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# Mt Wilson Mt Irvine Bushwalking Group

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Volume 29 Issue 7 & 8

July & August 2019

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JINKI RIDGE AND RADIATA PLATEAU

TOPIC

## OUR JUNE WALK

JINKI RIDGE off the BELLS  
LINE OF ROAD near MT  
WILSON

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2019

Much to my chagrin I had to excuse myself from this walk as we were having some minor repairs done to our house. So, while those present in the group were to experience views so grand they would feel they were standing on the roof of the world, I had views of a tradie on the roof of our house.

As no one was willing to accept the challenge of taking up the quill to dash off a report on this walk, I shall attempt to do so *in absentia*. It will be based on photos and videos taken by Helen, her comments about the walk, my memories of past walks at this venue, and perhaps a pinch or two of poetic licence; here goes.

The group met under a cloudless azure sky in the cleared parking area at Jinki Bend on the Bells Line of Road; three and a half kilometres west of the Mt Wilson turnoff. Linda Morrison, a friend of Merren Dargan, who was joining the group for the first time today, was welcomed. Helen Freeman and Barbara Harry came to catch up with the group and intended only walking a short distance. So the group of twenty-one, led by Karin Kirkpatrick with Freda Moxom as whip (many thanks to you



Winter in the Bush

both) set off in the brisk crisp 6-degree morning air.

Near the start of the walk silver spikes of frost adorned logs and stumps providing an ephemeral work of art before the gentle winter rays of the sun would melt it away; to be recreated on the next frosty morn.

Initially the track led the group through an area of hanging swamp, quite dry at this time, but typically devoid of any trees. Mitre Weed (*Mitrasacme polymorpha*) and Grass-leaf Trigger Plants (*Stylidium graminifolium*) inhabit this

area; neither flowering at this time. Soon the track was bounded by Conesticks, (*Petrophile pulchella*), Drumsticks (*Isopogon sp*) and Banksias; the ground cover carried Curly Sedge or Old Mans Whiskers (*Caustis flexulosa*). Blue Mountains Mallee Ash (*Eucalyptus stricta*) was now predominant with a few taller Eucalypts; it was here that Helen and Barbara returned to the cars.

The track began to descend now through low heath and views of the cliff faces on the other side of the Upper Grose Valley opened up. The group soon arrived at the first pagoda which carried some Heath Banksias (*Banksia ericifolia*) and Dwarf She Oaks (*Allocasuarina nana*) growing in seemingly impossible positions on the bare rock. Time to pause for a quick morning tea to enjoy Karin's version of Libby's bushwalker cake; many thanks Karin.

Beside this pagoda is a fairly steeply sloping smooth rock face with a few small horizontal ledges; this was the next area tackled by the group. Various modes of travel were employed to descend this face but whatever suits the individual is the best way to go; there were plenty of helping hands to get the remaining nineteen walkers back onto level ground. Beside this sloping smooth face, and in stark contrast to it, was a vertical sandstone face with an abundance of slightly protruding ironstone layers.

The track then led the group up a slight rise through a lightly wooded area and through wind blown heath to near the edge of the escarpment looking into the Upper Grose Gorge. The views from here were magnificent; indeed one could be excused for feeling they were standing on the roof of the world.

The view down the gorge on the near side was past Dalpura Head (*Aboriginal for Quiet and Peaceful*) to Birrabang Walls (*Rest*) then across to the sheer cliffs below Burrarakoko Head (*Big Rain*) and Hanging Rock and back along the cliffline to Burra Korain Head (*Big Wind*). Then across the side valley which carries Victoria Creek. Closer at hand, directly across the gorge, is Thor Head and Valhalla Head in front of Asgard Swamp. Two ancient cultures, and a touch of British royalty, meeting in the naming of features forming a magnificent view down this stupendous cleft in the plateau.

Closer at hand there were amazing rock formations. Layers of golden sandstone compressed between thin veins of dark ironstone. Broken 'onion skins' of curved ironstone lying atop rocky outcrops; a double cruciform of sandstone about one and a half metres high. There were intriguing wind eroded overhangs and sandstone pedestals, topped with thin extended horizontal plates of ironstone. Clinging to the edge of the cliff was a beautiful Grass Tree (*Xanthorrhoea sp*); its narrow strappy leaves dancing in the breeze rising from the valley.

