



Queens Birthday trips

This year's Labour Day and Easter long weekend trips were very successful (see stories elsewhere in this issue). The upcoming Queens Birthday weekend should also be an enjoyable one, with three trips to choose from that should cater for all tastes.

Bellarine Peninsula accommodated w/e

For those who like an accommodated weekend that doesn't involve too long a drive, explore the Bellarine peninsula with Sing Wong whilst staying at a cosy three-bedroom house in Ocean Grove. One of the day walks will be to the Queencliff/Point Lonsdale seashore marine reserve, the second will cover the Barwon River from Lake Connewarre to Barwon Heads, whilst the third will visit the Barwon River parklands in Geelong.



Coastline near Barwon Heads

The food, wine and entertainment will be as good as you care to bring along (the house has a home DVD system). Cost is \$85, numbers are limited to 12 (there's only room for so many mattresses on the floor!), so book early to secure a spot – contact Sing 9482 1206.

Northern Grampians base-camp

If you fancy the camaraderie of a campfire and rugged Grampians scenery, Robert Potocnik is running a base-camp at the Mt Stapylton camping area. Set in an oasis of scrub bushland amidst ochre cliffs, the campsite has excellent facilities, including new toilet huts, picnic tables, rainwater tanks and a few resident wallabies.

Planned walks include the loop track to the summit of Mt Stapylton, Briggs Bluff and Hollow Mountain, all providing great views of the surrounding area if the weather is clear. Distances are only 10-12km per day but as they naturally involve a bit of climbing and rock-hopping, the grading is medium plus. The trip will end with a visit to the scenic Olive Farm café.



It's not all hard walking, with a relaxing lunch at Spargos Hut on the Mt Hotham Labour Day weekend (full trip report p3) *photo: Andrew Stevenson*

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As with Sing's weekend, the quality of food, wine and entertainment is entirely up to you. The cost is booking fee (\$7/\$12) plus a camping permit of approximately \$36/vehicle over three nights.

Contact Robert 9459 4624 for bookings.

Victoria Range pack-carry

The third option is a pack carry into the wild and remote Victoria Ranges. The ravines, sandstone cliffs and strange rock formations, dominated by the Fortress (pictured), are among the most intriguing scenery of the Grampians. This is a challenging but rewarding walk.

– enquiries Paul 9537 1001.



**YHA BUSHWALKING COMMITTEE
2007/08**

President	David Sisson
Secretary/Website	Hooi-Soon Khoo
Treasurer	Cynthia Bell
Walks Sec. (Weekends)	Paul Gottliebson
Walks Sec (Sundays)	Sing Wong
Clubnight Coordinator	tba
Social Secretary	Andrew Stevenson
Search & Rescue Rep	Simon Walliss
General committee	Jane Bateson
	Ron Bell
	Martin Cousins
	Ken Sussex

Yeti Editor (non-committee) Stephen Smith

CONTRIBUTIONS TO YETI

These articles don't write themselves y' 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. Find a spare moment, jot them down then email them to yhabush@bigpond.com

Deadline for the next issue is Aug 17th 2007.

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

Take advantage of the opportunity to promote your upcoming trips in YETI with a more detailed description than space in the programme allows. Please contact the editor with the details.

YHA ACTIVITIES CLUBNIGHT

Is held on Monday nights at the YWCA building, 1st floor 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:

Jane Bateson
 Martin Cousins
 Paul Gottliebson
 Lisa Milne
 Robert Potocnik
 John Sloan
 Andrew Stevenson
 Vanna Walsh
 Sing Wong
 and several others too embarrassed to be named!

60 YEARS AGO

ROUTES AND SURVEY

(The Hosteller - March 1947)

The monthly meeting of this committee, will be held at the office, at 8pm, each 2nd Thursday of the month. The committee has now been divided into two working sections. One will deal with map making and the other with tracks. All Y.H.A. members are asked to contact Gwen Owen if they have suggestions for new tracks or new routes to be blazed across country. New routes, even around existing hostels, mean more scope for existing trips.

PLANNED TRIPS

(The Hosteller - March 1947)

Now that most people have returned from summer holidays and are fit and ready for a strenuous years hostelling, we announce the following planned trips:-

On APRIL 20th JAN CROYDAN is leading a DAY WALK

BORONIA to SASSAFRAS

ROUTE:- Through Basin up to Mt. Dandenong and Olinda and along to Sassafras, catching bus back to Ferntree Gully - 10 miles.

8.55am train - Flinders Street

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3-DAY WALKING TRIP - APRIL 25-27 (ANZAC DAY WEEKEND)

Yarra Glen via Dixon's Creek "GREENWOOD" via Toolangi "HAZELMONT" to HEALESVILLE.

As far as we know the usual 8.25am will be running but it will be wise to enquire at the Tourist Bureau when they have some definite information.

2nd Return ticket to HEALESVILLE

As this is the first planned Hostel trip for the year, it is likely to be booked out very quickly, so pay your deposit early and don't be disappointed.

REPORT ON PLANNED TRIPS

(The Hosteller - May 1947)

With no transport, the day walk between Boronia and Sassafras had to be cancelled but as soon as electric trains are running again, a date will be fixed.

