



# Ramble On

Newsletter of Redland Bushwalkers Incorporated

website: <http://www.redlandbushwalkers.org.au>

email: [redlandbushwalkers@yahoo.com.au](mailto:redlandbushwalkers@yahoo.com.au)

P.O. Box 101 Cleveland 4163

## May 2012

### Next Club Meeting

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2012

7:00pm for 7:30pm start

### President's Report

This is my first report as President of the club and I have to say that I am a bit daunted by the prospect. It's a bit like crossing a razorback with six people behind you and you do not want to show them how scared you are. So you just stride across on wobbly knees with as much bravado as you can muster.

I must start by thanking the outgoing committee; you did a fantastic job and will be a very hard act to follow.

The new committee has just had its first meeting; it is reassuring for us newcomers that there are still a few experienced people left in the committee who can show us the ropes.

The cool season is upon us with the prospect of great walking, please get your minds working on what walks you would like to see on the calendar for the next six months. We will have a planning session in June, so there is plenty of time for you to ponder. Please note that you do not have to volunteer as a leader for a walk just because you have suggested it, even if that would be nice.

What we need are plenty of good ideas!

This year's Pilgrimage is hosted by our club and the team of Hilary, Betty, Judy and Ted has been hard at work organising this event. Even if they are pleased with the response from volunteers so far, there is still a need for more walk leaders. So could all experienced track walkers please consider leading? It is not very hard, at least if you decide to stay on the tracks.

Looking forward to seeing you on the trail!

Happy walking,

Mats



The 2012-13 Committee were elected and are as follows:

President:	Mats Anderson	<a href="mailto:matsmarika@gmail.com">matsmarika@gmail.com</a>
Secretary:	Malcolm Thomson	<a href="mailto:annethomson52@bigpond.com">annethomson52@bigpond.com</a>
Treasurer:	Narelle McFadden	<a href="mailto:wellie10@bigpond.com">wellie10@bigpond.com</a>
Vice President:	Denise Kolcze	<a href="mailto:dkolcze@bigpond.com">dkolcze@bigpond.com</a>
Outings/Walks Coordinator:	Steve Tolcher	<a href="mailto:roslyntolcher@bigpond.com.au">roslyntolcher@bigpond.com.au</a>
Membership:	Sandy Stephens	<a href="mailto:sms2001au@yahoo.com.au">sms2001au@yahoo.com.au</a>
Safety & Training:	Ted Wassenberg	<a href="mailto:twassenberg@optusnet.com.au">twassenberg@optusnet.com.au</a>
Newsletter:	Jennifer Ivers	<a href="mailto:jennifer.ivers4@bigpond.com">jennifer.ivers4@bigpond.com</a>
Equipment Storage:	Denise Mitchell	<a href="mailto:denise@professionalscleveland.com.au">denise@professionalscleveland.com.au</a>
Meeting Supper	Heather Beh	<a href="mailto:heatherbeh@hotmail.com">heatherbeh@hotmail.com</a>

## Upcoming Activities

### **BUSHWALKERS PILGRIMAGE 2012**

A chance to walk & meet with other clubs.

Hosted by REDLANDS BUSHWALKING CLUB

AT

**CANUNGRA SHOWGROUNDS**

(Showgrounds Road Canungra)

ON

**7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012**

Early Bird until 31/7/2012 - \$36

After 31/7/2012 - \$42

We are also offering a Tasty Spit Roast Dinner on  
Saturday night for \$18.50 (BYO drinks)

***The cost for the weekend includes:***

Camping, Hot Showers, Friday Night Soup, Tea, Coffee & Nibbles all weekend, Bushwalks from Hard to Easy, Bush band "Stone the Crows", and Sunday Morning 'Sausage Sizzle'.

For more info and booking see our website: <http://pilgrimage2012.weebly.com/index.html>

Contacts: Hilary Riley 0415 526 910 & Betty Murray 0408 129 241

**Email: [Pilgrimage2012@hotmail.com](mailto:Pilgrimage2012@hotmail.com)**



## **PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION**

As we approach the middle of the year for our club calendar, with plenty of interesting walks and activities behind us and planned for the future, we in the Photo Comp committee have been delighted to see cameras being taken along on outings, and we do hope that plenty of wonderful photos and videos have been captured! We are now starting to consider the submission of entries for the competition, and hope to have entry packs available for purchase at the June meeting. These will contain 10 black A5 size cards for mounting photos upon, an entry form for each entrant, and a copy of the guidelines for entry.

