

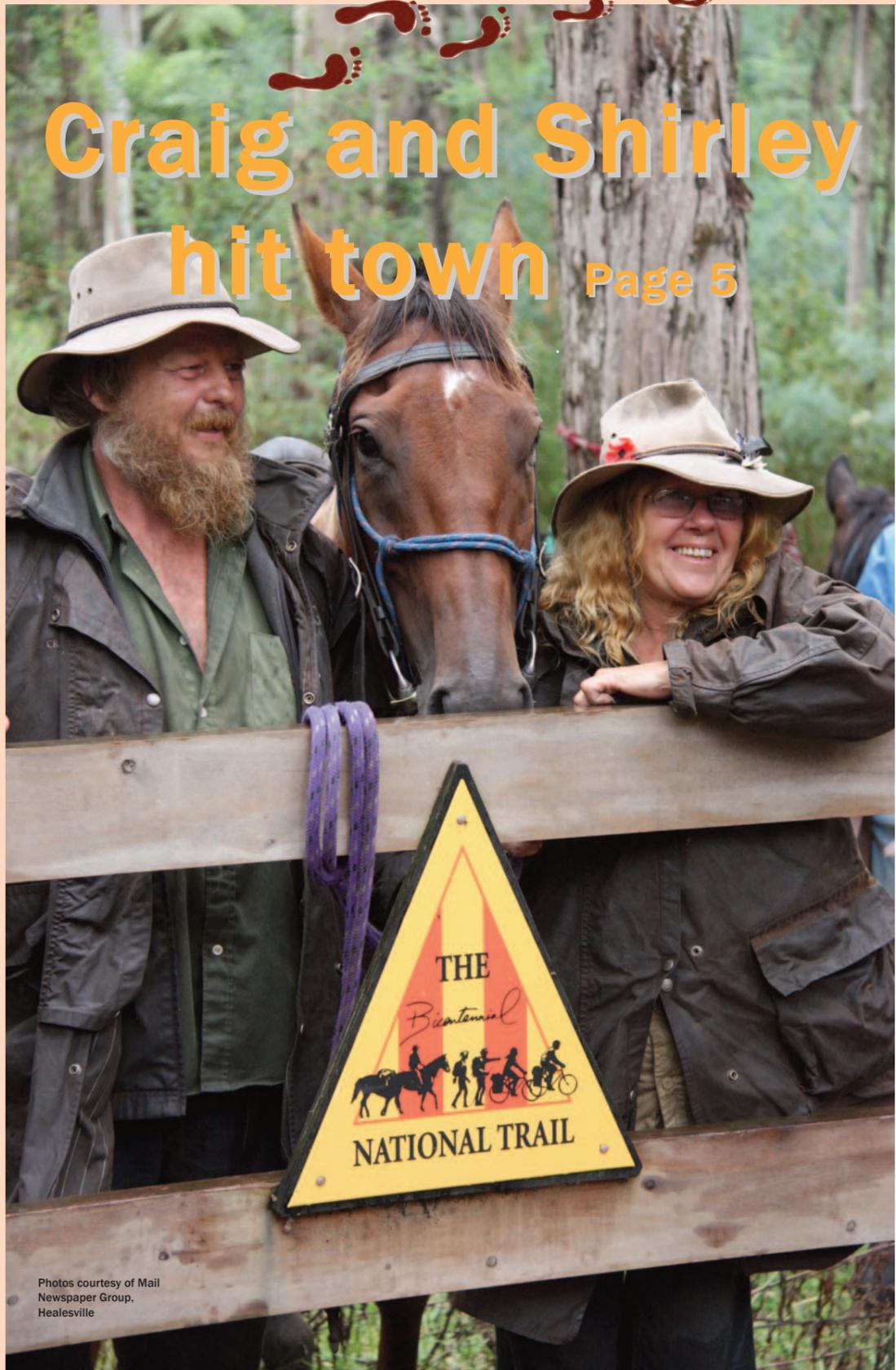


"Goo-ee!"

BNT

# TRACKS

NEWSLETTER OF THE  
*Bicentennial*  
NATIONAL TRAIL



## Craig and Shirley hit town Page 5

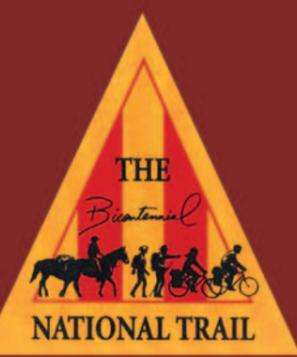
### INSIDE:



High Plains  
drifters



Running  
the BNT



August 2012

Photos courtesy of Mail  
Newspaper Group,  
Healesville

## From the Chair

THE BNT once again has a NSW Trail Coordinator.

The NSW Dept of Lands has appointed George Schneider to the position that was held by Col Roberts until he retired two years ago.

George has taken to his duties in a vigorous and dedicated manner. Since his appointment, the BNT completed discussions over the TSR camp sites and BNT registered trekkers will not be charged. The MOU will be officially signed shortly.

On behalf of all members of the BNT I welcome George and look forward to a

productive association and working relationship. George's first report appears in this edition of *BNT TRACKS*.

Along with BNT members Richard Smallwood, Peter Cochran, Genevieve Long and Clive Edwards, I have been involved in ongoing discussion with the NSW NPWS on a Horse Riding Strategy.

Also involved is Fiona Mellor from the NSW Endurance Riders. Fiona, who has been a strong supporter of the BNT, has succeeded me on the NPWS Advisory Council and matters concerning the BNT will continue to be well represented.

For access onto lands that are privately

owned, BNT Trekkers must now be current financial members of the BNT.

This is due to insurance and also requests from some private landowners, for a better control on who enters their property.

Therefore, the Board has decided to restrict the sale of guidebooks and other BNT goods to members only and limit the access of information to non-members. Access to public lands is still open for all.

I look forward to meeting up with BNT members at the AGM at Ebor.

Nick Jacomas

## Meeting in the wilderness

RUB shoulders with wilderness buffs from around Australia in one of the most demanding wildernesses of the BNT.

This year's AGM will be held at Ebor, NSW, at Yaraandoo Eco Lodge, a premier venue set in the spectacular New England National Park.

There will be a choice of accommodation from 5-Star to budget and a two-course dinner with entertainment, and the chance to discuss new directions for



Australia's National Trail as well as to elect a new Board.

Saturday, October 6 is the date for the meeting and dinner, while activities on Sunday include a Dawn Chorus

breakfast at the spectacular Point Lookout and a barbecue with national parks rangers at Georges Junction on the Macleay River.

Bookings for the dinner essential: contact Roger Fryer on 0427 559 575 or email [rog.fryer@bigpond.com](mailto:rog.fryer@bigpond.com). To arrange accommodation: Yaraandoo Eco Lodge (02) 6775 9219 or [www.yaraandoo.com.au](http://www.yaraandoo.com.au). National parks can be contacted on (02) 6657 2309.

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ACN 010 860 143  
PO Box 1196 NERANG QLD 4211  
Phone: 1300 138 724  
Email: [info@nationaltrail.com.au](mailto:info@nationaltrail.com.au)  
Website: [www.nationaltrail.com.au](http://www.nationaltrail.com.au)

Editor: Roger Fryer  
Phone: (02) 6654 9555  
Email: [rog.fryer@bigpond.com](mailto:rog.fryer@bigpond.com)

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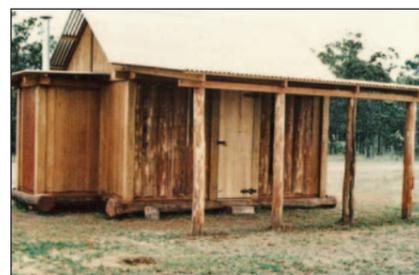
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Design by Publish and be damned ...

## Letter to the Editor

DEAR Roger, it was great to read the hut issue in BNT Tracks magazine. I have been interested in building huts of all makes and styles all my life. I am a fourth generation timber man and was born with an axe in my hands. Working timber with the old tools of broadaxe and adze is something I enjoy doing.

We need to run some schools to teach people how to use these tools before it is too late. Before long there will be no bugger around to teach them. When R M Williams was alive we talked about this but we never got around to it. I did a lot of timber work for R M, he was a great mate. I cut some beautiful big hand-adzed beams for his buildings at Toowoomba, and also cut a lot of hand-adzed timbers for the Stockman's Hall of Fame in Longreach. I am retired now but recently built



two of these huts in my back yard at Curra, north of Gympie. My old mate Brian Taylor, National Trail man, often visits and we swing the billy and we tell a few yarns. I have been a keen axeman and axe grinder all my life, this keeps me hopping but I am still keen to keep the pioneer spirit of Australia alive. If there are any projects building huts I would like to have a look at them. I have included a few photos of some of my work.

Regards, Cyril Dahl.

## News

### Grant for ACT Centenary ride on the BNT

THE ACT Equestrian Association has received a grant from the Centenary of Canberra Community Grants Fund to support a celebratory horse ride along the Bicentennial Trail in Canberra's centenary year.

This event, which will be designed to attract all ages and types of equestrians, will serve to draw attention to the numbers of horses in Canberra and to the significance of the BNT through the Territory. The last big ride on the BNT in Canberra was in the year it was opened, 1988. So this will be a 25 year anniversary.

It is proposed that the route from Hall to Kambah or even Tharwa will be broken into stages at points which will enable riders based in various part of Canberra to drop in and out of the ride at places where there is adequate float parking and facilities for horses and maybe even people.

Stromlo Forest Park have volunteered to be such a staging area, as have equestrian Park and Belconnen and Kambah Pony Clubs.

The general plan is to hold the ride on a Sunday in Spring 2013. October appears to be a month already set aside for cycling events so it is more likely that the ride will be in September or November.

Several people have volunteered to be on the planning committee which will meet for the first time in June.

While there are definite reps from the BNT, ACTEA, ACTERA and the Australian Stock Horse Association, and expressions of interest from pony clubs, GPUG and the Monaro Trekkers, at the moment there is no-one specifically from the Weston Creek /Stromlo Area.

The first meeting of the planning committee will be on Thursday, 7 June. If you think you can help represent the views of local riders and have time to help with what will grow into a bigish and complex planning exercise, please contact the Secretary of ACTEA, Beth Stone, at [bstone@webone.com.au](mailto:bstone@webone.com.au).



### Heading north

BNT Chair Nick Jacomas, Mayor Lee Watts, Sam Alexander and Pipa Alexander, Sam's mum

BNT horse trekker Sam Alexander was given a mayor reception in Scone, the horse capital of Australia.

Sam, who left Healesville on the 25th of February, was having a week's respite in Scone before leaving the Upper Hunter towards the New England area of NSW and on to Queensland.

