

ADELAIDE BUSH WALKERS

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Volume 48 Number 2 Winter 2018

Searching For Vanishing Falls

by Trevor Jones

3 Capes Trip Tasmania – A Beginners Solo walk by Penny Day

Contents

The Australian Alps Walking Trail	7
<i>by Lorraine Thomas</i>	
Glenelg River Revisited	14
<i>by David Wattchow</i>	
My Biggest Challenge	18
<i>by John Bartlett</i>	
Sensational Sixties	20
<i>by Bruce Marquis</i>	
3 Capes Trip Tasmania -A Beginners Solo Walk	23
<i>by Penny Day</i>	
Searching For Vanishing Falls	25
<i>by Trevor Jones</i>	
Wednesday Walkers 20th Anniversary lunch at Belair National Park	31
<i>by John Bartlett</i>	

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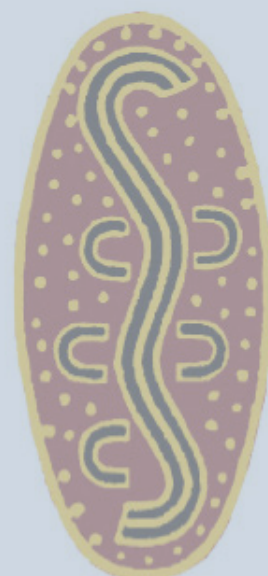
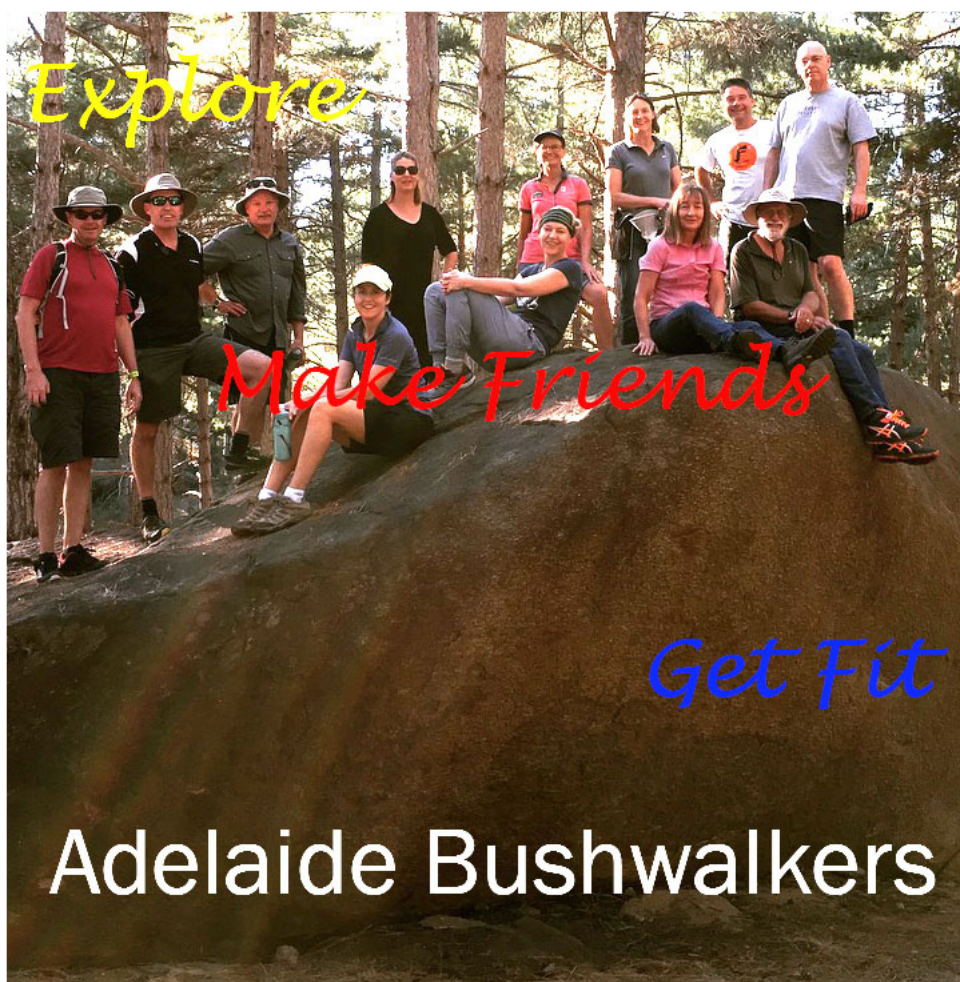
‘There’s an expression in Australia that’s called ‘Go Bush,’ which means to get out of the city and relax. I try and ‘go bush’ to places where there’s no cell reception. But, I don’t get to do that often, so for the most part, it’s just a state of mind.’ Cate Blanchett

www.adelaidebushwalkers.org • gohiking@adelaidebushwalkers.org

Close off date for next issue: 15th August 2018

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ABW Club information

The club meets at the North Adelaide Community Centre, 176 Tynte Street, North Adelaide on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm (February to November)

Annual subscription fees

Category	Normal	Student
Prospective Membership	\$60	\$30
Full Membership	\$60	\$30
Associate Membership	\$10	\$10

Family membership is no longer available for new members

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Membership queries

Contact the Membership Secretary Bec Thomas on 0474 894433

or via email through gohiking@adelaidebushwalkers.org

For privacy reasons, the names and contact details of other office bearers are no longer published in the magazine. Please use the contact details above.



Trevor Jones and Bruce Hood walk/paddle in search of Vanishing Falls, Tasmania, March 2018

Adelaide Bushwalkers specialise in multi day wilderness hiking with full packs and camping gear, along with other complimentary activities such as day walks, kayaking, cycling and social activities for our members



Mambray Creek campground, July 2017



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The Australian Alps Walking Trail

by Lorraine Thomas

This is the third article on Lorraine Thomas's Australian Alps Walking Trail walk. The previous articles covering stages 1 and 2 were pictorial. Here Lorraine sums up the whole trip including stage 3.

The Australian Alps Walking Trail (AAWT) begins in Walhalla, Victoria and traverses the high peaks and plateaus of the Australian Alps to finish at Tharwa near Canberra covering a distance of about around 700kms. The trail passes through five remote wilderness areas with some parts undefined or overgrown and poorly marked so good navigation skills and equipment are essential.

There are no general stores or accommodation along the way apart from Mt Hotham and Thredbo Alpine resorts and there may be a need to carry extra water or search for water after a long day on the trail. The walk is logistically difficult to plan, physically and mentally demanding and typically, walkers put it off and relegate it to the too hard basket. With this in mind our trip was divided into three manageable parts with 18 days of walking in each, covering around 250kms and planned around seasonal conditions for weather stability and water reliability.

From Adelaide it requires days of travel and the placement of food drops is difficult to get to areas additionally hampered by seasonal road closures and 4WD tracks only, so detailed planning is essential before you start. For convenience and to reduce extra days of travel we decided on one food drop for each section. The food was a mixture of our own dehydrated and commercial items, enough for eight to ten days of hiking and packed into 20L, water tight, "Canoe Drums" along with extra fuel for our stoves and some clean clothes and luxury goodies like wine and chocolate!

As the end of my trekking days draw near I did not want this project to be drawn out over years and



Colin and Lorraine arriving at Tharwa having completed the whole trail: 765km, 33,672M ascent, 31,331 descent, 53 days including rest days.

given seasonal constraints and particularly the questionable reliability of water I decided to start with the middle section first, Mt Hotham to Thredbo, in March, 2017, with section 1, Walhalla to Mt Hotham, the following November (2017) and finishing with section 3, Thredbo to Tharwa, in March, 2018. These are the best months to do each section but I will describe the walk in geographical order, from south to north, rather than chronological order.

Section 1 - Walhalla to Mt Hotham

	18 days
Lorraine Thomas	260km
Colin Kinnaird	16,260M ascent
	12,976M descent
John Glover	

In November, 2017, four of us set out in two cars from Adelaide and overnighed in Jamieson, Victoria, from there we took the Jamieson Licola Road, reopened that day, to hide our food drums near the trail at Rumpff Saddle. We then travelled to Mt Hotham, left our cars in the long term carpark where we were picked up by pre-arranged commercial transport who would take us to Walhalla, 5 hours away. Our trek began with a brief walk around this historically rich town and we stayed overnight at the friendly Star Hotel vowing we would return here with our families some day.

