



Special Clubnight Guest Speakers

This winter we are privileged to have two very special Clubnight presentations. Firstly on June 21st Antarctic expeditioner and bushwalking pioneer Fred Elliott, then July 12th bushwalking guidebook authors John and Monica Chapman. Both presentations will have accompanying slide or photographic displays.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of Mawson Base, Australia's research facility in Antarctica. Fred was a part of the founding ANARE team at Mawson, as well as an earlier 1953 expedition to the previous base at Heard Island.

Prior to Antarctica, Fred was a member of several pioneering bushwalking expeditions with Geelong College, led by the late John Bechervaise. In 1947 they were the first to set foot on Rodondo Island, a formidable granite outcrop near Wilsons Promontory. With sheer cliffs on every side, the only access was by waiting for perfectly calm conditions then scaling the steep granite rock face to the island's vegetated plateau.

Their best known adventure was the one in January 1949 which saw them become the first group to reach the summit of Federation Peak in southwest Tasmania. Even nowadays Federation Peak is one of the most challenging walks in Australia; YHA Bushwalking has had successful trips there, however these were with the benefit of walking tracks. Fifty years ago there was nothing, just thick, trackless scrub, so while most major Australian peaks were conquered during the 19th century, it is of no surprise that this was the last goal to be achieved.

Someone also very familiar with Federation Peak is John Chapman, author of one of the definitive guide books to South West Tasmania. Through their website and numerous contributions to publications such as "Wild", John and his wife Monica are among the country's best known bushwalking authors and photographers. If you want to go exploring yourself, John & Monica's "Bushwalking in Australia" is a good place to start. Last year's clubnight with Tyrone Thomas was a big hit, so July 12th, come and hear more stories about what it takes to research and publish a guidebook.

Chairman's Report

Winter is generally one of the quietest seasons for Bushwalking, but this year we have a full program. We have five snow walks so everyone will have an opportunity to climb Mt Bogong, Mt Feathertop, Mt Buller, Mt Donna Buang or Lake Mountain. If you haven't done any of these walks in winter, this year's the time to do so. They are completely different walks at this time of year, and probably more spectacular! If you have been thinking that there are not enough harder walks on the program, well here they are!

Back in April we had our AGM. I'd like to welcome two new committee members, Cynthia Bell and Stuart Hanham. Thanks also to Robert Yuen and Greg Shepherd for taking on the roles of Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Greg in particular will have a hard act to follow, taking over after four years' invaluable work from Jean Braakhuis.

The highlight of the Clubnight program will be the talk on mid-winters day 21 June by Antarctic pioneer Fred Elliott (*see main story*). A unique and genuine Australian explorer! I hope to see you there at the YWCA building 1st floor, 489 Elizabeth St Melbourne.

Cheers
Simon Walliss
Chairman



Rob and Charmaine dress up for the occasion at this year's Formal Dinner Walk (full story, page 6)

Also in this Issue

- ❖ First Cope Hut working bee
- ❖ Bushwalking Book Reviews
- ❖ More Offbeat Equipment
- ❖ Dr Telemark's Quiz
- ❖ Who Does & Doesn't Go Walking?

**YHA BUSHWALKING COMMITTEE
2004/05**

Chairman	Simon Walliss
Secretary	Greg Shepherd
Treasurer	Robert Yuen
Walks Sec.	David Sisson
Social Sec.	Cynthia Bell
S & R	Ken Sussex
Webmaster	Andrew Brown
Newsletter	Stephen Smith

General	Ron Bell
	Jean Braakhuis
	Stuart Hanham
	Andres Vidovic

YHA Bushwalking emergency mobile phone
(For emergency contact on walks) 0428 313 880

General Enquiries: 0500 500 272

CONTRIBUTIONS TO YETI

These articles don't write themselves you know, nor are they all plagiarised from the internet (well some of them aren't anyway). If you've enjoyed yourself on one or two YHA trips or have some thoughts about bushwalking which you'd like to share, then here's your opportunity to do so. Instead of just confining them to the people you shared a ride back to Melbourne with, find a spare moment, jot them down then email in plain text or Word format to yhabush@bigpond.com. Alternatively mail them to GPO Box 25, Melbourne 3001. Don't worry if you're semi-literate, it can all be fixed in the editing. Deadline for next issue is August 25th 2004.

