

Mini-heybob APR 91



UNI OF QLD BUSHWALKING CLUB
C/- CLUBS & SOCS
UNI OF QLD UNION
ST LUCIA QLD 4067

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST

MANGROVES AT WATHUMBA

PUBLICATION NO. QbH 1061

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MT. ETNA CAVING TRIP

by Janice

Cavers- Karen Gerry, Stephen Gerry, Marco Heijboer, Janice Porter

During the 4 day Easter break, some more adventurous bushwalkers decided to take the plunge into the depths of the Earth and discover the delights of caving.

Limestone Ridge and Mt. Etna, approx 20km north of Rockhampton, being one of the closest caves systems to Brisbane, was the site of our initiation. We crossed the Tropic of Capricorn at about midday and after setting up our camp at the Rodeo Grounds in the Caves Township, headed out to our first cave on Good Friday arvo.

Through her old contacts in the Speleological Society, Karen had found us Joe, an old campaigner, with 28 years of exploring experience, and a host of caving stories; to be our guide. Now retired from his tourist guide job, Joe leads a "Quieter life", often buzzing around between nearby National Parks on his motor-bike with his caving helmet on.

Gear required for caving contrasts with the common bushwalking needs of rucksack, map, compass and sunhat. A pair of old overalls or tough old jeans and some elbow protection is essential

My polystyrene bike helmet and front light were deemed unsuitable by Joe who lent me a sturdy miner's helmet and a \$250 rechargeable battery with headlight similar to his. Marco somehow managed the climbing with a basic Dolphin torch and two new batteries.

We were underground for about 10 hours altogether, and when you turn off all the torches, you can't even see your hand held up in front of your face. So a good strong light source makes exploring the caves much more enjoyable, and rechargeables are more economical in the long run.

After introductions, Joe decided to take us to some of the easier caves in the area which didn't require too much strenuous rockclimbing or rope-work. Actually, the climbing we did was one of the highlights of Caving, besides seeing some spectacular formations such as columns, shawls, oolytes, stalactites and stalagmites.

Friday : Johansens Cave on Limestone Ridge is one of the most accessible caves and it gave us a good mixture of vertical climbs to pick our way up, chimneys to manipulate ourselves up, "squeezes" to get wedged in, and even some figtree roots to climb out on.

Karen discovered, much to Joe's amazement, that she had changed shape since last she went caving. Steve also had some trouble adapting to the size of one of the squeezes. Marco proved to be quite a nimble climber, and I just wiggled through all the tightest tunnels, including the one down to the Lion's Pit (Main Cave) which has a huge stone blocking it.

Saturday : Up on Mt. Etna, a monstrous concrete path has been built to Bat Cleft since the blockade in 1983. The limestone mining company blasted many gorgreous caves on one side of the mountain, among them Crystal Palace and Elephant Cave, which were on the slides Joe showed us at his place on Sunday night. Luckily for the 100,000's of bats that use Bat Cleft, it is now part of the National Park, but Speaking Tube, which was the main over-wintering cave of the Ghost bats, is gone to cement.

Past the Bat Cleft Track, we scrambled down over the sharp limestone and scrub to Main Cave which we stayed in for about 2 hours and got very muddy in by lunchtime. Commando Cavern, named after the ones who surveyed it by candlelight during the war, was also extensive with many "pretties".

Joe's pocket knife came in handy in his conquest against the giant cane-toads living in some of the caves - pretty revolting !

On Saturday evening, we all headed to the creek beside our shady campsite to cool off after the high humidity and still air in the caves. The high CaCO_3 concentration in the creek makes some interesting "rimpools" damming the water up behind them so we could sit up to our necks in it.

Sunday : Larynx Labyrinth, Dragon's Head, and Ballroom Cave on Limestone Ridge were our destination, and Joe said he knew a shortcut up via Cammoo (commercial) Caves. I think he just wanted to show us all the edible plant species, and the not so pleasant ones including the native Chilli Plant. Delicately licking the juice off my thumb by mistake put my tongue and lips in agony until we got back to the snack bar 10 mins later for an icecream.

We disturbed alot of bats down the bottom of Dragon's Head - probably about 500 Little Bent Wings or Horseshoe Bats flying around our heads squeaking while I photographed a glistening flowstone. Karen and Marco exited via a new daylight hole Karen had noticed, while Joe and I returned the way we'd come past the Dragon's Head Formation via a very narrow crawl-out, to get Steve

who was guarding the entry with a mosquito swat in hand, incapacitated by a mightystrain on Saturday.

Ballroom Cave features a large daylight hole with tree roots coming down through it and light making a circle of sunlight on the cave floor. It is a long wide shallow cave, different from all the others which seemed to be more series of interconnected irregular spaces in the Earth.

Monday.: Saw an early departure by Marco and Janice and a more leisurely drive to Mt Morgan for Steve and Karen. A great Easter with many happy memories of the Caves and the company - including Joe and his wife Diane - and not too many bruises to prove it with.



"Listen out there! We're George and Harriet Miller! We just dropped in on the pigs for coffee! We're coming out! . . . We don't want trouble!"



"Now here comes the barbaric finale."

Down the Cataract !!

Fresh from their adventures at the Colo River over the New Year, Brendan and Angelo were intent on using the Australia Day long week-end for another li-lo trip. A three day trip down the Cataract River in northern NSW to end at Paddy's Flat was planned. A number of UQBCers expressed interest but, by the fateful day, only the two li-loists extraordinaire and myself were left. With Rob's help, we would be able to complete the long car shuttle involved.

The trip started with the usual UQBC organization; with departure planned for 6 am on the Saturday, Rob and I were rudely awakened by Angelo knocking on our door at 6 am. A flurry of packing and eating followed. The drive to Upper Toolom and then the drop off point was uneventful, except for the delights of a Driver Reviver stop outside Woodenbong. At 1pm, we started the walk in, a scenic stroll along a confusing network of old mining roads. We reached the river in about 30 minutes, at which point sinister clouds began to appear. Undaunted (but suspicious), we inflated the lilos and were off. It started to rain almost immediately (the sight of Angelo aboard lilo in a brilliant red goretex jacket sticks in my memory). We negotiated some interesting shutes and slides before finally stopping at a level camp site. It continued to rain heavily, affecting Brendan's and my morale (Angelo lurking in his fly seemed unmoved).

We ate breakfast and packed up in rain the following morning. With Angelo dissenting, it was decided that we would walk out that day, an optimistic effort given the distance but felt to be preferable to two day's li-loing in the rain. By 11am however the sun had cautiously re-appeared and so had the li-los. It was from this point that my limitations as a white-water liloist were to become apparent, