



The Log

Newsletter of the UNSW Outdoors Club
October 2009

From the President

Hi all,

Welcome to the final UNSW Outdoors Club newsletter for 2009. Although the session is rapidly drawing to a close, there is still plenty happening in the club at the moment and this will continue over the summer months.

A successful Boree Log was held a bit over a month ago, thank you to all the Exec who attended, and all those who ran trips and assisted with setting up, cooking and packing up. From what I hear I missed a great weekend!



UNSWOC President
Steven Hare

The club is currently undertaking a revamp of the website. There are some serious bugs that need to be fixed and the layout and look of the website will be updated. If anyone wants to help with small portions of this large project, please email me at president@unswoc.org

Finally, as summer approaches I encourage everyone to get active! It's a great time of year to get out and canyon, kayak, go caving, climbing or for a walk. The club depends on its members to run trips so get enthusiastic and get Outdoors!

Boree Log Session 2, 2009 By Susan Ireland

Yes it's that time again. We went to Mt York this time for Boree Log. As always the party began on Friday night, with a cosy campfire, plenty of booze and lots of happy campers.

On Saturday morning, Disco took the canyoners away early to do Starlight canyon, while the rest of us ate our breakfast at a leisurely rate. For the climbers it was a casual stroll to their activity, as the cliffs were only 100m or so from the campsite. Meanwhile Anna, Adrian, Jimbo and I headed out to Evans lookout for our walk through the Grose valley. We followed the cliffline along to Govett's Leap, taking in the scenery as we went.



Anna and I checking out the view. I think we were pointing at Pulpit Rock

Starry, Starry Night by Smush



When we arrived at Govett's leap we found out that the track we had intended to walk was closed due to a landslide. We decided to just walk as far as we could and turn around at the 'track closed' sign. At least we would get to go up all those wonderful stairs!



The Log

Newsletter of the UNSW Outdoors Club
October 2009

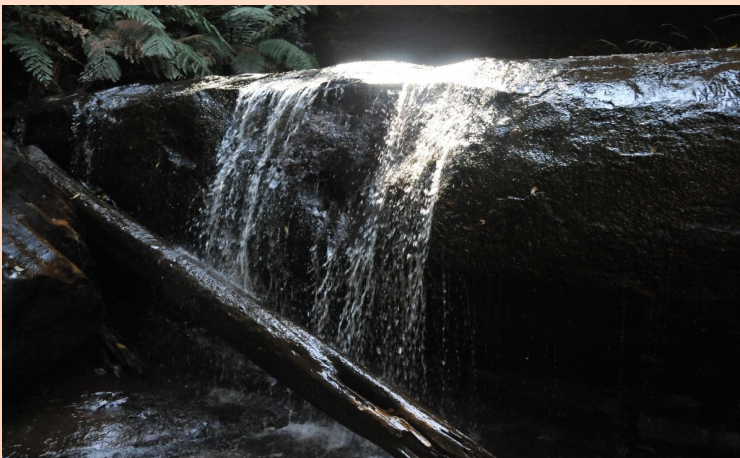


The track from Govett's Leap to the Grose Valley.
With that many stairs, who could resist?

We stopped off for lunch and a spot of bouldering at the base of the stairs. It was pretty fun, and after a while we even managed find our way back down again...

We really appreciated how shady and cool it was in the valley. We even played a game to see who could keep their hands in the cold water the longest!

The way back was a wonderful steady climb to the top of the cliffline. We returned just in time to pick up Gloria, who had missed her train in the morning. :(We returned to see our fellow campers as handsome as



The cool of the pool...

ever, in suits, ties and even top hat and walking cane! We donned our formal attire right away and began with the serious task of drinking up! Once the canyoneers returned from a long, hard day, dinner was served. As always, those in formal attire were served first. We were challenged to identify all the ingredients in Simon's stew, with mixed success. Our hunger satisfied, we continued with punishment punch and drunken slacklining...

On Sunday morning Su Li took the canyoneers out to Dargan's Creek, Damon lead a walk around scenic world and the rest of us headed to Dam Cliffs for some climbing. For Jimbo and I, it was the first time we'd climbed outdoors in about a year, so we were a bit nervous at first. We got into it pretty quickly though. Dam Cliffs is well protected and probably more like a gym than any other crag I've been to.



My attempt at slacklining. I got onto the line! Woohoo!



