

The Sydney Bushwalker

January 2023

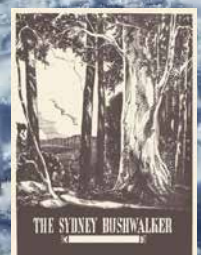
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Exploring since 1927



Above: Hinku Valley, Nepal

Cover: Summit of Mera Peak. L to R: Charles Dunn (kneeling), Sebash, Bruno De Villenoisy. Photo: Alan Osland.

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Opinions expressed in this magazine are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of The Sydney Bushwalkers.

Sydney Bushwalkers acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

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President's Report

Jim Collier

Annual General Meeting 8 March

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 7:30pm on Wednesday 8 March via Zoom. At the AGM the members consider the annual report for the last 12 months, including the club's accounts. In addition, elections for committee members are held.

This year we'll be proposing a small change to the constitution to support recent improvements in the club's privacy processes. Those attending the AGM will vote on the change and we'll provide more information on the proposal before the AGM.

Our Secretary, John Kennett, will email an invitation to the AGM to all members in the next few weeks.

We strongly encourage your attendance. The AGM is an important part of the governance of SBW, and we want to share the governance process with as many members as possible.

Christmas in the Snowies a great success

Jim Close and David Trinder did a fantastic job in organising this year's Christmas in the Snowies event. Fifty members attended and Jim and David took the lead in organising accommodation, daily walks and the myriad of other details required to keep an event like this running smoothly. Well done Jim and David!

New committee members needed for 2023

A few committee members will be stepping down this year, which means we're looking for volunteers to join the committee from April 2023. The time commitment isn't onerous and the committee is a convivial group whose members enjoy making a contribution to the life of the club.

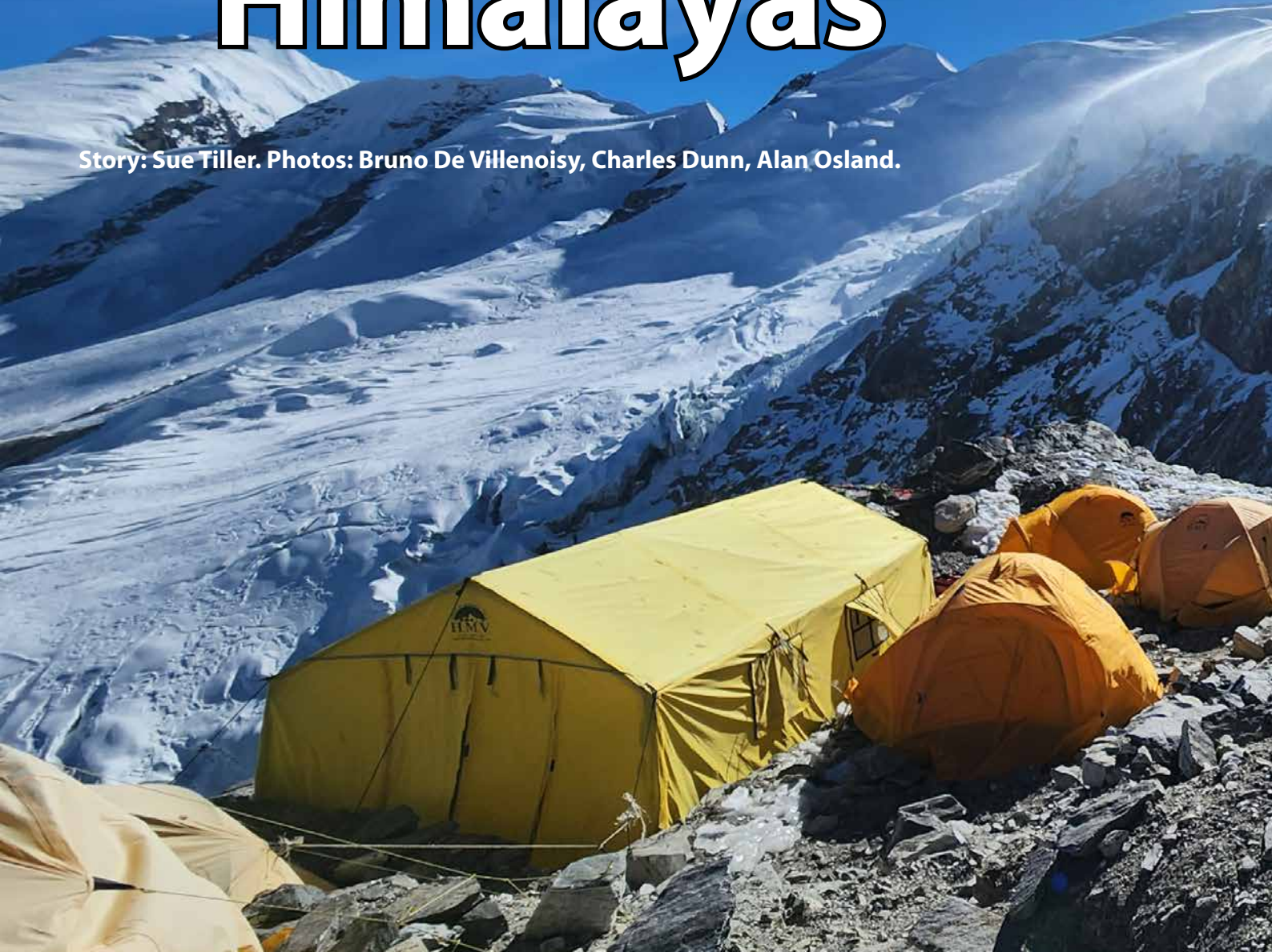
If you're interested in stepping up, please email John Kennett at secretary@sbw.org.au



Amphu Lapsa, Nepal

High Adventure High in the Himalayas

Story: Sue Tiller. Photos: Bruno De Villenoisy, Charles Dunn, Alan Osland.



In November 2022 Charles Dunn led Sue Tiller, Bruno De Villenoisy, Alan Osland and Craig Holden on an epic high altitude expedition in Nepal.

After doing the three passes and Island Peak in 2018, Charles wanted to do the three passes again and add Mera Peak. The problem was finding someone willing to take us over the Amphu Lapcha Pass, 5800m, to eliminate the need to descend back to Lukla and take the traditional route through the Hinku Valley to Mera Peak.

After the COVID disruptions a window appeared in 2022 and he found Mountain Sun Valley (mountainsunvalley@gmail.com) who were able to pull together the combination of trekking, mountaineering and climbing guides required during the various stages of the trip. Rajendra, the principal, and his team were extraordinary in their management



of the group and its ever-changing needs during the trek.

The trip comprised 24 hiking days plus two summit preparation days and one day awaiting a weather window, five high altitude passes from 5300-5800m and a 4200m pass, two peaks (Island Peak, 6160m and Mera Peak, 6476m) over 200km with a cumulative ascent of 18,500m. Eighteen days were near or above 5000m.

Our group of five — Charles, Craig, Alan, Bruno and myself — had various individual objectives with two of the group (Craig and Sue) seeking to bypass the peaks and some passes, while Charles, Bruno and Alan would summit all the passes and Mera Peak. Alan would also summit Island Peak before Mera Peak.

We commenced our journey from Phaplu (2600m) after a 10-hour jeep ride from Kathmandu which

we recommend no one does. This is a long day on dangerous roads with little upside other than saving around US\$100 versus taking a flight into the local area. We were all very happy to start our trek and did not see another vehicle for 30 days.

Namche Bazaar

The first five days of walking to Namche Bazaar (3500m) were scenic, well vegetated with an abundance of amenities and tea houses along the way. After day three we hit the Everest Base Camp (EBC) track and joined the happy throng to Namche Bazaar.

Namche Bazaar was our first real taste of higher elevation, 3400m, and we stayed there for two nights to acclimatise.

Unfortunately, Sue needed longer to acclimatise and found breathing difficult on the ascent to Everest View Hotel (3800m). After a meeting we decided to split into two groups.

Bruno, myself and our porter Ramesh would make their way to Gokyo Lake (4790m) via the more direct, gentler route, while Charles, Alan and Craig — along with their guide, Sebash, and porter, Karmel — would continue as planned and make their way via the first pass, Renjo La Pass (5360m), to Gokyo Lake. We would all meet at a teahouse three days later at Gokyo Lake and re-evaluate our plan.

Once over the first pass to Gokyo, Charles' group remained between around 4,800m to 5,100m at night for the next 18 days. Temperatures progressively got colder with our water bottles freezing overnight in our rooms so our best estimate was between -5 to -10 degrees inside.

After our two nights in Gokyo Lake the group split again. Rather than walk the three passes trek, Bruno offered to go with Sue while Charles, Alan and Craig continued on the three passes trek. We would all meet at the pre-arranged teahouse in Kothe which would be our base for the Mera Peak ascent. Ramesh continued with Sue and Bruno. Sebash and Karmel stayed with the other three as they continued over the next two passes and made their way to Kothe.

