

Ramble On

Newsletter of Redland Bushwalkers Incorporated

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P.O. Box 101 Cleveland 4163

December 2013

Next Club Meeting

Wednesday, 8th January, 2014

7:00pm for 7:30pm start

Indigiscapes Centre, Runnymede Rd, Capalaba

Presidents Report



2013 – The year of cancelled walks?

The year is coming to a close and we are all preparing for Christmas, bushwalks are low on the priority list and even if you wanted to do one, it is probably too hot. It is a good time to look back on our anniversary year, a year full of brilliant plans for a celebration thanks to the 10th anniversary committee. They had the excellent idea of re-creating the walks from our first year in existence; however Mother Nature clearly had other plans. Activity after activity had to be cancelled due to tree falls, land slips and track closures. Luckily enough, some of us could still end the year on top of Mt. Warning with strawberries and champagne, celebrating the past and toasting the future.



The Christmas party at Mt. Warning Holiday Park was a great success, even though Mother Nature again tried to throw a last spanner in the works in the shape of a thunderstorm. A big thank you to the Christmas party committee for all your effort and planning, it was much appreciated by all.

So what has 2014 got in store? Well that question is best answered by looking at the club calendar. It has filled up splendidly with quite a few exciting walks but there are still some weekends that need activities, please feel free to put your hand up and fill the gaps. One excellent result from our Christmas party is that a Christmas party committee for 2014 has already been formed; Beatrice, Laurel, Rhonda and Marika put their hands up and are already getting stuck in. Spring Gully Stays is booked for the last weekend in November, however if you have an idea for another venue please contact any of the ladies and they will be more than happy to check it out.

Have a safe and happy Christmas; see you in the New Year!

MATS





WALK GRADINGS:

Distance		Terrain		Fitness	
S	Short Under 10k, per day	1-3	Graded track or open terrain, no scrub	1-3	Easy. Suitable for beginners
M	Medium 10-15k, per day	4-5	Off track, bush, minor scrub, rainforest, rock hopping, minor scrambling	4-5	Medium, reasonable fitness required
L	Long 15-20km per day	6-7	As above + thick scrub. Major rock scrambling using hands.	6-7	As above + agility required
X	Extra Long 20km+ per day	8-9	As above + rope and technical ability required	8-9	Hard strenuous, fit walkers only

AB	Abseiling	DW	Day Walk	TW	Through Walk
BC	Base Camp	SOC	Social	XT	Extended Trip
R	Bike Ride	TR	Training		

EXAMPLE:

The Albert River Circuit at O'Reilly's is 22km long all on graded track, it would be graded as: **DW X 3 5**

Activity Reports



Where: Coomera Circuit Revisited

Date: Sunday 10 November 2013

Leader: Bob Hartley



Redlands Bushwalkers Inc. wasted no time in getting back onto this walk after it was reopened. Five members, Bob, Ruth, Denise, Hilary and David set off just after 9.00 am.

The weather gods were smiling (well up until 1.00 pm). We enjoyed perfect walking conditions – 22 degrees and dry underfoot. The Coomera River was very low which made for easy crossings but unimpressive waterfalls – but this gorge is well worth looking at whatever the river levels. Birdlife was plentiful but it was audio only as they remained hidden – we heard Whipbirds, Leeuwin's Honey eaters, Catbirds and Emerald Doves.

The track was in good nick – but NPWS has left a couple of trees across the track just to raise the grading level. But David rose to the challenge.

On reaching the Border Track there was a debate as to how many times we had crossed the river – each walker had a different number between 8 and 13 – so we took an average and made it 10.1 crossings – near enough!!

On the way back we saw a very large red bellied black snake enjoying the view at Jolie's look out – and then the thunderstorm arrived. We arrived back, a little damp at 2.00 pm. We had thought this would be a rare leech free walk in the Lamington NP – but it wasn't to be - one did latch onto Ruth.

Thanks to all for making this a good experience, Bob Hartley.



View from Mt Mitchell taken by John Kolcze

Where: Mt Mitchell, Cunningham's Gap

When: Sunday 3rd November 2013

Leader: Hilary Martyn



Eight club members and two prospective new members set off at 8.30am to walk up Mt Mitchell. We were shocked to see the damage caused in January by ex-cyclone Oswald. However, National Park rangers have done a good job repairing the track. Most of the walkers walked quietly during the two hours it took to reach the top and we heard whip birds, cat birds and currawong amongst other bird song. One of the group, who will remain anonymous, realised he was wearing his wife's boots which caused him to hobble a bit!

