. Following his six-day sit in Nullica State Forest he was very recognizable to the cops, who nabbed him when he let his guard down next time they saw him, despite that he was outside the prohibited zone.

A lot has changed in our forests since Henry Kendall published his *Leaves From Australian Forests* in 1869. Ron's verse might not convey quite the romantic imagery of poet-forester Kendall, for Ron is a forester of an altogether different kind – a feral forester, yet his lively style lets readers feel they are in on the action, and offers insights into some of the psychological pressures of confrontation in the forest.

Those who know him know that Ron has some rough edges; characters like Ron don't like taking backward steps, and when a group of them are pulling at the same time they don't always pull in the same direction. There is a price to pay for our convictions, as I know Ron, and so many of us, learnt in the South East Forests.

So this little book of lighthearted rhymes is Ron's side of the story. He has worked with the tools available, using

basic meter and rhyme to charming effect. Ron tells it like he saw it, with tributes to his fellow activists and homage to the forest under siege he gave his all to protect. It is in this spirit that I recommend "Leaves From An Australian Forest Protest" to everyone who wants a better future of our native forest heritage.

Wollemi National Park The Complete Wollemi North-South Traverse

Yuri Bolotin and Michael Keats

ISBN 9780987583628

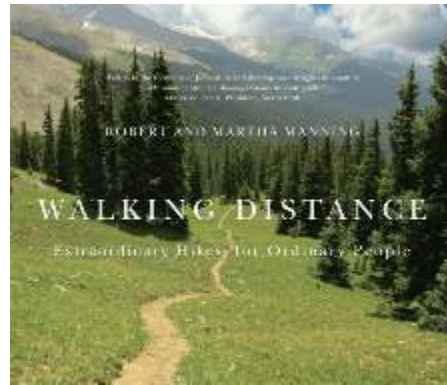
RRP \$48, through Blue Mts bookshops or via www.bushexplorers.com.au

You may remember that we featured three articles by Yuri in Volume 38 of The Bushwalker on this N-S traverse of the Wollemi NP. They were just 'extracts': Yuri promised a full book in due course. Well, this is it, co-authored with Michael Keats as he both has the experience in writing such books and was involved in the support/resupply trips for the walk.

It's not one of Micheal Keats and Brian Fox's guide books, but the format is very similar, and it works very well. Good paper, clear type, lots of good glossy photos, and maps for every one of the 18 stages - plus a bit extra. The people doing the two resupply trips had some little day walks, and these are included.

Bios are given for the three walkers, Yuri Bolotin, Ian Thorpe and Rodney Nelson. Ian Thorpe was the leader for this expedition, and was responsible for most of the planning and navigation. Yuri did the photography and note-taking, while Rodney was the expert on the plants and animals they met along the way. It is rather important to note that between them they had already explored much of the route beforehand. If you think that doing so might detract from the actual walk, you obviously do not know Wollemi NP very well. What the topo maps (which are quite old) might show as a spur with widely spaced contour lines may turn out to be a 50 m cliff line. Just finding ways through the cliffs can take days. Finding water can also be tricky. If you want to travel at any speed, lots of foreknowledge is crucial.

The book covers the walk of course, with some interesting descriptions of the terrain, route finding, water finding and everything else. But it also covers how their moods went up and down: finding a neat fast pass through some cliffs meant elation; getting stuck in a gully full of fallen logs and jungle meant - well, you can guess. What many do not realise is what it is like to be on a quite long trip like this: how you react to the sustained



Walking distance: extraordinary hikes for ordinary people

Robert and Martha Manning

ISBN 9780870716836

US\$35 plus \$9.50 shipping to Australia.

<http://osupress.oregonstate.edu/book/walking-distance>

Planning an overseas walking trip?

Tempted by the Lycian way in Turkey? Or the Lost Coast Trail in California? Or perhaps you are simply looking for ideas for longer walks overseas?

The recently published 'Walking distance' is a delightful menu of 30 walks in over a dozen countries around the world, with an emphasis on multiday walks at grades that we would call Medium/Easy to Medium/Medium. The book's subtitle Extraordinary hikes for ordinary people says it all: the book's thirty walks are highly scenic but generally well-marked and managed trails within the capabilities of moderately fit people.

This is a book to pick up when you are day-dreaming about an overseas walking trip and looking for both inspiration and practical detail. The book's photographs are certainly inspiring, and with dimensions of 20 x 25 cm, the book has more space than many guidebooks to show them off. There are, as you would expect, enticing images of scenery, but for each walk there is also at least one image showing the type of track or terrain - a very useful feature when you are assessing the difficulty of a walk.

The writing style is a cut above the rather mechanical style of some guide books - the authors manage to convey the 'feel' of each walk. They include engaging anecdotes that range from their experiences of lambing season on the Cotswold Way to chilly river crossings in the Paria River Canyon. Not surprisingly, their anecdotes about the Milford Track focussed on the keas!

For each walk there is a summary, giving the length of the walk, the accommodation types (inns, huts or camping), whether baggage transfer is available and whether it can be walked in sections. There is also a sketch map, with, hurray!, a scale, and some suggestions for further reading.

If you are looking for level walking, you might like to plan an itinerary that took in the C & O Canal trail in Maryland and Washington and the Ocala trail in Florida. I like mountainous country so I'm tempted by the Walkers' Haute Route in Switzerland, possibly followed by the more decadent but still delightful Cinque Terre. This book is a menu with so many choices!

Linda Groom

need to be totally self-reliant for days and even weeks on end, and how strong the drive to keep going forwards becomes. This comes through.

This was not the first N-S traverse of Wollemi: others have done such walks before as noted in Volume 38, but they have not been written up like this. My wife and I have done most of the sections of this walk as well over the last 20 years, but I have never published my notes: it's a Wilderness zone. What was interesting was to compare our notes and experiences: there were so many similarities. It's a fascinating place of extremes, and the book captures that.

One last thing should be mentioned. While not quite as extreme as, say, Fienne's trip across the Antarctic, this is an extremely hard trip in extremely difficult terrain. The authors don't make very much of this, although it does peek through a bit. Be very careful when venturing into Wollemi NP off-track. Go very cautiously.

Roger Caffin



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Blue Mountains National Park, Mulgoa