Anzac Week-end - According to the 11 members who went out on this planned weekend, it was a great success and the damp on Anzac day only added to the fun. They soon dried off by the huge fire at "The Greenwood." Over at "Clifton Farm," more hostellers enacted the same scene.

TRIPS TO COME

The weekend May 31st-June 1st is still the Clifton Farm walk, to be led by Gwen Owen. 8.25am train to Yarra Glen - follow the blazed trail to the Hostel - back on Sunday to Hurstbridge, via Bald Spur.

No trip has been planned for King's Birthday weekend, as most of the Hostels are being booked up by private parties.

Mt Hotham Labour Day weekend

The YHA Bushwalking Labour Day Long Weekend at Mt Hotham was a great success, with 30 bushwalkers coming along to experience great walking and superb alpine views in perfect weather.

We stayed at the Jalanga Ski Club lodge, which gave us a more than comfortable base to start our adventures from, and with the company of our hosts Keith & Barbara who passed on a great knowledge and love of the area.

Day one saw us head out across the Razorback to the iconic peak of Mt Feathertop, with many walkers (25) making their first ascension of this classic Victorian peak over a long and more than warm day.



Setting out along the Razorback (photo: Stephen Smith)

Day two saw our second walk over Mt Loch to the seldom visited and sometimes hard to find Spargos Hut where we enjoyed a long relaxing lunch with not a cloud to be seen, visiting Charles Derrick Hut on the return journey.

Sunday night saw us all get together for a fun night of trivia organised by Louise Reynolds, with our President David Sisson again being part of the winning team. Clearly this man must be stopped in the future from winning any more trivia competitions, possibly to the detriment of his health, only because he chose to gloat that he had never lost before.



Enjoying the view from Mt Tabletop

After our brainstorming night and maybe a little too much wine, our final day saw us head out to Mt Tabletop with great views, followed with a café fix at Dinner Plain before our return to Melbourne.

Andrew Stevenson

Review: Great Ocean Walk



Campsite with a view, Johanna Beach (photo: Paul Gottlieb) (photo: Paul Gottlieb)

The 91km Great Ocean Walk (GOW) traverses the Otways coast from Apollo Bay to Glenample Homestead. Over three weekends the club recently covered the full length of the GOW. Each trip was well-attended, but only Paul Gottlieb and Narelle Trotman went on all three. How great is the Great Ocean Walk? - Paul gives his verdict.

The Route Some sections of the GOW are newly constructed tracks, however much of it uses well established walking tracks or roads. Some of the 4WD tracks have been closed to vehicles but unfortunately a lot of the walk is on gravel roads shared with the local traffic. There is scope to improve the walk by removing these road sections and creating walking tracks closer to the ocean. It is disappointing that only 5% of the walk is on the beach itself and that less than half the walk has coastal views. Let's hope that the Great Ocean Walk is a work in progress and that as further funding becomes available, more scenic sections will be created.

Highlights

- Marengo-Elliot Ridge; walking along beach and rocks
- The Gables Lookout-Devils Kitchen Campsite; exploring the anchors on Wreck Beach
- Princetown to Glenample Homestead; excellent views approaching the 12 Apostles.
- Elliot Ridge to Blanket Bay; walking along old 4WD tracks in the Otway forest.
- Spectacular coastal views near Castle Cove.

Campsites Most of the campsites are well setup with tank water, toilets and a communal shelter. The water was fine on all three sections, despite the warnings not to drink it (more on that next issue). The best campsites for views were Ryans Den and Johanna Beach, the best for swimming was Blanket Bay. The other campsites did not have any views (except for the loo at Devils Kitchen - which was great) and were not close to the beach.

Verdict I would not recommend doing the complete walk from beginning to end due to the many kilometres of road walking. Instead, pick and chose the best sections and complete them as day walks. This also avoids the \$15-20 per night fees for the 'walkers' campsites.

New Committee Members

Most of the main office-bearers remain unchanged following this year's AGM. Beginning a second year in their current positions are David Sisson (President), Cynthia Bell (Treasurer), Paul Gottliebsen (Weekend Walks Secretary), Sing Wong (Sunday Walks) and Andrew Stevenson (Social Secretary). Hooi-Soon Khoo has taken over as Secretary from Stuart Hanham who along with Catherine Koh (Clubnights) has decided to take a break from committee; thanks to both Stuart and Catherine for their work over the past 2-3 years. Two new faces join the committee, Jane Bateson and Martin Cousins; here they describe some of their bushwalking experiences and what ideas they have to further improve the club.

Jane Bateson

How long have you been with YHA bushwalking? Just over three years, since the start of 2004. I've always enjoyed bushwalking and wanted to get back into it; a friend already walking with YHA recommended it to me.



Favourite walk so far? Butcher Country (April 2005); a beautiful area (now sadly burnt out), challenging off-track sections, and moments of excitement to get the adrenaline going such as walking in the dark!

Overseas, a trek in Patagonia. It had the most amazing glacial lakes. Hiking in 160km winds, watching glaciers break off into a lake were memorable enough, but the highlight was getting up at 3am and walking to "The Tower" to watch a cloudless sunrise.

Worst experience? Good Friday 2006 at Thredbo. Drenched to the bone by a torrential downpour in the afternoon, I arrived freezing at the nearest car park, however our transport was still 4km away in Thredbo. In order to fetch my car and ferry the rest back to the lodge, I hitched a ride back to Thredbo in a very expensive car, my filthy and soaking wet self on classy leather seats.