Having packed in a lot over the past two days and we couldn't wait to start the trail to "have a rest"! The trail starts gently at the rotunda directly opposite the Star Hotel and follows the path of the old timber tramway to the Poverty Point Bridge. It was an easy stretch by the time we reached our first campsite and it was only lunchtime but, being inundated with leaches we decided to move on. After 20.5 kms and 1,130m of ascent we were glad to see our Mountain Monarchs Campsite, a little known place not marked on the maps but complete with tent platforms, picnic table and reliable creek water. This was just a taste of the days to come where our daily average of ascent was usually over 1,000M and descent around 770M.

Over the next few days we continued through the picturesque Baw Baw National Park, just missing a dusting of snow, and then continued through the primordial State Forest, wading rivers, pushing through overgrown log strewn foot pads and cautiously negotiating very steep 4WD tracks. The campsites were compact and very appealing, the birdlife entertaining but there was little other wildlife

apart from the feral pigs, wild dogs, goats and deer. From now on the trail becomes increasingly interesting as we enter the Alpine National Park and follow high ridges along the Great Dividing Range and descend into the plethora of deep valleys and saddles. The views are dramatic and sensational beginning with Mt MacDonald, Mt Magdala and Mt Howitt but the trail becomes more difficult to follow because of intense regrowth after bushfires and a profusion of fallen trees. Water becomes more scarce as well, sometimes up to two kilometres down a valley after we have made camp. November is the best time to start from Walhalla, after the melting snows of winter, and having such a late winter in 2017 we always found water but could see that these creeks would scarcely last a month longer.

At Mt Howitt we departed with the "Canberrans" who continued on while we whimsically had a rest day in the Vallejo Gantner Hut at Macalister Springs. This is a great place to rest and wash up and the hut is comfortable even with seventy Timbertop students camping around us. They were so energetic, polite and courteous young people, off on the trail before we were out of bed! The weather by this stage was starting to turn with thunderstorms approaching each night but missing us each time and we knew our luck would run out soon.

Back on the trail we easily negotiated the Crosscut Saw, Mt Buggery and Horrible Gap then in the afternoon, halfway up The Viking the lightning and



Pack hauling through The Chimney during the thunderstorm

thunder started with vengeance as we were about to commence a pack haul and a rope assisted ascent through a steep “chimney” to get to the top of the ridge. We considered sheltering through the storm but the group wanted to push on as the track was difficult to navigate and negotiate and time was always a consideration when you don’t know what challenge will delay you next.

Fortunately there was a marathon running race along the trail and the organisers had marked and cleared some areas through this section. If not for this we would have endured 10-11hour days as it can get notoriously overgrown as the trail winds its way around rocky cliffs and ledges, up and down slippery, steep slopes with few markers to show the way apart from an occasional cairn! Having the GPX tracks available saved us a lot of time as well because it was so simple to quickly check if we were “on track”.

The storm continued through the night presenting more hail and lightening as the runners descended through our camp while we remained antisocial and cosy in our tents. As the ground shook with the thunder I wondered about the safety plans for the runners along that lightning ravaged ridge!

From Mt Speculation water is scarce and careful planning between a selection of camps with new water tanks and reliable creek water is paramount. As we continued on, hill after hill, after hill, we had spectacular views from each crest watching the snowy slopes of Mt Buller disappear as the distance narrowed to Mt Hotham.

A nice cold beer and an indulgent lunch at “The General” store was leisurely consumed as we met up with our young Victorian hiker who arrived at Mt Hotham three days before us! This section is by far the hardest and on questioning our young friend he found it totally exhausting doing up to 30kms a day and he needed that time to recover before moving on to the next section. We parted company feeling much better at taking our time and drove down to Bright where we stayed the night before travelling on to Adelaide the next day.

Section 2 Mt Hotham to Thredbo

<i>Lorraine Thomas</i>	<i>18 days</i>
	<i>259Km</i>
<i>Colin Kinnaird</i>	<i>9,912M ascent</i>
<i>Sue Curtis</i>	<i>10,065M descent</i>

Mt Hotham to Thredbo was walked in March, 2017, with four hikers setting off from Adelaide and overnighing in Rushworth, Victoria. The following day we drove through Mt Hotham to the Benambra Corryong Road to place our food and water drop where the AAWT crosses the road. Returning to Mt Hotham we left our cars in the long term carpark and commenced our walk from there.

This section of the trail is most picturesque and incorporates various terrain from deep valley river crossings and dense vegetation to the sparse Alpine Bogong High Plains with sub-Alpine Snow Gum forest in between. The trail has no shortage of quaint alpine huts with fabulous histories and generally reserved for emergency use only, there is usually a water tank, pit toilet and plenty of flat space for tents.

The first part of the walk engaged these delightful



Source of the Murray River

hut settings which became a welcoming sight after a day of river crossings, very long, steep ascents and descents with the cold mist rolling in about 3pm. After spending a rest day in the comfortable Cleve Cole Hut (so we could do the side trip to Mt Bogong), we continued on to Wills Hut and again indulged a comfortable night by the log fire. From here the huts were scarce and we had to “rough it” and collect water from creeks and find suitable flat campsites. More steep sections were to follow, hauling water and camping on the track after Gill Creek. One of our favourite places was Taylors Crossing on the Mitta Mitta River, unbelievably warm, we were able to swim and do our washing before continuing on.

By now we were beginning to see more wild life, especially brumbies which appeared almost every day as we moved closer to Thredbo. A long, dreary fire track led us to the New South Wales border at Cowombat Flat where we spent our rest day scrub bashing through the dense tea tree forest, in a swamp, just so we could stand at the official source of the mighty Murray River. Venturing further on we located the hidden cairn that marks the start of the straight

Black Allen Line that divides Victoria and New South Wales, with that we were feeling very pleased that we actually found what we had set out to do, a side trip well worth doing.

The Australian Alps walking Trail in NSW follows fire tracks all the way to Dead Horse Gap, but not unpleasant as they are grassy and soft to walk on. We only had two more nights on the trail staying alongside some of the best huts offering great views with magnificent sunsets to play cards (500) and beautiful sunrises to commence our daily trek, a lasting memory of this section of the trail. Eager to finish we got up early on the last day and arrived at the Thredbo Bakery by lunchtime. After a magnificent dinner at a Swiss restaurant we spent the night at the Thredbo YHA. The following morning we were taken back to Mt Hotham by a tour operator to collect our cars and head back to Adelaide, collecting our empty food barrels along the way.



The start of Section 3: Ben Campbell, Mike Round, Colin Kinnaird, Sue Curtis, Lorraine Thomas, John Glover



Black Allen Cairn



Tarn by the Granite Peaks. Ben, Sue, John

Section 3 - Thredbo to Tharwa

<i>Lorraine Thomas</i>	<i>17 days</i>
<i>Colin Kinnaird</i>	<i>246Km</i>
<i>Sue Curtis</i>	<i>7,500M ascent</i>
<i>John Glover</i>	<i>8,290M descent</i>
<i>Mike Round</i>	



Colin crossing Eucumbene River at Kiandra.



The Button Grass Plains of Kerries Ridge (no track)