Mayor Lee Watts, of the Upper Hunter Shire Council, who presented Sam with a Certificate of Appreciation, paid tribute to him for generosity as our young BNT

trekker has taken a year off his medical studies "to promote the importance of medical care in rural Australia and raise awareness of the important work done by the Royal Flying Doctor Service".

Sam paid great tribute to the BNT section coordinators for their valued assistance and especially to Jo and John Kash for their support in his preparation towards his trek on the BNT.

You can follow Sam's journey on his website, [www.headingnorth2012.com](http://www.headingnorth2012.com).

### BNT helps catch 'last bushranger'

POLICE used BNT maps to help catch the armed fugitive Malcolm Naden who had been on the run for an impossible seven years, much of it on the Bicentennial National Trail, effectively closing the sections around Nowendoc.

Naden, an experienced and canny bushman, lived by raiding isolated bush cabins, managing to feed and clothe himself, arm himself with a rifle and ammunition which he allegedly used to shoot and wound a policeman in a narrow escape, and even watched computer porn.

Naden was wanted by police over the disappearance in Dubbo of a close relative and the alleged murder of another woman. He apparently evaded capture by hiding in a roof space at Dubbo's Western Plains Zoo before heading to the wilderness of the Barrington Tops region.



The fugitive was finally captured after police wired a large number of remote bush cabins with electronic surveillance equipment and detected him cadging a meal. Although he attempted to run, he was finally brought to ground by a police dog and reportedly said: "Thank God it's over."



FOR five years now, everyone has been talking about Craig Landy and Shirley Marr trekking the BNT.

They are an attractive couple who carry with them the style, courage, character, self-reliance and resilience of National Trail trekkers.

Working their way down the Trail, they met thousands of admirers, battled floods and drought, and carried with them and broadcast the BNT spirit.

They started off with a gypsy wagon and horse team, but ditched the wagon and continued on over the mountain country with the just the team.

After putting away more than 5000 kilometres to trek the entire length of the National Bicentennial Trail, they finished their five-year journey in Healesville in March this year.

Craig and Shirley were greeted by family and friends at Donnelly's Weir.

"Healesville has been our holy grail since we set out from the Atherton Tablelands," Craig said.

The horse team consisted of Wally, Raisin, Slim, Crabpot, Ben and Dave.

They started the journey in a gypsy-style horse-drawn caravan and then rode, each leading two pack horses. Craig said



Additional photos: Greg Thurling

the biggest challenge had been the weather and the forces of Mother Nature.

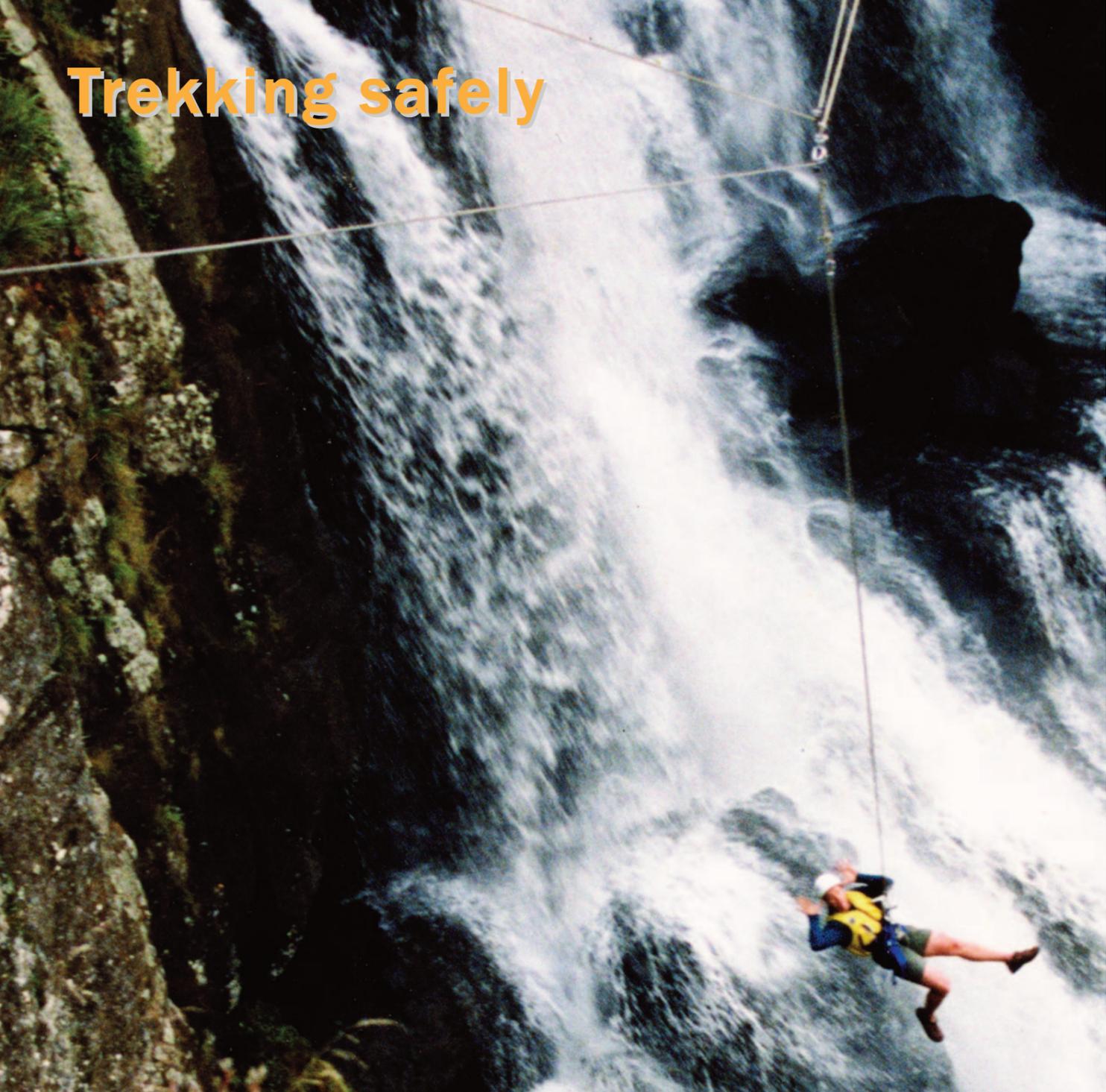
"Queensland is long, flat and hot. New South Wales is wilderness and very remote, then you get into Canberra and are going around in circles. Victoria is short and steep. It's all of the above," he said.

The couple stayed with local NBT coordinator Jo Kasch and at the Black Spur Inn in Narbethong before riding, accompanied by local trail riders Graeme "Smokey" Dawson from Launching Place and Norm Carter from South Belgrave, on the last leg.

Craig said the welcome was mindblowing. "It was unbelievable ... the faces we saw, people we know and care for and many people we have not seen for a long time," he said. Friends from Khancoban, Rockhampton and Gladstone were among them.

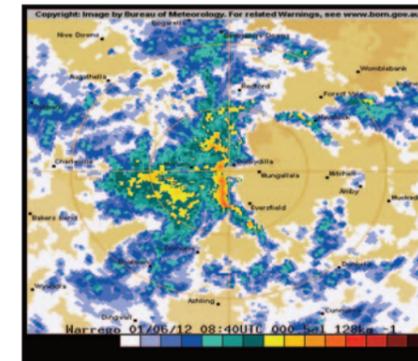
In a heart-felt speech Craig paid tribute to Shirley for her courage, grit and humour, and to the horses who he said conquered everything put before them with ultimate trust. The couple is writing a book of their experiences on the BNT to be called *The Flight of the Black Cockatoos*. There is also a movie in the making.

# Trekking safely



**S**AFETY is a big-ticket item in today's world. And planning for safety isn't just for commercial operators. Even as weekend recreational trekkers we need to look ahead for possible adverse scenarios and how best to meet them. Those planning extended treks on the National Trail of course face more detailed planning. We all wish to arrive home safely again with our trekking mates after a great time out on the Trail.

How many people are in your party? Solo trekking is not particularly safe unless you are in good contact with a support team nearby. Ideally there should be at least four in a group so that if someone is injured two people can trek out via the escape route for help while one remains behind with the injured party.



Route planning is of the utmost importance in setting up a safe trek. Factors to be considered include time of year, what kind of clothing should you take allowing for all possible weathers? How much water do you need? Will in fact these portions of the Trail be open this time of year? North Queensland the trail is closed in the wet summer and on the NSW-Victorian border the High Country sections of the Trail are closed in winter.

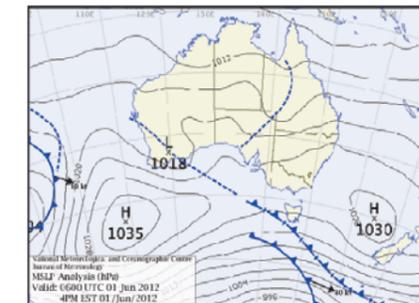
Do you have a list of relevant essential phone numbers for each area (when you have mobile phone signal)? Have you determined access points for a support vehicle and can you carry necessary supplies (with reserves) between each access point? Particularly importantly have you planned escape route options if foul weather or disaster overtakes and quick evacuation is needed? Have you correctly assessed your fitness levels for your projected route and have you vectored in enough rest days? Trekkers need to be conservative in estimating their fitness and generous in providing rest days.

Who has a copy of your route and knows your basic plan so if you fail to check in with reasonable time, or raise an alarm they can give emergency services a

reasonable idea of your plans? Of course a satellite-based personal locator system such as SPOT or a PLB which gives a GPS position as it transmits an alarm gives the best possible chances of finding you quickly. Most of us love (and need) to "get away from it all" at times however as history has proven folks who truly are out in the wilds with no one aware of their movements back in civilization are at risk. If something goes wrong their chances of receiving suitable help are greatly diminished.

In a similar vein do you always carry some basic form of identity with you, even if just going on a short Sunday afternoon stroll on the National Trail near your home? Accident and emergency units in hospitals sometimes receive unknown casualties carrying no identity who are only identified some hours or days later when frantic family and friends finally discover them.

Depending on your mode of transport what spares do you have? Each year a couple of us lead a three-day Duke of Edinburgh Silver Award cycling journey on the National Trail behind Maryborough in Queensland. What bike spares and tools should we carry? We are bound under Duke's operating rules to have a support vehicle very close behind so we usually carry a couple of spare bikes as well as tools and spare tubes, etc.