Favourite bush tucker? Sweet chilli and soy noodle soup with mushrooms, broccoli and zucchini.

What places haven't you been to that you'd most like to visit? In Australia, Southwest Cape and the South Coast track in Tasmania. Overseas, the Annapurna trek, Nepal.

What ideas do you have to improve the club? The current recipe has been fairly successful so far, I like the way it caters for a wide range of groups. I'd like to see a greater variety of Saturday walks, a good accommodated trip over the Christmas-New Year period and more opportunities to practise navigation.

Martin Cousins

How long have you been with YHA bushwalking? About three years, when I moved here from NSW. I wanted the chance to get out and see parts of Victoria, I heard about the club from a friend of a friend.



Favourite walk? Probably Mt Field; I've enjoyed the other Easter alpine trips (Thredbo & Dinner Plain) as well.

Not so pleasant experiences? A reconnaissance for one of my walks; it was raining steadily, we were pushing it to get back before dark and ended up covered in leeches. The walk itself went very well. In the Blue Mountains a couple of canyoning trips; on one I got covered in ash as the area had recently been affected by bushfire, on the other it was an after-dark finish after endless scrub-bashing.

Most interesting sight? Quolls running around our campsite at Walls of Jerusalem (Tas); I'm always fascinated by native animals.

How does bushwalking in Victoria compare with NSW? NSW has large expanses of National Park (eg the Wollemi-Blue Mountains area, Northern Rivers), whilst Victoria's NPs are smaller areas of remnant bushland. NSW has the greater spectacle, but Victoria's advantages are more variety, less distance to travel and easier accessibility. The weather here is cooler, less humid and drier (although that may just be the drought).

Favourite bush tucker? Packet cheese-cake; easy to whip up in a Trangia lid, a cold stream nearby is useful to set it.

Places you'd most like to visit? Parts of Tasmania – Maria Island sounds good, and the Arthur Range. Overseas North America – Rockies, Grand Canyon.

Ideas for improving the club? I'm keen to encourage minimum environmental impact – eg ensure car-pooling, recycle containers used on walks. Also, the leader's first-aid kits could do with replenishing.

Situations Vacant

Accommodated Trip Organisers

Does this sound tempting? – a weekend at a charming Victorian country town, staying in comfortable hostel or cabin accommodation. During the day go walking in a nearby national or state park, with time to visit the odd winery or other local attractions, whilst in the evening dine out at one of the local restaurants or hotels. If you answered “yes” to the opening question, you’re far from alone – accommodated weekends are usually very popular.

So why aren’t there more of them? There’s plenty of towns out there ready to be explored; Ballarat, Ararat, Heathcote, Benalla, Mansfield, Port Fairy, Traralgon, Marysville, Lakes Entrance, Castlemaine, Sorrento, Beechworth & Horsham to name a few.

Unfortunately a lack of volunteers to run these type of trips mean that instead of offering one every month, they’ve tended to be limited to one or two per programme, generally on the long weekends.

Accommodated trips are more of a challenge organisationally – the venue needs to be booked well in advance, a deposit may need to be paid, then comes the task of promoting it and getting confirmed bookings well ahead of the actual date. Finally comes the matter of leading the walks. Maybe if the responsibilities were shared – one person to do the “night” work arranging accommodation and a dinner venue, while another concentrates on the “day” task of leading the walks – a few more volunteers would come forward. There seem to be quite a few in the club with capable organising skills but not confident with navigation in unfamiliar areas, whilst there are also experienced walk leaders who like to be able to relax afterwards in the evenings.

If you have an idea for a weekend destination and are willing to organise accommodation but would like someone else to run the walks then contact the Weekend Walks Secretary with your proposal.

Bushdance Organiser

After organising the annual Bushdance for many many years, Ron Bell is retiring from this role. A volunteer (or group of volunteers) is needed to take over the reins if there is to be a bushdance in 2007 or future years.

Ron is willing to assist the new organisers, passing on his extensive knowledge and experience. The job is fairly straightforward – book a venue, book a band, sell the tickets and provide tea and coffee (OK maybe that’s a little too simplistic) – and the committee will provide helpers to work under the direction of the organisers.

If you don’t want to see this tradition end and are interested in helping out, please contact Ron (9338 4057) or another member of the YHA Bushwalking Committee.

Tips for Better Bushwalking

#7 A warm night’s sleep

The arrival of autumn brings more pleasant daytime temperatures however frosty nights also start to become common, often leading campers to question the adequacy of their sleeping bag. No sleeping bag is ideal for all conditions, however before deciding you need to buy a new one, here are some tips to get the most warmth out of the one you have.



★ Take your sleeping bag out of its stuff-sack as soon as you have your tent set up in order to allow the down plenty of time to uncompress. Shake it in order to evenly distribute the insulation. When not in use on a walk, make sure it is stored uncompressed as well.

★ If you are in a tent, a lot of heat is lost into the ground, so a thick insulating mat is important. Raincoats, overtrousers (if they are dry) can also be placed under the mat to provide additional insulation.