Jimbo on Stormin Normin



Boar's Head By Joan Lee

It was a fine day, not too sunny and not too wet, when we started the walk to the start of the first multipitch abseil point from the driveway. We had an unintentional glimpse of the end's walk highlight which is the Devil's Hole before we got a bit serious in actually getting to the right entrance to the walk which leads us to Boar's Head first abseil point down to the gully below.

As usual for some of us, we needed a fair bit of briefing on abseiling and self-belay at every start of the abseil as you'll never quite know what may have changed if you haven't been abseil for a long while. Anyway, the view could have been better but it was still pretty good to be more aware of the structure of the rock as we are mindful of slipping since it is wet.



Munter-hitch knot

We walked a bit and then went around the right side of a ledge. There we set up munter-hitch as part of the traverse abseil preparation as we deemed that we shouldn't take the risk even with a small probability of failure since it was wet (rather than having to mention it's wet everytime, just have it in mind that the whole trip is in wet conditions). Anyway, it was good fun to see it done for the first time. However, after a pretty long period of waiting with Steve traverse abseiling around the ledge, he finally got rid of that safety plan. We then packed up the carabiners and rope and off we go doing abseil-free traverse till we got to the point of where it gets fairly more exposed a.k.a dangerous and

that's when the real traverse abseil setup becomes a necessity.

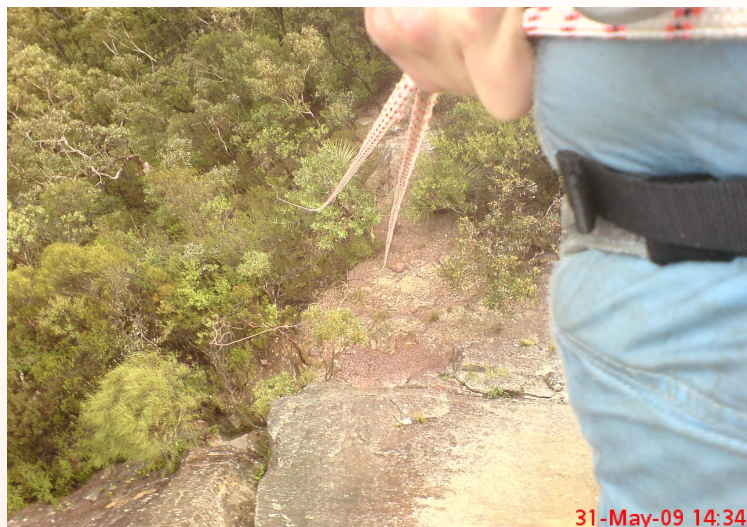


The beautiful cloudy, wet weather

It was very windy at the exposed portion of the ledge. Jenny had to occupy her mind with lots of singing from the coldness we were experiencing while waiting for Steve to get around the ledge. Traverse abseiling is pretty cool stuff as the three of us did different things when it comes to our turn. The first person and the last person to go had to first fix up figure of eight loop to the harness and have one person doing the belaying through the munter-hitch, while the persons in the middle will walk through with a safety line tied to the harness and to the rope that's been fixed at both ends.



Steve and Jenny traversing safely



Going down the last abseil.

Can you see the ropes tangled in the bushes?

Throughout, it was a very fun and nice trip. Though there was an interesting incident on the account of the rope tangles. As you can see from the picture above, the two ropes were nicely tangled in the shrubs. On a closer look, you can observe that the two ropes part with a little tree in between. Clearly, the abseil path is on the right side of the tree with a nice clearing for the abseil. However, we had the knot of the new rope's end stuck all the way to the bottom (found out after having got down safely). This information wasn't known before hand. Therefore, the initial attempt to fix the new rope back on track with the old rope was pretty futile. There were a few ideas to get around it.



The new and the old

One was to get the old rope together with the new rope even though the path which the new rope was strewned wasn't ideal as there were lots of shrubs etc. This was tried but failed as the old rope also got stuck somehow on the right path but within view, which means have to get down and free the rope. The next option was to abseil down as much as allowed on both ropes by pulling whatever I can on the new rope along the path of the old rope, hoping that the new rope will disengage with whatever it was caught on during the abseil or that it will still be long enough for me to make it all the way down. This was tried. Unfortunately, the new rope wasn't long enough. So, I got stuck about 4-5m in mid-air fashion from the bottom. And so, I had to pull myself up along the two ropes to a small wedge. It was pretty tricky and to cut it short, I managed to get down safely only on the old rope, after making sure that Steve somehow got my message of having both top ends of the ropes tied to fixed nodes instead of functioning as a floating node. Bringing mobile phones to abseiling was definitely a good idea. We managed organise the last person abseiling to fix the new rope up after having freed it from some root which the end knot got itself caught.



