



New President's Welcome

A message from YHA Bushwalking's new president Andrew Stevenson.



Hello to all new and regular walkers with YHA bushwalking. I hope you are all looking forward to many a great walk this year.

With the tragedy of the February bushfires, I know that all our hearts go out to all those people affected by them and look forward for the club being able to return to the affected areas as soon as possible and support their local communities.

I am looking forward to my new role as president of YHA Bushwalking for the coming year and with the new committee we hope to be able to encourage new and regular walkers to get out there and enjoy the great outdoors.

Firstly I would like to thank the past committee for guiding the club to where it is today especially to outgoing president David Sisson, Club night Coordinator Jane Bateson and Weekend Walks Coordinator Paul Gottlieb for organizing a diverse program in 2008 and their continued support as general committee for 2009. People like these who donate their time and effort for free are a great asset to the club so that we can all have fun in the outdoors.

I would also like to give a warm welcome to the new committee members Bruce Meincke and John Sloan.

Going forward for the next twelve months with the support of the committee and club members I hope to see more people getting involved in doing overnight pack carries. To achieve this there will be information club nights, more beginner pack carries and accommodated pack carries to help ease the load for first timers.

(continued page 2)



Welcome to winter; it's approaching fast, however the first snow walk of 2009 has already happened at Mt Buller back in April.

More information about the rest of the year's planned snow walks and other winter trips is listed on pages 2 & 3

Also in this Issue

- ❖ **Winter walk previews** - Queens Birthday trips to Ballarat & Little Desert; extended walks to Gammon Ranges, Overland Track & New Zealand + selected snow & Sunday walks (p2-3)
- ❖ **Not Quite a Piece of Cake** – A tale of unjust desserts (p4)
- ❖ **Trip Report: Cape Liptrap** - A surprisingly rarely visited coastline (p5)
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- ❖ **Tips for Better Bushwalking-** Just put your lips together & blow (p13)
- ❖ **The Perils of Big Screen Bushwalking** – Why heading into the outdoors always seems to spell trouble in the movies (p14-15)

YHA Bushwalking Photo Competition

For the first time we have a photo competition exclusively for YHA Bushwalkers, with total prizes worth over \$700.

Entry is free, the main condition is that the photo must be from a YHA Bushwalk between November 2008-Nov 2009.

Full details and conditions of entry – page 16



YHA BUSHWALKING COMMITTEE 2009/10

President	Andrew Stevenson
Secretary/Website	Hooi-Soon Khoo
Treasurer	Cynthia Bell
Walks Sec. (Weekends)	Ken Sussex
Walks Sec (Sundays)	Hooi-Soon Khoo
Clubnight Coordinator	
Social Secretary	Sarah Kim
Search & Rescue Rep	
General committee	Tamie Dick
	Paul Gottliebson
	Tom Lun
	Bruce Meincke
	David Sisson
	John Sloan

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@biapond.com

Deadline for the next issue is Sept 5th 2009.

YETI ONLINE

"Yeti" has its own website www.yhabush.org.au/Yeti 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 a Monday night once a month at the Redback Hotel, 75 Flemington Rd, North Melbourne, from 8pm to approx. 9:30pm., or meet at 7pm for dinner beforehand. 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:

- Tom Lun
- Bruce Meincke
- Ken Orr
- Sharon Saing
- David Sale
- Andrew Stevenson
- Ken Sussex

New President's Welcome (cont'd from page 1)

Also we hope to improve the quality of our club nights with more interesting and diverse presentations and promote our walks and extended trips on these nights.

There have been a number of trips and events that were regulars on the YHA Bushwalking program in the past, such as the formal dinner walk and Cope Hut working bees that I hope to see return soon as possible, as they are immensely rewarding and great fun.

With the above items in mind I would also like to hear from our club members of what you would like to see happen to make our club better and more enjoyable. To do this I invite all club members and regular walkers to contact me via e-mail with your ideas or any concerns that you have for the future of the club; all correspondence will be treated strictly as confidential. This is your opportunity to have a say in the future direction of the club. Please contact Andrew Stevenson

E-mail: svenlobster@yahoo.com.au

Cheers Andrew

Winter Walk Previews

Mornington Peninsula National Park (Sunday June 28th)

A medium grade bushwalk along a section of the Two Bays Trail and Greens Bush through eucalypt forest mixed with spectacular stands of grass-trees, picturesque fern gullies and open grasslands.

Enquiries: Andrew Stevenson 9830 7622

Mt Dandenong (Sunday July 5th)

This is a circuit walk of 15km in part of the Dandenong Ranges. There are some steeper sections, some of which can be muddy. Total climbing is 600m.

The walk begins at the Kalorama lookout car park which has sweeping views to the east over the Silvan reservoir and surrounding forest. The walk initially follows a narrow track from the car park area below the ridge towards Mt. Dandenong. It soon opens up to a larger forest track and a 1938 plane crash site is passed along the way. The lunch spot is the former Doongalla homestead, with the return trip via another forest track lower down the hill.

Grading: Medium-plus Enquiries: David Sale 0407 667 624

Mt Baw Baw snow-shoe walk (Sat July 25th)

A snow-shoe walk from Baw Baw village to Mt St Gwinear, following the cross-country ski-trails and parts of the Alpine Walking Track. There could also be a little bit of off-trail snow bashing! To keep the walk safe and manageable, the number of participants is limited to 12 so book early.

Grading: Medium-plus Enquiries: Andrew Stevenson 9830 7622

Mt Feathertop snow-camp (July 18-19th)

The tradition continues. This is a good introduction to snow-camping, and in fact participants won't be allowed on the harder Mt Bogong or Mt Buller snow-walks unless they have done this one first (although in-turn, anyone attempting a snow-camp should have done a few normal overnight walks first). The walk up Bungalow Spur is evenly graded and not too steep. The campsite by Federation Hut is sheltered, so you can get by without a four-season tent. The walk can be done with just boots and gaiters up to the hut, however an ice-axe or crampons/snow-shoes are recommended if the Mt Feathertop summit conditions are icy (it is possible to borrow some equipment if you let the leader know beforehand). If the weather is sunny, the climb and the views are magnificent.

Bruce will give a presentation on snow-camping at Clubnight July 8th.

Grading: Medium Enquiries: Bruce Meincke 9306 2428

Queens Birthday trips (June 6-8th)**Little Desert - pack-carry**

Despite its name Little Desert national park, 50km west of Horsham, doesn't feature vast sand dunes, but is instead covered by a variety of heathland vegetation and occasional stands of eucalypts. This two and a half-day hike will cover approximately 50km of the 'Desert Discovery Walk', a specially constructed walker-only track through the highlights of the park. For a bit more fun there'll be a few off-track sections as well, following a compass bearing to give an even greater experience of being in the heart of this original Wimmera environment.

This is an ideal walk for those who don't like steep hills, although the daily distance will be 15-21 km. Surface water is rare in Little Desert, however it won't be necessary to carry more than a couple of litres at a time, as there are tanks (and toilet + shelter) at the walker-only campsites on both nights.