★ If you are cold, or it is likely to be a cool night, wear a beanie to bed...however a hat should be the extent of the extra clothing you wear. Don’t put on fleeces, down jackets – they are more effectively used as covers on top of the sleeping bag. A set of thermals and socks should be all you need to wear inside the sleeping bag.

★ A sleeping sheet, particularly a silk one can add an extra 1-2 degrees to the rating of a sleeping bag. Its other purpose of protecting a bag from soiling will also prolong the effectiveness of the insulation.

★ If the sleeping bag has been used a fair bit, washing in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions will revitalise the insulation.

★ If you’ve got a sturdy water container such as a Sig bottle, use it as a hot water bottle (use a sock as a cover) inside the sleeping bag.

★ Above all, remember that the sleeping bag is the most critical item of equipment to keep dry – once wet it loses its insulating properties. Ensure it is kept securely waterproofed in your pack and if your tent is prone to condensation or a leaky floor, use your waterproof clothing to protect the bag from directly contacting wet surfaces.

Sleep tight!

They took it on the chin

No one is perfect and even the most experienced walkers forget rules and make mistakes, while new walkers are ignorant of rules, regulations and bush-walking ethics. Yes, it sounds very serious, and indeed, it is.

As an experienced bush-walker I was surprised and dismayed to find out I had made so many mistakes on that particular walk. I had the excuse that I had only slept three hours the night before but even that didn't justify my errors.

According to the weather bureau the day was going to be fine therefore, even though the sky was full of clouds, I decided in my semi-awake state, to lighten the burden of my pack and not to put in a change of socks and a heavy jumper.

When we reached our destination and started walking, the sky turned cloudier and the wind became very cold. We were walking in lovely bush brightened by flowering wattles, on a track bordered by old water-channels. We walked uphill for quite a while admiring the bush and chatting away. As we all know what goes up must come down and eventually we had to walk down the hill. At the bottom of the hill a creek was running swiftly over polished, smooth stones. To reach the opposite hill we had no choice but to cross the creek.

Naturally, we looked for an easy passage and found it too, but nothing is ever as easy as it looks. Inexperienced bush-walkers as well as experienced ones should keep that in their minds and act accordingly. I was half-awake but that didn't justify the cavalier way in which I approached the creek crossing. In a nonchalant way, the dangerous I know-it-all, I'm-experienced way, I miscalculated the length of my legs in relation to the jump I had to take from the last stone in the creek-bed to the other side...and slipped. I was quick-witted enough to grab a branch of the tree overhanging the water near me and was able to steady and balance myself with one leg on the shore and one leg in the running water. I tested the strength of the branch to make sure it was strong enough and, although my wet leg and waterlogged boot weighed me down, was able to pull myself with both hands onto the other side. There had been two nice men on the other side of the creek offering help with their outstretched arms but I, in my vanity and pride, had refused it. Pride is a good thing because it makes people try their best but, at times, it is a far better option to be humble and accept help. Hubris will catch up with you. There I was walking with one wet and cold leg and one water-logged boot weighing one side of me down and no lack of funny remarks from some smart people, such as "Why did you put boots of different color on this morning?!".

Going up this hill, I learned my second lesson of the day: long nails are not a good idea. While I was grabbing on to rocks and boulders and hanging on to them, I was breaking and scraping a few nails. If your nails are broken and scraped, just about everything will catch on them and this gathering of small foreign bodies can be quite unpleasant, at least, I find it uncomfortable and irritating. John Belfio

came to the rescue. John the Great, who knows a lot about bush-tucker and survival tactics, picked up a smooth stone, handed it to me and instructed me to use it as a nail-file. I did and to this day, I think using a stone is better than using a nail-file.

John is a never-ending source of information and one day someone will have to write down all the bush-knowledge he possesses.

There were four young people on their first bush-walk with us. They were hanging on to branches and letting them whip back without paying attention to whom was following them. Even though Stuart was walking at what one would consider a safe distance behind the chattering foursome, he was hit on the face by a long branch that had been used as a steadying agent and then let spring back unchecked. The whack was so strong he almost lost his balance. It took him a little while to regain his breath and recuperate from the sudden, sharp pain. He had been hit on the forehead (that had been scratched), on two spots on the cheeks where later a bruise appeared, on the mouth, and the inside of his lip was bleeding. Stuart is an experienced walker and a gentleman and did not utter an unpleasant word against the four culprits or complained about the pain. The foursome was quite surprised by their innocent enough action and apologized. That was the third lesson of that day: bush walking is, like any other craft, something that takes time to learn. Therefore, new walkers should be aware of what they do and think about the consequences of their actions. It makes sense that if you grab a branch and hold on to it strongly to help yourself forward, the branch will bend forward with you and then it will straighten itself, bounce back and hit the person walking behind you.

At the end of the walk, because I didn't have a pair of spare socks to change into, I couldn't put on my dry shoes and had to sit in the car all the way back to Melbourne with a still very wet leg and foot. Fortunately, the driver did not mind.

