

THE BUSH CLUB NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2018

www.bushclub.org.au

Walks Program Autumn p. 11

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CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

Please send anything you think will interest
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MORRIE DONOVAN'S NEW CHALLENGE

By John Maltby



I recently had the pleasure of spending a few days over the New Year period with Morrie Donovan and his extended family camping at Sawpit Creek in the Snowy Mountains, but this was no typical family camping holiday.

After many years of leading multiday pack walks for the Bush Club, Morrie was obviously up for a new challenge. So, with his 2 great-grandchildren, Blake (2) and Lala (5) Morrie had decided on one last trip to Nepal.

Our stay at Sawpit Creek was to see how well the little ones coped with walking and 'acclimatising' at 2,000 metres prior to their upcoming 10 day trek in Nepal, where great-grandchildren are basically almost unknown.



However, Blake and Lala are not your average helicoptered city kids, having grown up on 'closed' Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory and central Queensland, where their parents have worked.



So, from our base camp at Sawpit Creek we spent 4 days travelling to 2,000 metres to visit North Ramshead, Porcupine Rocks and an overnight stay at Mt Stillwell in preparation for their climb to 4,000 metres in Nepal.



Both children and family went well, with 5-year-old Lala even totalling an amazing 17 kilometres unassisted, over the 4 days of walking.

Of course the acid test is yet to come late this month (February), when Morrie, his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren set off for their 17 day, door to door, adventure in the real mountains of Nepal.

We can only wish them well.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Jenny Stephens
Carolyn Blake
Pooja Sharma
Trish Watson
Peter Walton
Ruth Henderson
Hean Lay Gan
Glenn Draper

FLORA TO WATCH FOR



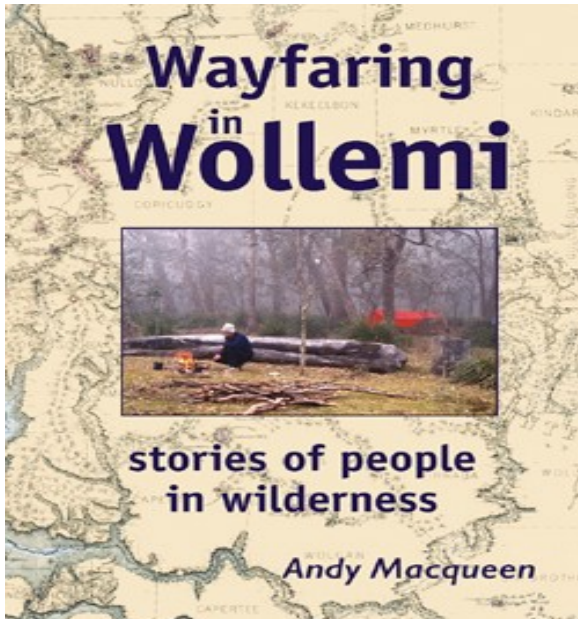
Banksia robur or the Swamp Banksia are found in an area from North Queensland south to the Illawarra region of New South Wales.

They can be seen in swampy areas, although they will grow in a variety of soils and situations.

Swamp Banksia grow to about 2 metres with a similar spread and flower in autumn and winter.

A BOOK REVIEW

By Jim Speak



If you've camped at Newnes, well, you are in the park.

A book published recently features stories of those who were schemers, settlers, mappers & seekers. The author has visited many of the areas frequented by such people, including just a few women.

The only names that register with me are Carne, Gosper & D'Arcy.

The book is self-published by Andy Macqueen who lives at Wentworth Falls.



For me, the page 244 photograph showing four guys in 1937 with a picture of 148 bass they caught in one day in the Colo River should be on the front cover of the book.

Springwood Library has a copy of the book "Wayfaring in Wollemi - stories of people in wilderness".

The last book sentence – "The eagle still flies". You would have to ask Andy what that means.

My only connection with Andy was about 20 years ago when I walked with a group of which he was a member.

And it's for the few people who like the characters who roamed wild country and who really fascinate the author.

BUT WHERE DO YOU WALK IN LUXEMBOURG?

By Lynne Outhred

The Group

Leader: Alan Sauran

Suzanne Aubrun, Mark and Anne Armstrong, Walter Baer, Sarah Bodlay, Graham Conden, Barbara Mitchell, Katherine Gloor, Richard Graylin, Jennie Kelso, Yvonne Lollback, John Maltby, Lynne Outhred, Virginia Rice, John Sharpe, Jenny Stephens.