Grading: Medium **Enquiries:** [Stephen Smith](mailto:Stephen.Smith@yha.org.au) 9387 6481

Ballarat : Sovereign Hill accommodation

Two accommodated trips have been organised for the Queens Birthday weekend. For those who missed out on a place last year, Sing Wong is re-running a trip staying at Ocean Grove while exploring Barwon Heads and the Bellarine Peninsula.

The second accommodated weekend has been organised by David Sale at Ballarat staying in the Sovereign Hill hostel. Several four-bed bunk rooms have been booked. These have shared facilities (including kitchen).

Several day walks are planned for the trip (these might change due to weather conditions, etc). The first is the Mt. Buangor lookout – a 11km circuit walk rated medium+. There is a 550 metre total climb with some steep and slippery sections. It is a semi-open forest walk with several lookouts along the way.

Day two is a 15km circuit walk in the Enfield forest. The walk is rated medium. This area is a very old gold mining area. Some evidence of this era is still visible. This area is also known for the large variety of orchids.

The last walk is the Mount Buninyong circuit walk (12km, medium). Buninyong was a former gold town that was soon overshadowed by Ballarat. This walk leaves from the town centre along the Wallaby Track (part of the Great Dividing Trail) to the extinct volcano of Mount Buninyong.

Enquiries: David Sale 0407 667 624

Extended Walks**Tongariro Northern Circuit, NZ (Sep 9-19th)**

A six-day pack carry in the volcano region of New Zealand's North Island. The main circuit is 50km, with side-trips planned to the summits of Mt Ngauruhoe & Mt Tongariro. Be equipped for climbing snow and ice-covered slopes; the intention of going in this season is to visit these volcanoes with their winter coat still present. The route won't be the full Tongariro circuit; sections requiring river crossings will be left out due to the difficulties likely to be experienced at this time of year. Accommodation will be in huts each night.

Grading: Hard **Enquiries:** Bruce Meincke 9306 2428

Gammon Ranges pack-carry (Aug 22-30th)

If you enjoy outback scenery and want to do a winter walk with mild temperatures, you'll love this trip. A dramatic maze of rocky peaks and breathtaking gorges, the Gammon Ranges are the northernmost section of the Flinders Ranges in South Australia.

The planned walk is a five day/four night pack carry exploring three major peaks (Mt John Roberts, Cleft Peak and Prow Point) with side-trips up a few of the chasms. Total distance, including side-trips is only 45km, but the terrain is rough and rocky. The route is based on the "Gammon Gorges" walk in John & Monica Chapmans' *Bushwalking in Australia*, but is subject to variation according to the available water supply at the time.

Participants need to have had prior pack-carrying experience and be comfortable with rocky terrain and rock scrambling (we won't be undertaking any serious climbing). Transport will be via car-pooling, allowing two days each way for the drive to and from Melbourne. If anyone can get a few extra days off (highly recommended), walks in other parts of the Flinders Ranges (Mt Remarkable & Wilpena Pound) will also be organised. Bookings must be confirmed by August 8th.

Grading: Med-hard **Enquiries:** [Stephen Smith](mailto:Stephen.Smith@yha.org.au) 9387 6481

Overland Track northern section (Aug 1-8th)

This winter's Overland Track walk isn't doing the full length to Lake St Clair. Instead it will start and finish at Cradle Mountain, only going as far south as Mt Ossa. This is for experienced walkers only; be prepared for bad weather and snow, but if fine weather graces even a couple of days in the vicinity of peaks such as Cradle Mountain, Barn Bluff or Ossa, the results will be truly spectacular.

Grading: Hard **Enquiries:** Bruce Meincke 9306 2428

Not Quite a Piece of Cake

Sharon Saing gets her unjust desserts

A “Cake Walk” could be a word misused to describe this particular walk. Most of us expected it to be cruising and easy as a piece of cake. It was certainly far from easy and predictable as the name suggested.

The first car shuffle started from Bacchus Marsh, and then another drive to Merrimu Reservoir, just on the outskirts of Bacchus Marsh for the final car pool that went until past noon. A group of us waited patiently for the drivers to arrive; we wondered how would we go on this walk? Will it be hard and will everyone survive?

Finally after 12.30 the walk began. Half an hour into it, steep hills confronted us and reality sunk in that it would be a brutal day with rugged terrain ahead. It was a dangerous move for a cake walk with a combination of hot and humid weather.

With half a day gone by, it was time for some sweets that everyone anxiously had been waiting for. Under the shaded trees with cool breeze we all raced to bring out a full range of cakes: homemade chocolate fudge, cheese cakes, lamingtons, dessert pies, tarts, vanilla slices and many more spread out in front of us to relax our tiring feet. After 30mins of indulging on the delicious desserts, we put our backpacks on feeling satisfied and refreshed. We recharged and felt that the tough section of the walk had finished.

We continued onwards for 1km and then came the battle. The climbing began again; moving forward was slow as the track just kept going uphill around the bend. We were exhausted and constantly needing water. After hours in this section and constantly crawling, we reached the top of the peak and felt on top of the world. We indulged ourselves a second time with the left-over pastries and chocolates. It was jubilation to reach this point although we were totally buggered and just sat there with our packs still on our backs. From where I sat, I could see the track ending, it was a huge relief. Or so it seemed...

After 10 minutes, we took off again knowing it was all downhill and we could now take some photos of the scenery. When we got to the bottom, immediately we had to climb back up again. The track continued this way for some distance – no more jubilation for a cake walk from this point! Every step we took, it felt another 10,000 steps to go, but we tried to forget how long it was going to take to the end of

the up-and-down hills. We focused on the view and the scenery to distract our exhausted bodies and overworked legs and backs. Meanwhile it got hotter and hotter every step of the way.

I kept count that this would be the last hill, until I finally lost count with my fingers and toes. It was starting to get dark, and there were no further rest stops except to wait for everyone to catch up. Some downhills were worse than the ups. Through the constant hills and slopes, our legs were aching right down to the toes. When I felt my knees aching, I found a stick to support myself from falling. The stick then broke and cramped my calf muscle; I was unable to move for almost 10 minutes



The fun (above) and not-so-fun (left) parts of the “Cake-Walk”

I roared in pain but no one could hear me. I tried to catch up to everyone and said to myself at least 30 more times that it will be over soon, only to be disappointed again and again around the next corner.

It was a mental challenge as well as physical, but none of us ever whinged or whined, we had to get to the end although no one could judge the distance or knew how long we had left to the end. Swearing was the way to describe the hills and we tried to stay positive as eventually it had to end. Physical toughness was definitely required on this cake walk; I think the leader may have had a different motivation!

Finally, it became reasonably flat. After getting used to the constant steep ridges, the walk went very quickly even though it seemed like forever. The soles of our feet were relieved for the first time. At the end of the day, it was an accomplishment for most of us. We got back to the cars just getting dark. Everyone was trashed and exhausted, but thrilled to have done it.

Although it wasn't the ‘piece of cake’ that everyone was expecting we all lived to tell the story. The 18kms of constant hills burnt off all the calories from the day's excessive chocolate and pastries consumption.

