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## THE BUSH CLUB NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2012

[www.bushclub.org.au](http://www.bushclub.org.au)

Walks Program Autumn 2012 p. 21

Walks Reports Summer 2011-12 p. 16

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### CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

Please send anything you think will interest our members to Judy O'Connor

[bushclubeditor@gmail.com](mailto:bushclubeditor@gmail.com)

## WEST HIGHLAND WAY AND GREAT GLEN WAY

By Lynne Outhred

September 1-17, 2011

*Leaders: Robert Robinson and  
Graham Conden*

*Walkers: Sue Crosby, Shirley  
Hart, Jan Mathieson, John Maltby,  
Lynne Outhred, Robin Owens, Jan  
and John Wilson*

### West Highland Way

Leaving Milngavie after smoked salmon and scrambled eggs there were blue skies, woodland, open fields and wonderful views of Loch Lomond for the first few days.

We marched along the old Military road to Tyndrum, where we felt we might meet Mr Fawltly behind the bar of our hotel, which was decorated with red and white stripes and had a life-sized replica of Elvis in the breakfast room. Wifi reception was only possible on the stairs so we had to weave around people with laptops, phones and other devices trying to send emails as we staggered to our rooms.



Tyndrum Lodge

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## Great Glen Way

### Poetic twist

We met many people along the way and a German couple who were very interested in The Bush Club and its 'older' walkers wrote a poem about us:

#### *Walking Angels*

*Six hundred walkers*

*On their*

*Sydney-Walker-Hall*

*Hey a Hoo...Oh!*

*Looking for a way*

*to go*

*Finally*

*Met ten of them*

*On the Scottish West Highland Way*

*Fitter than young angels*

*They went up and down*

*Each day*

*Maybe*

*It's not "High Poetry"*

*But they impressed my heart*

*Were faster on the mountain trail*

*Than a Poet's word*

*Will start.*

### Wet finish

On our rest day most of us caught the train to Oban where the rain began in earnest. It continued on the following days as we crossed Rannock Moor, headed up the Devil's Staircase to Glencoe and through Kinlochleven to Fort William, the official end of the West Highland Way, and a day of washing wet and muddy clothes and boots.

Unfortunately it was still raining as we started the *Great Glen Way*, following tree-lined towpaths of the Caledonian Canal and along the shores of Loch Lochy, Loch Oich and Loch Ness beneath heather-clad hills. Thankfully, the rain eased after a few days and the sun shone until we reached Inverness.

*... (Madam Lash) was somewhat surprised that Graham only wore underpants under his overpants...*

What we all remembered was the generosity of most people we met and the stinginess of a few. The kilted host of one B&B who served breakfast in small portions extremely slowly amused us as did the efficient host of another who demanded we remove all wet gear and was somewhat surprised that Graham only wore underpants beneath his overpants!

She was deemed *Madam Lash* after some of our group received a lecture for taking their (now dry) boots into their rooms. Another memorable upmarket B&B had ornaments on every conceivable surface, rooms be-decked with ruffles and lace, and with four of us to a room there was no space to fit beds, occupants and luggage.

In the evenings there was laughter, recollections of the day's events, Graham's stories and general bonhomie as we ate pub food, of varying quality but much of it fried and accompanied by chips, while we drank wine, beer and the occasional single malt. Overall, it was a

wonderful trip. Thank you Graham and Robert.



Loch Lomond



End of the West Highland Way



## Raincoat Brigade

*Walkers: John Bannister (leader), Collette Bannister, Jill Green, Warwick Bridge, Pamela Warren, Daryl Warren, Diane Kolstad, Stephanie Miller, Tamara Carter (Guest walker), Marilyn Stewart (Guest walker)*

The second group of 'Scotland' walkers, led by John Bannister, was the ham in the sandwich, so to speak. They arrived at Milngavie and started walking a few days after group one (led by Robert Robinson and Graham Conden) and ahead of group three. They soldiered along

*... Wet weather gear was always at the ready and used constantly for the next 14 days of walking, some days being particularly uncomfortable!...*

the *West Highland Way* and, after a rest day in Fort William, continued on to conquer the *Great Glen Way*.

'Despite the weather, everyone finished, although some succumbed to Citylink buses from time to time when the weather was evil,' says John.