The Trip

"But it's all flat", Katherine said to Alan at our first meeting in Luxembourg. "I came by train and I didn't see as much as a hill on the journey, where are we going to walk!" Unperturbed, Alan gave a small smile and replied, "You'll just have to wait and see."

Luxembourg is the capital of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, a small country of 2,586km² with a population of about half a million people.

The national language is Luxembourgish with German and French as the administrative languages. As Luxembourg is such a compact country it's possible to reach almost any place in the country from the capital in less than an hour, on what we soon discovered, was their extremely efficient public transport system.



We began with a walk around the old city, including the town fortifications and the Grand Ducal Palace, which is surrounded by cobblestoned lanes. The old town is very attractive, built on a cliff overlooking a gorge.

At dinner in the old town on that first night we compared hotels, both very convenient to the station, but quite different in decor. All the non-couples were allocated to one hotel, all couples to the other. We were quite perplexed until we arrived. The Empire Hotel had good creature comforts, situated as it was, above a pastry shop, with the added bonus of a great buffet breakfast included. Hotel Grey, on the other hand, was very modern with a killer staircase of black marble - luckily no-one slipped - and open plan bathrooms which were separated from the large bedroom by a transparent glass wall. There was also soft under-bed lighting, but no breakfast included. As Mark commented, the hotel appeared to be designed for

young couples, but he hadn't seen any staying there. Despite the "attractions" of being able to see one's partner's ablutions, one unchivalrous lady said that she would have preferred a free breakfast.



Our first walk on Monday Alan described as a castle, a ruined castle, and an introduction to public transport. An early train followed by a walk up to Bourscheid Castle, built about 1000. After exploring the castle, we walked back to the station and another train to Ettelbruck. Some of the group had lunch while others visited the George S. Patton Memorial Museum, named for General Patton of the US army who is celebrated as Ettelbruck's liberator and symbol of the victory over the Germans in 1944.

Back to the station to catch a bus to see the ruined castle - during the week our legs realised that all castles are built on the highest point in the surrounding countryside - followed by a bus back to the station, and a train to Luxembourg City. Certainly, we were now familiar with using our Luxembourg travel card (only 4 euros a day, a bargain!)

The next day we split into two groups (because of the constraints of a minibus) to walk the Mullerthal Trail Route 2, which passes through Luxembourg's Little Switzerland with spectacular rock formations and beautiful forest areas. The whole trail is 112 km in length. During this walk Suzanne complained of chest and jaw discomfort, and a feeling that she was going to faint, with an impalpable pulse, as she sank to the ground. Luckily, John was on hand for medical advice and when some local walkers appeared, Jennie used her French to excellent effect and asked for advice. She found there was a nearby bus stop and we slowly walked there.



On reaching Luxembourg City, John escorted Suzanne to the hospital where she remained for the next three days.

Yvonne stepped in as leader the next day when we visited Wiltz town and castle where the beer museum was popular. During the last war Wiltz was a battleground in the Battle of the Bulge, near the end of World War II. A plaque in Wiltz described how a couple hid in a bunker, emerging to find the bodies of 3000 townsfolk.



On Thursday, after a train journey, Alan led us to Vianden Castle, one of the largest feudal residences of the romanesque and gothic periods in Europe. We walked across the Our River into Germany, along a rocky trail on the German-Luxembourgish border where at a site close to the first incursion of Allied forces into Germany, our military adviser John gave an informative and highly condensed talk on the Battle of the Bulge (16 December 1944 – 25 January 1945), the last major German offensive campaign on the Western Front during World War II. American forces bore the brunt of the attack and incurred

their highest casualties of any operation during the war.



Friday we returned to Mullerthal Trail Route 2. On this section, the sandstone formations were amazing and strangely familiar to Sydneysiders, with deep slots and lookouts, including Pulpit Rock, Hell Crevice, Robbers' Den and Wolves' Gorge. We arrived back to find that Suzanne was released from hospital. She joined us for dinner to celebrate she was under strict instructions from the leader not to go on any group walks.



Suddenly, it's our last day in Luxembourg and Alan led us from Ehnen up through Moselle vineyards looking down on the Moselle River. We found a cafe at lunch time and tried the local wine. Unfortunately, it was a warm day with a long uphill section after our alcohol consumption; consequently, we missed the bus and consoled ourselves with coffee and cake.