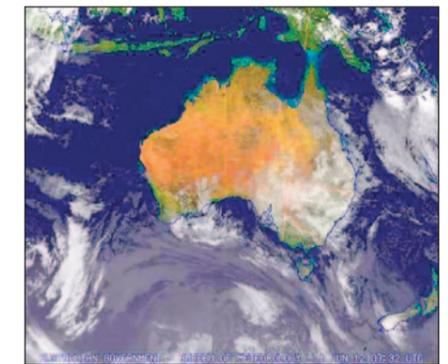


We all love to chaff the weather bureau but modern technology has given the person in the street excellent access not only to weather forecasts seven and ten days ahead but also to past records so trekkers can analyse trends in their locations of interest. Even out on the Trail when mobile signal is available smart phones, tablets, etc can be used to access weather reports. Locals too are often a good source of information.

Modern risk management for many organisations requires outdoor recreation leaders to read online weather forecasts fluently, plan accordingly and save those weather forecasts as part of their planning and risk management documentation.

Check out sites such as Bureau of Meteorology, [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au), Weather Zone, [www.weatherzone.com.au](http://www.weatherzone.com.au) and Weather Channel, [www.weatherchannel.com.au](http://www.weatherchannel.com.au).

Considering the Trail is almost entirely rural in nature and often in heavily timbered country bushfires are another serious risk which need to be considered particularly approaching summer months. Total fire ban days are of course not trekking days anyway because of the high temperatures and risk of dehydration. On the southern portions of the Trail particularly in Victoria high winds often are part of the high fire risk days which mean if a fire occurred any trekkers on the Trail could be at grave risk of fire in a very short time. Each State has a rural fire authority website which should be consulted for details of fire bans and fire conditions generally.



Even today there are folks who have never attended a first aid course, and some recent incidents which have come to my notice prompted this article in the first place. First aid courses are useful not just for learning the principles of first-in treatment of injuries but also for developing a risk management mindset which anticipates potential hazards and sources of injury thus proactively avoiding or minimising incidents.

A couple of scenarios – both based on fishing incidents known to me personally. First scenario a couple of fellas headed out fishing on a wet weekend. One slipped and fell on wet rocks striking his head. His mate was unaware of the potential risks of any form of head injuries and simply put him to bed.

Next day our fishing friend was groggy and showing serious signs of head injury but these were only noted by a visitor to the fishing camp later on the second day who then set in place a very difficult evacuation. Our friend survived by a narrow margin and required months of treatment and rehabilitation.

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Help us buy and protect more special places in NSW by making a donation. Donate online via our website, send a cheque or money order to PO Box 1121, Lismore NSW 2480 or call 02 9641 4718.

## Trekking safely

From Page 7

The second incident happened to a mate of mine who was fishing five hours from the coast when he suddenly lost his voice and felt decidedly strange. He had recently completed a first aid course and had stashed his first aid book in his bag. He suspected he was showing symptoms of a stroke and by sign language told his mates to find his book to confirm the symptoms. The skipper immediately set course back to shore and called emergency services on a satellite phone. A rescue chopper and a Volunteer Marine Rescue boat were put on standby to ferry a paramedic out if that option was needed. Although my mate experienced two bouts of stroke-like symptoms he recovered sufficiently well to stay on the fishing boat until it reached shore where an ambulance was waiting to transport him to hospital. Extensive tests since haven't shown any problems, my mate is back in full health and the cause of the incident remains a mystery.

Anyone contemplating trekking on the National Trail (or trekking anywhere) would do well to attend a first aid course if they haven't already done so and to update their qualification every three years. And of course a thoughtfully assembled first aid kit is a must. Include such items as a few butterfly clips for nasty cuts and particularly wide roller bandages for snake bite.

Modern day trekking has changed forever with modern technology used both for information and communications. We have discussed in past articles the safety options now available such as Personal Locator Beacons (which are used only for life and

death situations); the SPOT facility which allows sending of GPS coordinates with a range of messages ranging from social to "send help but not life-threatening" to PLB function which triggers search and rescue operations. Modern day trekkers need to seriously consider such options.

Mobile phones are useful particularly when near towns on the Trail however most portions of the Trail have no service. However modern smart phones have many functions which can be useful on the Trail and without doubt these functions will grow exponentially over the next few years. My regular digital camera refused to work on the last trek a couple of weeks ago but my mobile phone captured a good range of reasonable pics (see elsewhere in this edition). Many phones now have GPS capability as well however oft-times the mapping that goes with that needs mobile signal to work correctly. No matter how good any piece of mapping technology is ultimately trekkers still need to have some form of paper maps which they can refer to when techno items of equipment fail.

There are a growing number of apps which are stand-alone and will work offline. Many trekkers wouldn't want to carry a full first aid book with them (as in our scenario earlier) but a suitable first aid application or PDF file on their smart phone would serve that purpose well. Of course keeping phone batteries charged is a real problem away from mains power.

However there are also a growing range of options for charging batteries out on the Trail, ranging from lightweight solar panels

to a small battery pack for recharging. I have a lightweight USB battery pack of 3 AH capacity which kept my smart phone charged on my last trek which meant I was able to take photos of the whole trip.

UHF radios up to 5 watts power can be a useful tool for maintaining communication within groups, particularly cycling groups which tend to straggle as cyclists ride to their personal abilities. On our recent Duke of Edinburgh trek on the Trail east of Biggenden (which is all on public roads or Forestry tracks) the designated current ride leader carried one 3-watt, hand-held radio, a second one was carried further down the group and the overall trek leader had a third. Our legally required support vehicle bringing up the rear was fitted with a 5-watt vehicle set with a good aerial.

With this configuration we had good communication from end to end of the group and everyone was in instant contact. Possibly too a setup such as this could be useful at times for making contact on UHF emergency channels however because of the uncertainty of contact it would only be a secondary form of communication. I was pleasantly surprised how long our batteries lasted – on one charge our hand-held batteries lasted the whole three days of our trek.

Ultimately our safety, and maybe our survival, depends on one person – us. How well are we exercising "common sense planning ahead"?

Dave McLeod



## Scarred in the memory

By Dave McLeod

NOTHING is certain in life, and predicting weather patterns when organising cycling tours is very uncertain indeed. When Terry Montgomery from Cairns organised a National Trail cycle tour north from Healesville for November 2011 he was fairly confident he could strike a balance between adverse weather and the lack of water and total fire bans experienced along the Trail later in summer.

Readers would remember that Terry and half a dozen mates cycled the National Trail from Killarney to Mutchilba in 2008. This trip proved to be even more memorable. In 2008 they averaged 70-100km a day. This trip they were flat out making 40km a day riding mountain bikes pulling Bob trailers. Brad McCullach accompanied Terry as far as Omeo then Jeff Coward joined them to cycle from Omeo on.

The first couple of days saw warm dry weather and good riding. First night at Marysville was sobering with burnt trees as far as the eye could see. By day three the heavy climbs and subsequent descents had taken their toll necessitating the first change of brake pads.

Day five Terry and Brad headed for the historic old Kevington pub. They

spent 12 hours riding long uphill sections pushing bikes and trailers and downhills so steep brakes were failing when brake fluid started boiling in the lines. Kevington pub was a really old pub with a single bar and some accommodation out the back. A really nice place to spend the night particularly because rainy weather had now moved in.

The next day was a revelation. In Terry's words it "scarred our memory". Early morning the rain started bucketing down. They finally left Kevington at 10am reaching the top of the Lazareni Spur at 7pm having covered only 34km for the day.

Terry explained the day's exhausting yakka: "We made good time in the rain and following the road. We covered 20km, arriving at Knockwood at 1pm. We travelled the next 10km through the bush to the base of the Lazareni Spur and started the climb at 2pm getting to the top at 7pm.

"It had taken us an hour to travel 10km through the bush then another five hours to travel 3km.

"We would wheel one bike up then snig the trailer up. We put a piece of timber through the yoke of each trailer with a man either side of the bike trailer snigging it up the 3km of slope. Reaching the top by 7pm we camped on the slope at the top. It rained all night so we woke up

freezing cold with clothes and sleeping bags all damp.

"We left next morning at 7.30am completing the Lazareni Spur by 10.30am. Both Brad and I were exhausted by this point. We continued climbing, lunching at Crow's Hut. Somebody had already camped there so we kept an earlier campfire going for much-needed warmth. We decided when we reached the Jameson-Licola turnoff at an altitude 1200 metres to detour Licola to book into the caravan park to recuperate.

"Licola was at an altitude of 200 metres so we enjoyed a long downhill run. We did some research with the National Parks people who advised us that would be better to go from Licola to Dargo via the bitumen or use the Billygoat Track. Finally we decided to climb out the valley using the Billy Goat Bluff track which was said to be okay but quite steep."

A whole day was spent climbing onto the Great Divide starting the day at 220 metres and climbing to 1480 metres. It was a long steady climb but Terry and Brad were able to ride the whole way. They camped at the Lost Plains Hut near a helicopter pad. Lost Plains campsite is really nice with level areas to pitch the tent, toilets, a fireplace and table.

Somewhere in the night the cyclists heard a noise.

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# Scarred in the memory



From Page 9

Brad's bag was hanging in a tree and the noise they heard was a cat's claws ripping Brad's bag apart. They scared the huge cat away but it came back later that night and managed to get into Brad's bread which was in the tent vestibule. It must have been really hungry because it carried away the bag containing the tyres, tubes and pump. Terry managed to track the cat (which had a head the size of a fox) and found the bag a couple of hundred metres from the camp.

While at Lost Plains Terry tried replacing his brake blocks which had worn down to metal but he didn't have the necessary tools to open the hydraulic brake callipers enough to get the new blocks in, so he fitted another set of half-used blocks. Brad was having trouble with gear changes and a slipping chain which had to wait until the next town.

Next day proved very cold and windy as Terry and Brad faced the 87km to Dargo. One consolation was that long downhill roads ensured good times. The pair arrived at the top of Billy Goat Bluff midday. Terry and Brad particularly enjoyed the spectacular views from the top of Billy Goat Bluff.

The slope was so steep they had to walk the bikes to the bottom and bikes and trailer would jackknife occasionally. When they put on brakes on in a vain effort to steady their rigs the bike, trailer and cyclist would slide downhill. This track was simply a fire break bulldozed along a spur and photos show the narrow firebreak stretching along the ridge line disappearing into the distance in spectacular style.

Terry and Brad decided to continue on to Dargo and book into the motel for two nights. A chap driving to Bairnsdale of-

ferred to collect bike parts and bring them back so our intrepid cyclists wasted no time fixing their bikes. Motel staff generously let them use the motel workshop to give bikes a major overhaul which included fitting new brake and gear cables.