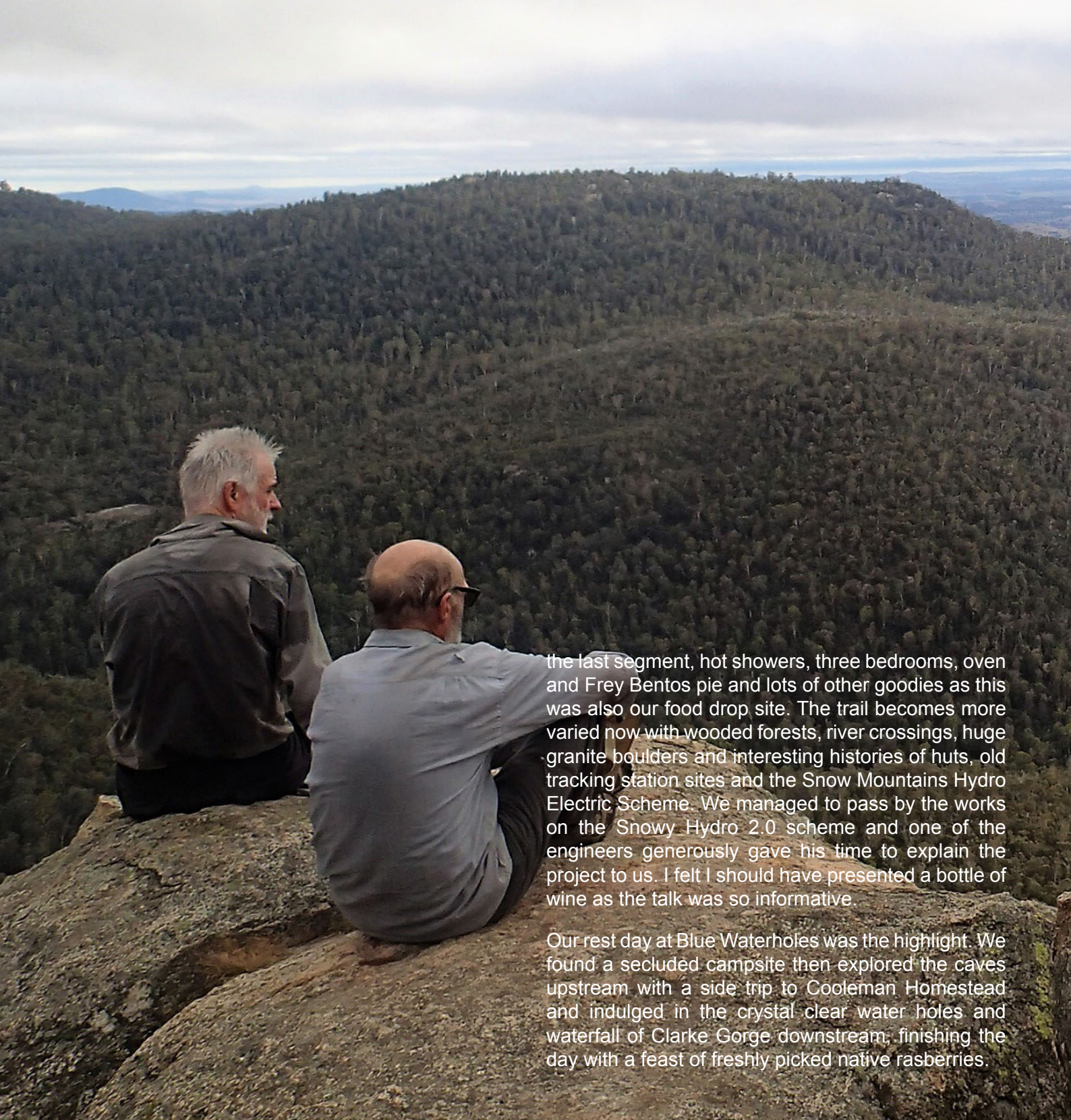
This final section began in March 2018, again being the best time for weather stability in the Alps and we weren't disappointed, I didn't use my rain jacket once! While this part of the trail is easier than the other sections it is not without challenges. The high (above 2000M) open range can be subjected to high winds, freezing temperatures and thick fog in a matter of minutes so prior preparation and good navigation skills are again essential. Our first camp turned from sunshine to thick fog in 20 minutes and did not lift until late morning the next day so our planned trip to Mt Townsend had to be cancelled but we were able to visit Blue Lake.

Much of the trail to Kiandra is on open fire track so we opted to avoid the "Ironway" to Mt Kosciuszko by taking the alternate route over the Rams Head Range and from Whites River Hut we took the alternate route over the Kerries Range to Mawson and O'keefes Huts. This untracked wilderness over buttongrass, swampy plains and granite outcrops is hard work but the rewards are worth all the pain! Wild flowers abound on the high barren Great Dividing Range at this time of year, and sweeping panoramas

blow your mind so time out to reflect is mandatory. We were in awe of this beautiful landscape. To top it off and in spite of the challenges, Ben managed to produce cheese platters and wine every night for our consumption. Never before have I had delicacies such as this out in wilderness.



Collin, Mike, Sue cooling off at Blue waterholes



the last segment, hot showers, three bedrooms, oven and Frey Bentos pie and lots of other goodies as this was also our food drop site. The trail becomes more varied now with wooded forests, river crossings, huge granite boulders and interesting histories of huts, old tracking station sites and the Snow Mountains Hydro Electric Scheme. We managed to pass by the works on the Snowy Hydro 2.0 scheme and one of the engineers generously gave his time to explain the project to us. I felt I should have presented a bottle of wine as the talk was so informative.

Our rest day at Blue Waterholes was the highlight. We found a secluded campsite then explored the caves upstream with a side trip to Cooleman Homestead and indulged in the crystal clear water holes and waterfall of Clarke Gorge downstream, finishing the day with a feast of freshly picked native raspberries.

Colin and Mike at Booroomba Rocks looking toward Canberra on the last day.

At the trail end we were welcomed by the rangers and staff at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, just south of Canberra. A mixture of emotions flood your mind as you remember those tough climbs through the alpine peaks, wild scrub and river valleys, and the footslog through the high plains, the extremes in weather conditions, the sensational vistas and all the fun times with exceptionally good company. This trail will remain one of the most memorable trips I have ever done.



Bush Tucker, keeping scurvy at bay with Native Raspberries!



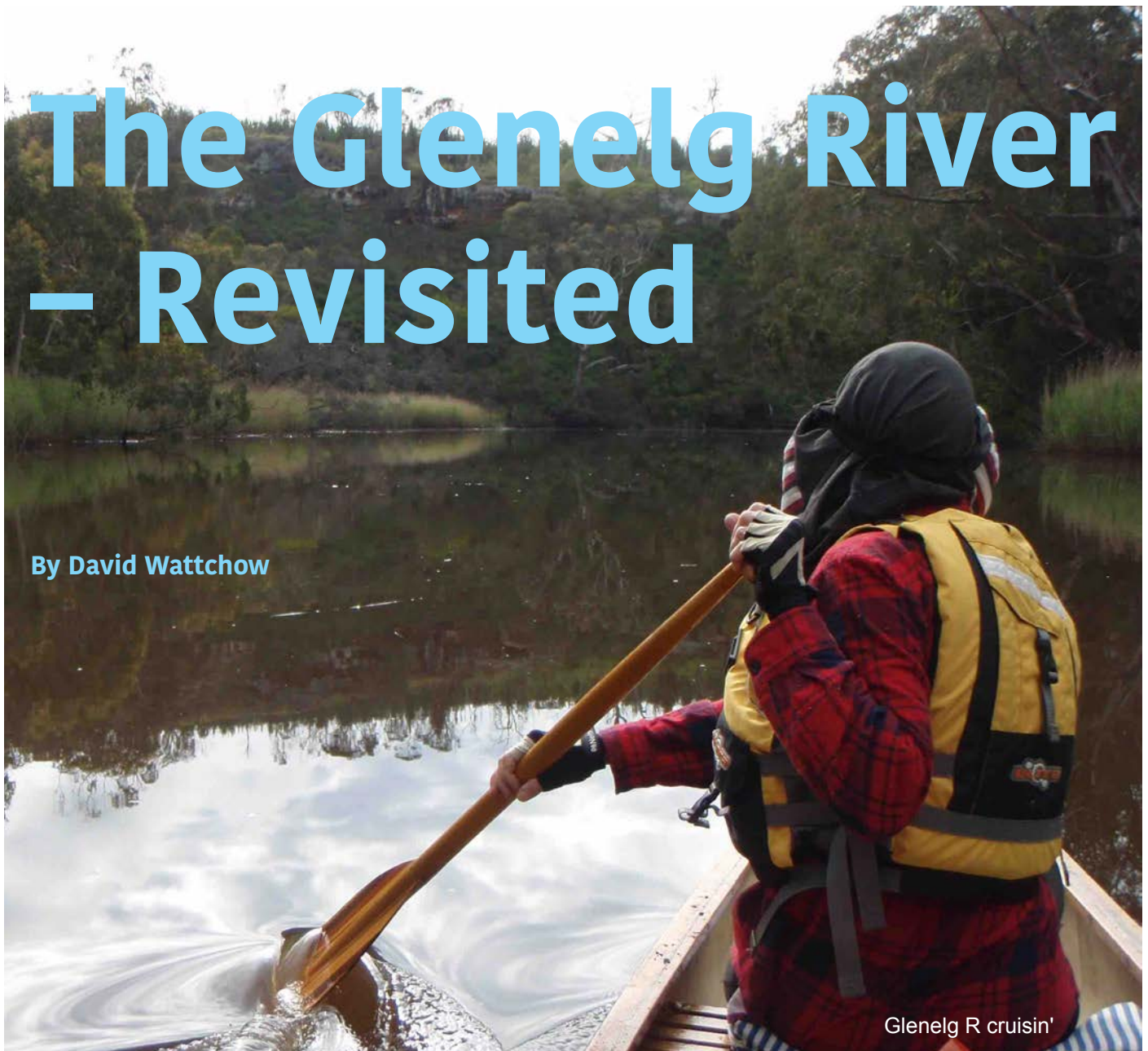
Resting at Mackays Hut. Checkout the stone work on the chimney. Ben, Colin, John



Historic Coolemine Homestead

The Glenelg River – Revisited

By David Wattchow



Just as Charles Ryder “revisits” Brideshead castle in Evelyn Waugh’s famous novel, we were revisiting the Glenelg River, some 30 years after our initial sojourn. Ryder develops a close relationship with Brideshead, as we also had with multiple visits to the Glenelg River over the years. Our initial courtship started on a full moonlit night at Easter, and we had a midnight paddle on the limpid waters at Moleside camp that time.