We are currently seeking judges for the competition and wish to ask members for suggestions. We would ideally seek someone with an interest in photography - whether a club member who does *not* plan to enter the competition themselves, or friend, relative or colleague of a member, who would be willing to provide an unbiased opinion.

The judge would not necessarily need technical photographic skill or expertise, but just be willing to discuss what appeals to them in a photograph. We would ask for perhaps a couple of hours of their time between the October and November club meetings to peruse photographic entries, discuss with other judges and decide upon category winners and runners-up. A list of general criteria for judging would be provided. If any member is interested, or can suggest someone who might be interested, please contact Leah ([lstephens@tpg.com.au](mailto:lstephens@tpg.com.au)), Mike ([sew@baystitch.com.au](mailto:sew@baystitch.com.au)), or Wayne ([wayne.porter@brisbane.qld.gov.au](mailto:wayne.porter@brisbane.qld.gov.au)).



### **Kayak Training afternoon**

**At Wynnum / Redlands Canoe Club, 2 Railway Parade, Thorneside  
Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May, commencing 1.30pm**

The prime purpose of the day is to provide training and kayak selection opportunity for the Upper Brisbane River Paddle in June (see information below). Both inexperienced and experienced paddlers are all welcome.

We'll be paddling in the Tingalpa Creek estuary near the Canoe Club and using their canoes, paddles and safety flotation vests. (Charge \$10.00 per paddler). Bring your own hats, long sleeve tops, sunscreen, water etc. and carry personal items in a water proof bag. Preferably wear old sandshoes or similar footwear. Not thongs. This session will be good preparation for paddlers proposing to do our scheduled Upper Brisbane River paddle on 24<sup>th</sup> June. You will be able to try using different types of kayaks to make sure that you are comfortable with the type you choose for the Brisbane River Paddle. The number of the kayak that each participant selects can go against their name so that we will know which boats to load for them on the Brisbane River Paddle day.



### **BRISBANE RIVER PADDLE**

**ESK HIGHWAY RIVER CROSSING TO BURTONS BRIDGE  
Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

It is a requirement that those without reasonable kayak paddling experience attend a training day with Don Baxter before the event and assure Don and themselves that they have sufficient paddling knowledge and experience to participate in the event. At the next training session, intending participants will need to decide

which boat they will use for the trip. They may need to try using two or three kayaks to make sure that they are comfortable with the type that they are using. The number of the kayak that each participant selects can go against their name so that we will know which boats to load for them on the day.

Kayaks, paddles and safety vest will be provided by the Wynnum Redlands Canoe Club through Don. Hire charge for the gear for the day is \$10.00 per paddler. If you propose to bring your own kayak and gear, make arrangements with Don for transport on the Kayak carrier trailer. Transport of paddlers, kayaks and gear will be provided by Dave Banks Coach Hire. Return fare per paddler is \$35.00. Make sure that you bring snacks, your lunch, at least 2 ltrs of water, and a waterproof carry bag for your take aboard gear. Bring your own hats, long sleeve tops, sunscreen, water etc. preferably wear old sandshoes or similar footwear. Not thongs. Clean clothes and shoes must be worn on the bus.

The bus will depart Victoria Point Shopping Centre at 6am, and pick up paddlers at Cleveland Station, Capalaba opposite KFC and Wynnum Redlands Canoe Club at Thorneside. We'll pick up the canoe trailer and depart the Canoe Club at 6.45am. We'll travel to the Esk Highway Bridge over the Brisbane River north of Fernvale arriving around 8am. We then kayak down the river for about 4km stopping for a break at Savages Crossing around 9.30am. From there we cruise down to Burtons Bridge, about 13km. We'll pull up for lunch on the way through, and expect to have everyone at Burtons Bridge by 3pm We'll load the kayaks onto the trailer, change our clothes and head back to Thorneside stopping at the nearest coffee shop on the way. We expect to be back at Thorneside around 5pm, where the canoe trailer will be uncoupled and Dave will continue dropping us off via Capalaba, Cleveland Station and Vicki Point.