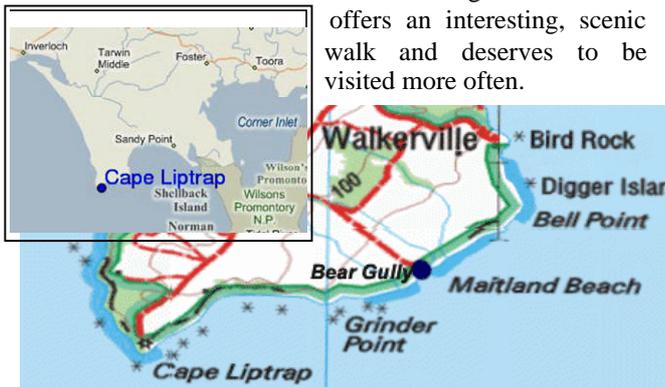
Trip Report - Cape Liptrap

A silver lining from this summer's bushfires was a trip to a surprisingly ignored section of Victoria's coast.

Cape Liptrap is a scenic undeveloped stretch of coastline only 200km from Melbourne, yet it hasn't been visited frequently for bushwalks. Aside from a cancelled trip in 2007, no club walks have been attempted there for well over a decade. Perhaps it is overlooked as being too far for a day walk yet overshadowed by the extremely popular Wilsons Promontory immediately to the south east.

Ken Sussex led a walk to Cape Liptrap in February; this only came about as a replacement for the originally planned Prom walk being called off due to the bushfire. The conclusion from those who went along is that the area

offers an interesting, scenic walk and deserves to be visited more often.



Away from the coast the area is generally flat farming country, but the coastal scenery is equal to the Prom – pristine white sandy beaches interspersed with steep cliffs, blowholes, mini-islands and lots of unusual rock formations. An advantage over the Prom is that no permits are needed and there is free vehicle-based camping at Bear Gully. Cape Liptrap is close enough to Melbourne not to require driving up on a Friday night, and is an ideal spot for a base-camp weekend (or even a formal dinner).

An easy car shuffle sets up two walks, Walkerville-Bear Gully and Bear Gully-Cape Liptrap. Walkerville (previously Waratah) was a bustling township up until the 1930s, producing quicklime in a series of kilns along the beachfront; nowadays it is just a few holiday homes. The walk from Walkerville South to Bear Gully is an easy one, only taking 2-3 hours, so it is recommended to spend an extra hour with a side-trip to Walkerville North, exploring the history of the place with a visit to the cemetery and preserved limeburning kilns.



Grinder Point can either be walked around or across

The second section, Bear Gully to Cape Liptrap has all the variety you could want in a coastal walk; beaches, boulder hopping, and cliff scrambling. Allow 4-5 hours, medium grade.



Ken takes a break about a kilometre from Cape Liptrap

Low tides are critical for the last kilometre (half-hour) to Cape Liptrap and the first few hundred metres from Walkerville, hence consultation of the tide charts is essential when planning the date and timing of these walks. Even at low tide the Cape Liptrap section could be treacherous with rough seas, so assign the best weather day to this walk; if conditions do appear to be dangerous, the final section can supposedly be bypassed by walking through the heathland above the cliffs, although this didn't look to be an easy option. Another alternative is simply to return along the beach to Bear Gully. Although Cape Liptrap is a highlight if you can reach it, Grinder Point and the beaches adjoining it are very scenic and still make the walk worthwhile.

The Bear Gully camping area was quite popular at the time we visited, although this may have been due to others like ourselves being unable to go to Wilsons Prom instead. Take water for the entire weekend; it was "Bare Gully" in February, but even if the creek is flowing it isn't recommended for drinking due to its mainly farmland catchment area. The campsite contains a toilet and fireplaces; camping isn't permitted on the beach, however it is only a two minute walk to a picnic table overlooking the beach with views across to Wilsons Promontory.

All up this is a very photogenic walk; the online version of Yeti features an extended gallery of pictures from Cape Liptrap.



The final climb up Cape Liptrap itself isn't as steep as it looks!

Mission: Conquer the Grampians (or part thereof)

Twenty-five intrepid hikers signed up for an adventure in the Grampians over the Easter period. It was an accommodated weekend, and the intention was to complete some of the more difficult or remote day walks in the area.

Mission 1: infiltrate the FORTRESS

The drive to the start of this walk was via a reasonably long drive over a dirt road. I was leading the convoy which gave me two advantages: the car wasn't covered in dust (at least the front half), and we saw some deer and lots of kangaroos.

The first difficulty was finding the start. It isn't marked on some of the newer maps, and wasn't even sign posted until 400m into the walk! But that didn't halt the mission.

The walk initially begins with a gentle stroll through some of the dry eucalypt forest. Soon there is a turn off for the Fortress with a warning sign indicating 'strenuous walking involved'. However, we refused to be intimidated.

From here, the walk continues with a reasonably constant ascent towards the Fortress. There are some fantastic views along the way, greatly assisted by clear and sunny conditions. Some of these locations gave a great view of the impressive fortress. Soon we arrived at the Fortress base.



The original intention had been to climb to the top of the Fortress. Unfortunately, time was against us and rather than be caught in the dark, it was decided to turn back. This gave us time to complete another short walk to the Manja Shelter to view some aboriginal art.

Mission 2: the Briggs Bluff-Mt. Difficult traverse

The original intention had been to tackle Mt. Difficult but this was considered (by me) to be too easy. Therefore, a more challenging Briggs Bluff to Mt. Difficult traverse walk was selected. (There was an option for people to return after Briggs Bluff but no-one took this up.)

The walk to Briggs Bluff begins with another warning of 'strenuous walking involved' (sign-posted at the start!). It consisted of a relatively steep and rugged ascent up to Briggs Bluff for a fantastic view. This made a great spot for morning tea.

The second part of mission consisted of following the track along the ridge to Mt. Difficult. There were periodic views along the way. In particular there was one campsite near a

cliff edge. It would have been tough to wake up in the morning to that view! Mt. Difficult gave another great view of the area. The descent proved to be quite technical; several places required rock scrambling or a good balance, or both. It also tested a few people's knees. However, all considered it a great walk (once they reached the end!).

Mission 3a: Scale the Chimney Pots

The Chimney Pots are located in a remote part of the Park. It is only 3 km, but the recommendation is to allow three hours. This sounded like a challenge so I made everyone do it.

The walk consists of a semi-circuit around a rock formation which includes a steep ascent. There is a short detour to a lookout which gives further views over the Grampians and beyond – this time looking west.

The descent took us through a protected and relatively lush (by Grampian standards) canyon. The older name for the Chimney Pots was 'The Temple', which was presumably due to the appearance of this canyon.

Mission 3b: Teddy Bear Gap Lookout

This was supposed to be an easy 8 km walk for the afternoon. It did include a moderate 100m ascent to the lookout. However, this felt much more after the previous two and a half days of walking. Although the view was good, it paled in comparison to the Chimney Pots walk.

Mission 4: Mt. Abrupt



After three days of easy walks, one would have thought that people would have been interested in one last small walk (450m climb) to a small hill (Mt. Abrupt) on the way home. Alas, there were only two die-hard walkers interested. We completed this mission in a relatively quick time, a good way to finish the long weekend.