YETI ONLINE

"Yeti" has its own website www.vicnet.net.au/~yhayeti containing an online version of the latest issue as well as archived articles from past editions. The web versions are well worth visiting, as they often include additional photographs not able to be included in the print version for reasons of space, as well as superior reproduction.

TRIP LEADERS

If you wish to have a brief description of your upcoming trip printed here in YETI please contact the editor with the details.

YHA ACTIVITIES CLUBNIGHT

Is held on Monday nights at the YWCA building, 489 Elizabeth Street in the city, from 8pm to approx. 9:30pm. Special events start at 8.15pm sharp, everybody welcome.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

If you recognise an article in this newsletter it is probably because it has been plagiarised from another source. This is the only way we can bring you this newsletter. YETI makes no apology for any offence caused.

YETI THANKS

The following contributors to this issue:
Richard Miller
David Sisson
John Sloan
Simon Walliss

Cope Hut Working Bee

As reported last issue, YHA Bushwalking has recently been appointed caretaker of Cope Hut by the Victorian High Country Huts Association (VHCHA).

An initial inspection at Easter was followed up the first working bee on May 15-16th. The hut was generally in good condition, with the most serious problem of damaged steps having been repaired by someone already. With the remnants of the year's first snowfalls still on the opposite side of the valley and signs in the air of more to come, a small team led by Neil Warden and John Belfio set about smartening the hut up for winter. The outside door to the adjoining storeroom was re-hinged and properly hung, whilst a temporary door was installed on a second storeroom at the back of the hut. A leaking tap was fixed, along with a missing rung from one of the sleeping bunk ladders.



Cope Hut Working Party May 2004: (l-r) John Belfio, Michael Teekens, Robert Yuen, Neil Warden

Those who slept in the hut confirmed that a night of fairly constant rain didn't show up any leaks in the roof.

Anyone planning ski tours to Cope Hut will be pleased to know that thanks to the generosity of another high-country enthusiast who dropped by while were present, it is more than adequately stocked with firewood to last the next three-four months.

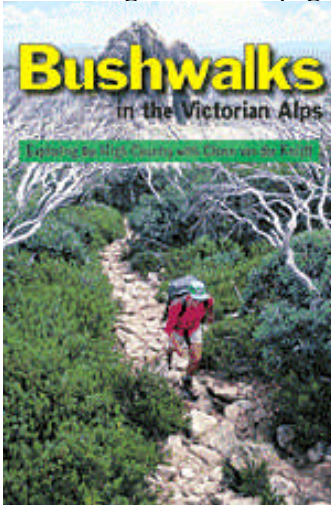
Plenty of ideas for further improvements were suggested, including fixing the pot-belly stove doors, installing a small sink to go with the tap and an alternative to the grotty foam mattresses covering the bunk-beds.

The next visit is planned for late-spring, keep an eye on the programme for details. The weekends aren't just about working around the hut, there are also plenty of short (2-4 hour) but interesting walks in the area to nearby huts, peaks and waterfalls.

General Hut News McNamara's Hut, destroyed by the 2003 bushfires, was rebuilt over the Easter weekend by volunteers from the VHCHA. The next two huts in line for reconstruction (after the snow season) are Federation Hut (Mt Feathertop) and Michell Hut (Mt Bogong)

Bushwalking Book Reviews

Glenn van der Knijff. *Bushwalks in the Victorian Alps: Exploring the High Country*. Open Spaces Publishing, 2004. 192 pages. \$32.95.



In recent years there has been a need for a modern colour guidebook to the high country written after the fires with clear maps and gradient profiles. *Bushwalks in the Victorian Alps* concentrates on the two best walking areas in the mountains, the Bogong -Hotham and Buller - Howitt - Wellington regions with a few walks on the Buffalo and Baw Baw Plateaux and a walk on Mt Torbreck, but sadly the book is a bit of a disappointment.

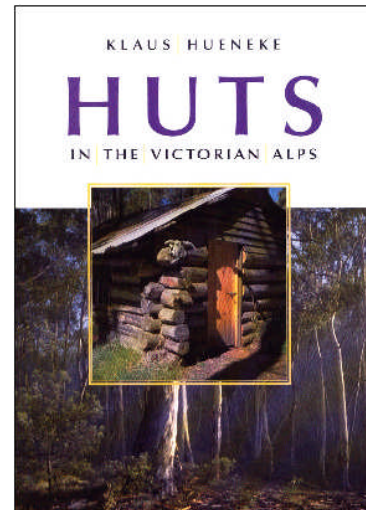
The choice of destinations is excellent, with all the best spots covered, but the principal failing of the book is route selection. An awful lot of the routes described go to the destination and return the same way, when there are good alternative return routes. Even where the author describes a circuit, his choices are sometimes questionable. An example is the recommendation to walk the unpleasant switchback road between King River Hut and Cobbler, instead of the easier and more enjoyable Muesli Spur track.