Initially a group of 4 – the Mays (Trevor and Lindy) and ourselves (David and Margaret) paddled upstream from Pines Landing to just beyond the National Park boundary. We had not been in October before, and the river was still brown from the winter rains (it forms up in the Grampians). A remarkable number of koalas were spotted in the tree branches over the water. They were quite unperturbed, and gazed down upon the silly canoeists below.

We were soon joined by the Moyles (Trev and Sharon) and David Evans and Paul Godfrey (aka “old spot”). There were plenty of pine logs as the plantation had been recently felled, so a good fire was underway, and the first of a daily “happy hour” was partaken.

A flotilla of kayaks now assembled and headed downstream. We were paddling the only Canadian – but so much easier to load and get in and out of than kayaks, especially at the landings. There is lush vegetation all along the banks of the Glenelg, and the forest was dripping. The water was like glass, and we were soon past Moleside (reeks of Kenneth Graeme and wind in the Willows) and having morning tea at Wild Dog bend. I spied the same kookaburra in a tree that had taken half a loaf of bread many years before- well, he sure looked the same!!

Now we journeyed on to Saunder’s Landing for lunch, and our first leeches!! By the time we got to Skipworth Springs the word was out, and Lower Leech campsite was established – with Trevor May proudly showing off a sandaled foot with at least 3 leeches attached!!

The firewood on the Glenelg is wet and woody – i.e. smokes a lot, and is pungent – compared to our normal diet of river red gum. Still, it is all rather civilized, with tables, fireplaces and toilets. Making toast is possible, though not as easy.

Because we had a party of 8, and the landings were often small, a staggered start was needed. We now observed a big rise and fall of the river level. This was because the river mouth to the sea



Getting ready



Laslett's fire

was open, so there was a tidal effect on the river. The river meanders at this section, past a number of campsites and we pulled up at Forest Camp.

On every trip to the Glenelg we have seen an azure blue kingfisher. Indeed, our Canadian has an emblem of a kingfisher on the prow. We spotted a flash of blue that flitted down the river ahead of the boats from branch to branch. Other bird sightings were gang gang cockatoos, and lots of wrens.

Good progress was being made, so we

pressed on to Bowds for a late lunch. Lucky we hadn't set up as we were shortly joined by a group of school kids. The campsites must be booked in advance – but the system cannot be that good as we were double booked. We shared the site, and the teachers had those kids on a tight rein!!

Now was the toughest day of all – a whole 8 kms to Laslett's landing!! Some of us walked up to Princess Margaret Rose Cave (Paul even did the Cave tour), others lazed around camp and

gathered firewood. I went for a bit of a solo paddle in the Canadian. This is possible by turning the canoe around and paddling it backwards. I was able to cruise right up beneath the towering cliff faces that were forming up in the limestone country.

Amazingly on our last day's paddle into Nelson we had a strong tail breeze. Often one faces a stiff westerly hammering along the straight but on this day we were blown in to Nelson. This section of river edges into SA, with it's unsightly shacks, before coming back into Victoria. The limestone cliffs are a feature of this section, with the pine forest towering on top.

With such a strong tail breeze we cruised on past the Isle of Bags, under the highway bridge, and landed on a beach in Nelson. We were later to find out that there was a canoe roller at the Isle of Bags landing!! Shortly Ross from Paestan canoe hire rolled up in his Landcruiser to ferry the drivers back to the cars.

So, while Charles revisits Brideshead some 20 years after his first visit, we were 30 years later to the Glenelg. But while his circumstances are changed dramatically by relationships and war, we had no such inopportune tidings – merely a good trip, with good friends, and even good weather (and only an occasional leech). BTW, the steaks in the Nelson pub are rather good!!



Tall Paul



A happy paddler

My Biggest Challenge

by John Bartlett

Bruce, our TANDANYA Editor suggested to a few members to write a short article about "Your biggest Challenge".

After pondering on this for a while, I decided my biggest challenge was the walk I lead to Precipitous Bluff (PB) near the South coast of Tasmania. in February 1999. My full report on the trip appeared in the Winter 1999 edition of this journal, including a map which is reproduced here.

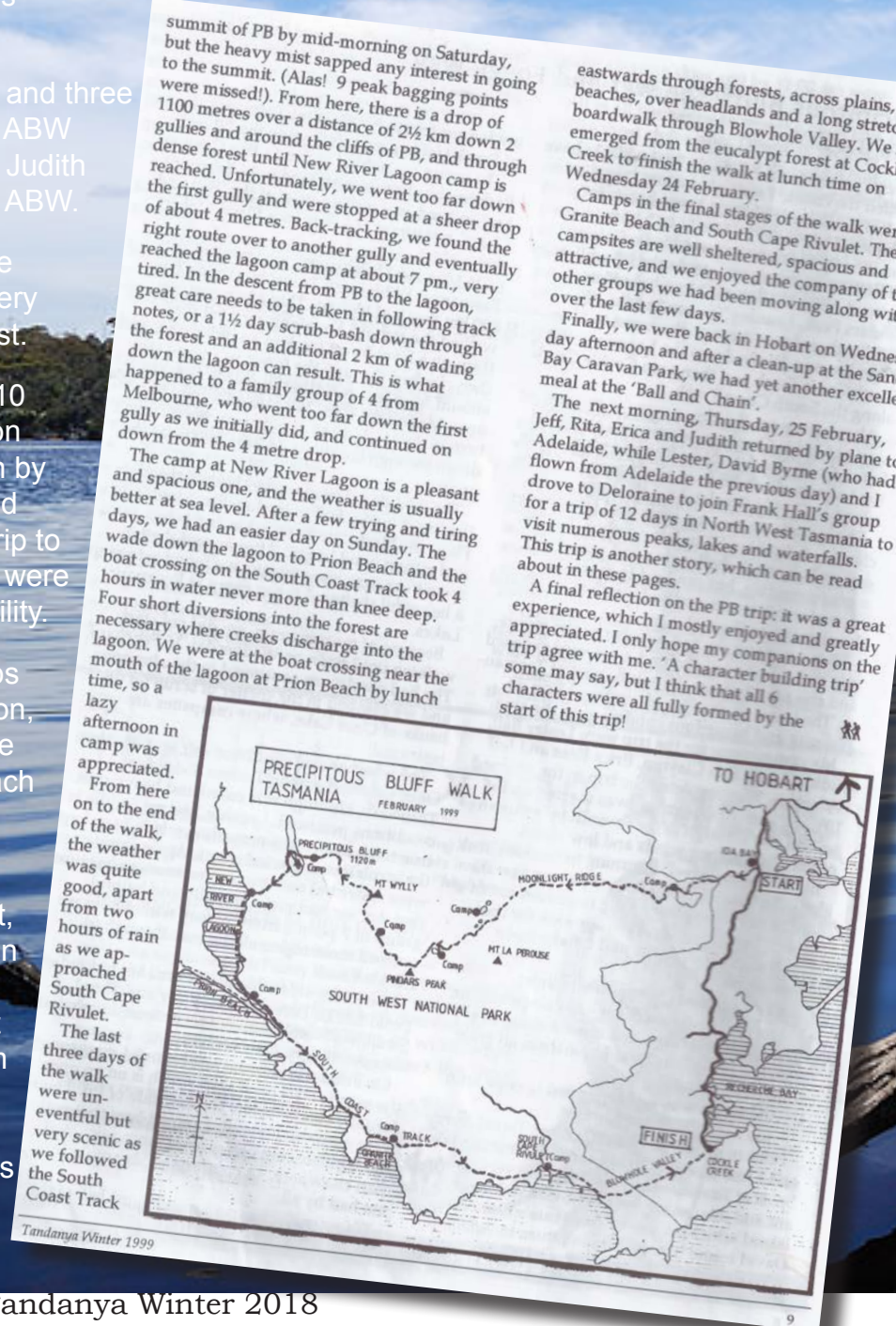
There were 6 in the group, three male and three female, all capable and well equipped ABW members. Of this group, Rita Clayton, Judith Cahill and yours truly are still active in ABW.