First of November Terry and Brad left Dargo in bright sunshine for Dogs Grave – a monument to the dog of drover Meehan. The local CFA crew advised them to stick to the Mt Birregun Rd. They arrived at Mt Birregun at 4 pm at an altitude of 1320 metres- they had climbed 1140 metres in the day. Within five minutes of stopping they were covered in cloud, the temperature dropped from 20 degrees to 5 degrees and it started to rain. Fortunately the next eight kilometres to Dogs Grave were downhill so they arrived at Dogs Grave ahead of the rain, pitching tents and cooking dinner before the rain hit. It was still very cold so our intrepid riders were in their tents by 7pm wearing most of their clothes.

After a late start our cycle trekkers rode to Bindi station. After receiving advice from John Stubbs, the BNT Coordinator, they decided to take an alternate route leaving the cycle-difficult BNT and heading up Splitters Range road which was good though with plenty of climbing then mostly downhill on the Bowen Track and the Scrubby Creek tracks to Bindi station on really nice countryside.

Bindi Station is heritage listed as is one of the trees on the property. John and son-in-law Fraser accommodated our cyclists in the shearers quarters and invited them to look over the property in the morning. Bindi has an old museum where one could spend hours looking through the place. Terry felt this station was one of the highlights of the trip and it would make an ideal rest spot.

The National Trail through Victoria passes through very steep mountains and cyclists need to vector vertical climb as well as horizontal distance into their calculations. And Bob trailers which were very successful in the more level conditions in Queensland are probably not as successful in mountainous areas like Victoria.

And cyclists also need to take into account trail conditions which would cause limited problems to say donkey trekkers or hikers but would cause significant difficulties to cyclists. BNT Section Coordinators (or other cyclists who have already cycled those portions of the Trail) are the best folks to advise on local conditions. Terry and his mates also regularly spoke to national park rangers where relevant and also rural fire crews who know their local areas very well.

Providence Portal (Happy Jack's Track to Queensland border will be Terry's next trip. This will definitely be with vehicle support and before Terry's 65th birthday. Terry already has vehicle support arranged but he is currently looking for someone to accompany him on the trip. Any takers?



Track along Billy Goat Bluff

# Tasmanian Trail



Right: Meadowbank, Glenora



THE Tasmanian Trail is a popular resource for adventure travellers whether visiting or living in Tasmania, and is on the 'bucket list' of quite a few.

It is ideal for walkers and cyclists and is a great extension to the Bicentennial National Trail, with a lot of the track traversing wonderfully varied scenery. Horse riding along the Tasmanian Trail requires plenty of forethought and planning, but is still a fantastic experience. Due to quite a few legs of the trail being on public roads, (albeit back roads), two or three busy and narrower sections really necessitate a back-up vehicle following the riders. Camping areas are designated in the Guide Book, but if you do your research you can locate B&B's, hotels and safe paddocks for rest days.

The AGM for 2012 has produced a new and enthusiastic Committee – mostly horse riders who are keen to promote the Trail. We have identified areas to work on during the winter months so that we will be ready for travellers this summer. Due to the ever-present problem of funding on-going maintenance, it has been decided to require membership for using the trail. This will be available from the website

shortly. Some advantages of membership will include a trail key and the protection of Public Liability Insurance, as well as a comprehensive and knowledgeable list of local contacts to obtain food, B&B's, horse friendly holding paddocks, farriers, feed merchants, available vets and doctors.

The Trail begins at the Axeman's Hall of Fame in Latrobe, which is a 15 minute drive from the arrival port of Devonport. Latrobe is a beautiful little town which offers all you need to get started, all within walking distance. The caravan park is situated across the road with watered horse yards and paddocks next door. It is a great feeling walking up the main street of Latrobe to start your journey.

Progressing south through the centre of Tasmania, both on and off the track there are quaint towns, friendly locals and great food which can all be accessed quickly with your back up vehicle at any point along the trail.

The landscape varies from rolling farmland, Forestry plantations, pretty streams, steep rocky climbs, bleak highland tundra, lush valleys filled with hop fields, wild tea tree scrub, ferny glades, button

grass plains, misty mountain tracks and Aussie eucalypt forests. Amazing views are numerous and breathtaking, but of course there are long stints of dogged trudging in between.

Horse riding in summer will bring sunburn, flies and mosquitoes, and the heat of the day can be pretty intense, especially on a bitumen road. Your back-up vehicle with cool water on board is a welcome sight on these occasions.

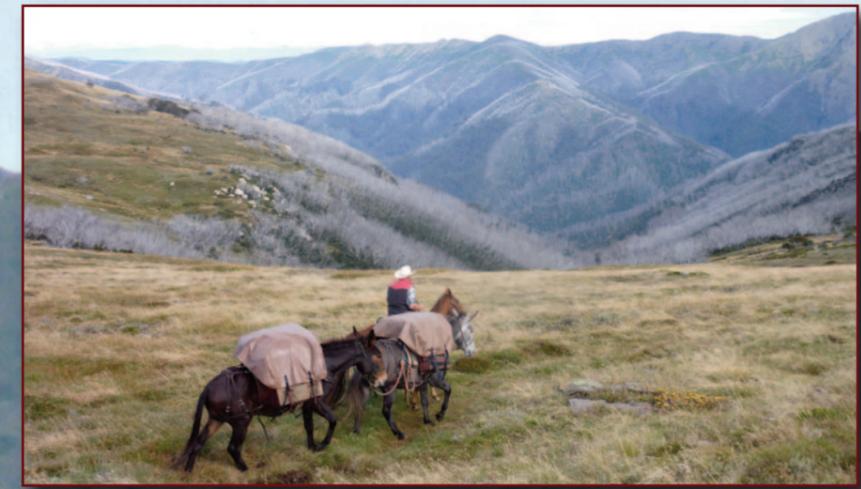
Whether you ride your horse, your bike or drive the back-up vehicle, you will have completed an amazing adventure.

You will never forget the magnificent view on the final leg as you ride down the hill into Dover.

You will never forget the sense of pride and achievement when you have managed your horse and yourself to complete the ride fit and well.

And you will never forget the friends you made along the way and the friends who helped you to finish.

# High Plains drifters



Mt Feathertop

## By Jo Kasch

In March this year it was time for our annual pack horse journey.

We decided to bite the bullet and head off for 14 days. So with the menu prepared, bags balanced and dryzabones tied on securely we headed off from Mt Beauty into the mountains – John and I riding our horses and leading our two big mules, along with our friends Alan and Debbie, they both rode quarter horses and leading one pack horse between them.

Our destination the Blue Duck Inn at Anglers Rest, up above Omeo.

Day one was the start of a spectacular journey. The tracks were a little rocky to start off with but soon eased out into soft earth mountain trails. Crossing the West Kiewa River was beautiful. The water rushing down the mountain river was crystal clear and turquoise blue in the deep pools. There were many waterfalls; each spot on the river seemed to be more spectacular than the last.

But eventually we found our own little patch of heaven and camped on the edge of the river, plenty of grazing for all the animals, and enough firewood for 10 campfires.

After a tasty dinner, I found some delicious blackberries, add these to fresh cooked

pancakes and the evening was complete.

Over the next four days we travelled quietly and slowly, climbing the Bogong High Plains, meandering over snow plains, seeing brumby mobs gallop away and turn to watch us curiously as we passed, but posing no threat to us or our animals.

We passed many cattlemen's huts. Young's, Weston's, Blair's to name just a few.

We arrived at the Blue Duck in to find our welcome warm, sincere and friendly, our accommodation roomy, warm and more than satisfactory, and our horses and mules made welcome with paddocks of long, lush grass.

After two days of resting and relaxing, it was time to saddle up and head off again. The horses, feeling fit, are ready to go. They set a 'cracking pace' up the hills and into the High Plains we go.

Arriving at McNamara's Hut, we're greeted by snow and sleet blowing in horizontally, the wind whipping around our coats and trying to rip the hats of our heads. This is the first blast of bad weather we have struck.

Never to be put off we strip the gear of all the animals quickly, throw the rugs on and get them into the paddock under the trees for a little shelter. What's this? 20 minutes

later the snow storm is gone, the sun shines brightly and it's warm and relaxing once again. Wonders will never cease!

We continue our journey over the hills, having your pack animal with all your needs, it's easy to go exploring and finding the hidden gems along the trail.

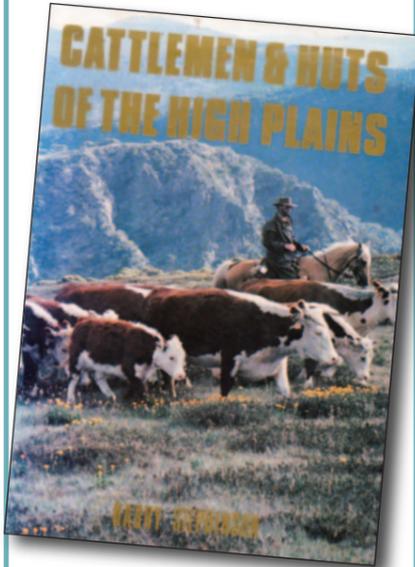
Each of our camps proves to be comfortable and easy. Taking tables, chairs and great food, this truly is a great way to have a holiday. Roast lamb, roast beef, corned silver-side, choc puddings, scones, platters of delicious nibbles; it's all easy if you do the right preparation.

After six days, climbing up over Mt Fainter, it's in the distance we see our final destination. Nestled in the blue mist, down in a valley, is the town of Mt Beauty. We head down pass Bogong Jack's Hut, then continue the journey on a long gravel road into town.

We prepared for this trip for three months, planned the menu carefully and worked all our horses and mules up slowly and carefully so as they were fit enough for the trail. All this proved successful by the fact we had no issues. Wow, what can we say, a wonderful journey, great company and terrific horses and mules.

Till our next journey – happy trails.

## Book review



IF you can get hold of a copy of Harry Stephenson's *Cattlemen & Huts of the High Plains*, grab it and run. There is no more definitive history of the settlement of the Victorian Alps.

Stephenson is actually a bushwalker who, amongst others, pioneered walking the High Country back in the '50s when many members of the original pioneering families were still active, like Jim Fry of the Howqua River and poet Jack Treasure.

The book follows the settlement of the remote valleys of the Victorian Alps, the discovery of the Omeo district from the Monaro country of NSW by the famous Pendergasts of Jindabyne, and the development (if that's what you could call it) of the Bogong High Plains and its many cattlemen's huts.