A SHORT WALK IN JAPAN'S NORTHERN ALPS (continued)

By Ewan Cain and Myles Ormsby

The Group

Misako Sugiyama (leader), Ewan Cain, Liam Heery, Jacqui Joseph, Myles Ormsby, Julie Rea, John Colyer and Guest: Ted Nixon.

In the last newsletter, this trip report started with a journey in the historic area of Kamekura, not far from Tokyo. From there the group made its way to the volcanic island of Miyakejima, and then walking in the Hadano and Hidano areas.

Now, let us continue.

From Hadano, we caught the train to Tokyo, where we spent one night. The convenient, central location of our Hotel, the Hotel Hokke club in Asakusa, gave us a good opportunity to explore at least part of the capital and its attractions, before travelling to the Northern Alps.

The following day, we headed by coach to Hakuba along a route that proved quite scenic and absorbing in its own way.

Hakuba is located in a picturesque valley, surrounded on either side by high mountains ranging up to about 3000m in height. In winter, it serves as a base for the local ski industry.

After one night in Hakuba, it was time to begin our ascent of the Northern Alps. From Hakuba, we caught taxis to the commencement of the walk.

Unfortunately, rain fell all day, and the track was slippery and awkward underfoot.



Our first day was not a long one in terms of distance, but as well as coping with the rain and the

slippery conditions, we had to climb nearly 1000m to reach our accommodation for the night, the Yari Onsen (2000m approx).

As we climbed on the first day, and on the following days as well, we also saw at close hand remnants of nearby glaciers.

The difficulties faced on the first day were again apparent on the second day, and were compounded by strong winds of 40 to 50km per hour once we had reached the pass. Prior to this, the ascent proved difficult, and in places, required the use of chains.



From the pass onwards, we followed a high windswept ridge, with sleet at times stinging our faces. All were relieved to arrive at our destination for the night, the Hakuba Sansou (2800m).

Weather conditions were much improved by the time we made a late start on the third day of the walk, and the rain had now stopped. We had decided to take a shorter route for this day, an inspired and gratifying choice, as everyone was still drained after two difficult days.

Departing Hakuba Sansou, we ascended the adjacent Mt Shiroumidake, at 2932m the high point of the walk. From here, we continued on to our third and final lodge, which was near the scenic Lake Shirouma Ohike (2400m).



Throughout the morning it remained windy at times, although not as severe as on the previous day, with mist occasionally sweeping across the ridge along which we were walking.

Due to our change of route for the third day, we had an earlier finish to the fourth day, with a relatively short but nonetheless challenging three hour walk to our rendezvous with the taxis that were to transport us to our next destination, Nagano, which was just over two hours away by taxi. Our hotel in Nagano provided us with an opportunity to clean up after our walk, and also that night and the next, to sample some of the excellent local cuisine.

A highlight of our stay in Nagano was our visit to the Ganshoin temple in nearby Obuse. The temple features a large, ceiling painting by Katsushita Hokusai.

The final day of the trip, a long one, saw most of the group travel from Nagano to Tokyo aboard the Shinkansen, the Silver Bullet train, a very comfortable and timely experience. As most of the group had an evening departure from Tokyo for Sydney, some of us had time to visit the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

Unfortunately, the palace is closed on Mondays and Thursdays, so we were able only to take a few photos from outside the palace grounds. On the plus side, this gave some of us an opportunity (or excuse!) to explore the huge department store Dimaru, after which we took the bus to Narita airport for the homeward journey.

Our appreciation to our leader, Misako, who devoted considerable time and effort to preparing and executing our itinerary, and then to amend it at short notice, cannot be over-estimated.

What's on our website?

Leader profiles and volunteers who will help new leaders. The list is at the end of the online program.

Information and forms for leaders.

Guidelines for all members including Walk Grading Guide.

Photo gallery (enormous) – see photos of walks from the last 4 months.

Tips on all sorts of things related to bushwalking and the website.

Archives of previous newsletters as well as historical Walks & Talks.

Formula for transport share costs

Just browse through the menu at
www.bushclub.org.au

Bush Club Committee plus contact details – see contact us on the website.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

'WHILE THE BILLY BOILS'

From The Bush Club magazine of July 1956

So, you are on your first bushwalk, and it's time to stop for lunch and boil the billy. Knowing that it is mandatory under the Act to make a properly constructed fireplace, we roll some stones together to form back and sides, or in the earth bank of the creek dig out a recess with a stick to give us that necessary three-sided fireguard.