Conclusion

All the walking missions were completed (more or less). However, the real mission was to give a group of people a great Easter holiday. On this basis, the trip was quite successful.

The unsuccessful part was the number people interested after the trip was already full. I would have liked to take everyone but this risks compromising manageability (and my sanity!) However, some of the walks weren't completed in their entirety, or have variations. Therefore, there will most likely be another excursion in the future.

David Sale

After the Fires

Once again bushfire devastation has affected a large number of popular bushwalks, this time the day walk areas close to Melbourne. Parks such as Kinglake and Cathedral Ranges are expected to remain closed for several months. Reopening is likely to occur in stages, with short tracks to popular visitor areas such as Wombelano falls being done first.

On a more positive note, some areas which were threatened by fires after Black Saturday weren't as widely affected as the publicity at the time may have suggested, so there is no need to avoid scheduling walks in these regions.

Wombat State Forest burnt for several days, but despite Daylesford making the news as residents evacuated, the fire's bark turned out to be worse than its bite and only a relatively small section of the forest has been affected. The main fire-damage is confined to an approximate region east of the Daylesford-Ballan road, south of Jubilee Lake, north of Leonard Hill and west of Bullarto.

Of the popular Daylesford-based walks, the only ones in the fire impacted area are Wombat Creek dam, the "Lost Children Walk", Leitchs Creek Springs and about 4-5km of the Lerderderg Great Dividing Trail. The Sailors Falls, Hepburn Springs and Tipperary Springs areas were entirely unaffected. There are no road closures in Wombat State forest, although the first section of the Lerderderg Track is temporarily closed, probably more due to damage to signs than any real danger. Nearby towns such as Blackwood and Trentham were on alert for a period as well, but their surrounding forest is also unscathed.



Wombat State Forest – only a small part looks like this.

Warburton and other towns in the Upper Yarra region also evacuated, with good reason, due to the threat of being trapped between fires from two directions, however this area also ended up relatively unscathed. The popular Powelltown tramway walk for example hasn't been fire-damaged. Although not burnt, the Dom Dom track has been bulldozed into a vast firebreak and so it and the Cement Creek track around Mt Donna Buang are closed for the time being. Around Healesville, Mt Juliet and Mt Riddell are reported to be burnt out, however Mt St Leonard, while being burnt on the side near Toolangi wasn't damaged around the popular circuit trail around the summit.

Finally those who enjoyed Ron Bell's Mt Disappointment weekends over many years will be pleased to hear that the venue used for them has survived, although the blaze came to within metres of the buildings. The Mt Disappointment state forest has been very badly burnt however and is currently off-limits to walkers.

A personal account by one of our members of a visit to one fire ravaged region in April. Please note that the area referred to is still officially closed to public access.

It has been one of my favourite day walk destinations for many years, an absolutely delightful little place, hiding in the northern parts of Mt Disappointment State Forest. It's Diggers Creek. In its lower reaches, it's quite a broad, very pretty little valley - an oasis of green in otherwise dry forest country. Walking upstream, the valley gradually narrows into a canyon, water cascading over delightful little falls, with rocky cliffs rising dramatically on both sides.

Then came Black Saturday. I had heard that the fires had started near Kilmore and headed south-east, before been blown east by the wind change. Kinglake and the south end of Mt Disappointment State Forest were fried, and Flowerdale was burnt too ... but was it possible that the fire swept east but to the south of Diggers Creek?

I had to find out. So a few weeks after the fires were out, I headed off up the highway.

What I found was heart breaking ... but awe inspiring too. It was very strange being able to see the shape of the ground so far off into the forest. The scrub was completely gone. Bare earth. However, many of the trees had survived and were sprouting from their trunks. And in the gullies, blackened tree ferns had new green fronds nearly a couple of feet long already. Absolutely amazing. Another thing I noticed was the quiet. I did see a couple of small birds, but the silence was deafening.

The fires certainly fried my beautiful little valley. But I'm glad I went to see it, and I will certainly be going back. In twelve months time, it will be an delightful oasis of green once more. Isn't our bush amazing.

Know your committee - Ken Sussex

The club's new Weekend Walks Secretary shares some of his experiences from almost 30 years of bushwalking with YHA.



How long have you been with YHA bushwalking? Since November 1980. My first walk was the Viking Circuit on Cup Weekend. It was ably led by a very strong young lady by the name of Marilyn Whimpey. She went on to be a lead walker with VMTC. Other luminaries on the trip included Bill Jessup and Michael Burston.

It was a memorable trip for a number of reasons, but especially for Saturday night. We were camped among snow gums, in the saddle just to the south of the Viking, when we were hit by a mighty storm. It really roared. By morning it had cleared, but we woke to find it had dumped six inches of snow all around. The problem was that some of the party only had running shoes, so we had to turn back and head down into the Wonnangatta Valley again. A bit dangerous tackling the snow covered Viking and the Cross Cut in runners. So ended my first attempt at the Viking Circuit

What attracted you to us in the first place? I was doing my Bushwalking and Mountaincraft Leadership Certificate at the time, and was looking for a club to join to broaden my walking experience. I made a couple of calls, and was invited to come along to clubnight, at the old VRI Ballroom in Flinders Street, to meet some of the crew. So I did, and I was made to feel very welcome.

Favourite walk so far? That is a difficult question. I have been on a lot of fabulous walks with a lot of wonderful people. I love south-west Tasmania, but I love Wilsons Promontory and Wyperfeld too. I love the Snowy River around Tulloch Ard Gorge, the country south of Thredbo, and the country around Jagungal. But maybe best of all has been the Overland Track in Tasmania's Central Highlands. It's got everything.

Funniest moment? What about tragic funny? We were on a traverse from Kiandra to Thredbo in early December quite a few years ago. It was magic weather. In fact it was a bit warm. After climbing Valentine Falls, some of the rock pools looked very inviting. So in we went, au naturale, and we spent the rest of the day there. The problem was that one of the guys had red hair and no sun block! Ended up with red everything. Ouch!

Least pleasant experience? Human memory is amazing in that we tend to erase our worst experiences, but I still have painful flashbacks to an epic ski tour, years ago, in the north end of Kosciuszko National Park. I spent a couple of nights in Pretty Plain Hut in absolute agony from cramps, in a woefully inadequate sleeping bag in temperatures of minus 15 degrees Celsius.

When I think about it, my worst memories relate to being really cold and wet through. Miserable! These days, I am very careful about staying warm and dry.

Strangest thing you've seen? That would have to be first hearing, then seeing, a mainline steam locomotive chuffing around on track, miles from the nearest railway line, on a property just north of Diggers Creek in Mt Disappointment State Forest. Boys and their toys? Hard to beat that.

Favourite food on a walk? Hmm. I like my orange in the morning. I like my lunch wraps with spinach dip, ham and tomato. But I think I have to say 'a good steak at the pub at the end of the walk'.

Have you made any mistakes on a walk that you aren't too embarrassed to admit? Navigation mistakes are always embarrassing, so I try hard not to make many. But I did make one on the Easter walk south of Thredbo this year. I led the party off a ridge one spur too soon, then had to bash through a fair bit of scrub to get to our campsite. The trip was advertised as 'off track', but that was a bit tough at the end of the day. Apologies once again to my fabulous party.