The first edition is the one to look for as it uses the original scans of the remarkable collection of old photos, while the second edition photos have lost a lot of quality. The book is out of print but can be picked up from the bibliophile website: [www.biblioz.com](http://www.biblioz.com)

**Cattlemen & Huts of the High Plains**  
Stephenson Harry, 1980  
Self-published

## Photo gallery



Bro's together



Above: Gary Kane  
Right above: Day three breakfast, Musket Flat  
Right: Day three Thinoomba turnoff



**DIGGER DOG CANVAS GEAR** started life as a horse rug repair business, but an inability to find suitable Pack Saddle Bags and functional packing equipment led us to design and fabricate the range of products we make today. These products have been tried and proven on

numerous packing and camping trips on Australia's Bicentennial National Trail and Victoria's High Country. Quality is the most important characteristic of a Digger Dog Canvas Gear product. We use only the best materials available to ensure you have a hassle-free and

pleasurable experience on the trail.

See the full range of products on our website: [www.diggerdog.com.au](http://www.diggerdog.com.au) or phone Ruth Manning on 03 5967 3026 or [ripstop@bigpond.com](mailto:ripstop@bigpond.com)



## United we trek

LAST year St Mary's College Maryborough set a new benchmark when 10 of their year 11 and 12 students successfully completed their Silver Duke of Edinburgh award cycling the National Trail between Biggenden and the Thinoomba turn-off on the Maryborough-Biggenden road. Coincidentally most of those are going on to complete their Gold Dukes award this year.

This year a similar number of year 11 students expressed interest in completing their Silver award over the same route. Because these Adventurous Journeys are actually run by the Maryborough Dukes Area Award Committee, other member schools can participate, so this year Maryborough Special School enrolled some students too.

The whole month of May was gloriously sunny across the Wide Bay, until shortly before the projected journey. As happened last year weather forecasts showed that a wet change would pass through on the first day clearing out to sea restoring fine weather again by day three. Mercifully rainfall was slightly less than last year however that didn't really reduce the discomfort of riding and setting up camp in drizzling rain!

Day one was a good settling in period. I had laid a couple of geocaches along the route a week earlier, however because of the adverse conditions I decided to push on because we needed to reach camp and set up as quickly as possible. Maryborough Special School is planning a journey along

the same route on the National Trail later in the year so they can learn GPS navigation the fun way looking for those caches. In the meantime it has been encouraging to see a couple of geocachers have already chased those geocaches on the National Trail and found them.

Day two conditions became tougher as the Trail entered the Wongi State Forest. Lunch at the site of the old Broomfield Hotel gave students the chance to look for the lonely teamster's grave just down the Brooweena Road. At Seaview Range students checked out the convict cutting which men wearing leg irons hacked into the mountain crest by hand in the 1860s.

Former Maryborough Special School student Ben took his turn leading the pack wearing the leader's radio – one proud young man who acquitted himself well. When the Trail turned around behind Mt Doongul students took a saunter to the top to check out the view before finishing the day's run into Musket Flat.

Second night's camp was at the BNT shelter on the western side of Musket Flat. This great asset for the Trail was provided by FCRC some years ago and it has been a welcome stopping point for many trekkers since. The rain had cleared out to sea by this time but the cold change following it made for a pretty chilly night. However some marshmallows toasted over the campfire and a few extra woollen blankets helped compensate for the cold.

All good treks should end with a bang and not a whimper. The last section of the



Left: Day two, Seaview Range. Top: Leaving Golden Fleece. Above: Campsite, Golden Fleece waterhole

Trail on this route from Elliot south to the Thinoomba turnoff certainly ends the trek with a good bang. Once the Trail leaves Old Gayndah Road it wanders more or less easterly along ridges for a while before a sharp turns takes it south roller coasting crossways over even more ridges. Students and adults alike were very grateful to climb the last ridge and crash by the side of the road for a welcome lunch before rolling out to the highway to finish the trek.

Organising a Dukes cycling journey on the National Trail takes considerable planning and work. Last year's Trek was very successful, however this year the planning was even tighter and all contingencies were comfortably met. This year the local Dukes committee purchased a UHF radio with a good aerial for the support vehicle. With three hand-held UHF radios shared between the front leader, middle of the group and the trek leader, and the support vehicle following the group, excellent communication was assured for the duration of the trek. And it was tremendously encouraging to watch mainstream and special needs students cycling and camping together, working as a team.

Where to from here? Maryborough Special School will hopefully be trekking this route from Biggenden to the Maryborough-Biggenden road later in the year. And hopefully both schools will see more students out on the Trail next year earning their Dukes awards and enjoying one of life's greatest recreations.

Dave McLeod

# Still going strong

CUMBURRIE Trail Horse Riding Club was formed in February 40 years ago. Prior to 1972 a small group of horse riders met regularly around Toowoomba to fill a need that's long been apparent in the horse world – a non-competitive, relaxing leisure activity for all the family to enjoy. Cumburrie is an Aboriginal word meaning long distance.

R M Williams joined the club late 1972 and was involved when the club planned and ran the first endurance ride in Queensland, and continued to run a 60 mile Endurance Ride for years. Cumburrie Trail Horse Riding Club is the oldest club in Queensland and one of the oldest in Australia.

In 1975 and 1976, the club was actively engaged in exploring and mapping the BNT from Crows Nest to the NSW border. On the Killarney section R M arranged for the Army's 4th Cavalry Regiment based at Enoggera to do the surveying and mapping. The club supplied the horses and taught the men to ride, before going out with them.

Thirteen Cumburries took on the particularly hazardous trek through virgin territory along the Great Dividing Range to establish an exciting route for future trail riders. This was part of what was then a larger plan to blaze a horse riders recreational trail along the east coast seaboard from Melbourne to Cooktown.

The Cumburrie club holds rides from Noosa to Tenterfield on private property, in state forests, along stock routes and country roads. Some rides are only a few hours long with others taking up weekends with camping out. The members not only enjoy trail rides but have social evenings as well, and are kept up to date with monthly newsletters, including member achievements such as distance awards, enjoyed by all.

Cumburries are still going strong and new members always bring experience as well as new ride venues for the club to enjoy. The club does adhere to a code of conduct that attempts to ensure the safety and enjoyment of all who attend rides.

Any past members who would like to join in the 40th anniversary celebrations, or if anyone would like more information on the club, please feel free to contact me: Rowanne Williams 0408 292 868.



R M, somewhere north of Killarney



Above: in the mountains north of Killarney



Right: Cavalry with souvenir snake



## Run, Richard, run!

ON Wednesday 18th April I arranged a welcome to Canberra horse escort run for Richard Bowles with his support Vickie Saunders it was a great success. Eight of us on our horses in from South Canberra in a relay showing him the trail around the Murrumbidgee into Yarralumla for an arranged media opportunity with the Canberra Times.

At the start from Pine Island Richard was also interviewed by 666 our local ABC radio. Richard's story will also be in the Canberra Weekly.

Richard and Vickie are committed to promoting the Bicentennial Trail during his run. This is a wonderful opportunity to publicise the BNT. Vickie is in contact with media during his run.

Vickie also a runner gets an opportunity to run in-between her work supporting Richard. She has also encountered some hazards as trees across roads and manoeuvring a long wheel based not four wheel drive campervan up some very rough tracks.

By the time he reached Canberra Richard had run 860km since his launch with the Bicentennial Trail's Patron and SANE Australia's Patron John Landy in Melbourne on the 25th March.

Richard is running for SANE Australia, their website will direct anyone with a concern about their mental health to the appropriate help. You can imagine what a support this would be in life's challenging times when you don't know what to do.



Above: Richard Bowles with patron of both the Bicentennial National Trail and SANE Australia, John Landy. Left: Richard and Vicki Saunders

His support and partner Vickie Saunders meets him wherever she can with their campervan. Often during long stretches he runs with a backpack with lightweight sleeping bag and tent and energy food to have sleepover until he can reach Vickie.

At one stage before Tom Groggin he crossed the Murray in chest high water hanging onto rocks to come across grey nomads offering hot drinks, food and a warm fire before Vickie drove for hours to get to the end point that day.

He has encountered early snow storms in Kosciuszko and other extremes of brilliant sunny days.

Some days have been 60km long. Before I met him in the ACT he had run

190km in three and a half days.

You can follow Richard and Vickie on their BNT journey or make a donation at:

[www.runbnt.com](http://www.runbnt.com)

Facebook: **Running The BNT**

Twitter: **Ultrarunnerrich**

Blog: **Ultrarunnerrichard @blogger.com**

He plans to finish by the end of September when work commitments start.

They are a delightful enthusiastic positive couple. Please give them your support.

**R.M. Williams**  
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# Ebor meeting



Ebor Falls

THIS year's AGM will be an important one – we have to elect five new Board members and there will be an open discussion on the future of the BNT in a period when it is facing major challenges.

The setting for the meeting is spectacular – Yaraandoo Eco Lodge is a super-comfortable venue in the scenic New England National Park. We are promised warm and cosy lodgings, open fires, cosmopolitan menu and hearty meals.

The hosts have provided the meeting room free of charge to the BNT. Two-course dinner on Saturday night with a five-star menu costs \$49.50 which is good value considering the remote location. There will be musical entertainment by the versatile singer/guitarist David Munro from Deervale.

There will be displays of BNT gear for sale, memorabilia, books, and information from the Guy Fawkes Heritage Horse Society which re-homes brumbies from the adjacent Guy Fawkes wilderness. Local bushwalking groups will be in the vicinity and mountain bikers will be attending. It's a chance to rub shoulders with wilderness buffs in one of the best wilderness regions in Australia.

Sunday morning will feature a Dawn Chorus breakfast at the spectacular Point Lookout where you can listen to about 50 lyre-birds singing in the rainforest of the Bellinger Valley as the sun rises from 5,000 feet elevation amongst snow gums.

The Sunday lunch barbecue at Georges Junction on the Macleay River will be hosted by national park rangers who will answer questions on national park access policy as well as provide advice for tackling the testing Kunderang Brook and Oxley Wild Rivers country.

There is a range of accommodation available, from free camping on the Styx River, national park campsite for a small fee, BNT campsite adjacent to Ebor Recreation Grounds (BNT registration required as it is a TSR), national park cabins (early bookings required) and the Ebor pub.

However, accommodation at Yaraandoo is the most convenient and ranges from \$33 for a bunk with three others, to \$110 for a double room and it is still economical.

Bookings for the dinner essential: contact Roger Fryer on 0427 559 575 or email [rog.fryer@bigpond.com](mailto:rog.fryer@bigpond.com). To arrange accommodation: Yaraandoo Eco Lodge (02) 6775 9219 or [www.yaraandoo.com.au](http://www.yaraandoo.com.au). National parks can be contacted on (02) 6657 2309.