We have 20 Kayak spaces only, so sign up early if you want to secure your place!

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## Activity Reports



**Where:** Cooginbano & Bimboolba Lookouts (Illinbah)

**When:** Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April

**Leader:** Hilary Riley

This is the walk I'll be leading at the Pilgrimage. The morning started with an auspicious sign from above, as we were poised to sign on – causing much laughter and a trip to the washroom for me. We enjoyed the short and picturesque drive through the Illinbah Valley – to the start of our walk. After a unanimous decision to get wet boots we crossed the Coomera River twice and then through the lush, though muddy paddocks which led us up and into the National Park.

We immediately left the track to go off track and up, and up is what we did for the next couple of hours. The trick for me



was trying to keep us on the correct bearing which would bring us out to the top of the ridge without hitting a cliff line or into heavy scunge. As we went around tree trunks, under hanging roots and over rocks it was easier said than done.... but armed with my earlier omen from above, all went well.

Without much ado we arrived at the Cooginbano lookout to enjoy a complete white out and drizzle (see photo) ...did I mention the cobblers pegs? There was no sign of them last time! 15 minutes later following the ridgeline track we arrived to at Bimboolba Lookout to watch the clouds lifting and the sun shining – a perfect spot for morning tea. Then it was steep down through long tufted grass and over private land that we have special permission to use. We were back in Canungra for lunch.

Thank you to Denise M, Judy and Ted for making it a fun morning on ‘Hil’s Hill Walk’.



**Where:** Ormiston Mystery Walk

**When:** Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April

**Leader:** Denise Kolcze

This certainly was a mystery as I had no idea how many people were interested but as it was my first walk for the club in such a long time. I didn't care.

Two of us headed off at 7.30 on a lovely walk around Ormiston. Before we reached the finish we came across a mobile pizza trailer and he offered us a breakfast pizza wrap, yummy I must admit.

All in all a great first walk had by us all - well us two anyway.



**Where:** Mount Cordeaux

**When:** 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2012

**Leaders:** Sue Donelly

After a breakfast coffee at Aratula, eleven cheerful walkers set out up Mount Cordeaux, Cunninghams Gap in a light mist. The forest was glistening in the damp atmosphere as we meandered up past hoop pines, strangler figs, vines and palms, grass trees and there were even some new buds on the spear lilies.

A few leaches were out and about but most of us managed not to get too attached to them!

We relaxed at the top for morning tea accompanied by a small python curled up on the rocks.

We did get some views as we climbed up and it wasn't until we reached Bare Rock that the rain really came down. Needless to say there was a little less chat and more focus on ducking our heads against the rain and walking downhill.



We finished a fun day out in good company by having a late lunch at the cafe at Aratula.

Thanks to all of you for joining the walk.



**Where:** Conondale National Park

**When:** Sunday 22nd April

**Leaders:** Kerrie Coulter & Mike Vose



Commencing with Leisa at Victoria Point, a group of 20 walkers were collected by Dave and his bus from our usual spots in the Redlands and Manly West. Then we headed for the Charlie Moorland camping ground at Conondale National Park, fed by Mike's collection of corny jokes and Kerrie's collection of trivia questions. Luckily Dudley wasn't on board this trip; so many others got a chance to earn a chocolate bar or two!

We commenced our 500 metre climb from Charlie Moorlands up to the Fire Tower at about 9.30am and the final few of us got to the summit around 11.30am. After inspection of the tower and morning tea, we paraded down the track under cover of the tall tree canopy towards our well-earned lunch stop at Boloumba Creek. The main pack was able to surge ahead, but the few lingerer's did get some great photos.

Then on to the Gold Mine: Oh! It's closed! No free gold today, so we retraced our steps back to the Boloumba Creek walk intersection, then down to Boloumba Camping Area no 1. Oh! We missed the bridge! Boots off, then over the creek we went. "Which way now?" we asked a couple, of bikers. "Just straight out there and turn left" they said. So we did. A comfortable walk down the hill, where we were told the bus would be waiting. BUT not before crossing two more creeks. (You didn't tell us about these Kerrie!)



Good News! Dave was waiting there with his trustee bus. A change into some clean gear and we were off. Just had time to stop at a roadside BP near Caboolture for coffee and cake. Desperation! Then home to our respective drop off points and.....bed!