Chola Pass 5,400m

The ascent required a traverse for around 1km over a glacier for which we required crampons. Feeling a bit unwell afterwards, Craig left the group, made his own way back to Lukla and headed home as planned.

While long and high with a decent leading to a long walk to the Teahouse, this was uneventful after completing the first two passes.

Bruno and I spent eight days heading back to Lukla (two days) and from there to the Hinku Valley and Kothe (six days) via the Zahra La Pass (4620m). By this stage I was well and truly acclimatised.

From Lukla they could see the Zahra Pass towering up in the distance. Once over the pass they descended into the Hinku Valley, a very beautiful, remote and tough area with few tourists, as it's off the beaten Everest Base Camp route. At first, they were clambering and sidling over large moraines then descending through beautiful birch and rhododendron forests, and finally had an easy day strolling beside a river on the valley floor. From here on Mera Peak became visible

In the meantime, Alan in his usual unassuming, determined fashion, stormed up Island Peak with Sebash and when asked "how was it?" shrugged his shoulders and said "Fine!" No long-winded exposé about every step taken on this technically difficult ascent!

While these sections were difficult, with only a few other trekkers, the next section — crossing the Amphu Lapcha Pass — would prove to be the most difficult.

Charles and Alan camped at the base of the pass (reportedly the most miserable night of the trip), leaving a mere 400m ascent for the final section the following morning. This took around four hours as it was near vertical ice, while roped.

The valley they followed for the next three days was almost devoid of other trekkers and it had established camp locations which were set up with shared eating facilities. A hot meal was awaiting at the end of each day.

Summitting Mera Peak

Exiting the valley via Mera Pass (5,500m) to Kothe placed them in striking distance of Mera Peak. While Charles had scheduled a preparation day, the weather was bad with 90km/hr-plus winds at the peak forcing all who had tried to summit for the previous three days to turn back. We used one of our contingency days hoping for a break in the weather but ultimately had to commit to the two days required to reach the Peak.

The first day of around six hours was spent getting to Mera Peak High Camp (5,800m) which was located on a rocky outcrop, with the facilities counter-levered over shear 300m drop. Cold, cold, cold.

A 3:30am start and a four-hour climb of 2.5km took us to Mera Peak. We estimated it was around -30 degrees and we encountered wind gusts up to around 70km. The summit experience was one of relief and 'get me down'. The views were spectac-

ular thanks to a clear morning. The descent was mechanical and almost in a daze.

At this end of the trip, we were simply exhausted. Having made it back down we were all faced with another four days of walking to Lukla, our exit point back to

Kathmandu, and just for good measure another pass.

The cold, altitude, duration, and scope of the trip left some of us a little dusty but we ticked all the boxes. The weather was extraordinarily kind. While cold it was clear and dry for the entire trip.



Namche Bazaar



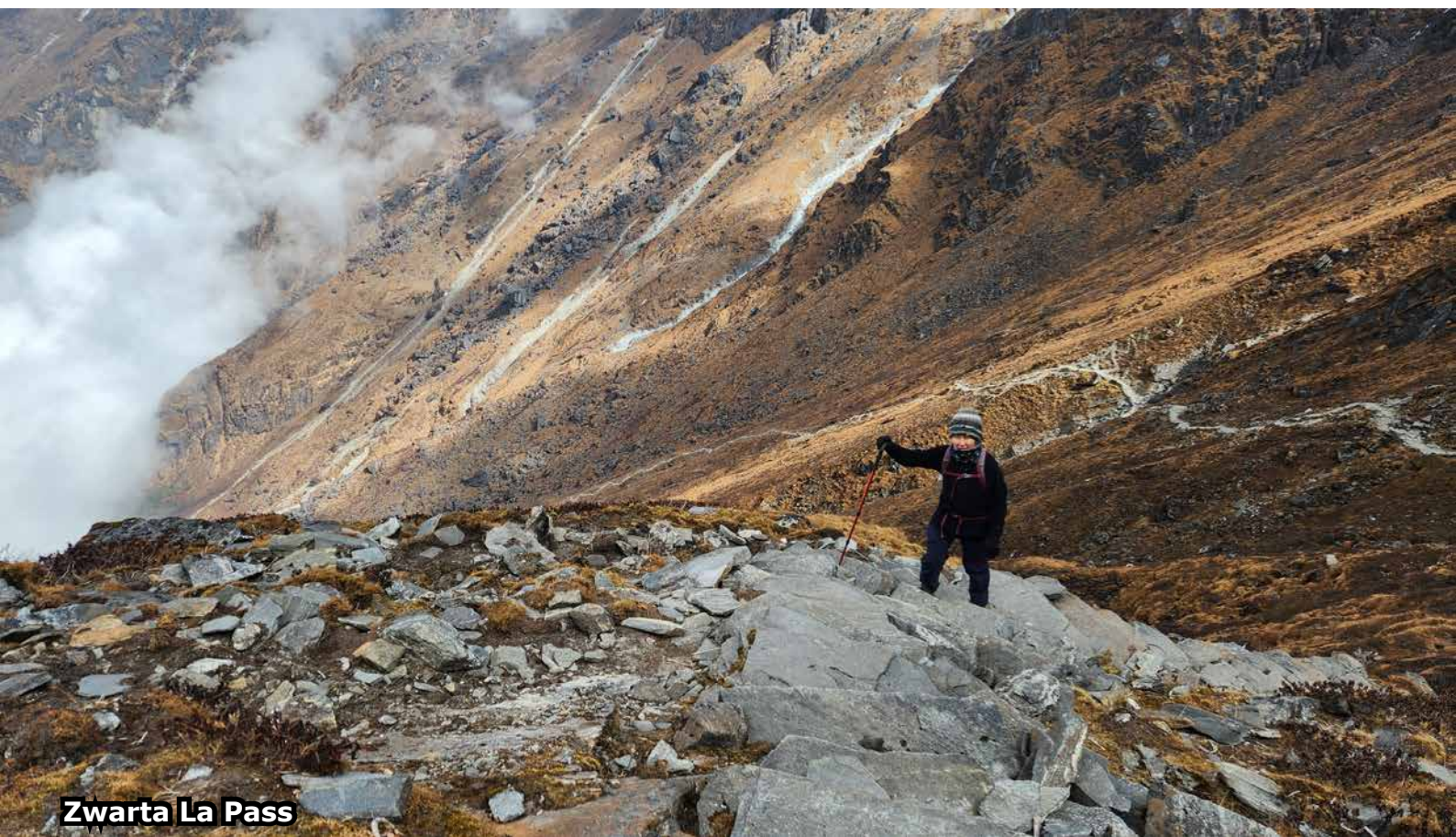
Left to right: Craig Holden, Sebash, Charles Dunn



Jubing



Renjo La Pass



Zwarta La Pass



Mera Glacier

Remembering Owen Marks

Marion Lloyd

Owen Marks, who died recently, was a multi-talented member of SBW for many years who made many contributions to the club beyond leading walks. Not all were legal!

How can I describe my friend Owen? He was generous, kind, fun, funny, eccentric, quirky, witty, clever and organiser extraordinaire.

He joined SBW in the early 60s after returning from many years spent overseas, which included hitchhiking through Africa, nearly all of Europe and the Middle East, many Asian countries and North America. He criss-crossed South America on his bike, taking a year to do so.

He led many walks. His pièce de résistance was his test walk on November 27-29, 1970: Barralier, Bindook Gorge, Upper and Lower Tomat Creeks, Wollondilly River and Barralier. The meeting place was the ford beside the Wollondilly River near Tony Carlon's shack (known as Barralier Post Office). Emerging from his tent on Saturday morning, Owen was gobsmacked to see so many people wandering around. When he eventually called everyone to muster, he nearly freaked out, counting 53 bods.

It was chaos trying to sort out the throng. Eventually Owen, with the help of a couple of assistants, divided the mob into clusters and sent each one forth behind a competent leader. The weather was fantastic and there were plenty of swimming holes. People were strolling along the track in driblets and drabs, stopping for morning tea, swims, lunch and more swims. Owen and his scrutineers were constantly counting us like his flock of sheep.

His most infamous walk was the Japanese Moon Viewing walk to Splendour Rock, with everyone appropriately dressed for the occasion. However, a prospective fell off the cliff at Merrimerrigal, breaking her back (she recovered, but did not want to proceed with membership!).

In the 1970s Owen organised many overseas trips to Asia and the Pacific islands. They were essentially walking trips, mainly camping out (be it on a beach in Samoa or a railway platform in India).



In Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in 1974. Left to right: Helen Gray, Owen Marks, George Gray, Marion Lloyd

Those of us lucky enough to be in those trips can vouch for the wonderful adventures they were. Owen could get around any language difficulty — his charades were brilliant! He was liked wherever we went. Owen never laughed at people, it was always with them.

As SBW social secretary he was seen to be the best of the best. He transformed us into culture vultures. We visited restaurants, museums, art galleries, cinemas, plays, operas and music halls. In the club rooms in Reiby Place at Circular Quay he organised plays, talent quests, recitals (such untapped talent among bushwalkers!). Owen was a fine pianist, by the way. Then there was his Gormandizer and Epicurean Club, and his gourmet bushwalks. His inventiveness was endless.



Dot Butler and Owen Marks at a fancy dress party organised by Owen to celebrate Dot's 50 years in SBW.

He organised excursions to the sewers at Ben Buckler, the huge mail exchange at Surry Hills, Fort Denison and Rookwood cemetery. He arranged for us to be extras in a Qantas advertisement. His clandestine events were varied: climbing the Harbour Bridge arch at night was one.

(In those days the fencing that separated the train tracks from the bike lane was not very high and was easily surmountable. We dashed across the rail tracks, up a steel ladder, then did a tricky clamber over the steel spikes designed to deter trespassers. Occasionally we were seen and reported in newspapers, but no one was caught, as far as I know!)

Then there was Taronga Zoo. We nearly got caught there. Those animals would insist on growling, roaring, barking, squawking! There was the trip through the unfinished Harbour Tunnel, guards and dogs notwithstanding. Then the unfinished Opera House: Owen had a friend who worked as an engineer on its construction and had arranged with him to clandestinely take us over the site one night. Although out of bounds we climbed the stairway up the ridge of the sails to the top. The view, like the one from the top of the Harbour Bridge, was spectacular.

Owen's other talent was writing. His contributions to SBW's magazines, especially in the 70s, are clever and very funny. Sometimes he would imitate another member's style and submit articles in his/her name to the unsuspecting editor. (That's a chapter in itself!) One Owen DID write in his own name was an article on a flight he took to Antarctica. His tongue-in-cheek humour missed the mark with the millionaire organiser who decided to sue the club for defamation. Fortunately, Owen's apology was accepted.

Owen became involved in Coolana. Not hands-on, but with generous donations. (Special thanks for the composting toilet, Owen.)

Owen died after a long illness at the age of 88. He was farewelled with lots of reminiscing, good food and laughter.

Marion Lloyd joined SBW in the late 60s. She was a strong and active walker, and a fearless climber, until the 1980s when a serious viral infection left her with debilitating chronic fatigue syndrome.

The Bigger Picture

Stuart Corner

This month's bushwalking news roundup brings you news of the Federal Government's review of environment protection law, Bob Brown's moves to save NSW native forests, news about a new national park for NSW and plans to upgrade another. If you come across any items you think we should share with members, please send them to editor@sbw.org.au

Discover the 61 islands of NSW South Coast

The Shoalhaven City Council is seeking expressions of interest to enable it to optimise the print run for a planned guide to the 61 islands of the NSW south coast: 20 coastal islands and 41 in the estuaries, rivers and lakes open to the ocean. It explains: "for three years Helen Moody and Mike Jefferis led walks and kayak trips to, past or around the 61 islands. ... Now they have written the first-ever book on the islands, to be published by mid-2023." The sale price will be \$50.

The council goes on to say: "Nearly all the islands are small and uninhabited; some are mere specks on a map. Yet each has something special about it. Several are wildlife havens with significant biodiversity values. Some have ancient and ongoing spiritual significance to First Nations people. Some have fascinating connections to early explorers and settlers. A handful are privately owned. One has a superb native garden. You have likely never heard many of their names before; or even been aware of their existence.

"The book is more than a travel guide. It tells of Aboriginal connections to the islands, the history of

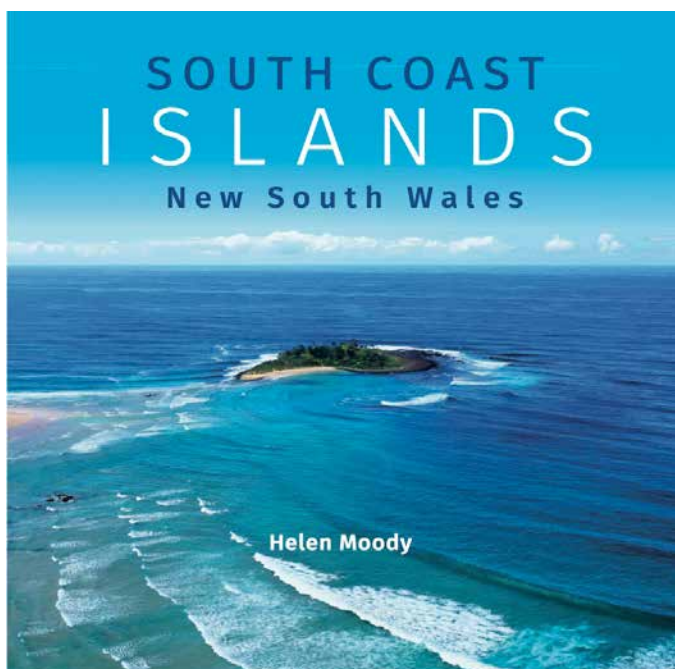
south coast exploration, and the arrival of settlers and convicts. It covers the geology, flora, lighthouses, shipwrecks, bird life and environmental values of the islands. [It has more than] 200 photographs, and maps and descriptions of how to visit every island, whether on foot or by boat..."

Expressions of interest to purchase the book can be made to southcoastislandsbook@gmail.com.

Warrumbungles wallabies under threat

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has launched what it says are large-scale interventions to save three of the state's important brush-tailed rock wallaby populations. It will create a, fenced, 303-hectare feral predator-free area within the Warrumbungle National Park. NPWS head, Atticus Fleming, said population in the Warrumbungle National Park had declined to 12 known animals, three in the nearby Nattai National Park and only one in the Mount Kaputar National Park.

The Kaputar Park wallaby will be moved into the feral-free zone and a second zone is being created in the Nattai Park, Fleming said. "With the support of Aboriginal owners and park neighbours, a 92ha feral predator free area is under construction in Nattai National Park, with a stage 1 area (0.3ha) already complete. Two individuals are now in this secure area and have had their first baby."



NPWS said the feral-free areas in the Warrumbungle and Nattai national parks would also support the return of other threatened species that have become locally extinct because of feral cats and foxes.

Master plan for Sydney Harbour parks

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has produced a [draft master plan](#) for overall management of the Strickland Estate, Nielsen Park and the Hermitage Foreshore precincts on Sydney Harbour. It aims to “protect, conserve and promote the spectacular natural, cultural and historic heritage ... and build a valued legacy for future generations.”

The plan identifies and outlines the vision and guiding principles for the joint site; visitor experiences, including day use, activities and events; landscaping and interpretation concepts; public access and circulation, vehicular and traffic management; park management aspects, including essential services; and proposed uses for buildings.

An interactive map and design boards “highlight key elements from the draft master plan and provide you the opportunity to leave your thoughts and see what ideas other members of the community have shared,” and there is an [online survey](#) to provide feedback on the draft master plan. Submissions close on 15 February.



Mt Canobolas gets an upgrade

The upgraded summit area of Mount Canobolas in the Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area has been re-opened as part of a \$2.94m upgrade to the park. NPWS area manager Fiona Buchanan said: “The summit has a new lookout, new accessible amenities and pathways, new cultural interpretation and educational signage, and a new visitor car park, including two accessible car parks and two bus bays. It also includes a stunning ground mosaic based on the work of local Aboriginal artist Mick Crook.”

The summit upgrade follows recent improvements to the Walls lookout and Towac picnic area, including new picnic tables and upgraded car parks.

Buchanan said the next stage of the project, a \$350,000 upgrade of the Federal Falls walk, would be completed in 2023.



Kangaroo Island leaps into NY Times top 10

South Australia’s Kangaroo Island has been listed seventh in the New York Times list of the top 52 destinations to visit in 2023. Our capitals did not make the cut: the next highest, and only other, Australian destination was Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in 29th place.

NYT writer Besha Rodell said the island was known for incredible wildlife, breathtaking ocean views and its status as an ecological haven, calling it a “zoo without fences.”

The NYT noted that the Southern Ocean Lodge was due to reopen in 2023 “grander and better than before.”

The Cobberas: Six Days of Type Three Fun

David Angell

The Cobberas, sometimes described as “the last wild mountains in Victoria”, are a collection of (almost) trackless rocky peaks just outside NSW near the source of the Murray River.

The Cobberas comprise two main summits, Mt Cobberas No 1 and No 2, accompanied by Cleft Peak, Middle Peak and Moscow Peak. Ridges, often rocky or scrubby or both, extend in every direction. Some lead towards the Murray and its tributary creeks; others, like the Cobberas, lie on the Great Divide, at the head of the middle Snowy River.

