



From the President



Rajan Chhetri
UNSWOC President

Dear fellow adventurers,

It's the end of yet another Uni year and time for some more excitement. I hope everyone is looking forward to actively pursuing your outdoors dreams.

I wanted to take this opportunity to bring you an update on where we are with the club and some of our future plans. Throughout my association with the club, I have found the UNSW Outdoors Club to be a very relaxed and approachable club and I have been trying to ensure that the club remains this way. Our aim is simple: "**get out there and do things**" and we have been doing just that. However, **some of the activities we get involved in do involve considerable risk and need careful planning and control to make the activities a lifetime of pursuit.** We have been lucky in this respect so far with minimal unfortunate accidents during our long history. To improve our safety standards further we are working towards having further safety features in place like regular gear checks, safety pages on the website and training of competent trip leaders as well as first aid trainings. We will give you ample notice of any training we will schedule and will try to accommodate all to benefit the club and its members the best. So, do keep an eye out for our notices.

As summer is here, there will be plenty of trips being led. We hope to see new members getting active and pursuing your activities and start leading trips on your own. If you need any assistance in this matter, get in touch with any of us and we will be more than happy to help you out. The club is also an excellent pool of experience, so less experienced members should take the opportunity to get in touch with more experienced members and learn from them. The club's discussion forum is possibly the best way to get ideas or plan trips. Or if you prefer, contact us and we'll get you in touch with more experienced people. Even though Friday night discounted climbing at the Ledge is only during semester, don't forget your membership card will give you a discount on any day. There will be lots of canyoning and hiking trips ahead. Keep your eyes on the club trips list. Or better still, organize one and take a few people along. It's a great way to make new friends and have a good time.

Adventure is not just what we do, it's a way of life we've chosen. What better way to articulate this than to present to you people who have embraced this lifestyle the best and are on a quest of

things out of the ordinary. We are working hard to bring to you some of the most accomplished outdoors people in Australia and promise you that you will be transformed by what they have experienced and what their goals are. We will let you know more details as we approach the dates of these presentations, hopefully, in semester I, 2008.

I have been lucky to have an excellent and dedicated team of executives who work hard to keep the club running. However, I can not emphasize upon the fact that the club is entirely reliant upon its members to tell us where to go. So, we hope to see active participation from all club members in deciding how to run the club in the new environment of VSU in the coming years. We take heart in the number of people who have been active in our club and are confident that the club is going strong and will continue to do so in the future. But if you feel we could do better, get in touch with us and we'll work together. The club is a gateway to an amazing life so let's have a great time together.

Wish you all a very active, safe and fun filled summer break.
Cheers,
Rajan Chhetri

Great Ocean Walk

- Ian Donaldson

The walk follows a 95 km section of the Shipwreck coast where the Great Ocean Road heads inland. The views were stunning as we walked through bush land, temperate rainforests, along tidal platforms, beaches and cliffs. The weather was good to us (considering it's Victoria) so we only got 4 overcast days, 2 days of gale force winds and only one day when it hailed. Because of the winds, the rains came and went very quickly but the overall gist of it was overcast but not raining.



The Great Ocean Walkers



We saw wallabies, echidnas, koalas, bogans and all the usual wildlife but apparently there were no whales this year (blame John Howard, he's Australia's favourite scapegoat). The views were unbelievable and **that's why this walk is rated in the top ten walks in Australia.** But it's my belief that 1000 of my words won't even get close to telling the story of one picture so instead I recommend you take a look at the pictures I have finally put in the photo gallery on the Outdoors Club website. The photos are incredible so check them out.



A misty view of the 12 Apostles

During mid-session break I organised for a few people to do the brand new "Great Ocean Walk" in Victoria. This track was only finished in 2005 and the entire walk is sign-posted and all campsites are run by Parks Victoria.

You're only allowed to do the track one way and only using their campsites, so we shared our campsites with the same people each night but we accelerated our program and caught up with the group in front of us. It meant we got to meet a few "interesting" people. There was a group of scouts, a pair of chain-smoking mothers (the only people who managed to get lost on the walk- ever) and two old ladies from Canada (absolute walking machines considering). And there was our group: Paddy had all the latest gear; Awanti had a football-game poncho that said "Nokia"; Stacey had all the food (onions, carrots, capsicum, 1 kilo of cheese, etc.); I was the brains of the outfit and my little brother, Ross, came along and wouldn't stop singing, talking or laughing (which is extremely unusual).