Another great “bus” & walk. When’s the next one?



**Where:** City Walk

**When:** 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2012

**Leader:** Heather & Marnie

On a lovely clear sunny day seven ladies caught the train from Cleveland to Southbank and headed along the riverside observing the rock climbers on the Kangaroo Point cliffs before crossing the Storey Bridge where we got great views of the river and city both up and down stream.

We then went down to the river side again and enjoyed an early coffee before strolling through the Old Botanic Gardens, across the Goodwill Bridge, Southbank, Queen Street Bridge. Then we walked down onto the bikeway and back across the Kurilpa Bridge and back to Southbank where we caught the City Cat up to the University and back and the train home again. It was a day enjoyed by all of us, including Cindy who is relatively new to Brisbane.



**Where:** Brisbane River survey & Thornside

**When:** 13<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> April 2012

**Leader:** Don Baxter

River Survey for the Kayak Event

On Friday 13th April, Don, Dudley and Mike did a complete paddle survey of the route from the Esk Highway Brisbane River Bridge Crossing above Fernvale to Burtons Bridge. About 18km.

Their conclusion: The current condition of the river is suitable for basic paddlers. Mike, in that category, paddled the full length without incident. There are one or two rapids where paddlers may elect to carry their kayaks along the shoreline rather than risk a spill. One difficult log jam that we encountered has been reported to the local council who have agreed to do work on it soon to allow easier passage by canoes and kayaks. Don will check this out again closer to the event.



On Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April, 12 kayakers enjoyed a couple of hours training at Thorneside.

The prime purpose of the day was to provide training and kayak selection opportunity for the Upper Brisbane River Paddle in June. Another training afternoon is scheduled for Sunday 13th May, commencing 1.30pm at Wynnum/Redlands Canoe Club, 2 Railway Parade, Thorneside.



**Where:** Boyds Butte Survey

**When:** 21 April 2012

**Leader:** Ted and Judy

Neither of us had been to Boyd's Butte, not in my memory anyway.

I knew the track started from the old sawmill in Currumbin Valley as I had been there sometime in a past life, not that I could remember the details. So Judy and I made a quick inspection of the area after joining Hilary on her survey of the lookouts of her Pilgrimage walk on 14/4/12 and found the start of the track.

However, Judy was not satisfied with a walk up to the Butte and back to the sawmill. One alternative was to do a car shuffle with cars at the end of the Garden of Eden Road and the other at the sawmill. This did not seem practical, so I contacted a colleague in the Gold Coast club and asked him about details of possibly approaching the Butte from the north side. He came back with a circuit walk through some private land and offered to gain permission for us to traverse this property, which we gladly accepted.

So armed with some vital recent information about the status of the jungle between Boyd's Butte and the east peak of the Cougals and the access across the private land, we set off to survey the route. The route from the saw mill up to the base of the Butte was quite distinct and easy to follow with a mix of a faint footpad and an old logging road. From there a general bearing westerly through dense wait-a-while had us in the saddle between the Butte and the Cougals. A quick sortie up onto the Butte gave us morning tea with views north-east to the Gold Coast, west to the Springbrook Plateau and south to the Cougals. A faint trail led across to the Cougals, again through wait-a-while and to the east past a cliff face, up a ramp and finally the top of east peak of the Cougals where we had lunch.

From here we walked down along the border fence – a well-worn track under common use - to the gate at the car park of the Garden of Eden. Here we looked for the hidden road that would take us back down to our car in Currumbin Valley. We had permission to cross this private land and it took several attempts to find this road as details provided initially were not quite detailed enough. Judy did find this road and it will be used when we again attempt this very interesting circuit. Unfortunately, the 183mm of rain in the area last Saturday 29/4/12 prevented access to the area and the planned walk was aborted. Judy is hoping put the walk on the calendar again at the end of June.

Thanks to Ken, Neville and Harley for making it possible.



**Where:** Kid's Camp  
**When:** 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2012  
**Leader:** Denise Kolcze

Raining in the Redlands, do we go or don't we???

After a phone call to Bigriggen to see if we could use the hall there if it was too wet once we get there and the answer was yes. 6 kids and 7 adults: Denise, Denise, John, Linda, Heather, Nadia, Kirsten, Taylor, Blair, Billy, Liam, Drew and Mia, all had dry beds in the bunk house and dormitory on the Saturday night.