## AGENDA

### BICENTENNIAL NATIONAL TRAIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2PM SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2012

1. Attendees please sign attendance book including contact details.
2. Welcome and introduction of Board members and their Board role and BNT involvement. Introduction from members present and their BNT involvement.
3. Apologies
4. Acceptance of Gatton 2011 minutes.
5. Matters arising from 2011 minutes and acceptance.
6. President's report and other reports
7. Treasurer's report and Auditor's report
8. Acceptance of the audited 2011 financial reports
9. Election of office bearers

#### Current office bearers

- Chairman Nick Jacomas
- Director and Treasurer Graeme Sleeman
- Director and Grants Officer Abbie Grant-Taylor
- Director Andrew Graham
- Director and Company Secretary Jenny Costin
- Two vacancies

#### Management team

- Office Secretary Josephine Harding
- Editor of *BNT TRACKS* and website editor Roger Fryer
- Assistant Treasurer Sue Cumming
- Book Manager Dave McLeod
- Trail Updates Coordinator Mal Keeley

#### Nominations and election of office bearers and Committee according to the Articles of Association:

- 33 (a): three members of the committee will retire.
- 33 (d): any retiring committee member will be eligible for re-election.

Those retiring after two years in office:

Nick Jacomas, Jenny Costin, Graeme Sleeman, Abbie Grant-Taylor.

#### There are five vacancies to be filled.

10. Nominations
11. Proxies
12. Election of Directors
13. Election of an Auditor
14. Further business

#### Close of meeting

Break for afternoon tea followed by open forum and discussion.

## NOMINATIONS FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS BICENTENNIAL NATIONAL TRAIL LTD

Nominations for the Board of Directors must be submitted on this form, and received by returning officers Marion Taylor and Sue Cumming by 26th August 2012. Please post to the BNT Museum and Resource Centre, University of Queensland Gatton Campus, PO Box 1111 Gatton Qld 4343.

Alternatively, scan and email to: [info@nationaltrail.com.au](mailto:info@nationaltrail.com.au) by 26th August 2012.

Please provide a brief profile of the nominee.

We/I (nominator) .....

and (seconder) .....

Being a current financial member/s of the Bicentennial National Trail Ltd hereby nominate:

.....

For the position of .....

On the Board of Directors of the Bicentennial National Trail Ltd.

Nominator's signature: .....

Date: .....

Secunder's signature: .....

Date: .....

Nominee name in full: .....

I accept this nomination: .....

Nominee's signature: .....

Date: .....

#### Proxy Form – Bicentennial National Trail Ltd

This form must be mailed to returning officers Marion Taylor and Sue Cumming at the BNT Museum Resource Centre, University of Queensland Gatton Campus, PO Box 1111 Gatton Qld 4343 by 23rd September 2012. Or scan and email to: [info@nationaltrail.com.au](mailto:info@nationaltrail.com.au) by 23/09/12.

I.....

of .....

being a current financial member of the Bicentennial National Trail Ltd hereby appoint:

.....

of .....  
or failing him/her, then the Chairman, as my proxy, to vote on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Company to be held on Saturday, October 6, 2012 at 2.00pm and at any adjournment thereof.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Clubs have two delegates, therefore are entitled to two votes. Please copy this Proxy Form.

## New members

Sharyn Bacon	Scott Creek	SA
Nicholas Wareham	Leanyer	NT
Peter Foster	Healesville	Vic
Valerie Kitson	Narrabundah	ACT
Kristine Head	Conder	ACT
John Went	Bungendore	NSW
Stephen Breen	Ermington	NSW
Peter Robert Foster	Healesville	Vic
John J Wright	Wandin North	Vic
Richard Taber	Rivett	ACT
John Armanelli	Ferny Halls	QLD
Peter Laker	Cotton Tree	QLD
Dr John Kiss	Warwick	QLD
Matthew Marcus Clark	Sydney	NSW
Gregory Thurling	Kirrajong Hills	NSW
Edward Fernon	Northbridge	NSW
Nicholas James Wareham	Lehnyer	NT
Sharyn Bacon	Scott Creek	SA
Roseanne Kay	Inala	Qld
Nicolette Hearne	Sunbury	Vic
Rolf Schutz & Ruedi Hort	Pelican Waters	Qld
Helen Reereboom	Mt Samson	Qld
Roger Joseph Henshall	Young	NSW
Jonathan Bartlette	Erksineville	NSW
Alan Melville	Mukinbudin	WA
Kenneth Watson	Binda	NSW
Annie Coffey	Toogoom	QLD
Lawrence Smith	Surf Beach	NSW

## Old friends

THANK you to trail Ambassadors Gale and Gregory Aberdeen.

Coordinators Gale and Gregory, who have been looking after Paradise to Biggenden in Guidebook 4, are moving.

For many years Gale and Gregory have been a wonderful help with their local knowledge in providing information for trekkers and also keeping Mal Keeley, our Trails Coordinator, updated with changes and local knowledge.

Thus maintaining the continuity of their section of the BNT. We hope that Gregory's new job and home will again be near the trail.

Without the local knowledge and contributions from our trail coordinators such as Gale and Greg we would have no trail.

Good luck for the future Greg and Gale.

### BNT Membership Application

Membership period July 1-June 30  
Complete the form below and post or email with your payment to:

The Bicentennial National Trail  
PO Box 1196 NERANG QLD 4211  
Email: [order@nationaltrail.com.au](mailto:order@nationaltrail.com.au)  
Website: [www.nationaltrail.com.au](http://www.nationaltrail.com.au)  
ABN 83 010 860 143  
Phone 1300 138 724 (within Australia)

Name: .....

Postal address: .....

Postcode: .....

Phone: (business): .....

(home): .....

(mobile): .....

Email address: .....

#### MEMBERSHIP FEE

\$35 individuals:  \$55 family or club:  3 years \$90 and  \$150  
If family membership then only one vote allowed and nominated person to be advised.  
If club membership then two votes allowed and nominated persons to be advised.

#### DONATION

\$10  \$20  \$50  \$100  \$500  Other .....

#### PAYMENT BY EFT

Bank of QLD BSB: 124 001 Account No: 10 285 229 Reference: your name.  
Please email to: [order@nationaltrail.com.au](mailto:order@nationaltrail.com.au) with receipt details to confirm payment and indicate whether new membership or renewal.

#### PAYMENT BY CREDIT CARD

Please charge \$ to my  Mastercard  Visa

Cardholder Name: .....

Expiry date (day/month/year): ...../...../.....

My card number is:  
□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□

Cardholder's Signature: .....

#### PAYMENT BY CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER:

Cheque  Money order   
Please make payable to Bicentennial National Trail

Do you wish to receive a copy of the Annual Financial Statement prior to the AGM? Yes  No

I am primarily a  walker  horserider  cyclist  donkey packer  
other: .....

How did you find out about the BNT?  
website  word of mouth  magazine or newspaper article   
other: .....

All annual membership renewals are due June 30.  
New memberships paid between January and June provide continuous membership until June of the following year.

# NSW Coordinator's Report

IT'S been a few years since NSW has had a Coordinator, partially dedicated to the BNT, since the retirement of Col Roberts.

So it's great news that I'm able to say that Crown Lands, part of the Department of Primary Industries, has taken the lead to retain a Coordinator position partially dedicated to assist with strategic BNT issues in NSW.

As the new Coordinator for NSW, I must say that it's a pleasure for me to be able to work with such a dedicated team of volunteers on this grand iconic Australian trail.

I'd like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the previous NSW Coordinator, Col Roberts, and the many good people working on the BNT, past and present as BNT Members, Section Coordinators, Board Directors, or assisting the Coordinators and the Board with various duties to keep this trail open.

I look forward to helping to build upon the vast work done towards a sustainable and secure future for the trail.

Since coming on board with the BNT, Nick has ensured that I've been kept busy! I thank him for his guidance and advice through these early stages as I familiarise myself with the business and its issues.

## Progress

- Guidebooks:** The BNT has been given endorsement by the General Manager of Crown Lands to go ahead with the digital publication of Guidebooks covering NSW. I understand that plans are afoot for the BNT to publish these guidebooks on the website. Copyright and templates are now in the hands of the Board, which will help to overcome the dilemma of upfront costs associated with bulk reprints.
- Travelling Stock Reserves:** The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the BNT and the Livestock Health & Pest Authorities (LPHA) had expired and is now redrafted with minimal change. The BNT Board has now endorsed the draft and we hope to hear back imminently from the LPHA with comments.
- Gundaroo near, Yass:** Lessening the distance on a dangerous section of BNT on Sutton Road from Gundaroo and Mulligans Flat Road near the ACT border with a safer alternative route has been negotiated with Yass Council and private landholders. Thanks to Jenny Costin, Warren Hudson and Beth Stone for doing much of the legwork in finding a good solution.
- Curracabundi Wilderness Area:** Nick and I recently visited the recently gazetted Curracabundi Wilderness Area in the Barrington Tops area with Officers and Senior Managers from National Parks & Wildlife Service. This area was the original route of the BNT until access issues required a re-routing of the trail through Nowendoc. The original route, which is more iconic, historical, safer and scenic will not be reopened until the access issues can be resolved. The trail passes through the historic Karamea homestead, Drovers Gap (locally known as Devils Gate) and several adjoining private properties. Although the trail itself has now been guaranteed a footprint through the Wilderness Area, access issues adjoining the Wilderness Area itself and through the private properties are still being negotiated.

- Richard Bowles, BNT runner:** Richard and his partner Vicky Saunders generously took time out of their busy itinerary to meet with Nick and I when passing through Aberdeen in the Upper Hunter.

Richard runs a daily marathon on his way along the BNT for the charity organisation SANE to support people with mental illness.

Opportunities to meet inspiring people like Richard and Vicky are a highlight of the job. It also provides us with an opportunity to discuss with experienced trekkers how we can better manage and promote the trail and to share ideas. If you want to know more about their journey, go to [www.runbnt.com](http://www.runbnt.com).

I look forward to meeting with more of the BNT family over the coming months and progressing the issues.

Happy trekking!



George Schneider  
State Recreational  
Trails Coordinator  
NSW Department of  
Primary Industries /  
Crown Lands

George Schneider,  
left, with BNT  
runner Richard  
Bowles and Chair-  
man Nick Jacomas

## Pack Saddle Workshop

Presented by Logan River Redlands Horse Trail Riding Club

**Saturday 4 - Sunday 5 August 2012**

WELL KNOWN VICTORIAN PACKERS JOHN AND JO KASCH WILL SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORLD OF PACK SADDLING  
Learn about the best type of equipment, horses to use, horse welfare, nutrition and what gear you need to take.

**PRACTICAL HORSE TRAINING DEMONSTRATION BY KEN ANDERSON.**  
Bellara Park Equestrian Centre  
97 Worendo Street  
Veresdale Qld  
9am start each day

\$30 (ATHRA members) / \$50 (non ATHRA members)  
Cost includes morning, afternoon teas and camp oven dinner Saturday night. Canteen for lunches will be available over the weekend.  
Campsites are available.