It was a hot day and the views from the top were a bit hazy, and we had to retreat to the shade of the canopy for morning tea.

The walk back down the track was uneventful until 10 minutes before we reached the road. One of the girls, Sue McDougal, who was on her first walk with the club, tripped on a rock and fell, twisting her ankle, fortunately she was able to walk the final 10 minutes to the cars. However, a visit to her doctor the next day confirmed the ankle was fractured. Sue assures me it hasn't put her off and she'll be back walking with the club next year. We wish her a speedy recovery.

Report by: Hilary Martyn



Where: Back Creek Abseils

When: 2 Nov 2013

Leader: Ted Wassenberg

After several attempts earlier this year we finally completed all waterfalls.

The wet earlier this year caused us to avoid Back Ck and to abort one attempt when rained started as we had passed the third waterfall and in August a mishap to one member also had us escaping from the creek.

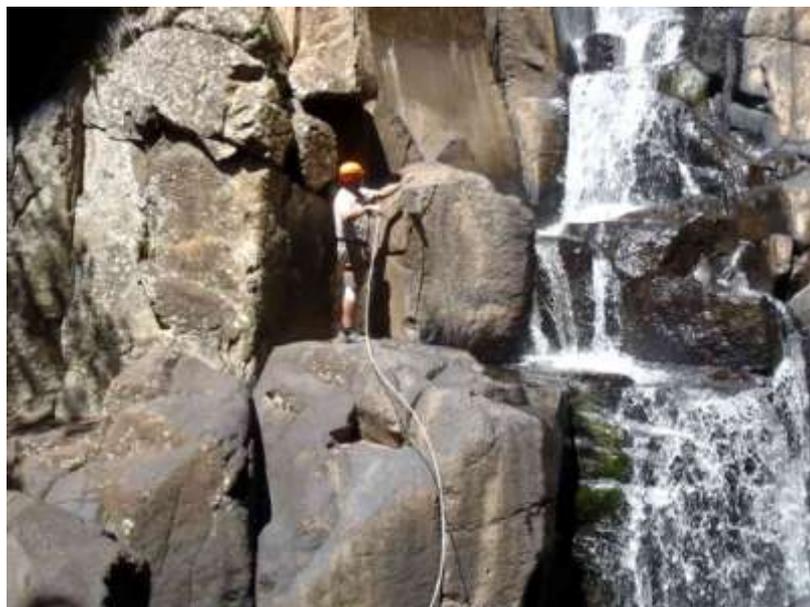


This time conditions were very dry. We had Rob, Judy, Gary, Alison, Beatrice, Jacob and I. Having met in Canungra at 0800 and partaken of some refreshments we set off for Back Ck and commenced the walk down stream to Denham Falls (~40m). We used a different angle than usual from the anchor to descend the falls, making it a vertical drop with an overhang and landing at the base of the water spray. Rob set the standard by going down first. When everyone was down safely, Rob, Gary and Judy retrieved the ropes.

As the creek was very dry and water-levels low, it was much easier to descend past all the large boulders to Lip Falls. This one we bypassed without an abseil. A short rock-hop downstream soon had us at Cavern Falls (~12m). Again we used a different angle from the anchor to abseil over the cliff. This cliff is undercut with a large recess at its base, hence the name. Here Jacob took the lead to descend first. The rocks at the base were a good spot for morning tea.

After morning tea we arrived at Rainbow Falls (~15m). This falls caused some trepidation as this time we were going to abseil into a large deep pool at the base and then swim across about 10m to the other side. Judy showed everyone how to get down and cross the deep pool. Beatrice was towed across the pool by Gary and Judy as she was worried about swimming with a pack and fully dressed in long pants, gaiters and boots. The walk to the final waterfall is always difficult due to boulders the size of houses marring the way and we usually have to divert into the rainforest to get by.