The second problem is the number of factual errors and questionable judgements. A few examples for the case of Mt Feathertop: van der Knijff describes the huge \$200,000 Federation Hut double decker dunny as 'small', rates the notorious trackless route on Champion Spur as 'moderate', and confuses the old Feathertop Hut with its former neighbour the Feathertop Bungalow. It makes an informed reader question whether the author has recently visited or even read about the areas he describes. There are at least a dozen similar errors elsewhere in the book.

However a number of interesting routes are described that have not been covered in any guidebook published in the last 30 years, notably a route from Moroka Gorge direct to Snowy Bluff. But a few interesting new routes don't make up for the book's many failings, so John Siseman's *Victoria's Alpine National Park: A Bushwalkers Guide*, (1997) remains the best walking guide for the area.

David Sisson

Klaus Hueneke. *Huts in the Victorian Alps*. Tabletop Press, 2003. 256 pages. \$45.00.



After writing half a dozen books on the Snowy Mountains and their people, as well as publishing a number of other books on the area, it was inevitable that Klaus Hueneke's gaze would be drawn south of the border.

This is the first book that attempts to cover the huts of all of the Victorian high country and while a few notable huts are omitted, Hueneke has produced a well written, well researched book. He writes in a pleasant anecdotal style and avoids the dryness of a more academic approach or the haphazardness, errors and inconsistencies of many self published books. *Huts in the Victorian Alps* is an excellent and entertaining background to the history of the huts of the high country.

David Sisson

High Country Grazing Review

A government taskforce is currently reviewing the issues surrounding cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park. Recommendations from the report, due in July, will influence a decision on whether or not to renew grazing licences, many of which will expire in August 2005.

Cattle are currently banned from areas affected by last year's bushfires, however the terms of reference of the taskforce is to investigate the general impacts and benefits (if any) of grazing rather than those to do with the time necessary for recovery and regeneration after the fires.

The deadline for public submissions (email in MS Word format to alpine.grazing@dse.vic.gov.au) is June 18th.

Further information about the negative effects of cattle grazing can be found at www.cowpaddock.com

For Sale: Sirio hiking boots, size 43, Excellent Condition, Goretex lining \$180. Contact: Ben 9808 1647

Equipment News

It's good to know that while Yeti's readers are enjoying the great outdoors, in other parts of the world teams are slaving away in research labs trying to find new ways to take the effort out of bushwalking. Short of just sitting down and watching the whole thing on DVD, here's the latest and greatest they've come up with so far.

RoboBushie: How do you make a 30kg backpack feel like barely 10% of that weight? One way is to go walking on the moon, although the cumbersome 100kg (still 15kg on the moon) spacesuit needed to stop your lungs from exploding would somewhat offset the reduced pack weight.

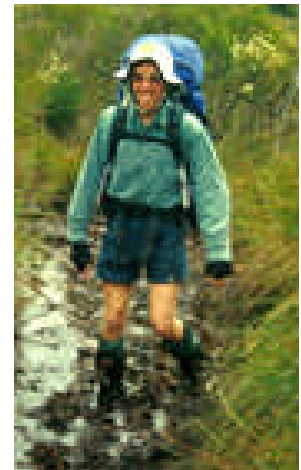
Another way is to strap on a giant helium balloon. This may present some difficulties walking through forested areas. Also you'd need to maintain careful counterweighting; taking off your pack, or even having a hefty toilet stop could see you reaching altitudes not marked on your map.

A more earthbound means of achieving enlightenment is the following development by a team led by Professor Homyoon Kazerooni at the University of California Berkeley campus. The Berkeley Lower Extremity Exoskeleton (BLEEX), as it's officially called, consists of mechanical metal leg braces that are connected rigidly to the user at the feet, and, in order to prevent abrasion, more compliantly elsewhere. The device includes a power unit and a backpack-like frame used to carry a large load.



A bushwalking fantasy – or is it?

