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#### Membership Fees

\$40 Per Person Subs due July each year

## Sunraysia Bushwalkers November 2013

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   & Karl's 60<sup>th</sup>
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Last month the Club ended up having two events on the one weekend. So decisions

had to made whether to do the Friday evening walk at Kings Billabong or celebrate Karl's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday in Broken Hill followed by a walk and a night camped at Mutwingii camp ground – what choices!

As things evolved Dick, Wendy, Russell, Sandra, Elizabeth, Bernie, Tony, Jeff & Marion joined forces for the Kings Billabong Walk, while Barb & Roge did the trek to Broken Hill with Karl & Meryl. It eventuated that Michael & Paula were also in Broken Hill and they joined us for the birthday evening meal at the Good Earth restaurant on the top of an enormous mullock heap on the outskirts of the Silver City.

The following are reports by Dick on the Kings Billabong walk and Mutawintji Moochings by Barb.



## KING'S BILLABONG WALK 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2013.

The King's Billabong and its surrounds is a treasure not widely known to many Sunraysia locals. Being easily accessed because of its proximity to Nichols Point, it offers the opportunity for interesting walking in a bush environment. The billabong has been a permanent water storage since the beginnings of the Chaffey settlement when the single levee wall was constructed at its northern end. In the





early years much of the surrounding land was a designated "common" where livestock were grazed and stockyards were located near the levee. A road track crossed the levee and for a number of years vehicles had unrestricted access to the area. The closing of these rough tracks prompted much public outcry about "loss of rights" but it enabled the Friends of King's Billabong to implement their vision of creating an attractive place for passive recreation.

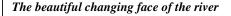


Nine club members met at the car park at the levee and walked to the bird hide via the inland loop. The water level in the 'bong' was a bit lower than is often the case, but the view from the hide across the water revealed vast numbers of water birds. We returned to the starting point by walking closer to the water and found a plundered tortoise's nest beside the track.

Back at the start, we drove a short distance in the direction of the old pumping station. We enjoyed a picnic snack while watching the effects of the setting

sun on the glassy water. It was indeed a pleasurable way to finish the working week.







Mutawintji Moochings & Karl's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> October 2013

The group of four set off at about 3pm on a rather warm afternoon to drive the 265 klms to celebrate Karl's 60<sup>th</sup> at Broken Hill followed by a walk in the Mutawintji Nation Park the following day.

Oh dear, all those dead kangaroo bodies along the way

are such a sad sight to see. The only things that are flourishing are the Kites and Wedge Tail eagles feeding on all the carcasses and the goats eating all sorts of vegetation as they do.

We made it in time to change at the Grand Guest House, where we were overnighting. Once upon a time it might have been described as 'Grand' but now sadly not quite so grand as it was in its heyday. A real step back in time experience.





Three of the group were keen on walking up the mullock heap to the restaurant! Barb chickened out, as dress shoes rather than walking shoes would have been rather crippling to say the least.

Michael & Paula put us to shame as they managed the walk up the hill! I meant to check out Paula's footwear that allowed her to achieve the climb up without undue discomfort.

The view overlooking the town of Broken Hill together with the setting sun is a wonderful sight.

Early Saturday morning we departed for Mutawintji National Park, which is 130 klms from Broken Hill. Part of the way is bitumen which gives way to a wide graded dirt road. The surface is rather gravely so one must take care of the speed when taking the corners.

Once at the Park camp ground we sorted out our gear for the day's walk and set off into the Park. Our route brought us unintentionally across the rubbish area from the Ranger's houses. It was an awful surprise to see at least 3 pairs of freshly cut



emu legs left lying on the ground, together with some other slaughtered animal. Unfortunately there seems to be no attempt at keeping the rubbish in one central spot as we came across a

fresh load of rubbish spread over the ground.





Atop the ridge checking out the views



We sadly continued on our walk. But our spirits soon lifted as we came across quite a few kangaroos sheltering in the shade of the low bushes as we climbed to the top of the gorge. Here we stopped for lunch. It was a great spot to view the gorges and to have a cooling breeze. The temperature for the day was forecast for 33°C, just a little too warm for comfortable walking.