For more information and to book contact  
**Claire Bourke**  
0418438 807

Supported by:

# Section coordinators

## QUEENSLAND

### Guidebook 1

Jenny Lott  
Edition 2 Guidebook 1, Maps 1-12  
Cooktown-Kingsborough  
Ph: 07 4094 1481  
[jennylott@skymesh.com.au](mailto:jennylott@skymesh.com.au)

Steve Grainger  
Edition 2 Guidebook 1, Maps 12-14  
Kingsbrough to Walsh River  
Ph: 07 4099 6171 Mob: 0459 996 171  
[tontosjg@yahoo.com.au](mailto:tontosjg@yahoo.com.au)

Tim Daniel Wilderness Expeditions  
Edition 2 Guidebook 1, Maps 15-20  
Walsh River to Gunnawarra (Rudd Creek) Ph: 07 4096 2266 Mob: 0447 401 090  
[info@wildex.com.au](mailto:info@wildex.com.au)  
or [tdwildwalk@gmail.com](mailto:tdwildwalk@gmail.com)

### Guidebook 2

Tim Daniel Wilderness Expeditions  
Maps 1-27 Gunnawarra-Collinsville  
Ph: 07 4096 2266 Mob: 0447 401 090  
[info@wildex.com.au](mailto:info@wildex.com.au)

### Guidebook 3

Mike Teuwsen  
Edition 2 Guidebook 3, Maps 1-7  
Collinsville to Nebo  
Ph: 07 4954 0424 Mob: 0408 075 019  
[neswuet@bigpond.com](mailto:neswuet@bigpond.com)

Ian Howard  
Edition 2 Guidebook 3, Maps 8-12  
Nebo to R4  
Ph: 07 4959 7484  
[ian.howard@deta.qld.gov.au](mailto:ian.howard@deta.qld.gov.au)

Therese & Cedric Creed  
Edition 2 Guidebook 3, Maps 13-22  
R4 to Kabra  
Ph: 07 4934 6190 Mob: 0429 948 198  
[beefy@beagle.com.au](mailto:beefy@beagle.com.au)

### Guidebook 4

Therese & Cedric Creed  
Edition 2 Guidebook 4, Maps 1-7  
Kabra to Calliope River  
Ph: 07 4934 6190 Mob: 0429 948 198  
[beefy@beagle.com.au](mailto:beefy@beagle.com.au)

Kim McArdle  
Edition 2 Guidebook 4, Maps 7-15  
Calliope River to Kalpowar  
Ph: 07 4979 0909 Mob: 0400 703 920  
[tobymac55@hotmail.com](mailto:tobymac55@hotmail.com)

James Cooper  
Edition 2 Guidebook 4, Maps 16-21  
Kalpowar to Paradise  
Ph: 07 4157 8371  
[cooper\\_jim@harboursat.com.au](mailto:cooper_jim@harboursat.com.au)

Edition 2 Guidebook 4, Map 22  
Paradise-Biggenden no coverage.

### Guidebook 5

Dave McLeod  
Edition 2 Guidebook 5, Maps 1-7  
Biggenden to Wide Bay Creek  
Ph: 07 4124 3107 Mob: 0439 532 737  
[dave@davcor.net.au](mailto:dave@davcor.net.au)

Graham Knight  
Edition 2 Guidebook 5, Maps 8-12  
Wide Bay Creek-R125 Brisbane River Ph: 07 4168 8195  
[gndvknight@activ8.net.au](mailto:gndvknight@activ8.net.au)

Bruce & Beril Murray Edition 2 Guidebook 5 Map 12-16 R125 Brisbane River to Blackbutt Ph: 0438 017 903 or 0408 874 634  
[brucemurray@gmail.com](mailto:brucemurray@gmail.com) or  
[berilmurray@hotmail.com](mailto:berilmurray@hotmail.com)

### Guidebook 6

Bruce & Beril Murray  
Edition 2 Guidebook 6 Map 1  
Blackbutt to Emu Creek  
Ph: 0438 017 903 or 0408 874 634  
[brucemurray@gmail.com](mailto:brucemurray@gmail.com) or  
[berilmurray@hotmail.com](mailto:berilmurray@hotmail.com)

Toni Deecke  
Edition 2 Guidebook 6 Maps 2-5  
Emu Creek to Ravensbourne  
Ph: 07 4630 5480 Mob: 0407 034 441  
[toni@tranquiltrees.com.au](mailto:toni@tranquiltrees.com.au)

Lynne Anderson  
Edition 2 Guidebook 6, Map 6 and part of Map 7 Ravensbourne to Withcott Ph: 07 4630 5142  
[lynne@seatonfire.com](mailto:lynne@seatonfire.com)

John Dwyer  
Edition 2 Guidebook 6, Maps Part 7-10 Withcott to Thornton  
Ph: 07 4615 2247  
[dwyer.john.c@gmail.com](mailto:dwyer.john.c@gmail.com)

Ipswich & District Trail Horse Riders Club Inc  
Edition 2 Guidebook 6, Map 13  
Cunningham Campsite-Reynolds Campsite Reynolds Creek.  
Lyn Koppel secretary PO Box 316 Ipswich 4305 Ph: 07 3395 0758 Mob: 0413 980 226  
Steve Maroney president  
Ph: 07 3276 7979 Mob: 0418 884 089  
[steven.maroney@gmail.com](mailto:steven.maroney@gmail.com)

Brenda Osborne  
Edition 2 Guidebook 6, Maps 11-13  
Thornton to Reynolds Creek  
Ph: 07 5466 7161

John Dwyer  
Edition 2 Guidebook 6, Maps 14-16  
Reynolds Creek to Killarney  
Ph: 07 4615 2247  
[dwyer.john.c@gmail.com](mailto:dwyer.john.c@gmail.com)

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### Guidebook 7

Michael Combe  
Edition 3 Guidebook 7, Maps 1-7  
Killarney to Demon Creek  
Ph: 02 6736 4612 or 02 6586 1048  
Mob: 0429 907 490  
[maxwell@harboursat.com.au](mailto:maxwell@harboursat.com.au)

Lesley Oldfield & Philip Willcocks  
Edition 3 Guidebook 7, Maps 8-9  
Demon Creek to Grasree  
Ph: 02 6737 6670 or 02 6736 1070  
[woorook@antmail.com.au](mailto:woorook@antmail.com.au)

Paul Jones & Cherrie Davies  
Edition 3 Guidebook 7, Maps 10-20  
Grasree to Ebor: Ph: 02 6649 4336  
[hjklein@bigpond.net.au](mailto:hjklein@bigpond.net.au)

### Halfway break

Roger Fryer Ph: 0427 559 575  
[rog.fryer@bigpond.com](mailto:rog.fryer@bigpond.com)

### Guidebook 8

Lesley Oldfield & Philip Willcocks  
Edition 3 Guidebook 8, Maps 1-5  
Ebor to Middle Yards  
Ph: Philip 02 6737 6670 or 02 6736 1070  
[woorook@antmail.com.au](mailto:woorook@antmail.com.au)

Christopher Hodgson  
Edition 3 Guidebook 8, Maps 5-12  
Middle Yards to Thunderbolts Way  
Ph: 02 6584 4930 Work: 02 6586 1968 Mob: 0407 001 968  
[timtrek@midcoast.com.au](mailto:timtrek@midcoast.com.au)

Barrington tops has southern access only. No access through Mrs Sun's property Karamea. No access or coverage for Maps 13-14. Use Nundle Route.

Lydia Stuart-Hill  
Edition 3 Guidebook 8, Nundle Route. Thunderbolts Way to Crawney Ph: 02 6762 1802 Mob: 0423 243 622  
[hamishhill@bigpond.com](mailto:hamishhill@bigpond.com)

Sue & Donald Finlay  
Edition 3 Guidebook 8, Maps 15-18  
Pigna Barnie to Polblue, Nundle Route Crawney to Aberdeen & Edition 2 Book 9 Polblue to Aberdeen  
Ph: 02 6546 1151  
[finlay@skymesh.com.au](mailto:finlay@skymesh.com.au)

### Guidebook 9

Rosemary Munn  
Edition 3 Guidebook 9, Maps 1-6  
Aberdeen to Cudgong River  
Ph: 02 6547 8108  
[n.rmunna@activ8.net.au](mailto:n.rmunna@activ8.net.au)

Malcolm & Denise Keeley  
Edition 3 Guidebook 9, Maps 7-12  
Cudgong River to Hampton Ph: 02 6355 1818 Mob: 0428 551 818  
[mal.keeley@bigpond.com](mailto:mal.keeley@bigpond.com)

Genevieve Long  
Edition 3 Guidebook 9, Maps 13-14  
Hampton to Jenolan Caves  
Ph: 02 6337 5866 Mob: 0427 718 112  
[lancia@pacific.net.au](mailto:lancia@pacific.net.au)

### Guidebook 10

Genevieve Long  
Edition 3 Guidebook 10, Maps 1-6  
Jenolan Caves to Crookwell  
Ph: 02 6337 5866 Mob: 0427 718 112  
[lancia@pacific.net.au](mailto:lancia@pacific.net.au)

Leanne Kelly  
Edition 3 Guidebook 10, Maps 7-10  
Crookwell to Gundaroo  
Ph: 02 4836 2143  
[gklkgreentop@hotmail.com](mailto:gklkgreentop@hotmail.com)

Jenny Costin and Warren Hudson  
Edition 3 Guidebook 10, Maps 11-15  
Gundaroo to Mt Clear includes ACT Section  
Jenny Costin Ph: 02 6231 9827  
Mob: 0412 274 810  
[jgcostin@bigpond.com](mailto:jgcostin@bigpond.com)  
Warren Hudson Ph: 02 6254 0295  
[hudson@grapevine.com.au](mailto:hudson@grapevine.com.au)

Peter and Richard Cochran  
Edition 3 Guidebook 10, Map 16 Mt Clear to Yaouk Ph: 02 6454 2336  
Mob: 0417 370 490  
Richard Cochran 0429 709 311  
[bushy.97@hotmail.com](mailto:bushy.97@hotmail.com)

### Guidebook 11

NSW Section  
Peter & Richard Cochran  
Edition 3 Guidebook 11, Maps 1-3  
Yaouk to Providence Portal  
Ph: 02 6454 2336 Mob: 0417 370 490  
RichardCochran 0429 709 311  
[bushy.97@hotmail.com](mailto:bushy.97@hotmail.com)

Sylvia Oldfield & Warwick Garner  
Edition 3 Guidebook 11, Maps 4-8  
Providence Portal to Khancoban  
Ph: 02 6946 6217  
[wgarner@westnet.com.au](mailto:wgarner@westnet.com.au)