Our party of eight started from Parks Victoria’s pleasant campsite at Native Dog Flat with a gentle warm-up afternoon of 6km to The Playground. The green valley at the foot of Cobberas No 1 provided an attractive overnight stay in the company of bats (detected by hi-tech methods) and dingoes howling in the distance. The evidence of recent brumby occupation was less enjoyable, but was something we never entirely avoided throughout the trip.

The real stuff

Next morning, in bright sunshine, we set off on the real stuff. The trail up Cobberas No 1 was described

in a source as “disappearing and reappearing at unpredictable intervals,” with only the occasional orange marker for assistance. We were pleasantly surprised to find that in fact the foot track was mostly clear and the markers frequent and helpfully placed. The climb up a broad gully was occasionally steepish until it reached the beginning of a long ridge where we took our first morning tea. Those who felt like a bit of a teatime wander reported views of snow on Mt Bogong (1986m, Victoria’s highest peak) 70km to the west.

A gently ascending route up the ridge led to a lunch spot, pack drop and final ascent of Mt Cobberas No 1. Although the rocky peak barely manages to peek out above the tree line, the views were tremendous: Bogong again, very clearly, to the west; range upon range to the south and east. The panorama to the north comprises in the foreground the staggeringly rugged Cleft Peak, further away the Pilot (our objective later in the walk) and





Photos: David Angell and Stephen Craft

on the horizon, Kosciuszko and the Main Range (more snow). The final two metres to the trig point, normally an easy couple of moves on clean rock, became impossible owing to the gale force winds. Returning to the lunch point, we headed off-track to the north, keeping low in the lee of Middle Peak until we reached the exposed top of a rocky ridge. Descending the ridge took us to a camp site just below Moscow Peak. Despite the altitude there is reliable water nearby, making this one of the most welcome inaccessible campsites one would ever see.

A foggy morning

Our hopes for a bright sunrise from our elevated camp were frustrated by a thick shroud of morning fog. The plan for the day was to traverse Mt Cobberas No 2 to the north, navigating off-track and descending to Cowombat Flat. But with visibility close to zero, it soon became apparent that this was not going to happen. Over to plan B: a direct descent to the west, avoiding all peaks and hitting the fire trail at some convenient point. By the time we got there it was generally agreed that anywhere recognisable would have been a convenient point. After lunch a few hours of track-bashing took us to Cowombat Flat, an expansive clearing right on the Victoria/NSW border among the headwaters of the Murray. Tents were pitched in a beautiful eucalypt grove at the eastern edge of the flat, and dinner and campfire relieved the day's efforts. The open bar supplied by one member of the party didn't hurt either!

A second night at Cowombat Flat gave a couple of options for the day between. Some of the party stayed in camp to explore the immediate vicinity, others made a day trip to the Pilot. The day trippers began with a ramble to the far side of the Flat along an alleged track which, to a great extent, consists only of a few flattened blades of grass and a general tendency westward. There follows a climb to the Cowombat Ridge and then a pleasant wander along to the beginning of the Pilot summit route. This consists of a gentle off-track ascent through light forest, followed by a short ridge walk with a bit of rock scrambling before the trig point

suddenly comes into sight. The Pilot (1829m) is the highest mountain in the southern part of Kosciuszko National Park, with no higher ground northwards until you get to the Ramsheads and Kosci itself. Understandably, the views in fine weather are magnificent: in cloud, less so. We arrived in partial cloud, which in some ways is the most magical of all, bits and pieces of the landscape appearing and disappearing by turn. On the whole, there was plenty to see: the familiar Cobberas and Cowombat to the south, the Main Range to the north. Over the Murray valley to Victoria in the west, the forests and plains of the Monaro to the east. We completed our day trip (rather later than planned) by returning along a different fire trail to Cowombat Flat to find that those who had stayed there had experienced hail, heavy rain and thunderstorms and were somewhat concerned for our safety. In fact, we had somehow managed to dodge all the rain bar a few light showers, the heaviest beginning just as we walked down to the Flat. The next two or three hours were spent in tents, and it was looking like cold rations for dinner: until the rain ceased about 9pm, just in time to permit some cooking.

The rest of the trip consisted, essentially, of a day and a bit returning to the cars. Before leaving Cowombat Flat we had a glance at the remains of a 1954 air crash at the edge of the flat. The journey south reversed our route from two days back, leading to a great New Year's Eve campsite at Bulley Creek. After all our exertions we only just made it to bushwalkers' midnight (9pm in case you didn't know), celebrating with the assistance of cheese, quince paste, chocolates, bananas (the lolly type), Drambuie and sparklers. New Year's Day dawned fine, affording an easy and pleasant walk back to Native Dog Flat. Lunch was partaken of in the Jindy Bowlo before the party dispersed.

Definitely type three fun in many ways! Though also a good deal of type one, especially around the campfire in the evenings. Thanks for your patience and persistence Katherine, Mark, Nicole, Nik, Stephen, Sue and Suzanne.





Christmas in the Snowies 2022

Jim Close

More than 60 people participated in SBW's Christmas in the Snowy Mountains, 26 December to 2 January, and a good time was had by all.

What a bumper turnout we had this year! All up we had a total of 53 people booked into four lodges over the Christmas break, but due to illnesses, we ended the year with 45.

We were fortunate that, with the increased interest this year (31 people last year) we were able to rent out additional accommodation in Smiggins Holes at the neighbouring IMBAC Alpine Lodge, Clancy Alpine Lodge and at Gunuma Lodge – in addition to the entire Windarra Lodge. Everyone who applied to come down this year was accommodated, even though there were numerous room re-allocations along the way for which I thank everyone who was prepared to move for the sake of the overall group.

John Pozniak also had another group of 12 people over at Kyilla Lodge at Guthega, which meant there were over 60 SBW members and prospec-

tives, friends and associates enjoying Christmas in the Snowies this year. (As I write this John is recovering from hip surgery – scheduled two weeks after he had led numerous walks around the Snowies this year. All the best for a speedy recovery John.)

We were also aware of another 30 NPA and Bush Club members led by Mark Goodson staying up at Charlotte Pass and an additional 16 Bush Club members led by Fiona Sontag staying at Gunuma over this period. [In fact, on two occasions that I am aware of, an SBW group and the joint NPA/Bush Club group started the same walks on the same days – both being the new Aussie Iconic walks that had just been opened.]

The weather throughout the week was as good as you could expect, and while the BOM forecast a 90% chance of 10-20mm rain and general doom



and gloom for three days in a row, the worst any of the groups had was a spot of hail and a light fall of rain elsewhere. Admittedly, there was one day on the Main Range when the winds were so ferocious that they threw even the biggest of us around like rag dolls. It took us all by surprise!

Another surprise was the near absence of March flies this year.

After the good snow falls this winter and an even later one in November, there were a lot more snowdrifts over the tracks on the Main Range, some being a little precarious to negotiate!

Traditionally, we have always walked the Main Range together on the first day, but due to the sheer numbers of people we had this year, we purposely sought to split the group into smaller, more manageable walking groups each day, which worked out extremely well over the week.

Walks undertaken

- Main Range Walk
- Guthega, Mt Twynam/Mt Anton to Mt Tate, Consett Stephen Pass to Guthega
- Guthega, Gills Knobs, Mt Tate, Consett Stephen Pass and back down to Guthega
- Guthega, The Rolling Ground, The Granite Peaks and back to Guthega
- Munyang, Schlink Pass, Schlink Hut, Gungartan Pass, Disappointment Spur to Munyang
- Charlotte Pass, Strzelecki Ck waterfall and back
- Charlotte Pass, Mt Stilwell restaurant ruins – with extension over to Iconic #2 and back to Charlotte Pass
- Iconic #1 – Guthega to Charlotte Pass or reverse direction
- Iconic #2 – Perisher Village, Porcupine Rocks, Johnnies Plain to Charlotte Pass
- Dead Horse Gap saddle, Main Range, Ramshoad North and back down to Dead Horse Gap
- Dead Horse Gap to The Chimneys and return
- Dead Horse Gap along the Thredbo River to Thredbo (for lunch) and back
- Perisher Village to Porcupine Rocks and back
- Rainbow Lake Walk
- Rennix Trail Walk
- Charlotte Pass to Mt Kosciuszko and return – by bike
- Thredbo to Crackenback – by bike
- Dead Horse Gap to Cascade Hut and return – by bike

Once John's group arrived at Guthega on 27 December, we were able to jointly co-ordinate many of the walks together over the seven-day period so that, on any one day, there were at least three walks available from which to choose, ranging in length from 10km to 25km and of varying difficulty. We also had a small contingent of bikers who set out each day to explore.