On the way back we decided to stop at Malmsbury for afternoon-tea. In the car we were warm because the heating had been put on, but when we got out and walked to the bakery (a longish way because the Bakery is very popular for its pies made with local produce and its cakes so the street was lined up with parked cars) it was very cold (six degrees!) and windy. The raincoat I had put over my light top wasn't warm enough and I bitterly regretted not having packed in my heavier jumper or my anorak. Moral: there are good reasons for rules and recommendations. Bush-walking rules state that a walker should carry a spare set of clothes, a raincoat and a warm anorak, gloves and a hat, just in case of mishaps. Bush-etiquette, the unspoken rules, suggests that a walker should be aware of his fellow walkers and of the consequences his/her actions will have on them.

Stuart never complained or fussed about the accident caused by unawareness and ignorance: I accepted my mistakes and was reminded that rules are there for a reason. Both of us took it on the chin.

Vanna Walsh

Embarrassing Moments in the Bush

Getting lost, getting caught short, sex, nudity and alcohol all feature in these cautionary tales of embarrassment in the outdoors contributed by our members.

It sounded an appealing summer Sunday walk, a hike along the coast between Mornington and Frankston. Being a fairly warm day, we passed a few beachgoers who all seemed a bit bemused that anyone would want to walk rather than just lie on the beach sunbaking. Skirting around a cliff face we came upon a long stretch of sandy beach with quite a large crowd of mostly middle-aged men on it. It didn't take long to realise that none of them were wearing Speedos – yes folks, our leader had plotted a course that took us through Sunnyside nude beach! He seemed taken by surprise as well – I never found out whether he hadn't surveyed the walk at all, or had checked it out during a cooler season. There was no inland track to bypass the beach – difficult access is usually a feature of these sort of places – so we had no option but to file past the hundreds of naked bodies.

Everyone huddled close together, heads down staring awkwardly at the patch of ground just in front of their boots as they trudged along about a kilometre stretch of sand. John Howard and George Bush could have been sunning themselves on the beach that day and none of the group would have noticed. No-one except me that is. I was at the back, about a hundred metres behind the main group. To relieve my embarrassment I stripped off, until I was wearing nothing but a hat and a daypack, and followed at a discreet distance.

One of the club's regular walkers had been banging on for a few years about wanting to walk in the buff but hadn't attracted any followers to his cause, so unexpectedly I had the distinction of being YHA's first nude Sunday walker. There were about two dozen in the group, but as they were staring so fixatedly at their boots, too embarrassed to steal even a sideways glance let alone look behind, none of them realised what I'd done. The beach ended at another rocky headland, which the group stepped around and out of sight. I stopped, got dressed then quickly caught up and rejoined them.

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As the leader, in arranging a car-shuffle, I placed the cars at the bottom of a spur the walk was planned to finish on. We descended the planned spur only to find the cars weren't waiting for us at the end. I'd placed them at the base of the next spur further around, so we had to walk an extra five kilometres.

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On a Sunday walk, I didn't take the opportunity to go to the toilet at the picnic ground where we had lunch. The urge hit me later in the afternoon. I tried to hold on until we reached the facilities at the end of the walk, particularly as I didn't have any toilet paper, but I was eventually forced to swallow my pride and borrow a roll. To further complicate matters, there was a large group of us and by then we weren't in the bush but walking along a country road. Nearly forty people filed past, unaware that I was squatting behind a bush barely a few metres away.

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I once made some home-made ski gear. It seemed like a good idea at the time, but after one of the club's resident gear freaks spotted them in my car and tried to get a closer look, I was too embarrassed to take them out and use them.

Snow shoes: Old 20l plastic sheep-drench containers with the end chopped off. For straps I used the seat-belts ripped out from an old Dodge

X-C skis: Had a pair of bargain 2.5m downhill skis which I converted to cross-country by bolting on studs cut off from some old football boots.

Ice-axe: Ordinary axe-handle with the leaf-spring from an old car.

The only unorthodox gear I did actually use was a pair of diving boots for walking up the summit of Mt Feathertop.

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Needing a loo stop, I headed into the bush a long way from the track the group was on. Either the track followed a curved path or I did, as despite my lengthy wandering, I ended up separated from it by just a few metres. I didn't realise this at the time I chose my spot-to-squat, but it became all too apparent when someone sprung me.

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Overnight walks are pretty social occasions, so on a trip to Wilsons Promontory I took a bottle of red wine to share with the group. No-one else wanted any, as they had their own. I couldn't let it go to waste so I drank it all myself. It had been a hot day, so I was fairly dehydrated; next morning I woke up with my worst ever hangover. I certainly learnt a lesson that weekend, which is to share with others whether they like it or not.

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I was on a YHA weekend bushwalk with a girl I'd only just started going out with. The group had set up camp then headed off on a day walk. The route back passed a swimming hole, ten minutes or so from the actual campsite. Everyone had a dip, but despite the cool water my girlfriend and I were still hot and had the urge to be alone together. As the others prepared to head back to the tents, I told them I wanted to swim for a bit longer and would follow on later.

Alone at last, the gently flowing river, dappled light through the trees, scent of eucalyptus in the warm afternoon air and occasional birdsong all set the mood for an almighty fuckfest. As we moved into starting position, there came the first sign of a horde of onlookers also wanting a piece of the action. No, it wasn't other people that ruined the moment but March flies. Dozens of the bastards swarmed around and kept biting me on the bum as I attempted to get down to business. It must have been our phero-whatsits that got 'em going as they hadn't been anywhere near this ferocious earlier on. Not having any Aeroguard handy gave new meaning to "unprotected sex". The persistent distractions made it difficult to maintain my

(cont'd overleaf)

Embarrassing Moments (cont'd from p7)

concentration, so after only a few minutes we gave up and abandoned proceedings.