The group had lunch here and spent some time absorbing the grandeur of the scenery; then it

was time to leave this special place. Jinki is Aboriginal for 'Spirit Place', how thoroughly appropriate, for anyone spending time here would surely have his or her spirits lifted; I wish I had been there.

John Cardy

### VALĒ KEITH RAINES

Keith passed away early in the morning of 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019. Keith was a foundation member of this walking group, having attended the first walk to the Tessellated Pavements in May 1990. He attended many walks in the early years of the group and later accompanied Libby when she did reconnaissance walks of new venues for the group. Keith was quietly spoken, respectful, and had a wonderful sense of humour.

Keith was a highly skilled carpenter, cabinet-maker and woodworking craftsman, as anyone who has seen his superb work in the house at Merry Garth would attest. He was also an expert and avid plantsman and landscaper with a special interest in rhododendrons, but he loved all cold climate plants. The garden at Merry Garth is a fitting legacy of Keith's and Libby's love of horticulture and their dedication to creating a place of beauty and serenity for others to enjoy.

On a personal note Keith paid a special compliment to Helen and myself some years ago when he said: "The only thing wrong with you Cardys is that you don't live at Mount Wilson."

Farewell Keith, your spirit is now free to meet Libby's in a Blessed Enclosure in some other place.

John and Helen Cardy for the Group

## OUR JULY WALK

**RADIATA PLATEAU between  
KATOOMBA and MEDLOW BATH**

**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2019**

The Macquarie Dictionary defines transcendental meditation as 'a state of rest deeper than sleep when the mind remains alert

and stress is neutralised automatically.' I used to find myself in a similar state when attending boring presentations at work, though I doubt my mind remained alert and stress was certainly not neutralised.

Well you may ask dear reader, what this has to do with a bushwalk in the Blue Mountains; let me elaborate. Our venue today is on a 300 hectare site adjacent to the Blue Mountains National Park, but it is in fact mostly privately owned by Maharishi's Global Administration Through Natural Law Group, which promotes transcendental meditation. There is a campaign, which started some years ago, to have the State Government purchase the land and incorporate it into the National Park. It has gained strength in more recent years and hopefully some agreement will be reached soon to protect the bushland and magnificent escarpments in this area.

Once again we were treated to glorious weather when fifteen walkers gathered at the end of Pulpit Hill Road to commence this walk. An azure sky hung languidly above the landscape, there was not a breath of wind and the air carried an invigorating chill as the winter sun struggled to impart some warmth into the atmosphere. We set off, led by Ann Mikkelsen who, with Freda Moxom, had previously checked out the route we would follow today; many thanks to you both.

The track took us through open woodland past the brilliant display of the tiny golden globes which combine to form the blossom of the Sunshine Wattles (*Acacia terminalis*) framed by their glossy compound leaves. Nearby there were examples of the Sydney Golden Wattle (*Acacia longifolia*) their dense cylindrical flower spikes contrasting markedly with their matt grey/green simple foliage. Also in this area were two varieties of the Geebung; the upright Broad Leaved Geebung (*Persoonia levis*) holding its bright green leaves aloft and the Prostrate Geebung (*Persoonia chamaepitys*) forming soft green mats.

Soon we arrived at a small dam, the water of which carried a thin layer of crinkly ice. On the far side of the dam stood a bed of reeds

illuminated a light glowing orange by the morning sun, their reflection distorted in the mantle of ice.

Moving on we made a short leap across a deep section of the creek downstream of the dam and began a gentle climb. We passed a trifecta of Banksias; the Hairpin Banksia (*Banksia spinulosa*), the Heath Banksia (*Banksia ericifolia*) and the Old Man Banksia (*Banksia serrata*); this threesome of the same genus carrying widely different leaf forms. Also scattered among the ground cover here were the strappy leaves of the Spiny-headed Mat Rush (*Lomandra longifolia*) and the ubiquitous Curly Sedge or Old Mans Whiskers (*Caustis flexuosa*) with its densely convoluted and coiled stems glistening in the sunlight.