Apart from the standard walks we normally always do, there were the two new Snowy Iconic Walks that had just recently been opened. The first, Iconic #1, is from Guthega to Charlottes Pass (or reverse) along the Snowy River via Illawong Hut, approximately 10km. The new swing bridge over Spencers Creek is Australia's highest suspension bridge.

The second walk, Iconic #2, starts from Perisher Village, leads up to Porcupine Rocks and then weaves in and out of the rocky outcrops and down through the trees southeast along the escarpment line overlooking the Alpine Way leading to Thredbo. It then turns 90 degrees to the northwest over Trapyard Creek and over the majestic Johnnies Plain and out onto the Charlottes Pass village access road, approximately 13km all up.

The Iconic #3 walk is still only in the development stage and will start from Perisher Village going up to Porcupine Rocks and then down over the escarpment to Bullocks Flat on the Thredbo Road. We believe that NPWS has already cut the majority of the track, but they tend to complete the middle sections first and then join up the track ends to avoid unwanted traffic while a path is still under construction.

Participants

Petros Nikoloudis	Belinda Campbell
Michelle Rose	Peter Wassenaar
Ljiljana Kragic	Sally Ho
Bruce Dennien	Tim Hill
Jim Close	Paul McCann
Karen McMahon	Christine Smith
Aleks Todoroski	Linda Taylor
Sivanthi Edirsinghe	Roshini Randeniya
Cathie Goss	Margaret St Hill
Deborah Baker	Stephen St Hill
Laura Larumbe	Mary Jin
Karen Brown	Marcia Kaye
Margaret Rozea	Shahram Landarani
Sandra Parker	Asiyeh Landarani
Blanche Kairies	Stephen Craft
Anthony Powell	Jose Correa
Joan Ho	Diana Correa
David Trinder	Sun Mi Clement
Mindy Gu	Don Finch
Sandra See	Omar Sharief
Walter Baer	Robin Cowdery
Stef Jang	Stuart Corner
Alison Howes	Patrick McNaught
Stephanie Price	Tom MacDonald
Stephane Renard	

During the week we met up with Jim Collier and Carley Finn who were spending time down in the Snowies and they joined our walk from Dead Horse Gap up the to the Main Range to below Ramshead North and then back down to Dead Horse Gap. At the end of that day we also bumped into a genuinely concerned Bruno who, we believe, had lost Sue somewhere between Geehi Flat and Dead Horse Gap having just completed Hannells Spur!

We also had walks out to The Chimneys, one up to Schlunks Hut and one over Gungartan Pass and back down Disappointment Spur. These were not easy walks at all, following GPS track logs only!

The Sentinel was also a favourite, not to be attempted on a wet or windy day though!

During our stay, we were all pleasantly surprised one night by an announcement by Stephane R and Stef J that they were cooking crepes for everyone – and to just bring with you whatever you want to put inside. It was simply a great night and a wonderful way to get to know each other. Definitely something to repeat next year. Thanks guys.

We had another great New Year's Eve party – and apart from another couple of 'hiccups' (by me)

during the games sessions where we literally ran out of time before the New Year was upon us, it was a remarkable success. Next year we will bring some of the games forward to during the mid-week, perhaps to coincide with another crepes or pizza night, and simply have a New Year's Eve party without all the interruptions posed by the games. With all of us spread out over four lodges, the NYE party is possibly the only time we all had to socialise together and to wind down from the past week.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members who were able to join us this year at a time where COVID, while not so severe this year, was always in the back of our minds. Thank you all for a wonderful gift voucher – that has already been put to good use!

A very special thanks also to David T and John P. Without their help over the last three months, I doubt whether the Christmas in the Snowies would have got off the ground this year.

There was never a dull moment down in the Snowies over the week and to those that made it down, and survived, thank you for a simply wonderful time together. It was all worth it! Until next year...





Mt Everest in Kosciuszko NP. Photos: Peter Wassenaar



Crepes Night – Steph, Stef and Stephane (The Three Steph/fs) cooking up a storm



Marcia Kaye below Seamans Hut. Photo: Don Finch



**Anthony Powell, The Chimneys.
Photo: Linda Taylor**



Negotiating the 'little difficult part' on the way to The Sentinel. Phot: Belinda Campbell



Australia's highest suspension bridge. Photo: Laura Larumbe



The 'Spice Girls' on the way (Whites Hut) to Schlink Pass. Photo: Laura Larumbe

It's Time to Celebrate – Come to Coolana

Bill Holland

SBW's 2023 annual get together (reunion) will be held on the weekend of 11 and 13 March at our property in Kangaroo Valley.

For many years the club has held a gathering of SBW members, an Annual Reunion, on the club's property, Coolana, in the beautiful Kangaroo Valley south of Sydney. Members, new members, family and friends are invited to join us.

This is your chance to renew friendships and socialise with new and old members. New members are particularly welcome to enjoy the attractive bush surroundings. A composting toilet (with water and light) is near the camping site and running water is available.

Camp near your car or preferably on the campsite located on the extensive river flats. Assistance with

transport may be possible. You can plan to arrive at any time, but it is better to arrive before mid-afternoon on Saturday to be ready for the campfire on Saturday evening on.

Check the Activities Program for walks and paddling opportunities in the area.

Access to Coolana is via either the Princes Highway or the Hume Highway. The property is on the Tallowa Dam Road, about 100 metres west of the intersection with Mount Scanzi Road.

Contacts: Bill Holland (h) (02) 4296 3084, (m) 0418 210 290, billholland@bigpond.com.



No Loneliness for this Long-Distance Walker

Paul Harvey

Paul's 13 suggestions represent good bushwalking advice, regardless of whether you are trying to minimise loneliness.

Join a walk. This one is fairly obvious. I counted at least 280 club activities in 2022. My experience is that walking gives tiny increments of hope and the more walks joined the more hope is received. My success rate at applying for walks is around 80%. Seeing an interesting walk advertised but finding it full or not meeting the leader's criteria can be frustrating. I have included some suggestions for what can be done to fill the remaining 20% of the time.

Talk with the people on the walk. I counted an average of six people per club walk in 2022. Bushwalkers come from a large variety of backgrounds, educations, careers and personal experiences.

Bushwalkers are friendly, inclusive and interesting. I know of few other ways to meet and spend eight hours or more communicating with others. If you persevere you will find other walkers similar to you.

Attend meaningful walks. Try to devise a purpose in attending a walk. For example, a destination you have not visited previously or for some time, a leader you have not walked with previously, or a walk that will challenge you. Doing this may help you gain satisfaction from the walk and connect with others who have the same, or a different, reason for attending.

Choose walks that suit your ability and aptitude. I found discomfort occurs when I join a walk too far beyond my ability. Instead I choose walks that strike a fine balance between extending my comfort zone and being so familiar as to be unfulfilling.

Develop a second interest. For example fauna, flora, fungi, geology or photography. Not only could this help you connect with others with the same interest, it could help refresh motivation for an area you have visited previously.

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Lead a walk. Being guaranteed a spot is one of the main reasons I lead walks. The other main reason is to organise the style of walks I like in the areas that interest me and on dates that suit me. Organising such events is a way to promote yourself to others with similar interests. However, my experience is that too much organising does not work. Instead I believe it is better to apply effort to organising thoughtful walks and joining other leaders' thoughtful walks.

Support less popular activities. Occasionally walks receive minimal interest despite the thought that has gone into their planning. Attending a walk with a small number of participants allows you to communicate more closely with those on the walk. I have noticed this to be particularly the case in recent times.

Carpool with other participants. Carpooling gives you more time to get to know other participants. It is also better for the environment and allows for sharing of fuel costs. I am surprised at how often every participant on a walk drives in a separate vehicles.

Join a second group. I hope this suggestion is not seen as being competitive. Attending and leading walks with another group has allowed me to double the number of walks I have attended in the

time I have been a member of SBW. I think many SBW members are members of multiple walking groups.

Volunteer. Bushwalking is mostly a voluntary enterprise. Volunteering is great because it allows you to do many things that interest you regardless of support from other people. And I do not mean volunteering only through advertised roles. You just need to persevere to gain connection with others. There are many ways to contribute if increased walking or leading is not for you.

Do not lose hope if you are on a waitlist. Of the 30 walks I have organised for the club, I count that an average of 1.9 people drop out of each walk before the day. So I think you have a reasonably good chance of obtaining a place if you are on a waitlist. You just need to be prepared for short notice.

Ask the leader for help. If you enquire about a walk and find it full and a spot does not become available, a kind leader may be able to put you in contact with others in the same situation. This could allow the few of you to walk together on a separate, independent walk.

Change your perspective. This could mean many things for you personally. One technique I have developed is to befriend the natural environment.



Upper Morong Deep. Photo: Dave Richards.