Hurriedly dressing, we wandered back to the campsite, feigning an air of innocence so that no-one would suspect what had been going on. It didn't seem to work however; I got the impression people were glancing curiously at me, trying to hide a few grins. I was sure no-one had witnessed us, and nearly convinced myself the funny looks were all in my imagination when upon arriving back at the tent, I realised that my shorts were on back-to-front.

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From our campsite in Little Desert, I headed off for a toilet break after dark without taking a torch. When it came time to return to camp, I couldn't find my way back. I was too embarrassed to yell out to anyone, instead I spent 10-15 minutes trying to locate the campsite. Eventually I spotted some torches and headed towards them.

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In places like Tasmania and New Zealand that receive regular heavy rainfall, tracks are perpetually wet and muddy. Some people manage to finish such walks with spotless gaiters, but they aren't proper bushwalkers, as stepping around the edge of a bog only enlarges it for those that follow. I fancied myself as an expert in reading the signs that indicated the depth of a bog, such as if rocks or branches are visible you won't sink above your boots. This enabled me to make a point of sloshing through the mud, judiciously sidestepping only where it looked like being closer to knee than ankle-deep. Hence when I saw leaves and twigs floating on the surface of a muddy patch I stepped confidently into it. Needless to say it came as a surprise to find myself submerged almost up to the waist, with both feet firmly entrenched. It wasn't quicksand or anything so I didn't sink further, but getting out was a very slow process, like wading in honey. The rest of the group were very concerned, and once they'd finished laughing and taking pictures of my predicament, I was offered a branch to assist in pulling myself out.



You should have seen the deep end! (photo: SimonWalliss)

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As the whip, I became separated from the rest of the group and was unable to find them again. I ended up having to ring the club's emergency contact in Melbourne in order to be put back in touch with the leader and obtain directions on rejoining them.

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One of the irritations of travelling overseas is having to pay to use public toilets in many countries, whilst at home "spending a penny" is generally free. Spare a thought then for the person whose pit stop in the bush turned out to be one of the most expensive toilet breaks in history. Things started straightforwardly enough – a brief diversion behind some trees several metres from the track before rejoining the group. A few minutes later, the lack of a rhythmic tap-tap-tap alerted him that his walking pole was missing. He ran back to where he thought he'd stopped, only it wasn't easy to recognise again - clumps of trees tend to look alike. Searching the area proved fruitless and the group was getting further ahead. As the trip was a return walk there would be opportunity for a further search on the way back, so he decided enough was enough for now and ran back to the group. A new and expensive digital camera had started out clipped to his daypack, but the clip wasn't up to the excitement of pounding along the rocky path and relinquished its grip somewhere along the way. Subsequent searches found no trace of the walking pole or the camera – replacing them left little change out of a thousand dollars.

Caption Competition Winner



Winding down at the end of another 'better than sex' YHA Bushwalk

Congratulations to Tim Brooks

Another favourite was 'Susan' usually enjoyed picking up men on her mountain climbing adventures but this one didn't fit in her pack! from Carol Challis

For Sale

Macpac backpack, Cascade size 3 large, 890tr, Quantum harness very comfortable and stable. Grey in colour. Used on one overseas trip, good condition, great for long hikes.....

\$380 ono - Jason 0419 530 528

Bush Recipes

This set of recipes is based around pre-flavoured packets of pasta or couscous, making them very easy to pack and later prepare. Nothing is superior to adding your own mix of herbs and spices, and some cocktails of chemicals used in packaged flavourings border on the disgusting, however the ones featured here are quite acceptable.

First up are a couple of couscous-based dishes. Like pasta, couscous is also made from durum wheat, but is even quicker and easier to prepare. It goes well with both Mediterranean flavours and Middle Eastern/Asian spices, and comes out well ahead of rice in terms of ease of preparation in the bush.

The consensus among bushwalkers seems to be that the 'Ainsley Harriott' range of couscous is particularly good. The addition of a few simple ingredients make for quick meals tempting enough to also use at home.

Pepperoni Couscous



Serving size: 1 medium portion

Ingredients

1 sachet (100g) Ainsley Harriot "Citrus kick" couscous
70g Pepperoni
50-60g Snow peas

Method

1. Chop pepperoni into 1cm cubes\
2. Slice snow-peas into bite-size pieces
3. Heat saucepan, fry pepperoni for 1-2 mins until lightly browned (it will release its own fat for frying, however a tbsp olive oil can be added if preferred.)
4. Add 200ml water, bring to boil
5. Add snow peas, simmer for 1 minute
6. Add couscous, stir in pepperoni cook as per instructions on packet.

Recipe contributed by Stephen Smith

Tip: Adding a splash of olive oil or a knob butter to couscous enhances the flavour and provides additional calories (remember when you are out pack-carrying, you want food with energy). Olive oil is best carried in a small bottle (eg nalgene) with a secure screw-top lid. Butter can mixed in simply by chopping it into small cubes and adding to the olive oil.