'At our final meal together in Inverness everyone had a sense of achievement having conquered the Scottish countryside in what were at times, most unpleasant conditions.'

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## Highland Flingers

By Sandra Bushell

*Walkers: Sandra Bushell, Bev Barnett (leaders), Helen Kershaw, Janette Allen-Fiore, Alison Harvie, Yvonne Bonner, Col Prentice, Peter Blackband.*

A third group of walkers to take on the two iconic walks in Scotland formed when two leaders stepped forward to take members who had been on the waiting list. We dubbed ourselves the *Highland Flingers* and flung ourselves into walking – and eating.

*The West Highland Way*, the first trail, was punctuated by atmospheric pubs (shelter from the elements), fireside dinners of fresh trout - and chips with everything. When we couldn't see the Munros for the mist and rain, we concentrated on the menu. More haggis with tatties for the adventurous.

### Forget campfire food

Fortified by extravagant breakfasts, we walked over Conic Hill, across moors and along lochs. We sampled game sausages, scotch broth and clapshot cake. And there are now fewer salmon in the lochs and rivers, as we polished them off at breakfast and dinner.

The Scots have had smoked fish since the Iron Age. Wild, farmed, locally caught, and smoked salmon appeared on spectacular spreads each morning, along with beautiful berries and a range of cheeses. Stay at Endencoille Guesthouse, Kinlochleven for around 50 breakfast options before you try walking some of it off. Black pudding with your

haddock, eggs, bacon and oatcakes anyone?

### Big decision

We met each evening for a briefing on the following day's track, trail features, distances, leaders and, importantly .... *Where would we have drinks and dinner?*

The days passed in a procession of rain, wind, heather and home-made porridge. The women started to talk less about trails and more about calories. The men pointed out that the daily walk briefings needed to be conducted very efficiently so that valuable drinking time was not lost.

### Sunny at last

*The Great Glen Way (GGW)*, the second trail, was sunny! This stimulated our robust appetites! The GGW was a long, but easy, walk beside the Caledonian Canal, lochs, forests – and some fantastic eating destinations.

Restaurants, pubs and hotels catering to the surge in Highlands tourism await the walker who comes in from the moors and 'the wilderness'. Since the early days of the clans, venison has been a favourite Highland food. We continued the tradition with (farmed) venison roasted, smoked and made into sausages (low fat & tasty) to fuel our walking.

The slow food movement pioneer began her good works near Spean Bridge and we duly tucked into a slow feast with French wines here. (Well, it had been a long day on the trail.)



**Cold Guinness for Col Prentice**

*Strewth!* At Fort Augustus, Contours Walking Holidays had booked us into the wrong accommodation. When we *finally* found our digs, we made up for lost time with another superb meal at our elusive but welcoming hotel.

*Strewth! Eat your heart out...*

'Have you let the chef know how marvellous we think this meal is?' we asked the innocent looking young waitress.

'Oh yes,' she replied confidently. 'I told her the table of Australians is out there 'strewthing' each time I deliver a course!'

*Eat your heart out – we did:* Our final night celebrations were held, appropriately, in a pub.

For those novices thinking of signing up for the fabulous overseas club walks: *Will you have a great walk? Absolutely. Will you reach your destination much fitter? Yes. Will you lose weight? Probably not!*



**Alison Harvey stepping on board for afternoon drinks**



## **ADRIAN COOPER – ONE OF A KIND**

**By Michael Keats**

*There are two kinds of adventurer – those who live with fear and those who are dead.*

**A**drian Cooper may not be the first sage to utter these words. However he is an adventurer who disciplines his fear and lives by its positive practical philosophy.



We are having a chat over a cuppa as I try to understand this intellectual giant of a man who has motivated hundreds of young people to effectively master their fear and enjoy an adventurous life to the full.

### **Positive and negative**

Fear is a very powerful instinct; in given situations it translates into courage and often enables us to perform way beyond accepted limits.

*...a chimney and a step  
of faith out of the  
window onto the cliff  
face...*

But, used inappropriately, it can be a downward spiraling negative that deprives and cowers capable performers into withdrawing.