Walks and Activities Report

Sue Tiller and Bruno de Villenoisy

Leaders: After the activity, reports must be submitted via the [online form](#). If your walk is cancelled, please send a brief email advising the same to walksreporting@sbw.org.au. Keep the signature sheet as this is a legal document. If you want your report to be published as an article email the report and any photos (jpeg or tiff format) to editor@sbw.org.au.

You can also send one or two photos to the editor for inclusion in the walk reporting section of the magazine. We are trying to ensure that the names of participants match what is in the membership database.

Members: if you have email addresses with other variations/spellings/names then the name you registered with it would be helpful if you made it clear in your sign-up email what your 'official' name is. If your name has changed we can update the database.

Long Gully Canyon

12 November 2022, Bungonia

Grade: S232E

Leader: Anthony Powell

Members: Rob Thomas, Damon de Costa, Nic Bendeli

Route: Long Gully Canyon near Bungonia to Shoalhaven River / ridge walk return to cars

Report: great conditions for Long Gully's creek walking and multiple abseils, with the largest abseil at 60m. It was warm but not hot, and enough water for numerous cascades in what can sometimes be a dusty creekbed. We had lunch on the banks of the swiftly flowing Shoalhaven river, with a cooling light rain as we climbed the ridge back to the cars.

Waterfall to Bundeena

13 November 2022, Royal NP

Grade: L222

Leader: Bob Seibright

Member: Tony Crichton

Route: Waterfall – Couranga Track – Forest Path – Wallumarra Track – Eagle Rock – Wattamolla – Bundeena.

Report: Pleasant walk with stunning coastal views.

Australian Alps Walking Track

15 November – 14 December 2022, Australian Alps

Grade: L333

Leader: Joanne Armstrong

Member: Alan Sauran

Prospective member: Ella Brewer

Route: Australian Alps Walking Track

Report: This walk should have been titled "An Attempt of the Australian Alps Walking Track". After successfully completing two long distance hiking tracks this year (Bibbulmun and Heysen Trails) plus numerous shorter walks (Western Arthurs, The Tarkine, the Grampians Peak Trail etc), my luck ran out with the AAWT. Higher than normal rainfall along the east of Australia meant flooded rivers, snow, 100km/hr-plus winds, sub-zero temperatures, frozen feet and a lost hiking pole in a flooded creek. The

start was delayed due to advice by Parks Victoria to avoid the flooded rivers but after four days from Rumpff Saddle we were facing 25 ms of snow near Hotham plus 100km/hr winds. We discontinued the walk in that area and decided to try the Thredbo to Tharwa section on 8 December. All good until day five – we made it to O’Keefes Hut via a climb of Jagungal on a clear day but again luck changed with damaging winds and snow. More flooded creeks led to a decision to discontinue this walk for 2022. We walked out to Round Mountain Trailhead via Derschkos Hut in blasting icy snow where we were picked up by a friend (of our prospective member) who lives in Tumut. The whole trip was quite an experience.

Coolana Cleanup

26 November 2022, Coolana Kangaroo Valley

Grade: S111

Leader: Mandy Roberts

Members: Catheryn Myson, Don Finch, Steven St Hill, Margaret St Hill, Ann-Margret Withers

Prospective member: Stephanie Price

Visitors: Nilo Zabalo, Jenny Clarke

Route: Bush regeneration and maintenance at Coolana

Report: Cleaned up soil around shed, weeded camping flat with catchers, mowed and cleared all debris around toilet and shed, checked and attempted clearance of creek water pipe.

Introductory Abseiling Course

27 November 2022, Wahroonga Rocks

Grade: S111E

Leader: Anthony Powell

Members: David Fidge, Lucie Banyi

Prospective members: Bart Janowski, Lenka Kleintova

Route: Abseiling at Wahroonga Rocks, North Wahroonga.

Report: A fun day of abseiling basics, and a little less fun doing some prussiking practice. Hope to see the participants on an SBW canyon trip sometime soon. Many thanks to Michal Banyi and Damon de Costa for helping out.

Fitness Booster Mountain Stairs

27 November 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: S222

Leader: Kerry Atkins

Members: Francis Bottrell, Luke Neander

Route: Katoomba Falls Reserve – Golden Stars – Federal Pass to Echo Point or as far as possible with closures – Furber Steps – Katoomba Falls Reserve

Report: A glorious walk on a glorious day.

Jim's Track Circa 1937

3 December 2022, Ku-ring-gai Chase NP

Grade: S213

Leader: John Kennett

Members: Rosemary McDonald, Jose Correa, Tom Macdonald, Susan Cartwright, Neil Cartwright, Stephen Brading, John Robb, Jim Close

Prospective members: David Singleton, Chloe Roberts, Stephanie Price, Jonas Lemmon

Route: West Head Road – Little Pittwater – Challenger Lookout – Hungry Beach – West Head Road

Report: A delightful day, low 20s, sunny. Water temperature was ideal for swimming at Hungry Beach. This is a terrific circuit exploiting a little known track, with a mix of great views over Broken Bay, a couple of steep but short climbs, and a 30 minute rock hop. Very enjoyable company.

Brooklyn Circuit

4 December 2022, Ku-ring-gai Chase NP

Grade: M222E

Leader: Bob Seibright

Members: Damon de Costa, Sumni Clement

Route: Brooklyn – Deadhorse Bay – Sandy Bay – Peak Hill – Porto Ridge – Brooklyn

Report: Lovely forest, beaches and bays. Great views from Peak Hill and Porto Ridge. Some bush bashing and scrambling.

Mt Murray Anderson Engraving Extravaganza

4 December 2022, Ku-ring-gai Chase NP

Grade: M222

Leader: Carley Finn

Members: Jim Collier, Don Finch, Petros Nikoloudis, Michelle Rose

Prospective member: David Eyland

Route: Duffys Forest – Perimeter Trail – Long Trail – Stingray Bay – Mt Murray Anderson – Perimeter Trail – Duffys Forest

Report: Aboriginal art engravings galore, a rare art cave, off-track and fun scrambling and route finding both up and down some minor cliff lines and magnificent views – this walk had lots of interesting things to do and see. A fantastic and very capable group with one of our longest serving active members as well as one of our newest prospectives, with this being his first walk having attended the Info Night a few weeks prior. Everyone had a great day out and maybe there will be a part 2 walk with more engravings we didn't get to on this walk.

T3 to Colo River via Tootie Cascades

4 December 2022, Wollemi NP

Grade: M333E

Leader: Yuri Bolotin

Prospective member: Jasveen Kaur

Route: Early start. The walk starts at the car park at the top of the T3 track near Mountain Lagoon. We head west along a rocky ridge, then north west to an unnamed peak that has great views over D'Arcy Range and Colo River. Next, we head north east, following a ridge down to Tootie Creek, joining it by some excellent rock platforms and pools. We follow Tootie Creek down to the junction with Colo River. This alternates between open rocky platforms and bush bashing. On arriving at the Colo, we return up the T3 track to the car park. Around 8 hours.

Report: OK.

Missingham Steps to Dtharowal Creek.

10 December 2022, Budderoo N.P.

Grade: M233

Leader: Frank Hartigan

Members: Anthony Powell, Joan Ho, Rob Thomas, Charlie Allen

Prospective members: Joel Coulsen, Adam Scott, Christian Peterson, Bronwyn Peterson, Justine Orielly
Dianne Hester

Visitor: Peter Still

Route: Fountaindal Road – Missingham Lookout – Missingham Steps – Kangaroo River – Carrington Falls – Dtharowal Creek – Fontaindale Road.

Report: Some big waterfalls.

Caleys Haycock to the Wollangambe

10 December 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: S223

Leader: John Kennett

Members: Katy Wilkins, Winson Chen, David Angell, Suzanne Gapps, Matthew Molyneux, Stephen Craft

Prospective member: Martin Daly

Route: Cathedral Reserve to the Wollangambe via Beronia Point Trail

Report: Thanks to a map provided by the Activities Secretary, we found a route down to a wonderful pool, ideal for swimming on the river via the so called Wollangambe 5 exit. We probed downstream for an hour past beautiful long pools but chose to leave further exploring to another day. After scrambling back up the exit, we enjoyed a walk amongst acres of flannel flowers on the promontory which the river surrounds for nearly 270 degrees. A great day out in fine weather. I will be coming back for more.



Caleys Haycock to the Wollangambe. Photos: Stephen Craft.



Galong Creek

10 December 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: M222E

Leader: Patrick Spiers

Members: Joan Chan, Gita Visockaite, Angela Beveridge

Prospective members: David Singleton, Matt Sharp

Route: Ironpot ridge – Ironpot mountain – Tinpot hill – Ridge heading roughly NW – Cox's river – Galong creek – Green gully

Report: We six hardy souls sallied forth under a sky still bruised from the previous night's rain. After locating the baffling ironpots we struck out NNW through moderate regrowth to Tinpot hill, and descended downward, ever downward towards the mighty Cocks River. The sun came out and with it the serpents. At the Cocks we took our elevenses perched on pleasingly water polished boulders before turning E up Galong creek. Feral pigs, trout and dogs all took flight as we approached. After an hour of creek walking we arrived at the gorge section..this is what we were here for. It was a delight, pure and simple. Energetic cataracts feeding deep pools and pleasant "chains of ponds" walking in between.