Saturday afternoon saw some of the kids go for a swim in the water hole not for long though. Bigriggen is a great area for the kids to just run around and enjoy and that they did.

Late Saturday afternoon Kirsten and Nadia had all the kids and adults involved in some great games played in the hall because of the weather condition.

Sunday morning, weather was good and the kids had a roam around Bigriggen chatting and getting to know each other.

Before we all parted we sat around and had a chat about the weekend and that was a really lovely way to finish the weekend.

Planning another kid's camp towards the end of the year. Watch this space.



**Where:** The Wangapeka Track.  
**When:** 3<sup>RD</sup> November 2011  
**Leader:** Ted Wassenberg

The following article was written by an old friend of mine, Lance, whom with his friend Kerry was invited to participate on an 8 day walk along the Wangapeka Track in NZ. Rob Santry and Russel McKenzie had already signed up to join me on this track.

“There is a track winding back to an old fashioned shack called the Wanga-peka Track”.

So five Australian Bushwalkers set out on a walk in the Kahurangi National Park, at the top end of the



South Island of New Zealand, almost due west of Nelson. Starting near Matariki and finishing at Little Wanganui on the west coast north of Westport. The weather forecast did not look good, but you have to take what you are given. Any other time I would have sat in town and played tourist but this time I was a guest in the party and the others were keen walkers ruthlessly led by Captain Wassenberg. Even the name sends shivers down my spine. Guess I just got a little slack in my old age and expanding girth.

The shuttle bus left Nelson at 7.30. That's 7.30 in the morning; I must have looked silly climbing in the bus in my jarm jarms. At least I could change on the bus. Peter, the driver was a very knowledgeable trumper himself with reams of information on the area we were to visit. He was taking us in to the start of the Mt Owen Track and the Wangapeka Track but 8km before the end of the road. The Dart River causeway was flooded and a little risky to drive across so we disembarked and had an extra 8km to hoof before the trip actually started. As the weather forecast was lousy and Mt Owen was the highest peak in the northern sector and in theory we were 2hrs late because of the extra walk we decided to leave Mt Owen for another day or should I say 3 days.

We started the Wangapeka Track at Rolling Junction at 11.15 am and reached the Kings Creek Hut at 3.15 pm. The walk follows the Wangapeka River and I, assuming the river was flat with just a little downhill to make it flow, envisaged an easy walk in to the hut, like walking into Aspiring Hut. Silly me, the track does follow the river but there were lots of little ups and downs, the track not the river. And me being as unfit as I was then those littles turned into bigs. Most of the walk in was in rain, not enough to justify rain gear but either way you would have got wet with rain from the outside or sweat from the inside. Never the less when I got to the Kings Creek Hut I was stuffed and my wonky knees were screaming.

The party consisted of 3 Redlands Bushies, Captain (Super fit) Wassenberg or if you were game enough Sir or just plain Ted. Russell who was also very fit and it helped that all he carried was a handkerchief cut in half for equipment, and Rob, who thankfully also had deteriorating knees. Two YHA Bushies, Kerry who was a little new to this game, could walk fast but had not yet learnt to pace himself and old blubber guts me, could pace myself but it did not seem to help with enough food on board to feed a regiment for a month, in case it was necessary.

#### November 4<sup>th</sup> Kings Creek Hut

Late yesterday afternoon was fine but the rain started about 4am this morning. Our plan was to walk up to Kiwi Saddle Hut, which was an offshoot of the main track and was up on the top of the ranges. But there was a creek to cross and that would have been flooded. On our walk in yesterday we met a trumper walking out who was stuck in Kiwi Saddle Hut on the other side of the stream for 2 days waiting for it to go down. The catch was he had to walk down from the hut for 3hrs to find the stream was flooded and then had to walk back up to the hut again for the night. So here we sit in Kings Creek Hut waiting for the weather to clear. We could not move on to Stone Hut as there



is a very large party of American Outdoor Education people camping there for the night and the hut only holds 10. Here we have a 20 bed hut all to ourselves. We just sat around with "I remember the time, and back in the good old days" stories. 1.30pm and all's well. I never realised how much fun you can have sitting in a hut with no library. Kerry for instance is not noted for his powers of observation but came up with a profound statement: "The rains coming down now", he meant the rain is a little heavier than 5hrs ago. Rob was measuring the angle of inclination of the falling rain. Mainly down. But at different times it was at different angles. I decided to have some lunch as my pack was too heavy because of the excess food. So for lunch I had a

charming little combination of cheese slices, Swedish salami and dried tomato in pesto in a wholegrain tortilla wrap. Not much reading matter, only two magazines. One of them I never got to read as it was very popular. I think it was a porn magazine called "Forest and Bird". The other was a South Island accommodation listing. In these conditions King Creek Hut seems pretty good and a hive of exciting activity.