Four happy walkers sit and contemplate the view on the Budawangs Bushwalk



Budawangs Bushwalk Nov 3-4

- Tom Young
Participants: Greg Stephenson, Ian Donaldson, Hannah Brumerskyj, Tom Young

The weather forecast became gradually worse all week, and by the time Friday came around **they were**

predicting a weekend of rain, rain and more rain. Nevertheless, three intrepid walkers piled into Greg's car and set off on the drive south. In the small, friendly town of Milton we were met by our fourth member, Hannah from Nowra, and final plans were made whilst a few superb pies from the local pie shop were consumed. The 'pie man' even let us in once the store was officially closed!

As darkness fell we reached our campsite at Long Gully after a bumpy and very dusty hour of driving along a dirt road. An hour later with the tents set up and the promised thunderstorms still not arrived, we sat around the small campfire and ate marshmallows, surely the perfect way to spend an evening. Our only company was a solitary wallaby.

The following morning we awoke to light drizzle and wet tents. Apparently the rain had hit in the night. The sky was overcast and the mountains shrouded in thick cloud as we set off towards Kaliana ridge, pausing after just two minutes to allow Greg to pick himself up out of the stream into which he had just partially fallen.

Starting a hike in good weather is great, but **there's something lovely about heading into the forest with low cloud surrounding you and atmospheric drizzle falling through the trees...** or maybe that's just me!

The walk up towards the Castle is a marked track, but with plenty of rocks and overhanging branches to negotiate along the way. At 11am we stopped for elevenses (as you do) on a rocky outcrop, the misty view into the valley below adding to the feeling that we really were in the middle of nowhere. My Whitakers peanut slab tasted good that morning.

'The Castle' is one of many similar mountains in this area; high plateaus surrounded by steep cliffs, usually making any climb to the top less than straightforward for mere bushwalkers like us. We had planned to tackle The Castle on our first day, but who wants to pull oneself up rocks and ropes if there's no view to be had at the top?



The fog begins to clear from the valley below our campsite on the second morning



So, plans were changed and instead we headed into Monolith Valley, a thickly forested area that fills the narrow gap between the sheer cliffs of Mount Cole and Shrouded Gods. Along the way we passed our campsite for the evening, and packs were dropped so we could make more ground during the afternoon. There's always that slightly uneasy feeling that I get whenever I say goodbye to my pack on a walk, because you never quite know when you're going to see it again. What if you get lost without it and have to spend the night out with only limited food and shelter? Surely such a thing could never happen to us...

...Five hours later we were lost. There's no other way to describe it. Lost in an area with badly marked tracks (if any), mountains that all look the same, and thick fog. Oh dear. And it had all started so well, with a pleasant walk into Monolith Valley and up to the Seven Gods Pinnacles, from where the view would probably be lovely on a clear day. It was on the return journey that things started to go wrong. Without wishing to either bore you or embarrass myself with the details, at one stage it was looking very likely that we would be spending the rainy night beneath a random cliff face with only one Snickers and two tins of tuna to share between us. Oh, how fun that would have been.

After numerous attempts at finding the track, we eventually settled on some mysterious red tags that seemed to head in the right direction, but soon left them in favour of some nice looking cairns. When the cairns failed us abysmally by stopping above a sheer cliff face, things weren't looking good, but we finally struck lucky and it was 6pm by the time we made it back, relieved and hungry, to our packs. The evening was spent contemplating what could have been, eating Hannah's fantastic home-made flapjacks and remembering an eventful day of fog and drizzle.

Greg wins 'quote of the day' with his answer to me when I tried to justify following the cairns: "If there were blank green signs on the motorway would you follow them to



Greg looks happy to have survived the latest rope section on the ascent of The Castle



The perfect view of Byangee and Pigeon House from the end of The Castle

Melbourne?" Actually, I probably would, and they'd probably end at a cliff face again.