Luncheon was taken where Pat, Gita and Matt spent some time porpoising in the cool water. After lunch the gorge tightened and it was no longer possible to keep our feet dry. The crux was a bomb-bay slot that had to be tackled directly from deep water, fortunately this led to a laid back corner system that allowed us through to the top. Another period of peaceful creek-walking deposited us back at the start.

If it had only lasted for another hour or so this would have made a great Q walk for Matt and David who, along with Angela, did their fair share of route finding.

Mt Kuring gai to Berowra

10 December 2022, Berowra Valley NP

Grade: M221

Leader: Tom MacDonald

Member: Jim Close

Visitors: Joanne Lee, Winni Mau

Route: Mt Kuring Gai to Berowra via Lyrebird Gully track was the planned route but back burning in the valley required a quick change of plans. We decided to do the Cowan to Berowra walk via Berowra Waters instead.

Report: Had to change the walk at the last minute because of back burning activities in the Lyrebird Creek area. We ended up doing Cowan to Berowra via Berowra Waters which ended up being a bit longer but a fantastic walk anyway, with great views and a good group of walkers. A good day out.

East Creek Glories

10 December 2022, Newnes SF

Grade: S323E

Leader: Yuri Bolotin

Members: Ian Starkey, Robyn Christie

Route: Find out why this part of the Gardens of Stone must be protected for the future generations. Park near spot height 1057 at GR 427 060. The walk will start by coming down into East Creek Galleries, then visiting a spectacular side ravine. We will move on to the West Side Falls and West Side Chamber; continue to East Creek Falls; then exit on the eastern side to visit the top of the falls. About 8k.

Report: OK.

Martin's Lookout Circuit

11 December 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: M232E

Leader: Bob Seibright

Members: Robyn Christie, Lenka Uvirova, Lucy Banyi, Mark Coleman, Sarah Homewood

Prospective members: Belinda Banister, Lucy Banyi

Route: Martin's Lookout – Glenbrook creek – Sharks Head Cave – Lost world & Bunyan Lookouts – Glenbrook Creek – Martin's Lookout.

Report: The views were stunning. Lots of scrambling up the ridge to Lost World Lookout. Warm day. Swim at a beautiful rockpool along Glenbrook Creek. Great group.

Woolwich Wharf – Macquarie Park

11 December 2022, Lane Cove National Park

Grade: M211

Leader: Leigh McClintock

Members: Fifi Ojong, Andy Ojong, Stuart Comer, Jenny Lian

Prospective members: Ann Banks, Melissa Twyford

Route: Street bash through Hunters Hill to Boronia Park, thence following the Lane Cove River to De Burgh's Bridge, and out to Macquarie Park.

Report: One week ahead of the day, SBW was not offering any Sunday day walks on the 11th. This walk was my last-minute effort to fill the gap. Sure enough, six eager members signed up, and proved excellent company.

About 20km on a warm, sunny day. For once, everything went pretty much to plan. The ferry trip to Woolwich, at the start, was a delight. The slog up the sunny side of Lane Cove Road, at the end, was the worst.

Despite the suburban streets at the start, this is an interesting and quite testing walk, with lots of little rises and falls, and enough rock hopping and stair climbing to maintain interest. The changing views of the river provide charming variety. The board walks through the mangroves are particularly nice.

Jenolan River camp

16–17 December 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: M232

Leader: Tim Sutherland

Members: Frances Bottrell, Huw Ap Rees

Route: Galong Farm – Tinpot Hill – Cocks River – Jenolan River – camp – Breakfast Creek – Hobbles Spur – Galong Farm

Report: This was a very pleasant summer walk along the rivers and creek. Some areas of scrub are extremely overgrown, adding an hour to each days walk.

Yeomans Bay for a swim

17 December 2022, Ku-ring-gai Chase NP

Grade: M212

Leader: Sue Tiller

Members: Bruno De Villenoisy, Tom Macdonald

Route: Waratah Fire Trail – Yeomans Bay – Waratah Fire Trail

Report: We didn't make it to Yeomans Bay for a swim due to the thick, scratchy overgrown scrub that Ku-ring-gai is famous for, and a cliff line we couldn't get through. We were all a bit battered and bruised at the end but enjoyed the walk and the company!

Heathcote Circuit

18 December 2022, Royal NP

Grade: M222

Leader: Bob Seibright.

Prospective members: Belinda Bannister, Ann Banks

Route: Heathcote – Karloo Pool – Uloola Falls – Robertson's Knoll – Kangaroo Creek – Heathcote

Report: Pleasant walking on a cool day. Some beautiful rock pools along Glenbrook Creek for a swim or two.

Wondabyne #1 to Patonga

18 December 2022, Brisbane Water NP

Grade: L221

Leader: John Kennett

Members: Jim Collier, Carley Finn, Tony Murphy, Karen Darby, Petros Nikoloudis, Michelle Rose, Jim Close, Tom Macdonald

Prospective member: David Eyland

Route: Wondabyne Station to Patonga

Report: A good trip with a few hills, about 21km, some great scenery especially from the top of Mount Wondabyne and Warrah Lookout. Intermittent showers had the party changing into and out of rain jackets multiple times. We arrived at Patonga for coffee and chips, but well ahead of the afternoon bus to Woy Woy. Our President had a chat to staff at the Beach House and we scored a free lift in their bus back to Woy Woy.





Following the rocks to Box Head. Photo: Lauren Curtis.



Walking along Half Tide rocks. Photo: Jon Bell.

Evening Express – Bobbin Head

21 December 2022, Ku-ring-gai Chase NP

Grade: M221

Leader: David Richards

Prospective members: Craig Turner, Kurt Henkel

Route: Sphinx track to Cowan Creek, follow the Werrimoo track downstream along Cowan Creek to Bobbin Head marina, then up Bobbin Head trail and back to the cars

Report: A great evening walk, lovely views and some local wildlife out to say hello. Tracks were dry finally.

Western Bouddi Coastal Excursion

23 December 2022, Bouddi NP

Grade: M213E

Leader: Lauren Curtis

Members: Craig Marcombe, Patrick Spiers, Winson Chen, Jon Bell

Prospective member: Hari Krishna Tummalapalli

Route: Wagstaffe – Half Tide Rocks – Lobster beach – Little Box head – Iron Ladder beach – Box Head – Little Tallow beach – Tallow Beach – Killcare/Putty beach – Bullimbah Spur – Marie Byles L/O – Putty Beach

Report: An awesome afternoon walk, with undeniably perfect low tide rock hopping conditions. The weather gods gifted us incredibly flat seas, sunshine, a light breeze and blue skies. An accident on the M1 meant we started about 45 minutes later than planned, but otherwise things went smoothly and there was a great, relaxed vibe throughout the walk.

There were about two-to-three mandatory swims between Little Box Head and Iron Ladder beach, otherwise it was just wet feet here and there and a lot of rock hopping and scrambling. The water temperature was ideal and the swims, together with the scenery, were real highlights. Successfully making it around the rocks between Tallow beach and Killcare was an unexpected bonus, as, going into the walk, this was a section I thought we were unlikely to get through. Thanks to all the guys for coming along and making it a fun afternoon. Thanks also for being so willing to swim, extend the end point, and for persisting with the heavy traffic on the M1 to get to the start. Particular welcome to Hari who joined us for his first walk with SBW!

Christmas in the Snowies

26 December 2022 – 2 January 2023 – Kosciuszko NP

Grade: S232E

Leader: Jim Close

Members and Prospective Members: Petros Nikoloudis, Michelle Rose, Ljiljana Kragic, Bruce Dennien Jim Close, Karen McMahon, Aleks Todoroski, Sivanthi Edirsinghe, Cathie Goss, Deborah Baker, Laura Larumbe Karen Brown, Margaret Rozea, Sandra Parker, Blanche Kairies, Anthony Powell, Joan Ho, David Trinder, Mindy Gu, Sandra See, Walter Baer, Stef Jang, Alison Howes, Stephanie Price, Stephane Renard, Belinda Campbell, Peter Wassenaar, Sally Ho, Paul McCann, Linda Taylor, Roshini Randeniya, Margaret St Hill Stephen St Hill, Mary Jin, Marcia Kaye, Shahram Landarani, Asiyeh Landarani, Stephen Craft, Jose Correa, Diana Correa, Sun Mi Clement, Don Finch, Omar Sharief, Robin Cowdery, Stuart Corner, Tom MacDonald

Visitors: Patrick McNaught, Christine Smith, Tim Hill

Route and Report: See the article on page 16.