What places haven't you been to that you'd most like to visit in Australia and overseas? I'd like to do some exploring on the east coast of Tasmania, on the spectacular Tasman Peninsula, and into Wineglass Bay in Freycinet National Park. I'm also intrigued by what I have read about walking in the alps in the north of Italy. Maybe some day.

What ideas do you have for improving the walks programme? We are a bushwalking club, so I would really like to offer more opportunities for members to enjoy a weekend away in the bush. My aim will be to increase the number of interesting weekend pack carry walks, both for beginners and for our more experienced walkers.

I can't do that on my own though. I'll need your help. If you have any interesting suggestions, or would like to lead a weekend pack carry, I would love to hear from you on kesussex@optusnet.com.au

And finally, any advice for new walkers? Enjoy a weekend away in the bush whenever you can. It's magic!



Trekking the Tien Shan mountains

A part of Central Asia not yet widely visited by Westerners is well worth the effort to get there

Australia's winter months are the best period – the only period – for trekking in the Tien Shan (Celestial Mountains) of Central Asia. Approximately 2500km long, the Tien Shan form the north western edge of an arc of mountains which extend south to include other ranges such as the Hindu Kush, Karakorams and the main Himalayan region. While its peaks aren't as high as the 8000m+ Himalayas, the central Tien Shan around the interstiction of the Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Chinese borders contains many in the 6000-7000m range that still offer some challenging mountaineering. Off-limits to Westerners during the Soviet Union era, the central Tien Shan offer magnificent trekking in a region which is unspoilt, safe for travel, but not as yet widely visited by tourists from outside of the former Soviet bloc countries.



The Tien Shan are noticeable soon after arriving in Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city. They aren't visible straight away, as all international flights seem to arrive in a bleary-eyed hour of the night, but once dawn breaks, the year-round snow-capped peaks form a scenic backdrop to the city. Almaty is an attractive city, with boulevards of upmarket shops and the large number of BMWs and 4WDs cruising its streets testament to the steady increase in the standard of living this decade courtesy of Kazakhstan's vast oil and mineral reserves.

Among the many parks, grand Soviet buildings and statues of communist heroes that make it worth spending a day or two exploring Almaty, a visit to its Green Market is a recommended first step in preparing for a trek. Unless you can't travel without Vegemite, there's no need to bring your own food into Kazakhstan; all the popular types of chocolate bars and sweets were available, albeit with Russian labelling. The Green Market had stalls dedicated to local delicacies such as horse-meat and fermented mares milk – they'd be sampled later, but to everyone's taste are the nuts and dried fruit sections. As well as piles of figs, dates, apricots, there was a variety of dried cherries, plums and other fruit better than anything seen in Australia. A hint when buying your scroggin: tender as close to the exact amount of money needed as you can, as



First view of the main Tien Shan range from Kurbegenty Pass

the merchants are bit cheeky. It's not that they don't give change, it's just that rather than coins or banknotes the currency they use is the equivalent weight of more dried fruit to anyone not fluent enough in Russian to argue back!

The trek started from 2200m "foothills" of the Tien Shan; in Australia this altitude means the windswept treeless peak of Mt Kosciuszko, in Kazakhstan this was a river flowing amidst lush grassy meadows and farms, with fir-laden hills rising a few hundred metres up the side of the Karkara valley.

A week was spent trekking through glacial valleys colourfully carpeted with summer alpine flowers, ice-cold lakes and across a series of passes of the lower Tien Shan in order to acclimatise to altitudes of over 3000m. The main Central Tien Shan range came into view from a pass on the gloriously sunny second day, a ridge of snow-capped peaks along the horizon. As the altitude of the passes gradually increased, the views became more dramatic; distant glaciers edged closer until we found ourselves walking across the tip of one. The walking was of a "medium" grade; ups and downs of a few hundred metres, daily distances of 10-20km and river crossings whose difficulty depended on how much rain had fallen in the previous few hours. Because of the altitude, trying to walk fast up hills was discouraged.

There were eleven of us plus the crew in the trekking party; during seven days we didn't encounter any other trekkers. Apart from a few isolated yurts, the area was uninhabited; the valleys offer pleasant summer grazing but are inhospitable for



Glacial view from North Ashutor pass (3800m)

Tien Shan trekking (cont'd)

the remainder of the year. The trek involved some Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan border crossings in very isolated places; surprisingly one of them did have a guard post in the middle of nowhere. The best part of an hour was spent waiting for passports to be inspected, but where the border was just a horse track over a 3500m pass, we were on our own.

After a week of horse-supported trekking, it was time to graduate to a more serious altitude. The trekking company's ex Russian army helicopter picked us up from the campsite for a 40 minute flight to South Inylchek base-camp. I was feeling a little edgy, not having flown in a helicopter before and having heard stories about some of these old Russian ones. I also wondered if it had been such a good idea to have a couple of bowls of thin porridge (oats hadn't been rationed too well and almost ran out by the end of the trek) a few minutes beforehand. These worries dissipated straight after becoming airborne; my breath was taken away, not by flying unpressurised at 5000m, but by the exhilarating view.



Green valleys I'd trekked through during the previous week quickly gave way to vast rivers of ice. Hovering alongside many snow-capped peaks, it was evident that some were still towering way above us as we took in their icy rock faces and gullies at close range. The ice beneath was dotted with the occasional blue or green-hued glacial lakes; the water in some of these is held in place by an ice plug or wall which melts towards the end of each summer, draining in a day what has taken nearly a year to accumulate. Eventually we touched down on the 4000m South Inylchek glacier. The camp – a row of 2-3 person dome tents on wooden platforms – had only been set up for a few days. The glacier is only safely accessible during July and August; anything not dismantled and removed at the end of each season is soon destroyed by winter storms. Despite the altitude, when the sun was out shirt-sleeves were adequate to sit outdoors and enjoy the stunning view down the valley of the pyramid-shaped Kan Tengri (7010m). Towering in the other direction was the higher but less imposing Pobeda (7439m) the highest peak of the Tien Shan. The next day brought other arrivals, a team of Spanish and South American mountaineers on a four-week expedition to climb Kan Tengri.

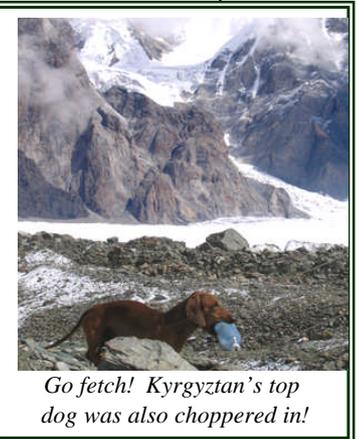
An easy walk for the first day was a short excursion across the glacier to inspect the wreckage of a helicopter from a previous year that didn't quite take off successfully!



South Inylchek camp, with Kan Tengri (7000m) at far right

To maximise the chance of conditions favourable enough to allow walks, the itinerary provided three days on the glacier. All three days turned out to be fine, allowing walks up the valleys towards Kan Tengri and Pobeda. All good things must come to an end, so it was too soon that the helicopter arrived for another awe-inspiring flight back to Karkara base-camp.

There are a few adventure travel companies offering trips in the Tien Shan (I went with Explore), however most end up using the same local operators from Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan. Independent trekking is possible, although as a local guide is essential, invariably they end up being hired from the same companies which run the organised treks. It is possible to trek all the way up to the glacier (a 2½ week epic) or undertake climbing on some of the smaller 5000-6000m peaks.



Go fetch! Kyrgyzstan's top dog was also choppered in!

Getting to Kazakhstan isn't easy. The first hurdle is the complex visa requirement for multiple border crossings; there isn't an embassy in Australia, so passports need to be couriered overseas (eg London), a process that takes 2-3 weeks. This assumes a "letter of invitation" from a local tour company stating why you are travelling there. A visa for independent travel could take much longer, particularly without a detailed itinerary. As might be expected there aren't any direct flights from Australia to Kazakhstan; the most convenient stopover is Bangkok, the only other "local" options are via Seoul or Beijing.

Learning some basic Russian (or at least how to read the Cyrillic alphabet) is useful in this part of the world. Kazakh and Kyrgyz are the official languages, but Russian is the common tongue and the one mainly used in the towns and cities. Kazakhstan had a reputation of being cheap – quite recent guidebooks state this – but improvement of its economy has led to price increases and a strengthening of its currency. Eating out in Almaty was a bit cheaper than Melbourne, although not by much. With spectacular mountain regions in countries such as India and Pakistan becoming dangerous to visit, it is heartening that areas in Central Asia are opening up instead. Getting there from Australia isn't easy as yet, but I found it to be a very enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Stephen Smith

Learning Mountaineering in New Zealand

In December 2008, I joined a commercial mountaineering instruction course in New Zealand, organised by a Wanaka based adventure company. (and Yes – without doing advertising for them, it is the one that led the ill-fated 1996 Everest Expedition featured in the best selling book – “Into Thin Air”) Let me start by saying I have got absolutely no ambition to climb Everest or the like. However, my goal is to do a few much easier peaks with a guide or a group of friends experienced in mountaineering once I’ve acquired the necessary skills. I enjoy landscape photography and I hope one day I can get on top of a 5000-6000m peak, taking panoramic photos of snow-capped mountains above the clouds as the morning sun slowly rises above the horizon.

We had five students and two guides on the course, all students were from Australia. I have prepared the shortened form of my trip diary to give you a taste of what it was like.

Day 1 and 2: Rain Rain Rain!

We spent two days in the tiny town of Fox Glacier while waiting for the notorious weather in the West Coast to clear up. The area gets **7 metres** of rain per year and by the end of Day 2 I was wondering if we should just build a pipe from Melbourne to Fox Glacier instead of the desalination plant in Wonthaggi. More reliable, less impact on the environment and possibly cheaper! We learned a bit of theory, different knots, rope-work and even did some Prusik-ing up a rope indoors in the community hall! It felt strange trying to imagine the roof of the community hall was the lip of this huge crevasse I desperately need to get to...

Day 3: Lift Off



The weather window finally opened early in the morning. It was a truly amazing experience sitting in a chopper for the first time, flying over the majestic Fox Glacier, catching glimpses of Mt Cook and Mt

Tasman, before landing on a tiny icy ledge just above Centennial Hut. Moved all provisions inside and learned how to build different snow anchors for the rest of the day. It was a lot of fun learning the different ways of self-arresting (using an ice axe to halt a slide down an icy slope). The hardest technique to master was to dive head first, face up, down a steep icy slope and try to self-arrest to halt the slide. It was hard to concentrate on where to plant the axe when all I could see was the sky above as I was zooming down the hill at high speed on my back. Practised a number of times but the best I could manage was to slow the fall, not arresting it. Well, hopefully I won't be falling face up, head down first during any stage of this course!

We had to melt snow/ice for dinner as the water tank was broken by a climber last week who decided the easiest way to loosen the ice in the tank was to kick the tank with his crampons on... Sigh...



Day 4: Trapped indoors

The wind speed exceeded 100km/h and it rained/hailed/snowed heavily for 24 hours non-stop. If you want to know how bad this was, consider these two facts: (1) Nobody got out of the hut to the toilet hut which was a mere 5 metres away for fear of being ripped off the mountain by the ferocious storm. We used the super high-tech Bucket Method™ instead.

(2) I felt the wall of the hut moving during the night, the steel frame gently swaying with the wind.

Just after I convinced myself there was nothing to worry about, the guides informed me another hut nearby was blown away a few years ago in a similar storm, along with all 4 or 5 occupants down the sheer cliff ...



Day 5: Fantastic day of sunshine.

Learned crevasse rescue, more anchoring and rope-work. Views were absolutely stunning, well worth the price of the course alone. Kept re-applying sun-screen every hour to combat the blazing sun reflecting off the snow all around me.

Learning Mountaineering in New Zealand (cont'd)

Believe me, I felt just as warm during the 43° heat-wave in Melbourne as the kind of heat/sun I experienced in the Southern Alps of New Zealand. Unfortunately I only brought along two litres of water for the outing and I paid dearly for it near the end of the exercise. I was very dehydrated and slightly dizzy by the time I returned to Centennial Hut. The worst thing was having to wait for the snow to melt to get a drink!



Day 6: The Walk-out/Fly-Out day.

With the weather window closing on Day 7, we had to get back down to the village in order to avoid being trapped for days up the mountain. Quite often, there are people who get stuck high up in the mountain huts for more than a week because they missed their opportunity to get out while the weather window was open. We walked along Fox Glacier to get to Chancellor Hut for our chopper ride, making full use of our newly learned glacier travel technique. We climbed our first New Zealand Peak - Von Barlow after making a couple of pitches under supervision. We even practised our summit poses on top!

It was another blazing hot day in the Southern Alps. The snow was softening at an alarming rate, making glacier travel more dangerous as the snow bridges got weaker and weaker. Near the end of the day, I punched straight through a severely weakened snow-bridge across a crevasse. There is nothing more terrifying than seeing the snow crumpled and a bottomless crevasse appear right in front of my eyes! I must have done something right as the chest harness I tied in the morning held!



Understandably, my guide didn't want me to practise my Prusik-ing skills to get out while he was on the other end of the rope attached to a novice climber dangling above a crevasse. I was dragged out instead...

Day 7:

Franz Josef Glacier.

We visited the nearby Franz Josef Glacier to learn ice-climbing. Once the ropes were set up, we were like circus monkeys performing tricks for the hundreds of tourists visiting the Glacier as they stopped, watched and photographed us playing around. I must say the ice-climbing session was one of the highlights of the trip.



Day 9 & 10 Rock Climbing

We practised our outdoor rock climbing skills, which included setting up rock anchors and trying to climb on rock wearing rigid mountaineering boots. We learned a bit of abseiling as well near the end. All the students got issued with certificates on the last day. A couple of them climbed Mt Cook a week later with the guides!

After the course - Coming to terms with the dangers of mountaineering

Around the time I was in New Zealand, four people died in three separate accidents visiting similar places I went to during the course. Even though I won't be doing anything extreme like climbing Mt Cook without a guide, these events really highlighted the dangers that are associated with the sport.