Adrian was eight years old when his cub mistress, Nola Beattie, 1st Lindfield Scouts, broke the age rules and persuaded (or, was it 'try to stop me!') him to participate in his first pack walk and camp – down on *skeeta* (diminutive for Mosquito) Flats on Middle Harbour. It opened the door on the natural world for a young man who already sensed an

affinity with the outdoors and adventure.

**S**couting was also incubating other budding adventurers including Dick Smith and Rick Jamieson. Adrian went on to become a Scout and later a Senior Scout (equivalent to the current Venturer Scout), thoroughly enjoying the diversity of outdoor activities on offer. This included mastering a range of skills such as bushwalking, camping, abseiling, rock climbing and more.

After graduating in Arts with a major in Mathematics at Sydney University and subsequently practising for a short time as an actuary, Adrian had a chance discussion with Colin Healey of Sydney Grammar School about launching the *Duke of Edinburgh* scheme in Australia.

### **Life changing**

This conversation would change his life as he went on to agree to become a maths teacher at Sydney Grammar and, along with Shore School, introduced the *Duke of Edinburgh* scheme to Australia. He went on to spend the next 39 years at Sydney Grammar. The rapport he developed with successive years of students led to lifelong friendships.

In 1969 the *Endeavour Club* was launched as a secondary school adventure activity group that has continued and expanded beyond its narrower concept and now includes many others apart from old boys and their families. Adrian stages an annual camp at Deep Pass in the Wollemi Wilderness where club members relax and enjoy, as well as sample, a range of adventurous activities.

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## **Canyoning**

He has a fearsome reputation in the abseiling/canyon domain, tackling activities that send shudders through those who have never contemplated, let alone attempted, to conquer their fear.

**T**alking specifics, I ask about Castle Head - a five-pitch abseil descent (with zigzag ledges in between) that ends in a walk down to the track and up The Golden Stairs. The climb, rarely done, is an alternative exit.

Adrian calmly told me that it is a 'rambling climb' that gives him a 'bit of a thrill':

'The last section of the climb involves a chimney and a step of faith out of the window onto the cliff face where the drop is of such magnitude that it quickens the heartbeat.'

## **Real thing**

He recalled an incident when he felt genuine fear.

It was way back when abseiling off *The Three Sisters* was still permitted. It was a night exercise and the last abseil down onto the bridge to the first Sister was all that remained to be done. A really strong wind got up and when the rope was played out it remained horizontal:

'Even though we knew it was long enough, when you descended, you hoped you had enough weight to counteract the wind and land on the narrow bridge...'

It sure takes guts to be an adventurer.

## **6 o'clock news**

While at Sydney Grammar, Adrian made the News on three occasions – for the wrong reasons, although he quickly points out that at no time were any boys at risk. The most 'sensationalised' incident occurred precisely at the time the NSW Government was contemplating disbanding the Police Rescue Squad.

He was leading a group that was overdue because a thunderstorm had caused a rapid rise in a tributary of Bell Creek and the group was benighted. Whilst every boy made it to the safety of a high ledge and a camping cave, some had not properly waterproofed their packs and they were excessively heavy with wet gear. As Adrian explains:

'It takes time to haul up packs that include a few extra kilos of water. Quite some time was spent giving this assistance and, as a result, it was necessary to sleep rough and walk out the following day.

'We made a fire and despite wet sleeping bags for some boys we all had a reasonable night. When we walked out the following morning, Rescue Squad members were keen to create images for the TV cameras. The city press was there as well. No assistance was really necessary, however the Police Rescue did ham it up for the cameras.'

## **Police Rescue Squad saved**

The most positive outcome from the incident was irresistible pressure on the NSW Government to retain the Police Rescue Squad. Adrian adds that one of the sad things learned was the poor bush craft skills of

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some squad members and their lack of ability to 'read the ground' and work out the location of existing tracks.

Adrian loves canyons, particularly those that involve complex abseils, physical challenges and a constant flow of adrenalin to successfully complete. He has enormous respect for the early canyoners of the 1960s. This was a time when there were no notes or books; no one knew how long ropes needed to be to successfully get down and survive, in fact, it was more scary than that – no one knew whether in fact you could get through and survive at all.