PB is notorious for bad weather as the mountain and plateaux behind it are very exposed and rise rapidly from the coast.

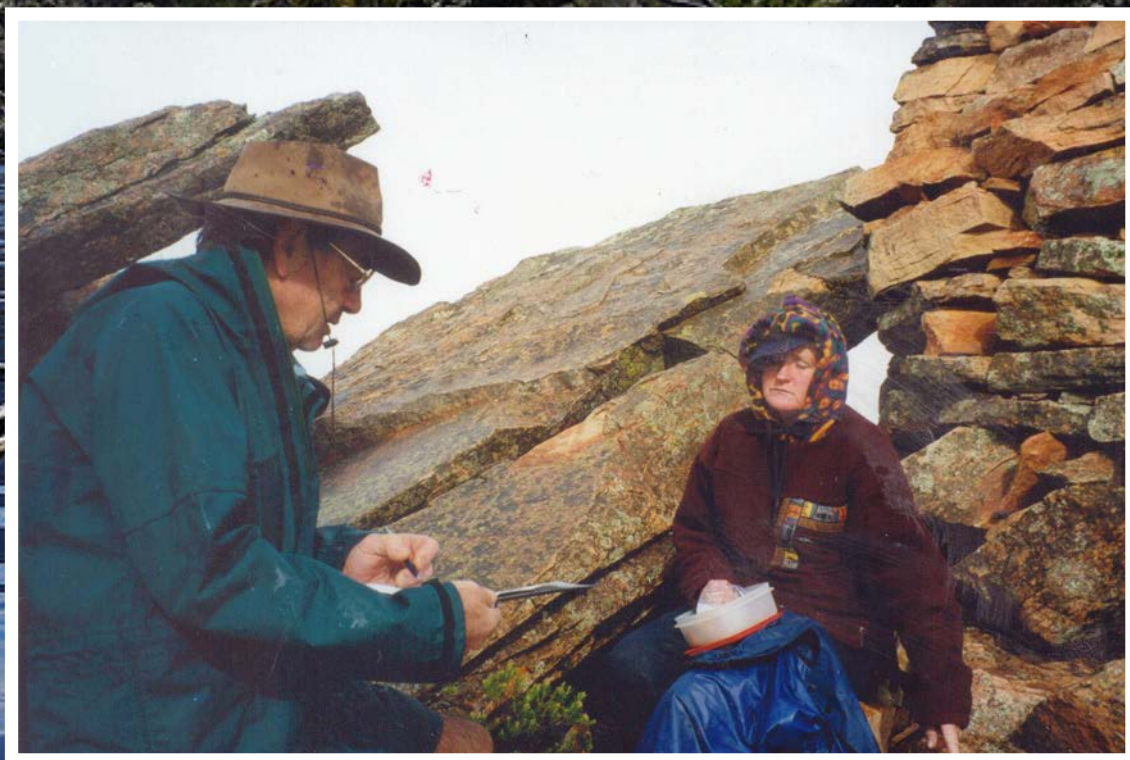
We completed the trip in the planned 10 days, but the enjoyment was marred on the second day through to the seventh by a mixture of rain, hail, strong winds and low cloud. There are interesting side trip to several peaks including PB, but these were by-passed because of very poor visibility.

From a saddle near PB, the track drops very sharply down to New River Lagoon, and then there is a four kilometre wade through the lagoon to reach Prion Beach before following the coast eastwards.

And why was the trip such a big challenge? Well, the weather foremost, as well as keeping the group positive in their outlook and keeping bedding dry, but there was also the disappointment in not getting the wonderful views from all those peaks. On our journey back to Cockle Creek and the bus back to Hobart, there was some consolation as the weather improved considerably.



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Jude and John before the descent down to New River Lagoon

Background image: Precipitous Bluff and New River Lagoon

Sensational

WALKS INFORMATION

Sunday walks begin from the top of the Adelaide Railway Station ramp at 9.00 a.m. sharp unless stated otherwise.

Weekend and longer walks are arranged at the preceding general and social meetings.

The following gear may be hired by members at very moderate charges: Rucksacks, Sleeping Bags and Tents.

To qualify for full membership, three weekend walks of suitable standard must be completed to the satisfaction of the committee.

Any beginner must first satisfy the leader of his/her fitness before undertaking any weekend walk.

GENERAL

It is important that every walker attempts to keep with the party. If through difficulties or otherwise this is impossible the leader **must** be notified without delay. If unable to make contact with the party ring emergency phone number if possible.

Emergency Phone Number:
K. Coghlan 4 3402

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Peter Beer	Balhannah 284	
Vice-President:		
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Walks Secretary:		
Hugh Dixon		79 3299
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Andrew Lothian	65 7711 ext. 206	23 3102
General Member, Librarian:		
Roger Kempson	59 5145	

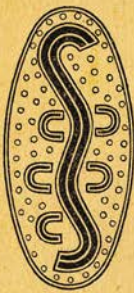
WALKS COMMITTEE
Hugh Dixon, Owen Harris, Alan Nelson,
Andrew Lothian, Brenton Wheare.

MEETINGS
Held at 70 South Terrace, Adelaide
and commence at 8.00 p.m.
Committee Meetings at 7.30 p.m.

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THE
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SPRING, 1966
WALKS PROGRAMME

Sixties!

by Bruce Marquis



Mt Magnificent 1967



I discovered this ABW program from the '60's recently. Roger Kempson has assured me there is a comprehensive collection of these old programs in the library. Do you remember some of these walks and members?

If you have some interesting historical photos of ABW walks please send them in to us.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday	4th	Bradbury, Mt. Bold Reservoir area, visiting Echunga Goldfields.	PENNY DYSON
Thursday	8th	SOCIAL MEETING, Slide Show, by	WALLY MOUNSTER
Friday	9th	Spear Creek to Mt. Brown.	ANDREW LOTHIAN
Sunday	11th	Wilmington (P.)	
Thursday	15th	COMMITTEE MEETING.	
Friday	16th	Lecture on elementary rock-climbing.	RICHARD HORN
Saturday	17th	Rock-climbing practice day.	ANN PERKINS
Sunday	18th	Cleland Wildlife Reserve.	
Thursday	22nd	Adelaide (A.S.)	
Friday	23rd	GENERAL MEETING.	STUART HARRIS
Sunday	25th	Walk from Spring Ck. to Hancock's. Lookout via Alligator Gorge.	
		Wilmington (P.) Melrose (C.S.)	

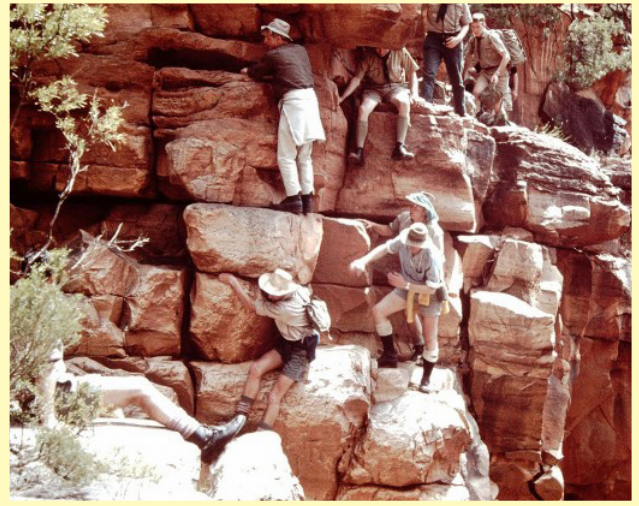
OCTOBER

Saturday	1st	Bush Search and Rescue Trinf.	ARTHUR WARD
Sunday	2nd	Walk in Wild Dog Creek—West Scrub. Hill area.	SHEINA NICHOLLS
Friday	7th	1. Walk in Aroona Valley South of Crisps Gorge.	PETER BEER
Monday	10th	2. Walk up Edeowie Gorge climbing Pompey's Pillar, returning outside the Pound.	WALLY MOUNSTER
		3. Exploratory trip to Druoid and Chase Ranges.	HUGH DIXON
Thursday	13th	Parachilna (G.S.) Wilpena (P.) SOCIAL MEETING "Conservation".	Mr. WARREN
Sunday	16th	Devil's Nose, South Para River and Parra Wirra Reserve.	BONYTHON
Thursday	20th	Adelaide, Gawler (A.S.) COMMITTEE MEETING.	BRENTON WHEARE
Sunday	23rd	Walk from Tanunda Creek to Mount Kitchener.	JOHN LIDDLE
Thursday	27th	Cambrai (A.S.) GENERAL MEETING. Slides in for competition.	
Friday	28th	Walk in the Dutchman's Stern Range.	ERIC JACKSON
Sunday	30th	Augusta (P.) or Pichi-Richi (L.D.)	