According to Prof Kazerooni "We set out to create an exoskeleton that combines a human control system with robotic muscle. We've designed this system to be ergonomic, highly manoeuvrable and technically robust so the wearer can walk, squat, bend and swing from side to side without noticeable reductions in agility". For the current model, the user steps into a pair of modified boots that are then attached to the exoskeleton. A pair of metal legs frames the outside of a person's legs to facilitate ease of movement. The wearer then dons the exoskeleton's vest that's attached to the backpack frame and engine. If the machine runs out of fuel, the exoskeleton legs can be easily removed so that the device converts to a large backpack. In the Berkeley experiments, a volunteer moved about wearing the 45kg exoskeleton and a 30kg backpack while feeling as if he were lugging little more than 2kg.



Beware of flat batteries!

A Shoe with IQ : Coming this Christmas, the computer-controlled shoe with 20,000 sensors which automatically adjust the amount of cushioning according to the environment. If compression is too hard it's bad for your knees, too soft and, well the poor old knees still get to suffer. A motorised system of cables in the sole lengthen or shorten to vary the level of compression. Developed by Adidas, estimated retail price is around \$350-400.



... **And something for Winter :** The next few months are likely to be pretty nippy outdoors, so some of our members may be interested in a pair of Louis Garneau Men's Heater Briefs. Available in any colour you like (provided it's blue). The ultimate wind brief! Wicking Drytex 2000 fabrication with a wind proof Microzone front panel, PLUS a removable Dryfleece 200 insulation panel for extra protection when and where you need it! Everyone who's ever been cold should have one.



Dr T's Quick Winter Quiz

Test your knowledge with Dr T's quick quiz. There may be more than one correct answer to some of the questions. Answers at the bottom of page 6.

1. When fitting chains to a car:

- a) Fit them to the rear wheels of all cars.
- b) Stop to retension them after a short distance and ensure that there are no loose chains to damage the paintwork.
- c) Fit them to the driving wheels of the car.
- d) Fit one at the front and one at the rear on opposite sides.

2. Your car door lock has frozen after being parked in the snow overnight, do you :

- a) Pee on it.
- b) Warm the key and ease it into the lock.
- c) Call the RACV.
- d) Go and sit in the coffee shop and wait for the group leader to fix the problem, (Well, He/She does everything else)

3. If you visited Cope Hut in winter you would:

- a) Use all the available wood to light a fire as stocks will be delivered again on Monday
- b) Take your 4WD to the door so that you didn't have to lug the esky far.
- c) Take a tent in case the hut was full.
- d) Thank the YHA Bushwalking volunteers for tidying the place up pre-winter.

4. A cold front :

- a) Is a right wing organization.
- b) Can be prevented by wearing a pair of Louis Garneau Mens Heater Briefs.
- c) Usually brings cold wet windy weather.
- d) Is the look from the yuppie businessman sitting opposite you on the train while you're wearing outdoor workers clothes.

5. If you visited Middelfart you would be in:

- a) Tasmania
- b) Denmark
- c) Germany
- d) New Zealand

6. Klister is:

- a) Used to make prisoners talk in Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison.
- b) A sticky substance used to add grip to cross country skis.
- c) A type of chocolate.
- d) Unknown in Australia.

7. If you experienced a "whiteout" you would:

- a) Be on the latest designer drug.
- b) Head to the nearest coffee shop.
- c) Push on regardless and leave the slower members of the group behind.
- d) Keep the group together and trust the compass as to which direction to travel.

8. If you were visiting Denmark and wished to buy some Metho you would ask for:

- a) Lysindstilller
- b) Affaldspose
- c) Maling
- d) Denatureret spirit

9. A ski Leash is:

- a) Used to add grip to the skis when climbing slopes.
- b) Used to prevent loss of skis and subsequent injury to persons below you on the slope.
- c) Used by US military personnel in Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison to help prisoners find their way while they are hooded.
- d) Used to take your skis for a walk in the same way you would walk your dog.

10. If you slept in a snow cave you would:

- a) Block the cave up snug and tight to keep warm.
- b) Need to remove the bats first.
- c) At all times ensure that there is a good flow of fresh air from the outside even if it means the temperature is lowered.
- d) Have a rotating watch by group members to ensure that the entrance / air hole does not block up.