### **Different today**

Musing on how things change, Adrian suggests that in 2012 abseiller/canyoners still take risks. However, for any given canyon there is information about how many abseils are involved and what lengths of rope are required. In the early days when the sport was evolving and largely driven by a group of Sydney University Bush Walkers, ropes were made of natural fibres that were extraordinarily heavy and even more so when wet.

*...he has even been seen walking on the Patagonian ice shelf...*

Such sophisticated hardware as harnesses and snap on and off carabineers were yet to be invented. Sophisticated safety gear, specially designed ropes, training courses and even helmets were yet to become part of the culture.

### **World high spots**

Overseas destinations have a strong appeal to Adrian. He has walked and led youth groups to Nepal, Borneo and New Zealand. He has even been seen walking on the Patagonian Ice Shelf. He was the second person to climb the west face of Mount Haidinger in NZ and climbed Mount Aspiring in the same country by two different routes. The Himalayan Club chose him to lead a trek for youths aged between 17 and 20 years from Australia and New Zealand, to the base of Everest, in Nepal, picking up rubbish dropped by thoughtless tourists/trekkers along the popular route. He has since trekked four more times in Nepal and has twice rafted the Trisuli River, and recently the wild Zambesi. Back at home his to do list includes *Bubble Bath* and *Crikey Canyons*.

### **Order of Australia**

**H**e does not speak readily about his Order of Australia (OAM) awarded for services to youth. What does shine through in a deep conversation with him is the dedicated teacher who yearns to impart to the next generation that spirit of adventure and love of the great outdoors, which has so enriched his own life.

I have been walking with Adrian for several years and feel privileged to do so. I have to confess to being quite chuffed recently when, on a reasonably challenging walk in very adverse conditions, he described my insistence on wanting to reach our goal to the rest of the group as that of 'a driven man'.

Equally I can return the compliment, as Adrian is also driven...to proselytize, imbue and convert the next generation to be real adventurers.

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## Conservation Volunteers Program

This non-profit organisation runs dozens of free courses and field days for volunteers committed to improving and conserving the local Environment. Recent topics have included *Introduction to Frog Ecology, Survey and Monitoring, Shore Birds and Shellfish, Oatley Park: Hidden Jewel of the South* and *Introduction to Bush Regeneration*. Their doors are always open for more people. Enquiries: 9663 0020 or [www.conservationvolunteers.com.au](http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au)

## Landslide Gully

by Michael Keats

**B**ush Club leader and luminary, John Cooper has a reputation for creating and leading walks that are steeped in history. Each walk also contains a generous slice of adventure and the possibility of finishing off the Richter scale. John also does his homework and marshals information that is generously shared.

Known documented history of *Landslide Gully* as a way of route was researched and compiled by Graeme Holbeach:

*In July 1975 Fr Frank Bendeich and Tony Boyd of the Catholic Bushwalkers Club (CBC) decided to follow the creek up, basically 'because it was there'. This*

*was written up in The Wayside at the time. Of particular note was mention of a plank and forked tree {probably at the bottom} and the chimney with torn shirt {definitely at the top}. Only recently Frank told me he led an ascent by the CBC priests soon after. Some of the party apparently stated that they would never go there again. No further CBC ascents occurred.*

*On 13<sup>th</sup> November 1992 John Morris, Paul Rendell and I (all members of the Sutherland Bushwalking Club) ascended Landslide Gully. Set out below are my post walk notes. We noted {unnecessary} spikes in a tree at bottom.*

*Up tree on left (short bolts in back unnecessary); onto 1m x 2m rock shelf; 2-3m vertical corner from there requires second person for support. Crawl along short ledge. Easier to get last person up slippery rock further on with tape anchored round boulder.*

*1m vertical onto ledge then 1.5m vertical; 2m vertical onto ledge; east along this ledge; 2.5m wet near vertical climb (ruts help); now in main amphitheatre.*

*Upper (rocky shale/shale) or lower (safer) terrace to east. Up to base of cliff and follow to east.*

*8m chimney which is a bit damp but has good holds. Tree at top for anchoring if required. Continue up small mossy gully. Take care not to*

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*dislodge rocks if anyone in the chimney then onto spur up to Glen Raphael Drive opposite a quarry. Tape used only to haul packs.*