NOVEMBER

Saturday	5th	Night stroll up Black Hill to view fire-works. Meet at Clubrooms 7.00 p.m.	HUGH DIXON
Sunday	6th	Visit, Ferries and McDonald Wildlife Reserves.	ERIC JACKSON
Thursday	10th	SOCIAL MEETING. Slide competition.	
Friday	11th	Train 6.10 p.m., Friday to Finnis.	ROGER KEMPSON
Sunday	13th	Walk to Willunga Hill returning by 3.30 p.m. bus.	
Thursday	17th	Milang (A.S.) COMMITTEE MEETING.	
Sunday	20th	Rocky Hill to Marble Hill. Return via Morialta Falls.	GERRY HORDIJK
Thursday	24th	Adelaide (A.S.) GENERAL MEETING.	
Saturday	26th	Bushcraft Training Weekend. Meet outside clubrooms at 8.50 a.m.	BRENTON WHEARE
Sunday	27th		

Index to map sources —
A.S. = Army Survey.
L.D. = Lands Department.
C.S. = Club Special.
G.S. = Geological Survey (Mines Dept.).
P. = Planimetric.



Edeowie Gorge, 50 years ago, photo Ann Ward



How campsites once looked, 1960s, photo Roger Kempson



Mt Zeil, highest in NT, after the descent, Aug 1966, photo Roger Kempson






Onkaparinga River campsite, Dec 1966, photo Roger Kempson



Onkaparinga River campsite, Dec 1966, photo Roger Kempson



Summit of Mt Bogong, Vic, in blizzard conditions, 1971, photo Roger Kempson



3 Capes Trip Tasmania – A Beginners Solo walk

by Penny Day

Having become a regular hiker over the last few years, I felt the need to stretch myself a little further and try out some solo hiking. I have had the urge to go back to Tasmania after several trips had always left me feeling the desire to experience more of this beautiful part of the world. So when I had the opportunity to tackle the Three Capes Track in Tasmania alone – I jumped on it.

The trail is a 4 day, 3 night fairly moderate (to easy) track of 46km on mainly boardwalks, some well-manicured gravel trail and a good dose of stairs to get your calves burning. A maximum of 48 people per day are allowed on the track and you can only walk it in the one direction. To say this track is thoughtfully constructed is an understatement – an impressive level of attention to the ecological impact on the area has been taken into consideration and the design of huts is both sensitive to the area and to the needs of travellers.

Each days walk leaves you plenty of time to slowly meander through the vast diversity of Tasmanian ecosystems and easily get in to camp by mid-afternoon and rest those weary feet. One of the most unique parts of the walk, for me, was the artful story seats positioned at perfect spots to stop and admire the amazing views and read about the history, local flora and fauna, or interesting stories of the beautiful area you are walking through.

So with Tassie weather at its best, I set off to explore the Tasman Peninsular. Beginning with a few hours at Port Arthur Historic site, I slowly unwound and started looking forward to the adventure ahead of me. From Pt Arthur you jump on a specially built boat, for an eco-cruise with close up views of the coastline you

traverse on your first day. The first days walk begins at Denman's Cove where it's an easy 4kms up to Surveyors Hut. Here you can settle down to meeting with your fellow walkers and chatting with the very informative ranger who greets you, and enjoy the luxurious panoramic deck with views of Cape Raoul on a clear night.



On Day 2 (11km – 280m elevation) you get to experience some of Tasman National Parks vast diversity with the trail taking you through low eucalypt scrubland, tall eucalypt forest, windswept moorland, up Arthurs Peak (312m) and even a small microclimate of wet forest; before reaching Munro Hut and indulging in a warm bucket shower. Munro Hut offers amazing views of Munro Bight as far as Cape Hauy and if you're lucky enough, an abundance of wildlife including ring tailed possums, spotted quolls, wombats and echidnas who have all been known to visit at night. Unfortunately the only creature I encountered was a rather intimidating tiger snake.

Day 3 (17km – 490m? elevation) offers the breathtaking views you have likely been waiting for – with your walk taking you out to the Blade at Cape Pillar. Here is your chance to get amazing pictures of Tasman Island and plunging dolomite sea cliffs of the Trident. If you're keen to see Cape Pillar from another angle – take the seal spa track around the corner, and with a pair of binoculars, you'll be rewarded with views of diving in around Islands



seals playfully the rock pools Tasman base.

You Munro same can leave camp on the If craving

return to Hut along the path, so you gratefully full pack at and pick it up way through. a little extra

adventure – take the opportunity to explore the bush camp at Wughalee Falls and here you can follow the less used old Mt Fortescue track that criss crosses streams and eventually comes out where you will walk on Day 4. You can once again leave your full pack at the camp junction and pick it up on your way to Retakunna Hut, which was handy as the walk down to the camp had some steep and slippery sections.

Retakunna Hut – meaning creaking limbs – turns out to be a perfectly cosy place to view the wild weather that came in on our final evening on the trail. Under Mt Fortescue's wispy cloud covered peak, we spent the evening watching the lightning and rain whilst recounting our adventures.

Day 4 (14km – 410 elevation) takes you to your highest peak (Mt Fortescue – 428m) and back down towards Cape Haug. This, for me, was the most beautiful section of the walk, going through Jurassic period forest with lichen and moss covered rocks and trees, an abundance of brightly coloured mushrooms and the giant trees and ferns. Once you reach the Cape Haug junction you can leave your pack and

take the side trail out to see the Totem Pole and candle stick where rock climbers test their skills every year. Returning to the popular day walk track, it's an easy downhill stroll to Fortescue Bay where you can soak your feet in the pristine waters and enjoy the long white beach at your walks end.

Overall this is a great trip for someone wanting to try solo walking or a family with young kids interested in hiking. The walk is fairly moderate, tracks are well constructed and there is no chance of getting lost. Overnight Huts are very comfortable and well equipped, meaning you don't have to carry too much. You will be in awe of the spectacular views and diversity of ecosystems you traverse. Although you can explore a lot of the area with bush camping or day walks, I feel the track is well worth a visit to experience the stories along the track, the luxurious feel of the huts and most of all the comradery of walking with a diverse group of people. Tasmania has so much to offer and as one of the entries in the log book points out – "Hiking is good for the soul", so put this trip on your list and get out there exploring.

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Searching For Vanishing Falls

by Trevor Jones

In late March this year Trevor Jones and Bruce Hood undertook a 13 day walk and paddle in an attempt to get to Vanishing Falls, in the SW National Park in Tasmania.

At Vanishing Falls, the Salisbury River flows over a dolerite plateau underlain by limestone. The river flows over the edge of the dolerite sill, a 70m drop, and drains straight into a cave system in the limestone. The above-ground channel downstream of the plunge pool flows only during floods.