Should all this not be possible, just kick a shallow hole in the ground with the heel of your boot, pile the earth around three sides, and support the cross-bar at each end by means of a simple tripod of sticks tied with heavy string (carried by every walker). To make our fire, if it has been or is still raining, collect dead wood and bracken fern from the sheltered side of trees or rocks or in shallow caves and above the ground where possible.

Use some of the wood to form a small raft in the fireplace and thus lift the fire bed off the cold wet ground; next some bracken, dry leaves or teased-out bark (for really wet conditions a newspaper may be used or a kerosene-soaked rag which has been carried in an empty tin) then small twigs and finally apply the match. If the weather really is

unkind and the “flamin” thing won’t burn, carefully pull out the kindling and try a new approach. Take half a dozen thin sticks, and with your knife (sharp) scrape off any wet bark and commence to cut slivers like the top of a pineapple (cut away from you), but still attached to the wood. Now stand these miniature pine trees upright in the fireplace together with the drier pieces of bark, paper etc., and finally holding two matches together for extra power, strike and apply the flame.

To prevent calamities such as fingers burnt by hot billy-cans, don't make a bonfire but rather nurse your fire along by placing each piece of wood in pyramid form; this helps the draught and concentrates the flame where it is most needed—on the billy's bottom. Billy-cans just dumped in the fire by the could-not-care-less type may have a bushcrafty appearance, but to the walker of maturity, who understands the basic principles of heating, a billy-hook is a “must”. Make sure the lid fits loosely and is not jammed by a bent handle or its lug, before placing on the fire; incidentally the efficacy of a green stick in lieu of a lid has no substance in fact. Keep the inside of your billy polished and the outside black but touch-clean, i.e. none will rub off on the finger. It can be easily demonstrated that the heavy crust of charcoal that is allowed to form by the lazy walker, greatly lengthens the time of boiling. Now you can sit back and enjoy a cup of the best.

“Mac”

How to Pack For An Overnight Walk

If you've been considering extended walks or even if you're experienced and need a refresher, then this could be for you.

Graham Conden will present a review on what to take on an overnight pack walk with the emphasis on lightweight gear, food and clothing.

The course will be held on Tuesday 27 March at the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, 16-18 Fitzroy St, Kirribilli.
Limited numbers, booking essential.

MARIE BYLES – A PERSONAL JOURNEY

Most Bush Club members are aware of some of the background of one of the Club's founding members, Marie Byles.

She was the State's first practising female solicitor, a mountaineer, explorer and avid bushwalker, feminist and journalist.

But, did you know she was also an original member of the Buddhist Society in NSW?

If not, there's a free downloadable e-book on Marie's personal journey into meditation in Burma, the modern day Myanmar.

Here is a link to the e-book:

http://host.pariyatti.org/treasures/Journey_Into_Burmese_Silence.pdf

Thanks Terry Redmond for the link.

Bush Club PLB Personal Locator Beacons

The Club has two Personal Locator Beacons (PLB) for use by leaders on walks.

Tony Hickson (email bushclubwebmaster@gmail.com) and Graham Conden (0418 647 951) are custodians of the PLBs. You can contact them at any time to borrow one.

Note that a PLB is to be used only in life threatening situations, as a last resort. You should always try to contact emergency services via your mobile phone and “triple zero”. Emergency services will have a better idea of how to respond to your incident/injuries if you can contact them via your mobile phone.

For more information see the **Information for Leaders** page on our website.

www.bushclub.org.au

K2K IN A DAY – SOMETHING TO CONSIDER?

By Luc Porter

*If you've ever thought, seriously or otherwise, of attempting the classic Kanangra to Katoomba walk, better known as the K2K, in a day, then you need to check out this trip report from **Luc Porter**. Ed.*

Starting at 6:50am and finishing at 1:20am, I totally underestimated how hard this track is. To put it in perspective, I like to think I'm reasonably fit, I've hiked the Six Foot Track in a day, it took me 9.5 hours.

But, K2K in a day took me and my mate Ben 18.5 hours and there was an embarrassing bit. We lost the track at Mt Berry, came down the wrong ridge zigzagging down to hopefully pick up the track, when Mt High and Mighty came into view again, it was 90 degrees to our left. A quick consult of the topo map told us not only were we off course, we had descended about 300m too far. Then the fun began.