*Time from bottom of gully to Glenraphael Drive was 1½ hours, but party was only three (John Morris, Paul Rendell and myself).*

*On 27<sup>th</sup> March 1994 there was a Sutherland Bushwalking Club walk down the ladders (or Devils Hole?), through the Daylight Tunnel under Narrow Neck and then to head up the Scenic Railway or Furbers Steps. There were about 15 to 20 on the walk. After exiting the tunnel, I offered to take anyone interested up the gully. About half the group took up the offer. Bill Rendell may have been on this walk?*

**W** weather conditions for the start of this walk provided their own challenge including rain squalls, rolling thunder, swirling mists, alternating with patches of clear sky and unpredictable light conditions. Underfoot, ground conditions were very wet and slippery. On the positive side the humidity was low, temperatures mild and walking conditions excellent.

At 1010 packs were shouldered and the descent of the Golden Stairs was under way. A stop was made at Walter Bottings Lookout to try and identify the particular gully that was the target of our planned ascent. It could have been any of four possible options. Photos were taken for post event review. I suspect that our actual ascent point was well and truly

hidden behind the folds of the re-entrant gullies. The terrain above the main cliff line has several hanging valleys, which further confuses the situation. The relative height differential at this point is 145m - that makes for an awesome climb.

## **Upgrade**

Descending the Golden Stairs it was good to see that the upgrade of the lower section has now been completed. When I was last there in June 2011, reconstruction work was well under way. New handrails have been installed. Where no safety hazard is involved, old infrastructure has been retained to provide a sense of history. Full marks to the NP&WS on a job well executed.

Reached the junction with Federal Pass at 1028 and then made fast progress along the old railway/tramway alignment to Rennies Tunnel that used to provide a route for kerosene shale and coal from mines along the Megalong Valley side of Narrow Neck to be transferred to the Jamison side for haulage up to Katoomba via what is now the Scenic Railway. A stop was made here to examine the recently installed heavy duty barrier to prevent bushwalkers and others from attempting the tunnel traverse – most unsporting but safety issues and threats of litigation drove the decision. The tunnel can still be accessed from the Megalong Valley side.

While in this area a number of us collected some unwanted travelling companions - leeches. I had one blood soaked sock to deal with at home. One member had a much more friendly leech that, without introduction, ventured into more sensitive areas.

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At 1058, GR 493 644, we left the Federal Pass behind and commenced climbing. Initially the climb was on a highly unstable scree slope below the main cliffs. A large, unstable boulder was set in motion by our passage. Fortunately when it moved it was below our position, which was just as well for it made a huge noise as it crashed down the slope taking all before it. No one was injured.

### **Slight setback**

Climbing higher, the scree slope narrowed and led us into a tight ravine that is the lower end of *Landslide Gully*. Here we had a bit of a shock. Graeme, who has completed this walk at least twice but nearly two decades ago was unable to find a key marker – a tree with spikes hard against the southern side of the ravine. Time and events have led to the demise of the tree and the access it once provided. There was nothing there. More disturbing were the changes in this part of the creek.

**A** huge rock had fallen and landed in the creek bed, also there was now a large apron of newly broken rock filling the lower area. As Graeme observed, if this boulder had not fallen where it did, then not even super agile Rodney would have been able to get up, and for the walk to proceed up the rich green, very slippery, moss encrusted all near vertical rock surfaces. Water dripped over everything. In many places it flowed over as well.



**Geoff Fox**

Our ascent prospects looked unlikely. We did however have Rodney Nelson in the party. Rodney, whose climbing ability is legendary, somehow climbed up over the slippery mosses and then further above looking for a place to tie off a tape. Brian Fox of equal climbing skill was close behind. After considering the implications of the loss of the initial access and what this may mean further on, it was still decided to proceed. It took 50 minutes for the whole party to negotiate this first challenge.

### **Test of time**

Next we had to deal with the interpretation of Graeme's brief words of 19 years ago:

*'1m vertical onto ledge then 1.5m vertical; 2m vertical onto ledge; east along this ledge; 2.5m wet near vertical climb (ruts help); now in main amphitheatre.'*

The only difference between the situation 19 years ago and the day was that everything was extremely

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wet. An omission from the old notes was the wet crossing of the creek in the ravine. This crossing looked treacherous but was not. Better still there were a few hand holds that enabled the traverse to be made in relative safety. A slip here would have been terminal with the racing water taking a falling person over the edge and into oblivion.