Charlie Findlay  
Edition 3 Guidebook 11, Maps 9-10  
Khancoban to Tom Groggin  
Ph: 02 6076 9474  
[charliefindlay@dodo.com.au](mailto:charliefindlay@dodo.com.au)

## VICTORIA

### Guidebook 11

Victoria Section  
John Stubbs Edition 2 Guidebook 11, Maps 11-18 Tom Groggin to Omeo Ph: 03 5159 1516  
Mob: 0427 003 157  
[omeorodeo@virginbroadband.com.au](mailto:omeorodeo@virginbroadband.com.au)

### Guidebook 12

Note: Trail notes run from South to North  
John Stubbs Edition 2 Guidebook 12, Maps 15-18 Dargo River crossing to Omeo Ph: 03 5159 1516  
Mob: 0427 003 157  
[omeorodeo@virginbroadband.com.au](mailto:omeorodeo@virginbroadband.com.au)

Kevin & Sally Bass  
Edition 2 Guidebook 12, Maps 7-15  
Knockwood to Dargo River crossing Ph: 03 5147 2798  
[sallybass@bigpond.com](mailto:sallybass@bigpond.com)

John & Jo Kasch  
Edition 2 Guidebook 12, Maps 1-6  
Healesville to Knockwood  
Ph: 03 5963 7264  
[kasch1@bigpond.com](mailto:kasch1@bigpond.com)

## TOP TO BOTTOM

BNT Trail Updates Coordinator  
Mal Keeley Mob: 0428 551 818  
[mal.keeley@bigpond.com](mailto:mal.keeley@bigpond.com)

# BNT Board

Chairman:  
**Nick Jacomas**  
250 Somersby Falls Road  
Somersby NSW 2250

Ph: 02 4372 1520  
Mob: 0417 900 070  
[nickjacomas@bigpond.com](mailto:nickjacomas@bigpond.com)

Treasurer:  
**Graeme Sleeman**  
88 Bonogin Road  
Mudgeeraba QLD 4312

Ph: 07 5559 0078  
Mob: 0400 941 389  
[bntgtreasure@bigpond.com](mailto:bntgtreasure@bigpond.com)

Secretary:  
**Jenny Costin**  
32 Fiskin Crescent  
Kambah ACT 2902

Ph: 02 6231 9827  
Mob: 0412 274 810  
[jgcostin@bigpond.com](mailto:jgcostin@bigpond.com)

Director  
**Abbie Grant-Taylor**  
179 Sorensen Road  
Gunalda QLD 4570

Ph: 07 5484 6436  
[shelob@spiderweb.com.au](mailto:shelob@spiderweb.com.au)

Director  
**Andrew Graham**  
47 Queens Road  
Clayfield QLD 4011

Ph: 07 3262 3672  
Mob: 0412 743 301  
[akka@qld.chariot.net.au](mailto:akka@qld.chariot.net.au)

## Management team

Office Manager:  
**Josephine Harding**  
67A North Road  
Beechmont QLD 4211

Ph: 07 5533 1061  
Mob: 0408 782 894  
[info@nationaltrail.com.au](mailto:info@nationaltrail.com.au)

Assistant Treasurer  
**Sue Cumming**  
111 Skyline Drive  
Kholo QLD 4306

Ph: 07 3201 1179  
Bus: 07 3812 0299  
[suecummingbnt@gmail.com](mailto:suecummingbnt@gmail.com)

Book Manager  
**Dave McLeod**  
25 Frangipani Avenue  
Kawungan QLD 4655

Ph: 07 4124 3107  
Mob: 0439 532 737  
[dave@davcor.net.au](mailto:dave@davcor.net.au)

BNT Trail Updates Coordinator  
**Mal Keeley**

Mob: 0428 551 818  
[mal.keeley@bigpond.com](mailto:mal.keeley@bigpond.com)

Website Manager  
and BNT TRACKS Editor  
**Roger Fryer**  
2/49 Ocean Street  
Woolgoolga NSW 2456

[www.nationaltrail.com.au](http://www.nationaltrail.com.au)  
Mob: 0427 559 575  
[rog.fryer@bigpond.com](mailto:rog.fryer@bigpond.com)

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We are looking for photos, news items, snippets, poems, stories and particularly treks and other activities carried out on the Trail.

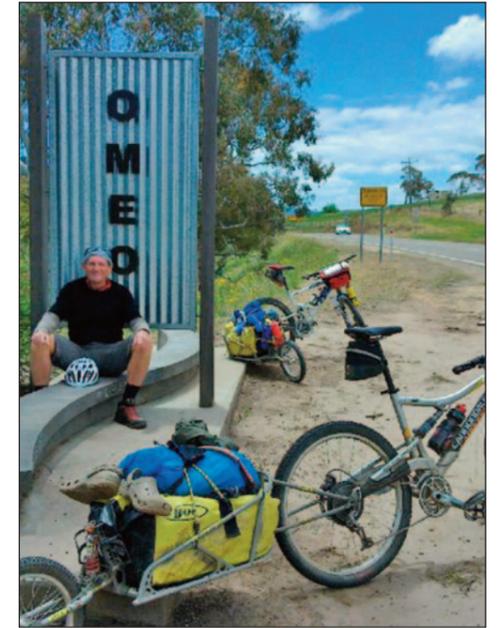
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[rog.fryer@bigpond.com](mailto:rog.fryer@bigpond.com)



# A slightly true story

## Chapter 4

by Harold Gardner

THE local townsfolk generally regard old Quinn as a bit of a joke, pattering along the river road slowly in his old Isuzu ute with a bend where a tree fell on it, and a tray full of rabbit skins stretched on wire hoops, traps, baling twine, old hessian bags and rotting pumpkins, with the odd dead rat.

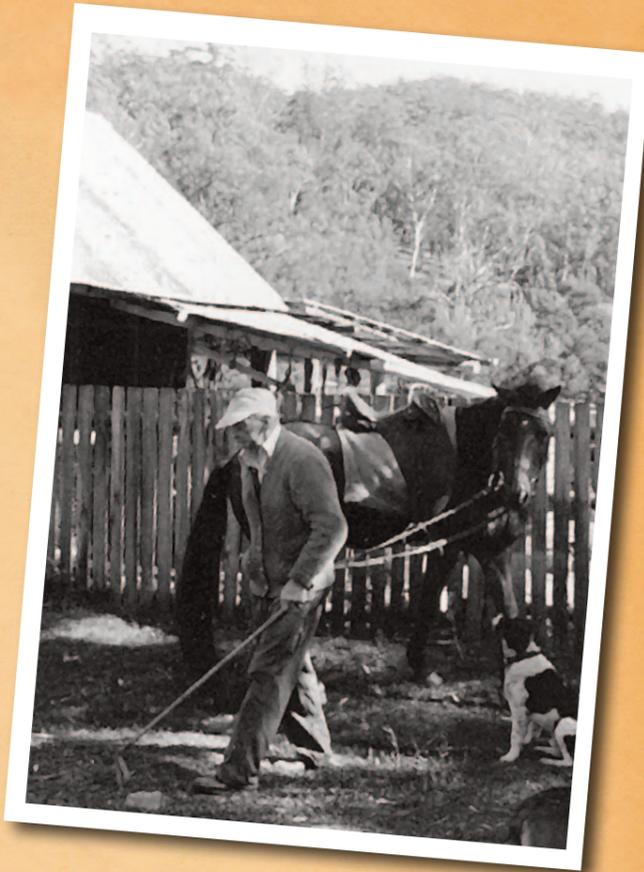
Kevin was forever siphoning petrol which was difficult without cheeks to suck properly with and resulted in a good lungfull of fumes. After filling his tank from one of the rusty kerosene tins he carried there was nothing better than to have a smoke to take the taste of petrol from his mouth and he would light up one of the loose, tufted durries he fumbled together with his worn and nobbly fingers. It was advisable to stand well back when he lit up.

To us he was a goldmine of pioneering and bush knowledge and a source of amusement whenever he pulled one of his transparent scams. You could see one coming when he would lay on a gratuitous favour, like a haunch of salt pork or a ute-load of bruised watermelons. The cost soon enough was to help retrieve the old Fergie which he had got stuck up some gully, or to give a mysterious package to “the taxi driver in Queenbeyan” he owed something to back in '47.

But to the older mountain folk he had a reputation as a tear-arse and an expert horseman, holding the record for droving a bull to the Countegany saleyards and back in a day when it didn't sell. I had no experience of horses when I moved onto my farm and the old man taught me everything I know. He showed me how all horses in the world know you will work with them on their left side, and to approach a new horse that way. He taught me to cuddle a fresh horse from under its neck, run your hands across its shoulder and down its back as you walk around behind, always touching and standing close so it can't kick or bite. Picking up their hooves, all four of them, shows your confidence and measures the quietness and level of training of the animal, and gives you a chance to gauge how well it has been taken care of by the condition of its feet.

Kevin gave great emphasis to riding with the “Australian” seat – hips thrust forward so you are resting your pelvic bone against the pommel of the stock saddle, giving you what is known as a “deep” seat with legs hanging vertically down, rather than armchair-style like Americans would in a Western saddle. The best way to learn this, he said, was to ride bareback as much as you can. Bareback riding required one to almost stand vertically with the horse's whither between your upper thighs, and your weight over the horse's pivot point at the shoulder where the movement as it cantered would be the least.

With Kevin I learned to ignore all crap about “leg aids” and other riding tricks and just grip the horse's shoulders with my legs and push it around. As the horse begins to trust you he will sense your intentions and respond in the way he believes you wish. The payback will be the increased confidence he gets from your higher view ahead and your better judgement – a true partnership between man and beast. Horses, after all, love to run and jump.



It was a learning curve but I got the hang of it and after going through several dubious prospects eventually got myself a good nag – a buckskin gelding with a deep chest trained by one of the local cowboys for barrel racing. “Duke” could turn on a sixpence, was always raring to go and became incredibly loyal – coming to my whistle whenever I wanted him. I earned this by always making sure he was fed and watered, rubbed down and comfortable, and went on many enjoyable adventures.

For all that, I had never seen the old man actually on a horse until the last few days when I guess he figured that if there was going to be trouble in the bush, he'd better get himself a mount. He came over a few days ago, before the flood, and saddled up “Nugget”, an aged bay stock horse with a slight sway back whose plan was to stay retired. I couldn't figure out why he would choose an old dobbie that seldom broke into an amble but before Kevin went to mount he struck the old nag hard on the rump with a long piece of cane split near the end which made a noise louder than it deserved.

Well Nugget stood up straight and decided he'd better take life a bit more seriously and remembered what it was like to be youthful again and full of spirit. I understood then that Old Kev had decided wisely that experience counts if there is going to be a stoush.