Faced with a long slog to the top of Berry again, we decided to traverse the ridge and slightly uphill to meet the track again near Gabes Gap. This was easier said than done, it was a nasty bush bash, thick scrub and Lawyer vine. I swear, (and I did at length) every third vine snagged my pack and stopped me dead.

The other two of the three, snagged my arms, legs and boots. We also discovered three new species of plant, known now as "you're kidding plants". The first is a single leafed spikey plant, the second is a three-leafed spikey plant, the third is a particularly nasty one, of spikes topped with needle like spikes. 1.5 hours later, we were at Gabes Gap.

We made it to Mt Cloudmaker around 12:30, signed the log book and noted K2K in a day, running late.

Spirits were still high, we were off to Dex Creek. I expected to waste some time here trying to pick up the track, I had not expected to get lost at Mt Berry. Every time the track disappeared, we entered a clearing or over a rocky section, my heart sank a

little, (please no, not again, please let us pick up the track).



Dex Creek had no running water. There were a few stagnant puddles if you were desperate. A little bush bashing again and we picked up the track west of Carra Top.



Then down Strongleg Ridge to the Coxs river. What a ruthless hill, my feet ached with every step down, my toes felt like they had been put through a mincer. We descended for ages and still the valley floor seemed no closer. It's a hard, merciless hill.

We hit the bottom around 4pm, well behind time. Kanangra Creek was not running, a few pools of water. I filled up here, the water was crystal clear, treated the water and followed the creek to the Cocks, it was running but quite low.

My feet were burning by this stage. It was crossing the river where I made my second rookie mistake.

Rolled up pants, boots in one hand, backpack in the other (yeah, I know, dumb. Still can't work out why I didn't put my pack back on). My only warm jersey was tied around my waist as I crossed the river. It was uber slippery. I slipped and went over backwards. In slow motion, I feel I landed on my butt, sitting in the water.

Soaking wet, hours behind time, we headed up Mt Yellow Dog. (A little tip I picked up, wet clothes will dry faster if you wear them) I also didn't really have a choice. Mt Yellow Dog is a behemoth of a hill. I'd rather not go into detail, it hurt, the sun was setting and we still had about 20kms to go. It was well dark when we made it to the top, around 7pm.

The lolly type snakes were my friend here, I won't mention a brand name but if anyone that reads this happens to work with The Natural Confectionary Company, get in touch with me and maybe we can do a deal.

Head torches on, we made it to Mobbs Soak, Again, no water here.

From there to Medlow Gap took ages.

Along this section, we came across a wombat, can't tell you how much running into that one rotund hairy mammal lifted our spirits. Thanks Wombat. The 2kms from Medlow Gap to Tarros Ladder took an hour. Granted the hike up is unpleasant with fresh legs, in the dark, after walking for around 15hrs, I'll just say it was really unpleasant.

We reached the base of the ladders about 10pm. Narrow Neck is the longest 10kms I've ever hiked. It just went on and on (a bit like this post) every step hurt, every downhill section was agony, my knee was screaming at me, my blistered feet protested all the way.

It took over 3 hours to walk that damn fire trail. If you know the area, we called my beautiful girlfriend Erica, around where you would leave the main trail to take Redledge Pass.

The relentlessness of Narrow Neck, the fact we had been walking 18 hours, we were both buggered. I'd had enough.

At 1:20am, we climbed the stile at the locked gate. Erica, as fantastic as she is, met us with water, hot food and hot tea.

I kid you not, it was the greatest cup of tea I've ever had in my life. Ben wolfed down all the food. I couldn't eat because I'd been dry retching for the past 2 hours.

In short, if you have never done this walk; do not underestimate how tough it is. Take all relevant maps and a compass and know how to use both.

You will lose the track numerous times, it's vague in a lot of places, it's non-existent in others.

Happy hiking.

PLEASE NOTE

- Leaders of trips away - if the trip is being planned through a commercial operation please ensure this is notified on the programme.
- Transport share cost has increased to 33 cents per kilometre

LEADERS WANTED

If you've thought of putting on a walk but haven't got around to it, there's no time like the present.

Remember, you don't have to have done any training sessions.

If you're wondering how to go about it, look up our website (www.bushclub.org.au) under the menu option 'Information for leaders'.

If you'd like some personal help, look up our "Leaders and Mentors" section in the current program.