We diverted off the main track and made our way a short distance down hill where we paused for morning tea. Here we were able to enjoy views across the forested floor of the Megalong Valley, over a cleared area of pasture to the tree-clad slopes leading up to the ridge carrying Hargraves Lookout and beyond; the view framed on our left by a craggy sunlit sculptural cliff face and on the right by a shadowy cliff line. While taking in this expansive view we relished another version of Libby's cake, this one baked by Michael Ihm's wife Beth. Delicious! Many thanks Beth.

Continuing on we climbed a small rise past a curious formation of stones laid out like the plan view of the foundations of an igloo, a circle about three metres in diameter with two parallel lines forming an entrance. Was this a children's play space or perhaps it had some transcendental meditation significance. We dropped down to cross a small creek line and climbed up through the enclosing heath to emerge onto a rocky outcrop on the edge of the escarpment. This was to be our lunch spot but first there was a canyon to explore on the headwaters of Back Creek.

My weary legs were warning me not to attempt the planned descent into the canyon, they may have coped with the descent but the ascent could have been a worry, so I remained

with three others indulging in a little pareidolia, while Ann Mikkelsen led the rest of the group. Here is Ann's description of this section of the walk.

*After reaching the lunch spot most of us headed towards the canyon, minus Simon and three others. Rough bushes initially impeded us whilst slippery rocks and a frayed rope made sure it was a speedy descent; after reaching a rock ledge below the cliffs we proceeded towards the canyon. The sculptured rocks above us were a mixture of warm autumnal colours. A further descent brought us to the cliff line which led to the Pink Canyon and grotto. Three large white-trunked gums poked their heads through the cliffs, their branches playing in the wind. Opposite the large overhang was a vertical 'swamp' constantly dripping water; a wall of emerald. A layer of soft pink shale at its base gives the canyon its name. We returned up the cliff but Simon just had to have a rushed private viewing, so I accompanied him back down; we didn't want to lose him. He was also very impressed with the scenery below, taking many photos.*

Many thanks for that delightful insight into the Pink Canyon Ann; Simon's photos help convey what a special place it is.

Pareidolia is seeing the form of animate beings in inanimate features. While we waited for the canyon explorers Simon pointed out the profile of an old man's face in the cliffs. My imagination usually does not stretch to such sightings but this one was quite clear.

Following lunch we retraced our steps back to the dam, the ice had now melted and the dam surface was like a mirror, reflecting the reed bed and surrounding trees; the croaking of many frogs seemed to indicate they were enjoying the warmer conditions. So ended another wonderful day enjoying the bush.

John Cardy

(Apologies for the late mailing of this issue)

## OUR AUGUST WALK

FRIDAY 16<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2019

**'Castles in the Air' - Panoramic Views, Windblown Heath, Precipitous Cliffs.**

### Castle Head and Narrow Neck Plateau

The Group last visited this venue in June 2009. It is a relatively easy walk of about 8 kilometres return, about half the walk is along the Narrow Neck Plateau fire trail. The track to Castle Head (off the fire trail) is narrow and winds through low encroaching heath so long pants or gaiters are recommended.

**Meet at 9.45am at the Narrow Neck Lookout carpark on Cliff Drive, just south of the Cedar Street intersection, at Katoomba. There will be a vehicle rationalisation here for the 2.5km drive along the unsealed Glenraphael Drive to the locked gate. 4WD or high clearance vehicles would be most welcome.**

**Those wishing to car share from Mt Wilson should meet at St Georges Church for an 8.30am departure.**

**Bring morning tea, lunch and plenty of water.**

**Contact Helen and John Cardy on 9871 3661 or on mobile 0400 444 966.**

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## FUTURE WALKS (Tentative schedule)

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September – To be advised

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## BUSH CARE

**Bush Care is held on the second Friday of each month from 9am to Noon. Any help, even for a short time, would be appreciated.**

**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September – Meet at Wynne Reserve**

**Mt Wilson contact Alice Simpson 0414 425 511 or 4756 2110**

**Council contact Tracy Abbas 0428 777 141**