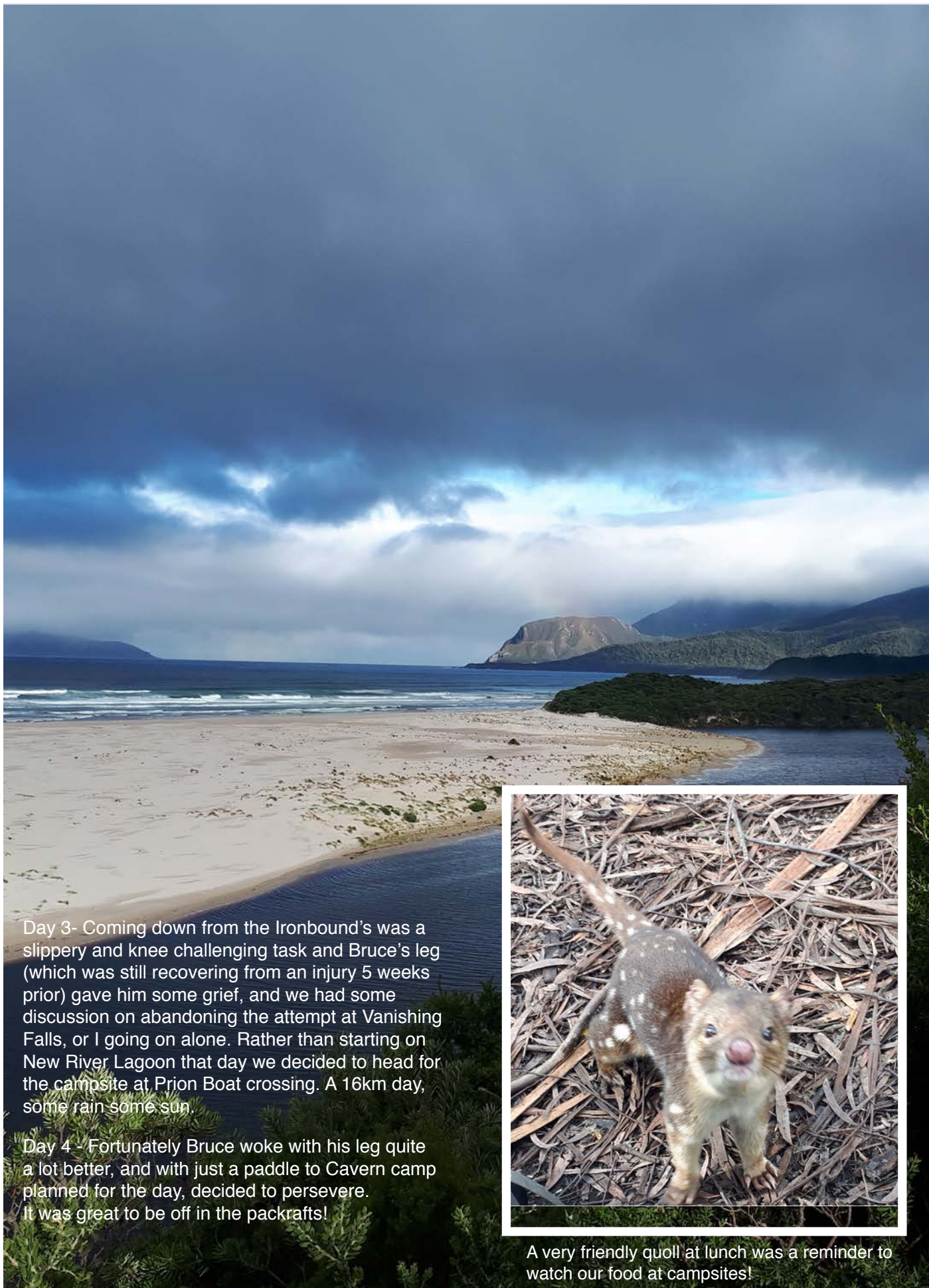
The falls are very remote and surrounded by dense scrub, requiring at least 3 days hard work to reach from the nearest track. There are several options on getting to the falls, we chose the, 'in theory' least scrub approach, coming in from New River and exiting the same way. To do this, on top of our 13-day

pack, we each carried a pack-raft and paddle. Adding about 2.5kg to the pack weight.

Day 1 – After our flight the previous day was cancelled due to poor weather, we took off the next day from Hobart, in equally poor weather, but the pilot managed to get us through low cloud and showers around the coast to Melaleuca. We started walking at 12.30pm in light rain - would the weather improve? Short answer - no ...

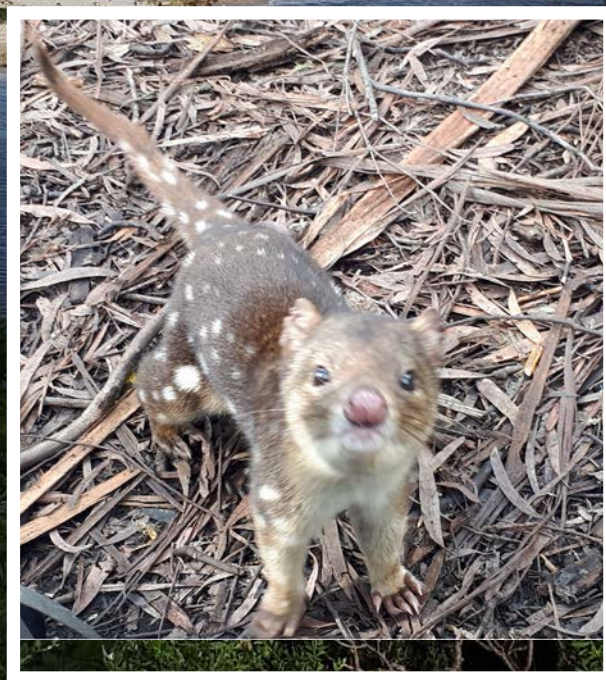
An easy 16.5km walk down to and along Cox's Bight.

Day 2 - A warm up day with a 900m climb up onto the Ironbound Range. We camped on top which was quite chilly. A 20km day, with good track and not too much rain.



Day 3- Coming down from the Ironbound's was a slippery and knee challenging task and Bruce's leg (which was still recovering from an injury 5 weeks prior) gave him some grief, and we had some discussion on abandoning the attempt at Vanishing Falls, or I going on alone. Rather than starting on New River Lagoon that day we decided to head for the campsite at Prion Boat crossing. A 16km day, some rain some sun.

Day 4 - Fortunately Bruce woke with his leg quite a lot better, and with just a paddle to Cavern camp planned for the day, decided to persevere. It was great to be off in the packrafts!



A very friendly quoll at lunch was a reminder to watch our food at campsites!



Setting off on New River Lagoon

Initially it was pretty calm but we soon had a significant headwind, showers and swell to battle. Normally (that is based on a single other trip report) about a 3hr paddle, it took us 4.5hrs. Walking along the edge of the lagoon was not really an option either with the lagoon level quite high. After a 6.5km paddle and a chance to relax at Cavern camp we set off for VF.

Day 5 - We left our unneeded food/gear hanging from trees at Cavern camp and set off. We had quite a stiff NW headwind getting the couple of kms to the mouth of New River, but then it was nice paddling for about 2.5km up the river. However the opposing current continued to increase (maybe 2km/hr with us paddling at 2.5 or 3km/hr) so after stopping for a break we decided to pack up the rafts and try the forest/scrub. At times this was ok, and at times slower than paddling; especially when we became navigationally challenged by a significant side creek (ie we went the wrong direction for about 1km!). Distance covered in a tough day - about 7km (700m / hr). Quite a few showers.

Day 6 - Cold and wet.

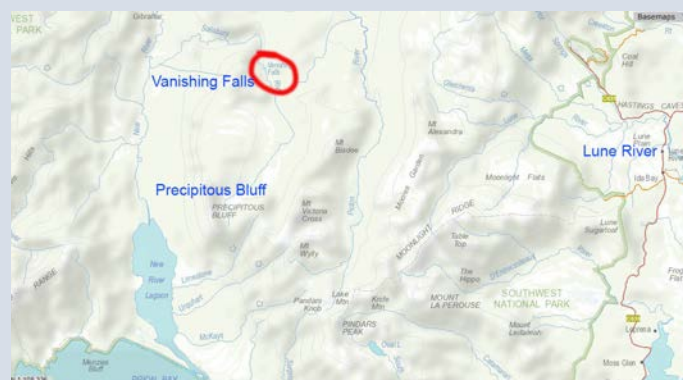
Difficult walking in scrub up beside New River to the junction with the Salisbury river. Used packrafts to get across New River and managed to paddle a couple of slower pools up the Salisbury, carrying rafts past rapids.

We packed up the rafts and entered the forest – with

thick vegetation we only managed 100m in 1 hour and battled back to the side of the river. After a while we chose to leave the rafts tied to a fallen tree. It was slippery, difficult, and very cold walking in and near the rivers edge. Sometimes slipping and being floated by our backpack while grabbing for handholds. We camped only a couple of kms up the Salisbury. Set-up in the rain, and cooked in tents. Maybe 7km covered for the day.