When we were staying at Centennial Hut, two Japanese climbers were attempting the nearby Mt Cook. On the day we were trapped in the hut by the 100km/h+ raging wind, they were struggling to survive in their snow cave on Mt Cook. Details of what happened are still sketchy and might never be known. Their snow cave was hastily excavated with a ball point pen as hell descended fast upon them. Rescuers could not get to them for days due to the appalling weather. Somehow the rescuers managed to drop a pack of supplies & radio 2m away from their tent and yet the climbers could not hear or see the pack in the ferocious weather. The Japanese guide died a couple of days later due to prolonged exposure. The client was rescued relatively unharmed, suffering hypothermia. It was a real shock when we got out and read it in the newspaper.

Recommendations:

- If you are new to rock-climbing, it is worth doing a rock climbing course back home or going rock climbing with a few friends outdoors. This will ensure that you have the experience and confidence in doing rope-work, knot tying and setting up simple anchors. It will help you on the course to pick up things a bit quicker.

(concluded page 13)

Mountaineering in New Zealand (cont'd from p11)

Recommendations:

- The course provides nearly all the technical equipment required (harness, hammer, helmet, ice screw, etc), except for mountaineering boots. It is far easier to use the supplied gear than to spend a few thousand dollars on technical equipment that you might end up using a few times. There is also the extra effort of carrying all of these on the plane.
- Be prepared that within the ten days, it is likely that a few days will be spent in mountain huts or even in town waiting for the weather window to open to get in/out by chopper.
- Last but not least, if you have a partner or family member who is paranoid about you climbing, DO NOT let them read/watch books and movies like *Into Thin Air*, *Touching the Void*, *Vertical Limit* or any other books and movies describing deaths in the mountains. Instead, tell them things like a crevasse is like a gutter on the side of the road.... Nothing to worry about

Tom Lun

Great Ocean Walk improvements

When the Great Ocean Walk opened in 2006, it attracted criticism (including from this club) about some sections being on roads and well away from the coast. Some of these problems have been recognised with the granting of over \$1m for improvements. One obvious fix has been to extend the track so that instead of fizzling out at Glenample Homestead, it now continues to a more satisfying conclusion at the Twelve Apostles visitor centre (making the total distance 104km).

Some track improvements have also been made around Parker Inlet by regrading steps so as to make the climb up Parker Hill less tiring. Track re-routing is also planned to separate it from public roads.

This is the sort of action that it had been hoped would be taken; this long distance track was a great idea, and has some sections that live to expectations, but there is also much room for improvement that it is hoped regular funding will see happen over the next few years.

Only 23 Months to go!

Blue Waterholes (April 22-26th 2011)

This Easter just gone, information about the pack-carry wasn't distributed until less than a week beforehand. Due to the late notice, many people had already made other plans, although those who did go enjoyed a good walk south of Thredbo, spotting brumbies and visiting Paradise and Purgatory Hills. For future reference, the view from Purgatory is better!

A resolution of the new committee is to reintroduce some longer term planning of the major long weekend events. So there is pleasure in announcing that Easter 2011, with the benefit of an adjoining Anzac Day holiday, will be at Blue Waterholes in northern Kosciuszko National Park. Caves, gorges, historic huts, the headwaters of the Murrumbidgee and a view of the ACT; there's a lot to look forward to in this superlative walking area, watch this space for more details.

Identify the Mystery Object

The only clue is that its purpose is something to do with camping.



Send your guesses to yhabush@bigpond.com No prizes, but the correct answer will be revealed next issue, along with any entertaining near-misses.

Tips for Better Bushwalking

#68 - You Know How to Whistle Don't You?



It's a simple, lightweight and inexpensive item of personal safety equipment. It's included in every guidebook or website's list of essential bushwalking gear. Yet a worryingly large number of people don't seem to bother carrying a whistle. If you've done more than a couple of walks with the club and haven't invested a few dollars in a whistle...well you know what you gotta do.

Should anyone get inadvertently separated from the main group (it happens!!), the sound of a whistle carries much further and uses less energy than yelling or coo-eeing. If you are really in trouble, three successive whistle blasts is the signal for an emergency.

One final point; wear a whistle around your neck, don't carry it in your pack. The "at risk" situations when you are by yourself in the bush are often those when you haven't taken your pack with you.

The Perils of Big Screen Bushwalking

A very short quiz: In the almost 70 year history of YHA Bushwalking, only one person has died while participating in a walk. Was it the result of (a) A bushfire; (b) Snakebite; (c) Car Accident; (d) Drowning; (e) Falling down a rock face or (f) Being eaten by cannibals? The answer is later on in this article.

Many of us like to fill in time between bushwalks by watching movies, but stumble upon a film that involves people going hiking in the wild and you could be forgiven for not wanting to venture away from the safety of your lounge room. Those of us who bushwalk regularly, be it a Sunday walk, a weekend camp or a Tasmanian epic usually come back feeling all the better for the experience; but it doesn't happen like that in the movies. Here's a checklist of cliches:

- #1 – No-one ever goes for just a bit of fresh air and exercise, invariably it's for a grand purpose.
- #2 - Movie hikers have personality problems. People with personality problems going bushwalking – how realistic is that? OK, maybe they have a point with this one.
- #3 – Something nasty happens that wouldn't have occurred if they'd just stayed home and watched a DVD.
- #4 – The characters involved don't seem to know a lot about navigation, camping, proper equipment or practical clothing; maybe not a scripted cliché, just a reflection that the filmmakers aren't outdoor types. Perhaps the producers should hire a "bushwalking consultant"?

So we know not to venture into the woods of North America (*Into the Wild, Grizzly, Blair Witch Project*) – but is there a more positive portrayal in Australian cinema? It isn't hard to make the the bush look scary (*Picnic at Hanging Rock*) and it's certainly frightening if you never wanted to be there and end up lost (*Walkabout*), but what about those who, seemingly well-prepared, intentionally head into the bush. Are they ever to be allowed to benefit from the experience? Australian films featuring outdoor activities aren't common, but here's a look at a few examples.

Monkey Puzzle (M, 91mins 2007) ★★½

Scenery: ★★★★★

Four students and their tag-along dope supplier(!) go bushwalking in the Blue Mountains for Easter in search of the Wollemi Pine (cliché #1 ✓). After mishaps which leave them lost and hungry, the situation brings out their worst characteristics.

The film is based around cliché #2 - all of the characters have major personal issues along with simmering tensions within the group - intercut with some attractive photography of the Blue Mountains. While it is intended to be a character-driven drama rather than action or suspense, the film was developed more through workshoping than strong scripting and direction; unfortunately it shows. The cast of unknowns show promise and while the workshop approach can pay off with experienced actors, the result here is the characters spend much of their time exchanging brooding looks rather than offering the viewer any convincing insight into understanding why they undertake their somewhat irrational actions. As a result some scenes are a bit tedious, although the drama lifts towards the end.

Apart from the opening scenes, all of the film is shot on location in the Blue Mountains. The setting is well used, with good photography despite the low budget and gave me



the urge to go bushwalking in the area despite the predicaments that occur. I'd just make sure to choose the right company.