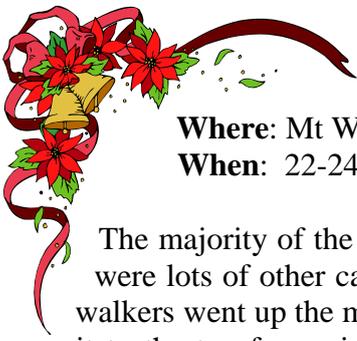
This we also had to do this trip. There were no slings set as anchors at these falls so we used our own slings leaving one behind after everyone was down. Again Judy set the standard and everyone followed. Alison was always the second last to descend as she carried the rescue kit, with me last to clear the ropes. The base of these falls was a perfect spot for lunch before we scrambled our way up the west side to the base of a cliff. We followed this cliff back upstream until we picked up a graded track and returned to the cars. With a relaxing refreshment stop at Canungra and we were on our way home.



Thanks to all for a safe and enjoyable outing and thanks to Betty as our contact officer.

Report: Ted Wassenberg





Where: Mt Warning Christmas Camp

When: 22-24 November 2013

The majority of the club members arrived on Friday afternoon and discovered to our dismay that there were lots of other campers. It rained heavily Friday night but on Saturday morning two groups of keen walkers went up the mountain, a dozen at 6.30am and another dozen at 7.30am Qld time, but not all made it to the top for various reasons - either weather or fitness related. (David and I went to the Tweed Regional Art Gallery which had a couple of really good exhibitions on, and other non-walkers headed off for coffee in Uki and other destinations.)

On Saturday afternoon a good crowd got together to prepare salads and then the party started with happy hour at 5.00pm. However, the evening didn't quite go to plan. Because campsite was very busy we weren't able to use the undercover camp kitchen. We took over the open area outside the Endacott's cabin which was a little way away from the rest of the cabins. A couple of games were played, the tent decoration competition was judged by all (Mats and Marika won by a big margin with their bushwalkers' version of a Christmas tree) food was good, the music (provided by Laurel and Rob's computer) was good, but then at 7.30pm the rains came, so we ate our Christmas pudding and then the party broke up fairly soon after that.

On Sunday morning we took over the camp kitchen for pancakes and fruit which were enjoyed by all. We then announced the result of the "average age" survey. We had asked everyone to write their age down (anonymously) and put in a box, and I then worked out the average age of the group. This was an exercise we did 10 years ago - back then the average age was 53. Ten years on and this year the average age was 62. The youngest was 37, the oldest 77, and interestingly, we had no-one in their 40s. I realise that there were only 44 people there but I'm not sure whether this would have changed much if we had had the whole club there.

After the final clean-up we headed home, though a few people stayed on for an extra night.

Report by: Hilary Martyn



Where: Lower Portals Mt Barney

When: 16-17th November

Leader: Tracy Ryan / David Rae

How to organise your walk around the impending storms predicated for the weekend.

1. Leave at a civilized time of 9:45am from the Lower Portals car park
2. Arrive at your destination at 11:30am and setup camp.
3. Have lunch while watching Peter put up his new tent



4. At 1:00pm shelter in the hut and watch storm number 1 unfold while collecting rainwater for your 2nd cup of tea.

5. At 2:00 pm the sun comes out and off you go for a leisurely swim in the portals



6. From 5:00pm to 6:45pm sit around the fire.



7. At 7:00 pm as the heavens open up from storm number 2 prepare dinner in the comfort of your hut.



8. At 8:00 pm break open Tracy's new pack of cards for a game of cheat.

9. Next morning at 7:38am leave for a short walk up the creek to Barney Falls

10. Back to the hut at 11:30 am pack up, have lunch and leave at 1:00pm.

11. Stoll back to the cars arriving at 2:30 pm

12. At 2:33pm the heavens open again with storm number 3

For some more pics see Youtube clip http://youtu.be/pe3s_uQtxFE

Report: David Rae



Where: Gwyala revisited DW

When: 15 Nov-2013

Leader: Ted Wassenberg

Having heard from the rangers that the ridge to Gwyala had been burned, I thought we would try to get to the summit without having to push through lots of tangled growth.

We met up at Rathdowney by 0700 h and Tracey left her car and joined us in one of the 4WD vehicles for the ride up to the cleared ridge. Tracy, Betty, Alison, Beatrice, Jillian and Jacob joined me for the walk to the base of the ridge leading up to Gwyala from Barney Ck above the Upper Portals. It was a pleasant although muggy morning walk alongside Yamahra Ck towards Barney Ck. We had a short snack stop at the junction of the two creeks and then commenced the ascent of the ridge.