While we rested Roger set off to locate a cave where one can see ochre hand prints, spears and lizards painted on the walls. He then led us there before we started to head back. The floor of the rocky overhang where the hand paintings are located is totally covered with goat droppings. So many goats were seen that we despaired for the vegetation, desperately trying to survive in this rocky dry area.





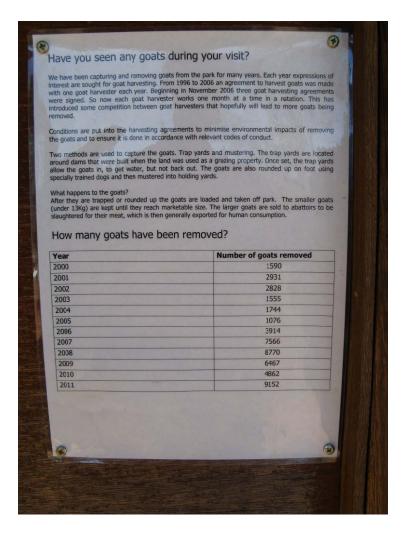
It seemed a very long walk back in the heat and the camp was an extremely welcome sight.

The amenities at the Park consist of toilets and solar heated hot water showers. We continued Karl's birthday celebrations, enjoying all the lovely nibblies, wine and bushwalking tucker provided by Meryl & Roger.

The photo on the right is of a sign in the information shelter at Mutawintji.

The number of goats supposedly removed is quite incredible and really makes one despair for the future of the Park.

We are left wondering as to the number taken out in 2012 if any!



#### **KANGAROO ISLAND**

Proposed trip to Kangaroo Island next April 2014

Duration: Approx. 6-8days, including travel to and from Mildura

Accommodation: Camping

Walking: Mostly day walks but those wishing to can do overnight

treks. Bike riding may also be an option.

Cost: Flinders Chase National Park Camp Grounds.

Per Car includes 5 persons

Rocky River \$27 per car Toilets/ Showers West Bay / Snake Lagoon 13 per car Toilets Most camping ~ \$13 - \$15 per night per vehicle. May camp in a couple of different locations.

Ferry: Per Person \$94 return plus \$180 per vehicle return.

General Information: www.tourkangarooisland.com.au/

Verna

# CANCELLATION OF HIGH COUNTRY RAIL TRAIL BIKE RIDE

Due to the low
numbers of
interested persons
for the High
Country Rail Trail
bike ride,
proposed for 21st
November, it has
now been withdrawn
from our calendar



Above is a tin of Christmas Bush Honey bought in Sheffield, Tasmania. If you are in Tasmania some time I would suggest that you give it a try. It is absolutely delicious.



#### PLANNED WALKS FOR 2013 & 2014

If you intend going on any of these trips please contact the Trip Leader by 8 pm the Thursdays beforehand so that arrangements may be finalized. Unless a minimum of 4 walkers (including the Trip Leader) have registered by Thursday evening walks may have to be cancelled.

2013	Activity	Grade	Contact
November 6	General Meeting		
2014			
April	Kangaroo Island – 8 days	Е	Verna 50234102
April 18 – 21	Mutawintji National Park		
	Cobdobla – Suggestion only at present		
	Glue Pot - Suggestion only at present		
Late April/May	Mt Feathertop – Harriet Ville to Ridge Walk -		
	Suggestion only at present		
	Katoomba to Genolan Caves (5 days) - Suggestion only at present		

All walks are given a **two letter grading code** 

#### The first letter refers to the distance

- **S** short (8-12 klms a day)
- M medium (12-20 klms a day)
- L long (20 plus klms a day)

#### The second letter refers to the terrain

- ${\bf E}$  easy (mainly following form of marked track typically on flat ground)  ${\bf M}$  medium (mainly on formed tracks but may include some off-track walking with moderate climbs on or off track)
- **H** hard (day or overnight walks which may require long or multiple steep climbs, cross country travel, creek crossings &/or some rock scrambling)
- **R** rough (day or overnight walks in difficult terrain which may include long &/or steep climbs and considerable off track walking. May include special requirements such as requirement to carry extra water, experience in rock scrambling &/or snow, knowledge of survival)

Next Meeting Wednesday 6th November at 8.00 pm at Drysdale's 2164 Fifteenth Street, Irymple