Yeti Crossword Solution (from Autumn issue):

Across: 1.Croajingalong, 7.Macpac, 9.Glisten, 10.No, 11.Spring, 12.Yak, 13.Side, 16.Beehive, 17.Sandbar, 21.Isle, 23.Map, 25.Stereo, 27.LP, 28.Gravity, 29.Denude, 30. Goretex Jacket
Down: 1.Compass, 2.Orchid, 3.Jeans, 4.Lying, 5.Nuts, 6.Snake, 8. Cope, 9.Gaiters, 14.Etna, 15.Kiwi, 16.Bakery, 18.Wet Tent, 19.Image, 20.Veld, 22.Struck, 24.Piano, 25.Spice, 26.Opera

Who Went Walking in 2003?

YHA Bushwalking statistics from 2003 show a similar pattern to those of previous years.

Total Walk-Days: (people x days walked) **2078**

By coincidence this is identical to 2002, although summer 2003 was marred by several trips, including long-weekends cancelled due to the bushfires.

Total Walkers: **424** (cf 462 in 2002)

Female – 249

Male – 166

Unknown – 9

New – 248 (ie first walk during 2003)

Returning – 176

1-trip Wonders: – 239 4 trips : 18

2-trips: 55 5-10 trips : 54

3-trips: 31 more than 10 trips : 27

Average Group Size

Sunday walks: **25.2** range 8-47 (2002 avge= 26.5)

Other day walks: **11** (2002 avge= 6)

Weekend (camping): **14** (2002: 11)

Weekend (accommodated): **20** (2002: 19)

...And Who Didn't?

For many, a bushwalk affords an opportunity to meet people with a common interest but from other professions to those they work with Mon-Fri. A cardinal sin is to meet up with someone from your own line of work and spend an excessive amount of time "talking shop", however there are no problems with explaining at length what you do with someone with a different occupation (provided they are keen enough to listen). There is quite a diversity of occupations, but it isn't really a true cross-section of society. Well represented among YHA bushwalkers are nurses, doctors and other medical professionals, accountants, teachers, skilled tradesman, social workers, librarians, as well as IT & engineering professionals, musicians and members of the armed forces.

But where are all the telemarketers, real-estate agents, management consultants, priests, cat-psychiatrists, Big Brother contestants, people who rearrange supermarket shelves so you can't find the milk and other first-class ticket-holders for the 'B' Ark? Or do they belong to another club?

Youngs Hut Formal Dinner Walk

Another successful Formal Dinner walk was held in February, this year at Youngs Hut on the Bogong High Plains. Only eight attended, as a few people were put off by the forecast scorching temperatures that weekend; 30°C for most of the night and 40+ during the day. How misguided they were – the high plains were the best place in Victoria to be! At an altitude of 1600-1700m the daytime temperatures weren't much above the mid-twenties, making walking pleasant, while at night it was cool enough to sleep comfortably but balmy enough to be the first formal walk in a while that the ladies didn't need to wear thermals under their cocktail dresses.

Champagne and wine flowed freely, along with a range of gourmet delicacies everyone had pooled together on Charmaine's very lightweight and easy-to-assemble picnic table. Young's Hut is a little off the beaten track (about 2km from the Alpine Walking Track turnoff to Cobungra Gap and Mt Hotham) and so isn't visited very frequently but is one of the hidden treasures of the High Plains. Situated at the head of a valley (from which a 45 minute walk leads down to some attractive waterfalls), it was originally built as an SEC survey hut, but in appearance and character is more like a cattleman's hut. The Border Bushwalking club have done an excellent job over the past few years renovating and maintaining it.



Youngs Hut

Formal dinner walks have been a tradition with YHA Bushwalking for a number of years. A high country hut is a typical location chosen, with a bonus if there is a major peak nearby to view the sunset from. You need to be able to carry a weekend pack with all the usual camping and safety gear, although the walk in is usually on the easy side (2-3 hours). The only special rules are that you bring along some quality food and drink to share and dress appropriately in the evening; either jacket and tie or a cocktail dress. Which of the options you choose to wear is up to you, out in the bush you don't need to feel constrained by traditional sexist roles as the cover photo shows. Details of the 2005 walk should appear in the summer programme.

Answers to Dr T's Quiz:

1, b & c. **2**, b. **3**, c & d. **4**, b & c. **5**, b. **6**, d, although a may be possible. **7**, d. **8**, d, Lysindstiller = light adjuster, Affaldspose = rubbish bin, Maling = paint. **9**, b. **10**, c & d. It is important to ensure a flow of fresh air. Death could result from closing the cave up due to oxygen starvation.