Cliché #4 critique: A common mistake when camping (it's happened on YHA walks) becomes a key plot point. Some of the clothing isn't ideal (jeans, denim shorts over leggings) but the young woman managing to abseil and hike wearing knee high leather boots takes the prize. And don't pack or treat a thermarest the way these guys do, or you'll soon have an uncomfortable night's sleep.

Dying Breed (MA, 88mins 2008) ★★½ ; (scenery: ★★★★★)

Four people venture into Tasmania's wintry wilderness in search of the Tasmanian tiger (as going in search of good weather would be too far-fetched - cliché #1 ✓), but fall victim instead to a breed that hasn't died out.

In 1822 Alexander Pearce, along with several other convicts, escaped from Sarah Island and survived for several weeks in the Tasmanian wilderness. Back then they didn't have freeze-dried meals, so Pearce snacked off his fellow escapees. Nearly two centuries later, people going hungry in the Tasmanian bush is still a common problem; luckily for the most recent (*cont'd p15*)



Perils of Big Screen Bushwalking (cont'd from previous page)

YHA group where this occurred, the ravenous person was vegetarian. Anyway, Pearce must have met a woman unappetising enough to have a family with instead, as (cut to the present day) a clan of his descendants, despite having access to instant noodles and 'Surprise' peas, still prefer to prey on passing bushwalkers.

For anyone wanting to make an Australian version of the 1972 classic "*Deliverance*" about city folk heading into the wild and getting into a spot of bother with inbred locals, western Tasmania is the ideal location (with Woods Point a close second). While *Dying Breed* has a few overt references to *Deliverance* in its early scenes, it soon becomes a very average horror movie with none of the complexities of the films which inspired it. The misty, wet Tasmanian setting is well used and is the main reason that the film is worth a look (location filming occurred during the extremely wet period in August 2007 that caused problems for a YHA group on the Overland Track). It's just a shame the script wasn't anywhere near as well honed as its cannibals' teeth. The early scenes aren't too bad and the final moments deliver a shock, but it sags in the second half. Once nasty things start happening in the forest there is a distinct lack of suspense as the expeditioners' resistance is little more than running about in forest and mine-tunnels. It doesn't help that one of the victims is very unlikeable, and when one of the evil clan decides to slit their own throat, any remaining credibility is lost.

Cliché #4 critique; Two of the hikers wear jeans. In Tasmania. In very apparent rain; highly uncomfortable clothing, particularly when it gets blood-soaked as well!

Long Weekend (M, 93 mins 1977) ★★★★★

Scenery: ★★½

A couple go away for a weekend camping on a deserted section of coastline in a last-ditch attempt to save their marriage. This pair of 4WD campers are anything but minimal impact in their attitude to the environment and soon suffer the consequences.

Not strictly bushwalking, as the walking isn't much more than a stroll along a beach, but this film is the most likely to make a viewer frightened of the bush itself. Getting lost, going in circles on tracks that lead nowhere and everywhere, being watched by unseen eyes... Originally regarded as a flop, "*Long Weekend*" is one of a number of Australian films from the 1970-80s that have experienced a revival of interest as part of the "Ozploitation" genre.

This is best classed as a psychological thriller, relying on a steady buildup of atmosphere and suspense with minimal graphic horror or violence.



With just two main cast members and mostly filmed on a single location, the film isn't big budget, but it succeeds where the other two don't due to imaginative direction, a well developed script and good acting courtesy of John Hargreaves and Briony Brehets. While the characters aren't totally likable, they engender some sympathy. Bonus marks for probably being the only movie to make a dugong scary.

What are the actual perils of bushwalking? A recent attempt was made to add a disclaimer to the club booking sheet listing all possible "risks"; these included rain, snow, bushfire, snakes, rough or slippery tracks, flooded creeks through to encountering nude German hikers. It was rejected as being more overboard than the Titanic. Some realistic odds are:

Bushfires: Despite affecting many popular bushwalking areas, no bushwalkers were killed by the Black Saturday fires, nor have they been by any of the other major bushfires going back well past Ash Wednesday. It doesn't take much common sense to work out why.

Venomous creatures: Anyone who's done more than a few walks has probably seen a snake (or more alarmingly walked past a snake and not seen it) but in the long history of YHA Bushwalking no-one has ever been bitten by one. Again common sense such as not antagonising them, wearing boots and gaiters (and being part of a large group) keeps the odds of being attacked very low. Of more concern have been bees and wasps, with at least two incidents in the past year including one that resulted in twenty stings; anyone with a known allergy is well advised to make sure they have medication with them and preferably ensure someone else is also aware of how to administer it.

Rough Tracks: Ankle sprain is the most common bushwalking injury (next is the one you get when the person in front lets a branch spring back in your face). It doesn't occur that often; suitable footwear and natural caution lessen the risk.

Psychos: The club occasionally attracts characters that would give Damir Dokic a run for his money, but they've always managed to be shooed away by committee members before they caused any serious problems.

Nude Germans: There have been recent media reports of a plague of them ascending upon the Swiss Alps. What isn't as widely known is that a potential breeding pair was spotted a few years ago on a walking track in Kakadu National Park. So far there is no indication they've got past the desert and the dingo fence into any of the southern states.

The one person who has died (in the 1960s) on a YHA bushwalk did so by drowning, not as a result of having to cross a river, but by going for a swim in the ocean (at Wilsons Prom).

Photo Competition



YHA Bushwalking has a great new competition where you can win your own Macpac Cascade FL 75L Hiking Pack valued at \$439.95. All you have to do is take a picture. It's as simple as that!

The winners will be announced at the end of year Christmas party.

2nd prize is a Black Wolf Vertical Limit 200 90/10 Goose down Sleeping Bag valued at \$250



The winners of each category will receive a free 12 month subscription to the new adventure magazine Outer Edge with the added chance of having your pictures published as well.



YHA Bushwalking would like you to submit your favorite photo from a recent or upcoming YHA bushwalk, so get creative and start getting snap happy to win these great prizes.

All you have to do is upload your photo via e-mail to yhabushphotocomp@yahoo.com.au with your name, walk title and the name of the leader.

You can enter up to three times per category; Landscape, Wildlife or People.

An independent panel of judges from Outer Edge Magazine will select a winner and runners up from the submitted pool of photographs.

For information on prizes visit the following websites:

www.macpac.co.nz www.blackwolf.com.au www.outer-edge.com.au

Basic Conditions of Entry

1. You need to send your Photograph via e-mail (JPEG format) to yhabushphotocomp@yahoo.com.au
2. Photographs must be from YHA Bushwalking trips on or after 1st November 2008.
3. Make sure you label each digital image with a title, also in your e-mail message list the walk name, who led it and include your contact details and a brief description of the photograph.
4. Only three photographs per category may be entered. As there are three categories, you can enter up to three times. The Categories Are: Landscape, Wildlife & People.
5. Outer Edge Magazine and YHA Bushwalking have the right to publish any prize-winning entry.

Entries close 9th November 2009

The complete Terms & Conditions are at www.yhabush.org.au/Yeti/Autwin09/photocomp.htm