Kings Creek Hut. 5<sup>th</sup> November.

6.30am and all's well except it's snowing. Not really heavy snow but enough to leave frozen clumps of snow on the grass. We are at 480 metres here. We started walking at 8.30 am heading for Stone Hut, had a quick look at the historical Cecil King's Hut and then onwards crossing Luna Stream on the slippery ice covered swing bridge and then another swing bridge over the Wangapeka River arriving at Stone Hut at 11.30am in sunshine. We were walking alongside a lovely stretch of river with its deep gorges and waterfalls but becoming flat as we approached Stone Hut.

There were 4 DOC track clearing fellas staying there and with our 5 made it quite cosy in the 10 bed hut. Two young Czech girls just passed through going the other way, stopping long enough to have a cuppa and some soup, they had walked up the Karamea Valley and then stayed in the Trevor Carter Hut for a day to dodge the weather that had us idle. Trevor Carter Hut being a day and a half further up the track that we were following. These little lassies were in a hurry to get out as they had work lined up so they took a short cut over the Biggs Tops which at this stage was covered in snow and another 700 metres higher than we were. They seemed to know what they were doing but their plastic shopping bag gaiters had me wondering. They were certainly braver than me. Stone Hut is in a lovely position, the river just in front with a Blue Duck preening itself just opposite. I fell in the river while trying to cross it for a photo. With the sun out it was not a big problem, and all of a sudden it started to snow again. Talk about Melbourne weather. All the while the DOC blokes were out there somewhere clearing the tracks. They sure do earn their money.

Stone Hut. 6<sup>th</sup> November

Left Stone Hut at 8.40am heading for Helicopter Flat Hut at 730m, but we had to walk over the Wangapeka Saddle at 1020 metres high. We got to the saddle at 10.20am. The weather looked sort of reasonable so we altered our plans and decided to go over the Biggs Tops to the Trevor Carter Hut knowing full well the Tops had a good covering of snow from the previous 2 nights of snow. This was the way the 2 Czech girls had come the previous day.



Walking up to the Wangapeka Saddle the track had snow beside it all the way. To get to the Bigg's Tops you leave the Wangapeka Track at the saddle and head up another 300m to the tree-line, walking in snow all the way. We geared up and started following the snow poles sidling around a ridge in snow 300 to 600cm deep. Going was slow with one of the party not familiar with these conditions, and the weather appeared to be changing so we bailed out and retraced our steps back to Wangapeka Saddle. It was good fun and a little different to what we would have expected. We stopped beside a creek at 1pm and had our customary 15min. lunch hour. Captain Wassenberg had a heart after all.

We then headed down to Helicopter Flat Hut following the Karamea River. It was good going initially except for a detour around a big land slip and when we got down to the river there are a couple of wet boot crossings and then slow going due to little ups and downs to get around rocky bluffs bordering the river. We arrived at

Helicopter Hut at a tired 5pm with the 10 bunk hut all to ourselves, as the American Adventure group there were camped in 3 and 4 man tents. Kerry had a bath in the river, as he thought he could smell something while the others had bucket baths. I was always told that only dirty people bathe.

Helicopter Flat Hut 7<sup>th</sup> November.

As per usual Ted was up at 5.30am stuffing around, but the rest of us did not move a muscle till 7.30am. It takes will power. Today is an easy day, time and distance wise. We left Helicopter Hut at 9:00 for the Trevor Carter Hut via the Lost Valley. A very pretty walk, made better by the fact we had sun and blue sky. Arrived at 11am at a beautiful modern hut with the crystal clear Karamea River out the front door and a great view up the Taipo Valley where we head tomorrow.