The 2.5 metre, wet vertical climb was made safe for all by Rodney again securing a rope around a tree and each of us using the 'Holbeach ruts' as footholds.

We had now gained significant altitude; however the challenge of the 8m chimney/slot still lay ahead. It was now about 1220. At this point a shower of rain added a little extra level of caution to our movements as we moved around a bluff to the east. A convenient overhang with views over a tossing white sea of mist was selected for lunch. When the sea of shifting white allowed, we had views of the cliffs above, *Mount Solitary* ahead and a reminder that there was still a significant vertical distance to cover. The key was to find the 8m chimney/slot.

### Quick lunch

**L**unch was a brief affair and after ten minutes we were all ready to face the challenge. From the lunch overhang, we headed straight up only to be confronted with a no-go cliff. Then we tested a rising ramp that led north towards the cliffs. As lead scout, Rodney called out to Graeme from 20m ahead that it was not going to work. He also said:

'What about checking out the slot behind you?'

Graeme turned around to find he had been standing in front of the slot we must take to complete the exit. From our approach lower down the slot was all but invisible. It was now just before 1300. The rain decided to return, not very heavy but enough to make everything sloppy and rocks very, very wet.

The lower section of the chimney/slot is not impossible but in wet conditions it is also not easy with hand and foot holds greasy with mud. Rodney was first up the slot followed closely by Brian. The tape was pressed into service and loops added every 75cm or so to assist climbing. A belay rope was also set to enable climbers to be assisted.

### Long haul

The process of getting everyone up the 8m chimney/slot safely, then hauling the packs took 90 minutes. As we arrived at the 'first station' above the slot climb, a small flock of Sulphur Crested Cockatoos eyed us off screeching at our intrusion of their territory. The next section of the climb was a continuation of the slot as an embryonic watercourse. After a few of us struggled with it, another tape was set as there was little to hang onto. A slip here would also spell disaster.

Whilst we had switched from near vertical ascent to 45-degree angle ascent the amount of vertical rise yet to be conquered was still significant. The cartographers did not put the 145m relative height on the map without good reason. We knew that every one of those metres had to be climbed.

As more elevation was gained the rate of climb reduced, making for better progress. The last few metres

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brought us out onto the 'spur up to Glen Raphael Drive opposite a quarry'. Remarkably, we had accomplished the mission. This could not have been done under the wet circumstances without Rodney's extraordinary skills, strong back up from Brian and prior knowledge by Graeme. In short, it required a whole team approach to be successful.

## Reflections

Waiting at the top for the drivers to retrieve the vehicles from the Golden Stairs track head, I could not but help think of all the debates I had had with **Wilf Hilder** about passes on *Narrow Neck* other than those already well known, and documented in *The Passes of Narrow Neck*. Wilf would have thoroughly enjoyed such a walk and undoubtedly would have had an opinion on when it was first walked and who was responsible for it being regarded as a pass. Given also that a sort of pass wound its way around the haulage of what is now the Scenic Railway, and the existence of the Golden Stairs one has to wonder why anyone, miners included, would contemplate using the route we followed as an alternative.

*The party comprised John Cooper, (leader), Steve Deards, John Duruz, Brian Fox, Geoff Fox, Graeme Holbeach, Michael Keats, Peter Medbury, Steve Murray, Rod Nelson, Bill Rendell and Caro Ryan.*

**Note.** There are few grid references given in this report and certainly none were documented during the walk. The concentration required was such that stopping to take such data would have distracted attention from the tasks to be done. A GPS plot of the walk has been kept.

It is recommended that anyone contemplating this walk seek discussions with someone who has successfully completed it and possibly a competent psychiatrist before attempting it.