Descender with 1½ setup. The old rope was strategically placed in the ½ setup!

We walked back up through the Devil's Hole for the second time through streams of water from the rain, passing some dark and cold sanctuaries of holes here and there with a little nicely arranged shelter which caught Steve's attention as a good benighting spot. All was done in great fun.



Bungonia Caving By Marcel Green

We picked a very cold weekend for this trip. When we arrived at the Bungonia National Park the wind was blowing a gale and it was raining on and off every 10 mins. The average temperature for the weekend was about 10 degrees with a constant strong wind that really put the tents to the test. Luckily though we were heading underground for the trip, and the camp site had a nice indoor kitchen, so the weather didn't affect us much.

When we arrived in the early afternoon, we decided to put up our tents first while there was a gap in the rain, but it didn't last and a few of us got wet. Then once everyone was changed we drove off to Grill Cave. It is a very long and easy cave to go through, but it often gets a lot of bad air towards the sump. Taking the whole group of 15 through was interesting. A lot slower than a small group, but we weren't in a hurry and gave us lots of time to appreciate the formations in the cave. There is a nice squeeze/crawl through in Grill Cave which everyone went through, about 30cm high and a couple of meters in length. Some people even had to take their helmets off to get through. After the Crystal Palace which is about halfway through, you can start to get into bad air. Which we did. Once the air got bad I made sure everyone knew that they didn't have to go any further and could stop and wait. 12 of the 15 actually came with me to the sump which I was surprised with. By then we were all sweating a lot and breathing like we had just run pretty hard. And a few of us were starting to get headaches. So we turned around and tramped back up to Crystal Palace and had a rest in good air. Once we emerged outside we had been underground for 3 hours.

Camping that night we shared the kitchen building with 2 scout groups, which made it very crowded. We

cooked dinner and set up a rope from the rafters so that we could practice prusiking for the next day. Once everyone else had gone to bed those of us that decided to party and drink that night ended up climbing up into the rafters (thanks to an adventurous Aaron) and played a few drinking games 3m off the floor. Which sounds dangerous but thankfully I was the only one to fall down.

On the Sunday morning we got off to a late start, always difficult to get 15 moving. We separated into 2 groups, 9 of us went down Blowfly Cave which required a 25m abseil in and prusik back out. The other



Pete ascending from Blowfly Cave

group went down the start of Acoustic Pot and then back to Grill Cave. Blowfly was a lot more fun than I remembered from 5 years ago. We had a 25m abseil inside the cave to start off with. Then there was a few meters of a painfully rocky crawl through. Where we waited for everyone else to abseil down. Then there was a few more squeeze parts before we got to the kidney squeeze.

I'm not sure if its called that because it looks roughly kidney shape or if you go through the wrong way there is rock that sticks into your kidneys. Either way its a tough squeeze to get through. That then leads to the top of the dragons teeth. Which is a 5m squeeze on a 45 degree slope going down, very fun as you have to go feet first and cant see where you are going. From there its not far to the other entry point and then we turned around and did it again going the other way. Dragons Teeth is much harder going up. We had set up a double rope abseil so that we could have 2 people prusiking at a time back out, as this takes a lot of time to do. Once everyone was out we were a little behind schedule as Blowfly had taken us a bit over 4 hours so set up and go through.

Everyone made it back to Sydney and there were no injuries. All in all a very successful trip.

Thank you to everyone who came on this trip. I had a blast.



Castle Head Abseiling By Damon Vandermaat

Participants

Steve, Jenny, Rudi, Damon, Pete, DJ, Kosol

We set out from Sam's Crack at around 8:15am on Saturday morning. A quick stop to pick up Jenny resulted in frustration when we discovered her road was closed for some kind of maintenance. As a result, she had to walk to the car. After that, an uneventful trip up saw Rudi and myself getting some sleep in the back of Steve's car.