The contrast as we awoke on the Sunday morning couldn't have been greater. The sun was out, the clouds had cleared, and as we stood and watched the fog dissipating slowly out of the valley below Coyoyo Creek campsite we knew we were in for a good day. After helping Ian polish off yet another packet of Oreos (he was the self-appointed junk-food provider for this trip!) we set off up The Castle, eager to see the views from the top that bring so many people to this remote mountain. The climb was great fun, with its fair share of scary moments for those of us used to keeping our feet firmly on the ground and hands around a sturdy pair of trekking poles! After numerous rock scrambles, fixed ropes and 'chimneys', we reached the plateau and began the walk across the sparse scrub to the summit itself. The views on all sides were fantastic. Behind us the scenes of yesterday's adventure loomed large: Mount Owen, Shrouded Gods and 'The One Beginning with N' looked majestic, rising out of the green forests below. To the South the famous view of Byangee Mountain and Pigeon House framed by the blue ocean didn't disappoint, and after signing the well-used register book the four of us sat by the cliff edge and drank it all in.

With time passing and the long drive home still to come, we were eventually forced to leave the summit and make our way back down. Having negotiated our way through 'The Tunnel', a series of rocks through which we had to squeeze first our packs and then ourselves, we retraced our steps from the first day, this time with some expansive views down into the valley that had been hidden by the fog on our ascent. The highlight of the descent was drinking the cool, clear water dripping from the cliff face we found inside a small cavern. The lowlight, at least for Ian, were the leeches that managed to invade his feet just before reaching the safety of the car. As usual though, they responded to salt in the way that all good leeches should. Back in Milton some lovely wood-fired pizzas were eaten and we set off back to Sydney, content after a weekend of excitement, fun, and fantastic views. Just don't tell anyone that we got lost, ok?



Boree Log Bendeela, Kangaroo Valley

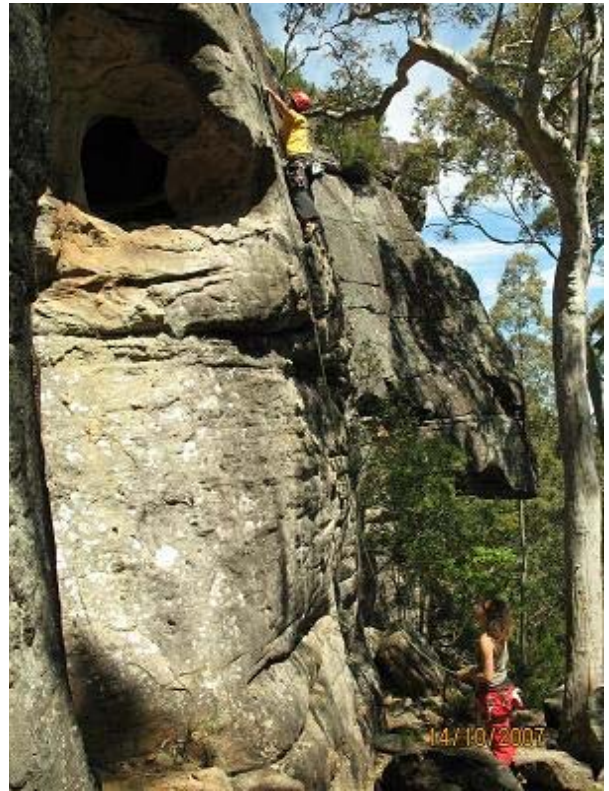
- Shelley Bambrook

A change of location for the Semester 2 Boree Log saw around 25 UNSWOC members heading south to the large riverside camp-ground at Bendeela. Attendees were greeted by security guards upon arrival, perhaps an indication of the company we were to expect over the weekend.

Taking advantage of the free club gear hire and the shuttle services provided by the camp chefs, a group of 8 headed almost to Tallowa Dam then jumped in the kayaks and paddled back along the Shoalhaven River to the campsite. As usual there was a strong climbing contingent and a couple of keen climbing groups drove out to some spectacular crags near Nowra, including Thompson's Point and the challenging Point Perpendicular for a little more exposure. Bushwalkers also ventured out to explore the area surrounding the campsite and negotiate a pass up onto a plateau with fantastic views of Kangaroo Valley.