The going was much easier than it had been before the fire. There were still a lot of burned but erect sticks (bushes) to negotiate. We slowly ascended the ridge stopping frequently to rest as it was getting quite warm. By 1100 h we reached the end of the burned area, well short (1 km) of the summit of Gwyala and thick with the dense vegetation that so drastically slowed our trip earlier this year. We had all earlier agreed that if the bush had not burned to the top we would abandon the attempt. This we did. Instead, we had morning tea before returning to Barney Ck.



We arrived at Barney Ck at about 1300 h and so did the rain. A quick walk down stream brought us to the Upper Portals where some young people were playing in the water. We settled down for lunch sheltering under a fig tree when suddenly there was a loud thunder clap and the rainfall increased. It all lasted about 15 min and then we had sunny clear weather. So we set off up the ridge above the Portals and up to the road. On the way we had clear views of the extent of the fire on Barrabool, Midges and Leaning Ridges on the west side of Mt Barney. All appeared to have burned to the tops. At 1500 h we were back at the cars and stopped at Rathdowney on the way home for some cold milkshakes. Some of our party had not been in the area for years and the

Bergers this was their first time. All agreed they had enjoyed the walk despite not achieving the summit of Gwyala.

Report Ted Wassenberg



Important Information

Guidelines for Club ethics:

- When nominating for a walk, members and visitors have an obligation to write legibly on the nomination form.
- Please contact walk leaders at least early in the week before a walk. If you leave it till Thursday or Friday night you may be disappointed to find that the walk has been cancelled, due to apparent lack of interest. Also dates, details etc. can & do change. Leaders give their time to organise walks and need to know if they are committed to lead a walk. The leader may assign you to a car for the trip.
- Read the walk description and note the rating. If you are unsure of your abilities, please discuss this with the leader before nominating. Neither you nor other walkers will have a good day if your fitness is not of a suitable standard.
- The leader of a walk has the final say on whether a person can come on a walk. Members and newcomers should be aware of this and accept it.
- Do you have a health problem that may affect your performance on a walk? It is important that you inform the leader of this and discuss the matter.
- If you have commitments after a walk please discuss this with the leader before commencing a walk. Leaders cannot guarantee the time of return, due to weather, terrain & the expertise of walkers.
- Arrive at the agreed meeting point before the set time. We try to be punctual. Late walkers can be left behind!
- It is a normal practise to share the costs of transport to and from a walk. This may vary between car owners and may be as simple as sharing the cost of the fuel among the passengers or a fixed amount for example: (10-20kms - \$5/person; 20-50kms - \$8/person; 50-100kms - \$10/person; 100-200kms - 15/person; 200-250kms - \$20/person; 250-300kms - \$25/person) Discuss this with your driver.
- Please have a change of clothes and shoes available in the car for the return journey as a courtesy to your companions and the car owner.

DAY WALK CHECKLIST:

Please ensure you have the following items so you are prepared for any eventuality whilst on a day walk.

ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS:

- Boots (must be fully enclosed – no sandals. Boots are preferable although joggers are suitable for most social walks).
- Gaiters or long pants (unless otherwise specified).
- Daypack of sufficient capacity to carry all your needs.
- Water – Minimum of 2 litres – (bladder or two separate containers).
- Torch/headlamp with spare batteries. (Lithium batteries are lighter and last longer than alkaline batteries).
- Raincoat or Poncho.
- First-aid kit
- Whistle
- Lunch and snacks.

RECOMMENDED:

- Light fleece or Thermal top.
- Pack liner and pack cover. (protects pack contents in case of rain)
- Sunscreen and insect repellent.
- Rubbish bag (we take out what we take in; also for wet muddy gear).
- Map and compass (ideally the leader is not the only one with these items).
- Toilet paper and trowel.
- Spare change of clothes in a bag to be left in the car for the return journey – be considerate of fellow passengers and those who provide the transport.

OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- Camera or binoculars.
- Walking poles.
- Gardening gloves or similar for off track walks.

IMPORTANT:

1. Trip leaders can choose to leave you behind if you are not properly equipped.
2. Keep to walks within the bounds of the walk grading as shown on the walk calendar.