Mt Solitary in the distance

We arrived at Narrow Neck at around 11, meeting DJ, Kosol and Pete who chose to park as close as possible to Steve's driver side door in attempt to block him in. A quick gear check and we were off. We ran into a spot of confusion when we took a wrong turn down a slightly overgrown footpad. A few back tracks were made, but it eventually met up with the main track again and all was well. About 30-45 mins after leaving the cars we were at the cliff setting up the first abseil. Pete decided to leave Jennys bag on top of the trig station too see how long it would take for her to realize, it

wasn't long. We could see a group ahead of eating lunch down a couple of ledges. We threw the rope down after setting the anchor, however the group ahead informed us that our rope was too short. The problem was rectified by setting up a double rope. I was a little nervous as this was my first abseil in a while but it quickly subsided once I was on the rope. Not a bad abseil, ~30m, reasonably exposed, however there were some trees that needed to be wrestled with at the bottom.

At the bottom we were faced with a slightly precarious traverse followed by a short scramble to the next anchor. Steve sent a rope down with DJ so Pete could set up the abseil. Instead he decided to set up a safety for the next people crossing the traverse and no matter how many times he tried, could not perfect throwing the rope back to the other side. While waiting for the next decent, rain clouds started to set in. In an attempt to make sure that the weather stayed good, I performed a sun dance, much to the amusement of Jenny. It was also at this time, while eating her premature lunch of vita-wheat's with vegemite, Jenny roped me into writing this article.



Kosol



Over the next abseil we were faced with a bit of a nasty little scramble. I decided to wait till it was my turn to abseil before I crossed. While waiting, Rudi and I decided to eat our lunch. Always the adventurous one, DJ thought that it would be really cool if he to a piss over the cliff. He decided to do this in plain sight of everyone in the party. To add to the spectacle, splash back landed all over him and was accompanied by “I am covered in piss, it’s on my feet, my hands, my head...”. Luckily Jenny had babywipes handy.



DJ probably won't be trying this ever again

To make it to the next abseil, we were given the choice of making a really sketchy jump that was deemed “not technical, but hard on the knees”. We chose the safer option and set up a short abseil instead. The second last decent of the day was the best, 45m down with good views, exposure and a cool overhang at the bottom. The final abseil was done to avoid a dodgy down scramble. Once that was out of the way it was a 1 ½ hour walk from ruined castle, up the golden stairs and back to the cars. The endless shenanigans of Pete and DJ led off the track in hopes of taking a shortcut and getting in front of us. They only succeeded in cutting open DJ’s leg on the bushes which required some mini-

mal first aid when getting back to the car. Before we could leave, Pete conveniently plonked himself behind the cars to eat his tuna and cheese sandwiches. We considered running him over, but decided reluctantly that maybe he was good value. Once on the road it was a fairly smooth run back to Sydney.

No compass? No worries.
By Survival Outdoor Skills

Clock method (sunlight required)

1. Point 12 o'clock at the sun.
2. North is located halfway between 12 o'clock and the Hour hand . South is in the opposite direction.

Note: Reverse north and south if you are in the Northern hemisphere!

Tree method (no sunlight required)

1. Wider grain on the North side

In the Southern hemisphere, trees with thick, rough, linear bark have wider up and down grain lines on the North side and narrower on the South side.