Then the tranquillity was pleasantly disturbed by a visit of an angel. A female angel, albeit grubby; the advance scout of a group of 5 angels. This was a party of local young mothers who abandon their partners and offspring once a year to do their head clearing exercise. They had arrived at the hut via the Biggs Tops. That was the way we attempted the previous day and backed off. They had a lovely sunny day, but melting snow to contend with. They breed them tough in NZ (Except one was a pom, but she has been forgiven) It was a great night with nice company.

Trevor Carter Hut, 8<sup>th</sup> November

The long-range weather forecast did not mention yesterday's beautiful day, but they

did say today it was going to rain. Not to be confused with showers, which is a different proposition altogether. Rain means you are going to get wet. We left the Trevor Carter Hut at 8.10am, which is early by our standards and headed for Taipo Hut up the Taipo Valley. If Captain Ted had his way it would be 6.10 but 4 against 1 are strong odds. The reason for leaving early was to try and dodge the rain and it was only a 2 ½ hrs trip if you read the signs. Unfortunately, we took 3hrs do this walk.

Fortunately, we just got into the Taipo Hut and out of our wet gear from the showers, when it started to bucket down. There were 5 soggy ladies out there somewhere behind us. By the time they arrived, we had the fire going, clothes-line strung up and water boiling for a cuppa. We took over the hut, which sleeps 16 and ate, drank and talked for the rest of the afternoon. Walking does not have to be painful. Tomorrow is a big day. Taipo Hut is at 700m and to get to Belltown "Mananui" Hut at 250m we have to go over the Little Wanganui Saddle at 1100m. I am glad we did not have to go over the Big Wanganui Saddle where-ever that is.

Taipo Hut, 9<sup>th</sup> November.

5am. Heard a Kiwi call at Taipo Hut. Set off at 7.40am for Little Wanganui Saddle in fine weather with mist on the mountains and down below the saddle, but with little sun. We arrived at the saddle at 9.15am. It was a very pretty spot with a large tarn and good picture opportunities. We headed down into the valley towards Belltown Mananui Hut, a steep down and hard on the knees, through some lovely moss forest. Morning tea was just before Wangapeka Bivouac at 11.00 and lunch at 12.30 just before the Tangent Ck. Bridge. Captain Ted relented and allowed us 16min. for lunch. The track on this side of the range is much rougher and the flora lush with a slow slog over tree roots and rocks. We arrived at the Belltown Mananui Hut at 3.20pm. It started to rain again and we were a little worried about the 5 girls behind us. Sigh of relief when they arrived 2hrs behind us, wet as shags and all smiles. It was a good night with 5 blokes and 5 girls in a 10-bed hut with drinks, jokes and tall tales, wonderful company.

November 10<sup>th</sup>, last day.

At 7.40am, we left the hut for a 3hr walk out to the trail end. Following the river most of the way along a very wet track from all of last night's rain and just before the end of the track I stopped. Imagine when one dies and you go to your version of heaven, you would hear angels singing. Well I was standing on the side of the track and even with my hearing difficulties and imagination. I could hear singing. A lady with a beautiful voice was singing some form of opera. I did not think I was dead although I probably felt like it, but off in the distance somebody was playing music and it was opera it was a wonderful experience for the end of the walk, civilisation at last. A pre-arranged shuttle bus took us to Westport.

Thanks as always to Ted for doing all the work organising the Wangapeka Track walk and to the company of Kerry, Russell and Rob and to the 5 Takaka ladies for a memorable trip.

Lance Rutherford



## Interesting Information



### **BUSHWALKIN CODE OF ETHICS**

(Taken from the Guidelines of the Qld Environmental Protection Agency)

#### **Walking Softly**

- ☺ Protect the bush, take no shortcuts, this causes unnecessary erosion.
- ☺ Walk on rocks and hard ground rather than trampling vegetation.
- ☺ Never mark your route. Blazed trees are susceptible to fungal attacks that can kill the tree. Markers can confuse other walkers. Become aware of where you have been, always look backwards and note the other side of natural features that may help to find the way back if necessary.
- ☺ Remove rubbish. Even biodegradable food scraps can upset the balance and cause weeds. Use toilets when provided.
- ☺ Bury human waste 15cm underground at least 100m from streams or lakes. Use no soap, toothpaste, shampoo or sunscreen in lakes or streams.