Spicy Tuna Couscous

Serving size: 1 medium portion

Ingredients

1 sachet (100g) Ainsley Harriot "Spice Sensation" couscous
1 sachet (100g) Tuna with sundried tomatoes
1 tbsp Chilli peanuts
½ cup Dried Chinese mushrooms
2 tsp Crispy fried shallots

Method

1. Soak mushrooms in boiling water (200ml) until softened
2. Add couscous, cook as per instructions on packet
3. Add tuna, peanuts, stir in and heat through
4. Add crispy shallots just before serving

Recipe contributed by Lisa Milne

Pasta & Bacon

Serving size: 1 medium portion

Ingredients

1 packet Continental Italian cheese & black pepper pasta
4-5 Mushrooms (sliced)
3-4 rashers Bacon (rindless, short-cut)

Method

1. Trim fat from bacon, cut into strips
2. Add all ingredients to 1½ cups boiling water, stirring continuously
3. Simmer for 8-10 minutes, then let stand for 2 mins.

Optional extras include a dash of soy sauce or a chopped garlic clove.



Dig In! - recipe contributed by John Sloan

The Tale of Lenny the Adventurous Leech (part 3 - Sunday lunch)

The story so far: *Lenny had an idyllic existence dining out at leisure on the Overland Track. The 21st century however is when everything changes, and for Lenny this happened on the day he stowed away inside a muddy gaiter and ended up far far away in a strange bog, surrounded by the "Upper Yarra Mob", a belligerent group of leeches demanding to know what he was doing in their patch...*

Lenny recounted his story as accurately as he could, but his audience seemed far from convinced. "You say you come from a place where you just helped yourself to feed from a plentiful supply of two-legs that passed by daily?"

"Yes" replied Lenny.

"And you didn't have any problems?"

"What do you mean?"

"Did the two-legs mind you feeding from them without asking?"

"A lot of the local two-legs didn't mind at all and let us ride along for as long as we liked. The ones from outside of the area weren't quite as welcoming and flicked us off when they caught us"

"Flicked you off – that's all? Just flicked you off?"

"Yes, just flicked us off".

A roar of laughter erupted from around the bog. "I've never heard anything so far-fetched – and yet he seems truthful enough about his story. I say we put him to the test – let's see if he's such an accomplished diner as he claims"

Lenny's task seemed simple enough – all he had to do latch onto one of the local two-legs and grab a bite to eat. "I feel I should warn you – they only pass by occasionally (round here they're known as 'Sunday lunch'), and don't take kindly to uninvited guests."

Days passed without any sign of a two-leg. Everyone seemed to make do with local wallabies, possums and the occasional wild dog – OK to subsist on, but nowhere near the fine fare that Lenny was used to. Finally they heard the unmistakable footfalls that signalled a group of two-legs approaching. Lenny was led to a spot where two-legs were known to often pause for a while. Sure enough as the first few arrived they stopped and waited, as if unsure where to go next. "No backing out now" said Tweedy. "Go through with this and one way or another you'll be remembered as a hero".

Lenny couldn't understand what all the fuss was about. It seemed the easiest and most natural thing in the world to crawl onto a boot and up to the ankle. Of course they were wearing socks – even back home very few two-legs went barefoot. This one had even tucked its trousers into the socks, so no chance of tapping into a firm piece of calf, but the sock itself didn't present much of a barrier. Working his mouth through the woollen fibres, he found his way to the skin, made an opening and began to slurp away. As the warm blood seeped into him, the sublime taste brought back memories of home. Oh how he'd missed these exquisite flavours. This one was a female two-leg; he could tell by the different scents they applied to their bodies. None of the others seemed to be joining in. Lenny settled back, blissfully savouring the fondly remembered taste that he'd missed for so long.

Suddenly the air around him erupted in a piercing shriek. If Lenny had eardrums they would have been shattered, but even through his skin he sensed the hostile vibrations. "I guess I've been spotted and am about to get the flick" Lenny thought, just before realising he was being squeezed in half. The scream wasn't coming from the two-leg he was on – not initially anyway. Noises which he couldn't comprehend filled the air around him. "*Don't pull at it Sharon – I've got something that will get rid of it*". "*For god's sake hurry up Sarah, this thing's still attacking me*". "*Found it – spray on a bit of this*". Lenny was wracked by a searing pain that penetrated every pore of his skin. He withdrew his mouth from the sock and began to pull away. "*It's let go – you can grab it now*". Lenny was once again crushed, then stretched many times his normal length. He was fairly elastic, but much more and even he would reach breaking point. Suddenly he found himself back in the mud, but before he was able to feel relieved, he was pounded and pounded and pounded. Had it been hard ground he would have been permanently flattened, but the soil was soft enough for him to be pushed in and buried. "*I can't see it, I'm sure I must have squashed it by now. Let's get moving – just wait till I catch up with the turtlebrain who said this area was safe to walk in*".