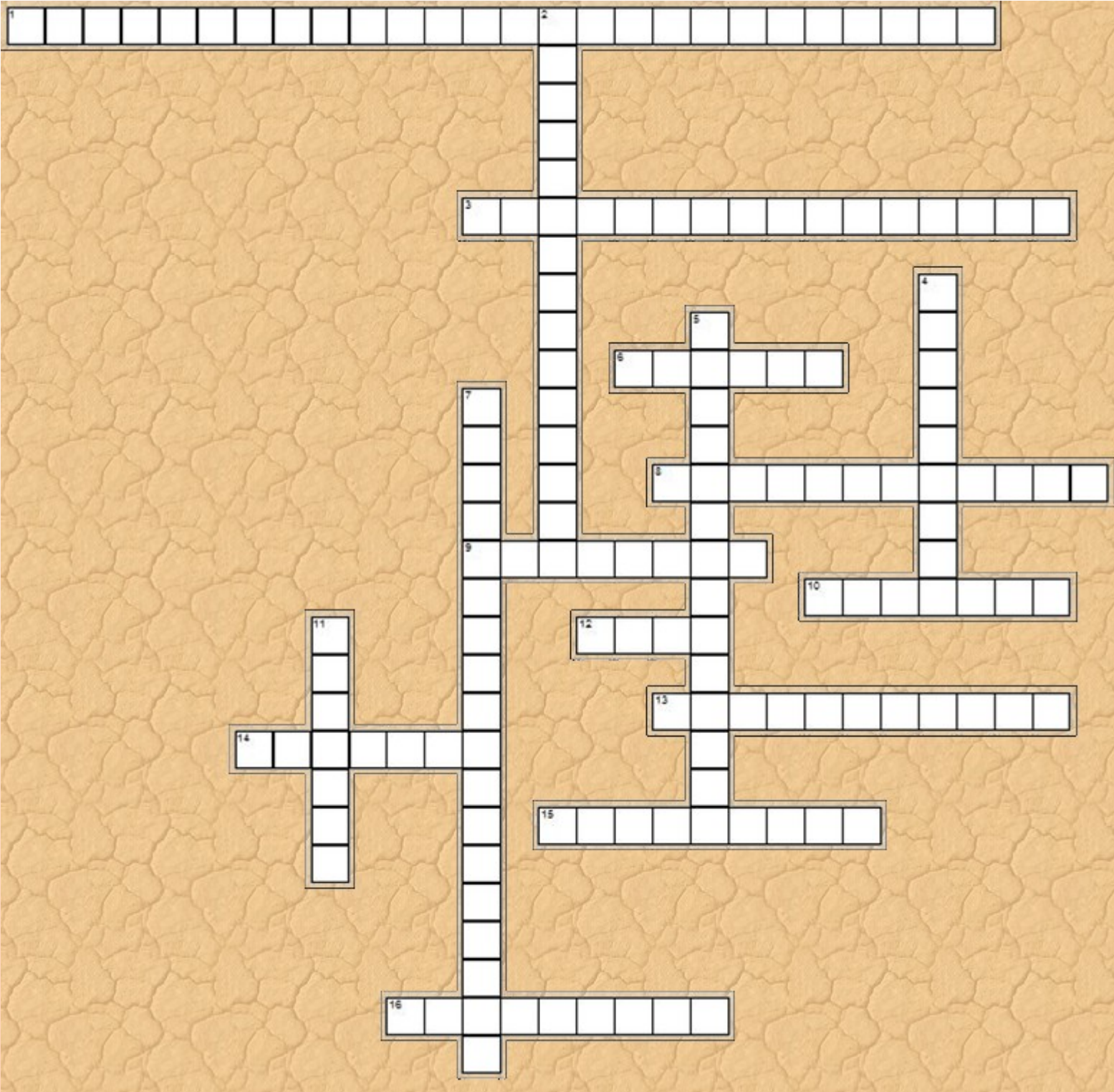


2. Moss grows on the South side

In the Southern hemisphere, moss found near the base of trees usually grows on the Southern side where the sun’s rays don’t reach.



UNSWOC-word





Across

Down

1. Australia's hardest long distance walking track
3. Climbing over water
6. Abseiling rope
8. Famous NSW bushwalk
9. Favourite Club climbing gym
10. Rare pine
12. Slang climbing move
13. Highest peak in Australia
14. Dangerous snow buildup
15. Type of Blue Mountains' rock
16. Famous climbing spot in Victoria

2. Favourite Blue Mountains canyon
4. Common rescue descender
5. NSW alpine area north of Sydney
7. Sea cliff climbing area
11. Southern-most canyon detailed in Canyons Near Sydney

9-Letter Target

The objective of the puzzle is to find as many words of four letters or more from the group of letters provided. Each letter may only be used once in each word, and the middle letter is always required in each word.

For each word formed, there must be no plurals ending in 's', no foreign words, no hyphenated words and no proper names.

At least one nine letter word can be formed.

R	N	S
C	E	D
E	D	E

Upcoming Events

Date	Activity	Location
Every Friday during uni semester	Indoor Climbing	The Ledge, Sydney Uni
24 October 2009	Canyoning	Bungleboori
6 November 2009	Beginner's canyoning long weekend	Blue Mountains
28 November 2009	Paddy Palin adventure race 2	Canberra
30 November 2009	Cycle tour New Zealand	South Island, NZ
13 February 2010	Paddy Palin adventure race 3	Canberra
13 March 2010	Paddy Palin adventure race 4	Canberra