In the Cobberas. Photo: David Angell.



On Cobbera 1. Photo: Stephen Craft.



In the Cobberas. Photo: Stephen Craft.

Canyoning

27 December 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: S232

Leader: Shiva Nami & David Carmichael (Co-leader)

Members: Charles Dunn, Caroline Houghton

Prospective member: Marten Blumen

Visitors: Alexander Musser, Tanja Ullermann

Route: Whungee Wheengee Canyon

Report: OK.

Mt Wilson Xmas Canyons – Whungee Whingee

27 December 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: M222E

Leader: Warwick Chate

Members: Kavita Joshi, Dorothy Jakab, Jon Bell, Lauren Curtis, David Richards, Omar Sharief, Srinu Gowda

Route: Cathedral Campground – Whungee Wheengee – Wollangambe swim – Wollangambe 2 exit – Cathedral Campground

Report: The water level was at a more sensible level than last year, allowing for a nice journey exploring the tight constrictions of the canyon and a warm swim down the Wollangambe to the exit track.

The Cobberas and Cowombat Flat

27 December – 1 January 2023, Kosciuszko NP, Alpine NP (Victoria)

Grade: M232

Leader: David Angell

Members: Suzanne Gapps, Katherine Zlatar, Stephen Craft, Nicole Gallahar, Marc Allas, Sue Hailstone

Visitor: Nikilesh Sharma

Route: Native Dog Flat – The Playgrounds – Mt Cobberas No.1 – saddle below Moscow Peak – Cowombat Flat Track – Cowombat Flat – The Pilot – Cowombat Flat – Bulley Ck – Native Dog Flat

Report: See the article on page 12.

Hannels Spur

27 December – 2 January 2023, Kosciuszko NP

Grade: M232

Leader: Bruno De Villenoisy

Member: Sue Tiller

Prospective member: Jonas Lemmon

Visitors:

Route: Geehi Flat – Hannels Spur – Main Range – Dead Horse Gap

Report: We ducked a few storms and enjoyed the challenge of Hannels Spur to spend a wonderful few days on the main range.

Short walks in the Snowy Mts

27 December – 3 January 2023, Kanangra-Boyd NP

Grade: M222

Leader: John Pozniak

Members: Linda Mallett, Ann-Margaret Withers, Pamela Irving

Visitors: Leisha Hay, Helge Sangkuhl, Lindy McMahon, Valerie Rice, Alex Pozniak, Alicja Poźniak

Route: Day walks to the following destinations: Mt Tate Circuit, Iconic walks 1+2; Mt Twynham; The Sentinel, Stillwell restaurant ruins and Kangaroo ridge; the Ramsheads; Charlotte pass – Blue lake – Kosciuszko circuit.

Report: Our group mixed with Jim Close group in various walks and vice versa.

Mt Wilson Xmas Canyons – Lower North Bowens

28 December 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: S222E

Leader: Simon Hager

Members: Jon Bell, Charles Dunn, David Richards, Caroline Houghton, Lauren Curtis, Srinivas Gowda, David Carmichael

Route: Lower North Bowens canyon

Report: A relaxing trip through a quality canyon.

Xmas canyoning Mt Wilson (Lower North Bowen Creek)

28 December 2022, Blue Mountains NP

Grade: S223E

Leader: David Carmichael

Members: Simon Hager (co-leader), Charles Dunn, David Richards, Caroline Houghton, Lauren Curtis Jon Bell, Srinu Gowda

Route: Started and finished from Wynnes Rocks Rd via fire trail and the standard canyoning route.

Report: Excellent descent of the very picturesque lower North Bowens Creek with good party & a moderate water level.

Wondabyne #3 Mullet Tunnel

29 December 2022, Brisbane Water NP

Grade: M223

Leader: John Kennett

Members: Andrew Stevenson, Nubia Quiazua, Angela Beveridge

Prospective members: Mark Coleman, David Eyland, Sam Grunel, Matt Levinson, Martin Daly, Alexi Kyriazis

Route: Wondabyne Station – Kariong Brook – Mount Wondabyne – Mullet Creek Tunnel – Wondabyne Station.

Report: Fortunately a cool day. A really nice circuit which included a couple of hours of classical coastal bush bashing, sometimes beautiful, mostly a tough hack, but great education on mastering this skill and fully exploiting the potential of the Sydney Region by leaving the beaten track. Some really good work in front by the men and some great route finding by Nubia. Special meritorious mention for Mark who missed the Wondabyne stop, had to wait an hour for the next train, then ran after the party, catching them in only 90 minutes at the base of Mount Wondabyne.

North Sydney Circumnavigation

29 December 2022, Sydney Harbour

Grade: M211

Leader: Leigh McClintock

Members: Tim Yewdall, Patrick Spiers, Andy Ojong, Fifi Ojong, Jenny Lian, Christine McColl

Prospective member: Michael Phillips

Route: Luna Park – Greenwich Baths – Gore Hill Cemetery – St Leonards Station

Report: We hugged the shoreline around to Greenwich Baths, where we were scheduled to have lunch and a swim. There was a cold south-easterly blowing, so we skipped the swim and just had lunch. Tim and Patrick left us at Gore Park, and by St Leonards we had done 16km. Michael, Jenny and Christine called it a day there, and Andy, Fifi and I continued to Northbridge, about another 4 km along.

Not the prettiest of days, but the rain held off, and everyone proclaimed themselves content with the day's exercise.

Gloucester Canyon

29 December 2022, Oxley Wild Rivers NP

Grade: M222

Leader: Shiva Nami & Alex Motyka (co-leader)

Members: Shiva Nami, Alex Motyka

Prospective member: Marten Blumen

Visitor: Danylo Motyka, Simon Murphy, and Brittany Meers

Route: Gloucester falls look out

Report: OK

Wadbilliga gorges

31 December – 3 January 2023, Wadbilliga NP

Grade: M233

Leader: Tim Hager

Members: Lauren Curtis, Gill Webber

Prospective member: Linda Hager

Route: Wadbilliga trail (276790) – Back River trail – knoll 295778 – ridge 305777 – knoll 3037705 – spur 312773 – traverse to ridge 311778 – Wadbilliga River (319779) – junction with Queens Pound River – side trip up Queens Pound River to 364796 – trail to car via Conways Gap and Bumbery Ck

Report: This was an interesting walk with plenty of rock hopping along the rivers and a few surprises that is always on the cards on an exploratory trip. The walking up to lunch time was easy and very pleasant, through lightly burnt forest. The amount of fire regrowth increased as we approached Wadbilliga gorge, but it was still easy to push through. Some good views from a heath covered knoll made a good lunch spot. But the views also gave some sense of the challenging terrain ahead.

The eastern side of Wadbilliga Gorge is extremely steep, resembling the country around Thurat Spires. However, we were descending on the western side, which was easier – according to the map at least. We angled downwards and caught a dramatic first sight of the spur that I hoped would provide a descent route. It was a spectacular knife edge with several drops. The clincher was the loose, rotten nature of the rock – we had to find another way.

The next ridge to the north looked promising, so we traversed and puffed back up the hill to pick up the ridge, topping up with water as a precaution. It was a goer, but was unrelentingly steep, had lots of loose rock and the regrowth became thicker as we descended. I wouldn't recommend this route and it was a relief to finally reach the river at 7pm. Fortunately, Lauren found a good camp site 5 minutes down the river.

After the strenuous first day, the rest of the trip was most enjoyable. The Wadbilliga River provides easy rock hopping and we arrived at a good campsite near the junction with the Queens Pound River after about 7 hours. It is a fast flowing river with lots of rapids and relatively few deep pools – not what I was expecting. Day 3 was a side trip up the Queens Pound River, which has a succession of deep pools and is a lovely stream. This day was the highlight of the trip for me.

The final day was a straightforward climb out of the gorge along a fire trail, though the 800m of climbing was quite a workout. Fortunately, the clouds rolled in after a warm start to the day.

Thanks to everyone for their company on the trip, their patience and resilience on the first day and to Lauren for pushing through the regrowth. Note that there is a rock and sand ford where the Wadbilliga trail crossed the Tuross River. An AWD with reasonable clearance is required.

Booking on walks

When contacting leaders by email please remember to state the following:

- Whether you are a full or prospective member
- A detail of your walking experience (preferably in the past 6 months): date, which leader if SBW and the route taken (not just the area).
- Any other relevant experience.
- Where you will be coming from and whether you need a lift or can provide one.

This will avoid back and forth emailing, it helps leaders and will encourage them to keep leading.

Remember also to give leaders plenty of notice if you need to pull out of a walk, so that other members can have the opportunity to take your place.



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