Lenny's skin was ruptured in many places, his insides were oozing out, and whatever he'd been sprayed with had left him blistered and struggling to breathe, but he was able to move – just. Agonisingly he managed to drag himself into the thick grass nearby before collapsing. Being a simple organism, the few drops of blood Lenny had just obtained were enough to sustain him over a difficult healing period of many weeks. He finally regained consciousness to find the others gathered around him. Eventually Tweedy spoke. "There's a fine line between bravery and foolhardiness Lenny – not sure which side of it you were on back there, but that was quite an effort. Still, you succeeded in feeding off a two-leg, which means you've passed the test to become part of our leechhood. You're obviously not lacking in strength or courage, but your technique leaves a bit to be desired – if you are to survive much longer around here, you need to learn some of the other ways in which a leech may prosper...." *(to be continued)*

Autumn-Winter Social Activities

	<p>Pig out on a 10-course Middle-Eastern banquet at St Kilda's popular Bedouin Kitchen restaurant on Friday 4 May. Enjoy good food and good company within a relaxing atmosphere. Numbers are limited to 20 so please book early (bookings close ANZAC Day). \$35 per person.</p> <p>Contact Louise Reynolds Ph: 9527 3514 E-mail: lourey@dodo.com.au</p>
	<p>Catch a ferry and visit Melbourne's Scienceworks museum and Planetarium at Spotswood on Saturday 12 May. Indulge your intellect and view the night skies all in one day.</p> <p>Contact: Andrew Stevenson Ph: 9530 3129 E-mail: svenlobster@yahoo.com.au</p>
	<p>Come along to Max's Restaurant and Bar in Melbourne on Friday 18 May for more food and drinks and then afterwards on to Pug Mahones for even more drinks. Please book early for this one.</p> <p>Contact John Sloan Ph: 9435 4965</p>

This winter there will be a further variety of social activities on offer for our members. Dates and times will be confirmed in the winter programme (early June).

	<p>We will visit the Melbourne Museum for the Great Wall of China exhibition</p>
	<p>Test our balance with Roller Skating</p>
	<p>And then an eerie tour of the Old Melbourne Gaol by candlelight, where you see Ned hanged nightly.</p> <p>Also, look out for the ever popular restaurant nights.</p>

Next Issue (Spring 2007) will be published with the programme at the beginning of September.

Feature articles will include:

- ★ Grumpy Old Bushwalkers – the more irritating aspects of bushwalking.
- ★ Safe to Drink? – When is it advisable to purify water in the bush before drinking.
- ★ Details of the upcoming Formal Dinner walk in Mt Cole state forest and trips to the Blue Mountains, New Zealand & the Western Arthurs.

If anyone has a planned walk, social event or clubnight activity between September-December that they would like to promote in a bit more detail (one or two paragraphs, with perhaps a photo), email them to yhabush@bigpond.com by August 17th.

Easter at Mt Field NP

With over 60 years of history, are there still worthwhile new destinations YHA Bushwalking can visit for major trips such as Easter? If the trip to Mt Field National Park is anything to go by, the answer is a very encouraging “yes”. The accommodation took several months to negotiate, not being confirmed until February, making it difficult to obtain relatively inexpensive airfares to Hobart. Unfortunately this discouraged quite a few from participating, but those who went got full value for money thanks to an unbelievable spell of fine and just as importantly calm weather. A variety of five-star day walks taking in picturesque tarns, historic lakeside huts and rocky peaks providing clear views to the major peaks of SW Tasmania made this a trip that deserves to become part of the regular itinerary every few years for an accommodated Easter, Cup Weekend or even Christmas-New Year walk. Thanks to David and Simon for their efforts in organising this very successful trip.



Twilight Tarn hut

The theme of the first day's walk was lakes, a circuit taking in the variety of them which covered the mid-level plateau of Tarn Shelf. Lake Newdegate and Twilight Tarn also had some picturesque huts; the latter was particularly interesting as it had been turned into a museum containing many relics from the 1930s, along with tales of how the pioneers would make the arduous journey up to Mt Field area then dress up in elegant eveningwear and go skating on the lake.



Following the track around Twisted Tarn

The next day was even better; an early start was required in order to reach Mt Field West on the outer edge of the alpine area. Getting there required going up and over the mass of boulders that formed the Rodway range – this wasn't a trip for anyone nervous about rock-hopping! We made it however for lunch on the summit, and superb views (morning cloud having cleared by then) on the return journey, arriving back just before sunset.

The other major highlight was Mt Mawson. This wasn't a walk described in current guidebooks, and had no track marked on the map. It was relatively late (2.30pm) when we set off, having done the Mt Field East circuit in the morning. It took nearly two hours to reach the summit (another rock-hop), but fortunately the section across Mawson Plateau to the top of the ski-runs had a foot-pad that we found without much difficulty and was fairly easy going. Conditions on Mt Mawson were the clearest of the weekend, allowing the distant but distinctive shape of Federation Peak to be identified on the horizon.



The final approach to Mt Field West

The accommodation was comfortable and the lack of facilities such as hot showers wasn't any great hardship; the location was certainly 4-star. Someone was brave enough to bathe in the lake (frightening away the platypuses), but most heated up a bowl of water and had a reasonably cleansing wash in the hut. Having a large number sharing a single dormitory resulted in the usual problem of nocturnal noises driving a few out into the lounge area to sleep (apart from a typical snorefest, there was some 3am “opera” and sleeptalking!) It was fortunate in some ways that the trip wasn't full, as fitting thirty into the hut would have made it go from comfortable to crowded; there are one or two fancier lodges which we may be able to use next time.



The summit of Mt Mawson (photo: Andrew Stevenson)