While the others were out playing, the aptly named Disco Stu was cooking up some hearty stews back at the campsite.

The troops returned to appreciate the food and recount the events of the day in some impressive outdoor style formal attire. With no fires allowed at Bendeela and the security guards present to enforce the ban, people turned in for the night a little earlier than usual but were treated to repeated stunts of lunacy by fellow campers involving old postie bikes, beer cartons and a tow rope.



Climbing at Thompson's Point



The bushwalkers about to set off



Ian and Susan dressed for the occasion



The Log

Newsletter of the UNSW Outdoor Club
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Shoalhaven River



Bendeela campsite



The kayakers getting their skirts on



Disco and Rajan cooking dinner

While wandering on a Boree Log walk...

- John Rasmussen

You come across some weird things in the bush from time to time. One of the more bizarre was this building Alex von Brasch and I came across on Boree Log. We found it walking along the banks of Tallowa Dam. The unusual architecture resembled some futuristic fort. With expansive water views, the temptation to have a look in the half finished building was too great. A sign up the road confirmed our suspicion that it was a Buddhist retreat. Hope no bad karma comes our way!



The mysterious structure



Blue Mountains Canyoning

- Shane Greenup

On Thursday the 8th of November a small group of us did Serendipity canyon up near Mount Wilson. As my first time through Serendipity I must say how incredibly impressed I was with this canyon. It was consistently beautiful and impressive: it had several technical abseils, a couple of jump-ins and swims, and a lot of creek walking just in case you forgot that you were indeed in a canyon.

It was an overcast and slightly drizzly day, so we all decided to simply walk into the canyon with our wetsuits already on. It isn't a long walk from Mount Wilson fire shed to the start of the canyon where you have your first abseil. The second abseil isn't far off from the first, and that is where the canyon really starts. **The scene is just one of those gorgeous scenes which you can only find in canyons – moss covered logs and rocks, crystal clear flowing water, high cliffs covered in ferns** – I'm not a good enough writer to describe it, so you just have to go and do it yourself. Trust me, you won't regret it.

After that there was a lot of walking along and in the main creek before reaching the third abseil. This abseil was an interesting one, quite difficult really, landing on slippery haphazard logs jammed into a ridiculously deep pool which of course made getting off the rope at the bottom all the more difficult. The actual abseils though were no real problem – no slips, no injuries or anything. But when we were pulling the rope through the anchor to recover it, we



This is a small waterfall which you see upstream from the second abseil.



First tier of the first abseil into Serendipity

managed to get it stuck a couple of times. The last time it got stuck was actually quite dangerous, because the other end of the rope had just gone up out of reach. I had to actually get a boost up the waterfall to reach the rope tail in order to pull it back down to release the jam. After pulling it back down, shaking it out a bit, trying to untwist any twists which might be in it (which we of course couldn't see) the next time we pulled it through it had no troubles and we were on our way again.

Although this incident had no consequences, and even if the rope had have been stuck there were no more abseils from that point onwards so we were reasonably safe;

this did remind me of the value of always carrying a spare rope in every canyon

with multiple abseils in

it. If you get your rope irretrievably stuck on the first abseil and you don't have a spare rope, then you will be trapped. No way down without a rope, and no way to safely get back up.

The last section of the canyon is just as impressive as the top half, with awesome narrow canyon sections, some fun jump in and swims, crazy giant boulders suspended mere meters from the floor of the canyon which you have to walk under, ending in what feels like a giant cave opening out onto Wollangambe Two canyon. It was an awesome day, and I'm pretty sure everyone in the group would agree with me on that.

If you are interested in canyoning, keep an eye out on the website for more of my trips – I will be doing something (mostly canyoning probably) essentially every week throughout summer. I am in the process of making a website at www.tdmskp.com.au and these trips are all being posted on the website. So for photos and video footage of this actual trip, have a look at: www.tdmskp.com.au/tripreports/

Participants: Sarah Ross, Laura Johns, Saskia Pokorny, Shane Greenup, Rob Luikens.



Shane posing under the waterfall of the third abseil.



This is the end of Serendipity. Were we caving or canyoning?