*Any further information about Landslide Gully would be welcomed by the author.*



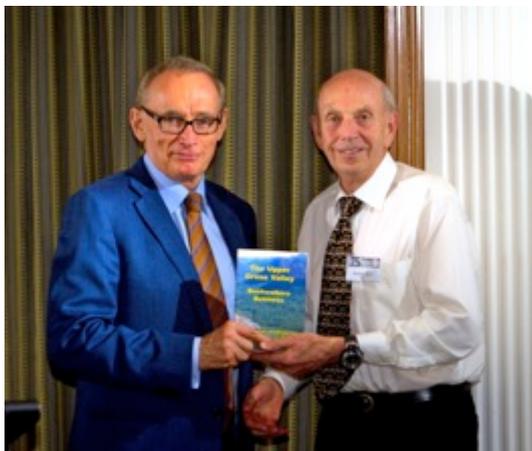
ooOoo

## Here's a thought

If you're planning a walk around Kiandra, you might consider staying at *The Wolgals Lodge* which sleeps eight people and has comfortable facilities, including gas oven, heater and hot showers. The owners are offering a deal that brings the cost down to \$50 per person for a weekend. Enquiries: Tumut & Region Visitor Information Centre (02) 69477025.

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## Anniversary dinner



Bush Club Life Member, Michael Keats, presents former NSW Premier, Bob Carr, with *The Upper Grose Valley. Bushwalkers Business*, one of several books Michael has written. The occasion was the recent 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS), the search and rescue section of NSW Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs and the specialist remote area search and rescue squad of NSW Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA).

### Thank You to Leaders

Each year the club invites leaders to gather for a special thank-you in appreciation of the work they do to make the club's walks plentiful and successful.

This year the event will be on *Friday 23rd March* at the Hunters Hill home of Pam and Darryl Warren. Start time: 6pm. Invitations, with all details, will be sent to leaders shortly. Make sure you put the date in your diary.

## Mike Pratt resigns from committee

It is with mixed feelings that the club accepts Mike Pratt's resignation from the committee. Mixed, in the sense that he will be sorely missed, but happy in the sense that he has taken on an exciting and enjoyable job which he is clearly enthusiastic about. Mike has a long history of hard work for the club, both in leading walks and serving in various roles – include twice as President. We wish him all the best and look forward to hearing about his new venture on future walks.

## Marie Byles birthday

**Marie Byles** (1900-1979) achieved many things in her life. She was NSW's first practising female solicitor, a mountaineer, explorer, feminist, author and conservationist. But, importantly for us, she, along with Paddy Pallin is credited with forming The Bush Club in 1939.

One of her finest achievements was ensuring the pristine Bouddi bush, bays and beaches - easily seen by standing on the northern beaches and looking across to Broken Bay – were gazetted in 1935 as a National Park. Countless walkers have since enjoyed the network of tracks and coastal walks that she, in effect, bequeathed to us.

**M**arie, a practising Buddhist, lived in a modest sandstone house near Cheltenham which she called *Ahimsa* and which became a centre for small groups to

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meet for discussions and meditation. The end of her life was tragic. At the

**keeps the bugs away.** age of 66, she was brutally attacked by an unknown assailant as she slept alone in her home and left for dead. She died thirteen years later. She left her property to the National Trust of Australia (NSW) to ensure the native bushland and surrounding reserves would be preserved.

Marie's birthday falls on **Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup>** and the club is considering marking the occasion with a walk and visit to *Ahimsa*. Details will be provided.

### Save money

In planning his walks in New Zealand early this year, Tony Hickson found it helpful for the group to pay for The Bush Club to become a group member of YHA NZ for twelve months to March 2013. The discounts on accommodation easily exceeded the cost of membership.

The membership card is available to any Bush Club leader so if you're organising a walk in New Zealand, contact Tony and he will mail the card to you. To [nyhickson3@bigpond.co](mailto:nyhickson3@bigpond.co)

### Numbers on walks

For safety reasons the minimum number of participants for an official Bush Club walk is **four**.

## A couple of tips

### Snake bandage

A really good item for your first aid kit (for any walk in the bush) is a **Setopress** compression bandage, for snake or spider bites. It has markings on it that show you the exact amount of tension to use on the bitten limb. Start at the end of the limb and work upwards over the bite, as far as you can - use two bandages if necessary. And keep the victim immobile.

### DIY Recipe for insect repellent

Mix a few drops of Cedarwood and Rosemary oils into a sorbolene cream. Rub a small amount of the cream to face,, arms etc (ears even). Spread gently for even cover.

It smells great to humans but keeps the bugs away.