Day 7 - Cold and wet (again), we crossed the river, with difficulty, when necessary - which was often. We went into the bush when both sides of the river impassable or not possible to cross, or when we were shivering too much. When in the river we wished we were in the scrub, when in the scrub we wished we were in the river ...

Camped 6 or 7 km up the Salisbury. Maybe 5km for the day ...



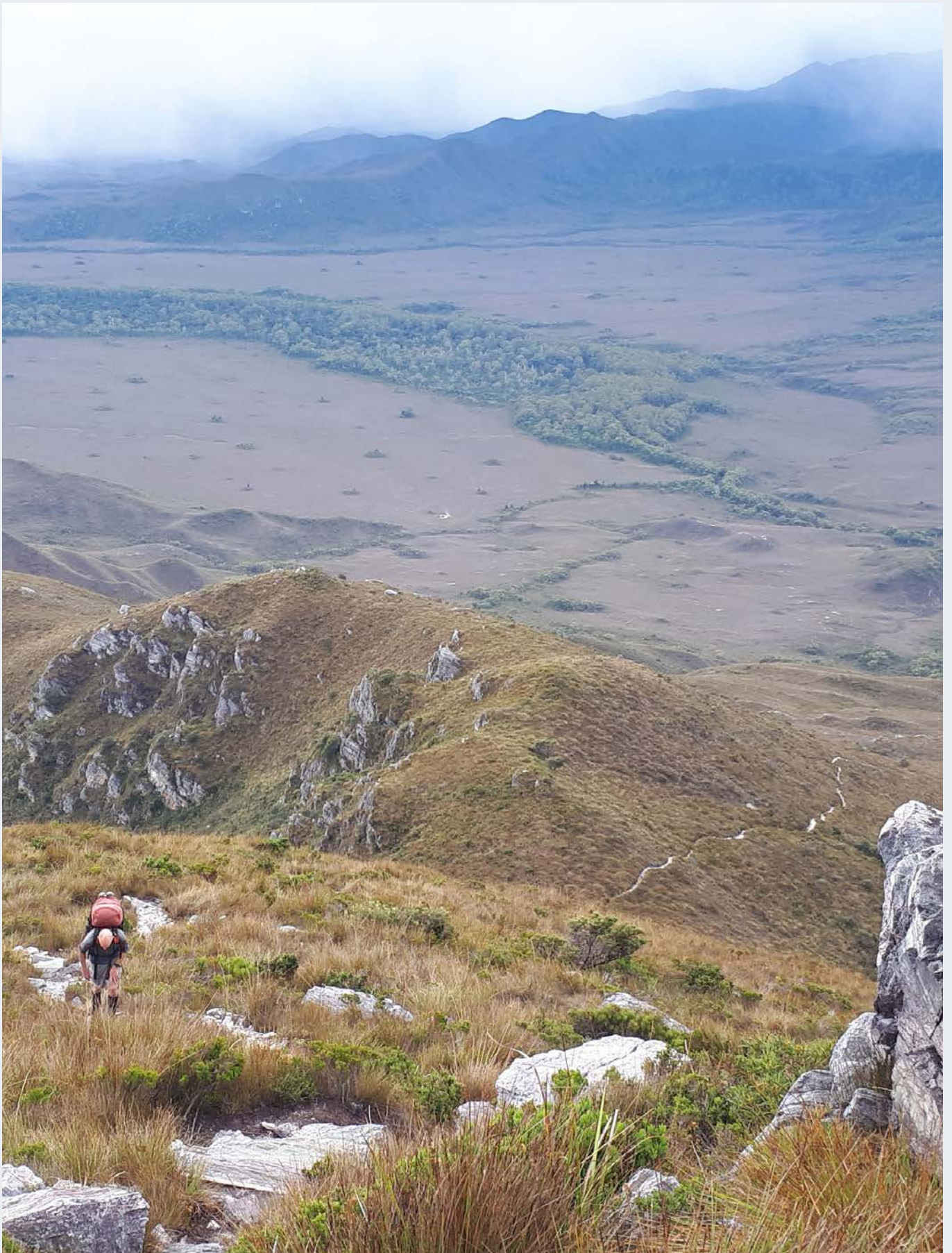
Day 8 - Cold and wet ...

We had now used up our 'rest/spare' day and also the day trip planned for climbing Precipitous Bluff. But assuming we would get back quicker than coming, we pressed on for a final attempt to get to VF.

The rising river level was making it increasingly difficult to cross or walk beside. We were often walking on fallen vegetation, in various states of decay, often 1m+ above 'ground' level, and regularly slipping off (or through) tree trunks, with our legs battered and bruised.

A fall through rotting vegetation to ground level a common occurrence ...

We got to about 3km from VF. The last 2km to the falls are normally a dry river bed with the river underground. But looking at the river we expect it would have been flowing and decide we had to turn back - just no more time left. We only got a couple of kms beyond last night's camp, heading back down the river - which was



Bruce – climbing up on to the Ironbound Range.



View to Precipitous Bluff



Crossing the Salisbury



Junction with the Salisbury River



Start of a 400m section of log jams across the river

now too high to cross or go beside.

A miserable day - finally admitting failure to get to VF.

Where there were rocks they were treacherously slippery to walk on.

Day 9 - Cold and wet ...

The river was too high to cross, we were on the south side of the river, and we had left our packrafts on the north side – no choice but to battle thru the scrub, occasionally trying the river for somewhere to cross. After a couple of aborted attempts we finally made a crossing and down to find the rafts about 4:45pm. We decided to celebrate with a bit of paddling before looking for somewhere to camp.

Neither of us had done any solo paddling in rapids before - but where better to learn than in the remote Tassie wilderness!

Coming down our first rapid my paddle came apart and I lost 40% of it - this was at the joint where I had deformed it using it as a walking stick ... fortunately Bruce spotted it caught near the rivers edge, and I managed to negotiate the rapid with half a paddle and recover it. After some great repair work by Bruce we continued on for another couple of rapids before finding a spot for the night just before the junction with New River.

I bent my paddle trying to get free from a rock on one rapid - another repair job taping a couple of tent pegs to it.

Day 10 - Sunny and calm! Finally, a nice day. Where was this when we needed it earlier ...

We had a fun (if nervous) day paddling down New River, with plenty of rapids to negotiate as well as

many submerged, and partly submerged trees. We came to one section of about 400m of log jams where we carried our rafts through the forest. The rafts held up really well - taking a battering on rocks and branches without any punctures.

We got to Cavern camp for a late lunch - having covered about 14km in 5hrs - a nice change from battling thru scrub! And after lunch decided to paddle on to Prion campsite while we had a tail wind.

On arriving at Prion, we hang out our wet things - basically every item in our packs ...

We covered about 20km this day - all by raft - with the help of a fast-flowing river.

Day 11,12,13 Back on the beautiful South Coast track - we really appreciated having a track (and bridges!) – even if it was muddy. Out to Cockle Ck, back to Hobart and a hot shower. Yah.

Enough challenge for a while I think.

On our last day we met a solo walker coming in - Andy Szollsi, who was just starting out on his little 88-day walk! He has pre-placed 9 food drops. Walking some of the toughest walks in Tassie: PB, Arthurs Traverse, Eldon Range, Frankland Range and others! Carrying about 32.5kg. In the Tassie winter! Finishing early July.

Well that humbled us.

Will we try for VF again? Maybe!

P.S. Ask Bruce about the small 35mm splinter he smuggled back into SA!



Crossing South Cape Rivulet (without getting your feet wet!)

Adelaide Bushwalkers Wednesday Walkers

20th anniversary lunch Belair National Park 28th March 2018



Back Row

Lorraine Billett, Chris Lloyd, Alan McLean, Melanie Jackson, Ian Dickinson, Jan Harrison,
Lee Kendall, Ian Boscence, Wendy Foreman, Brent Martin, Frank Hall, June Boscence,
Denis Harper, Janet Callen, Bruce Marriott, Roger Kempson, Murray Billett, Mal Kirkham,
Sally Paterson, Cynthia Kirkham

Middle Row

Bob Stanton, Bonnie Marriott, Natalie Stanton, Rita Clayton, Margaret Young, Alan Brokenshire,
Chris Steers, John Butler, Rosemary Butler

Front Row

Liz Woodham, Helen Davies, David Evans, Judith Cahill, John Bartlett

Inset

Alison Beer, Peter Beer, Margaret Wattchow

Behind Camera

Barbara Phillips



A fall through rotting vegetation to ground level was a common occurrence ... Trevor Jones on the Vanishing Falls walk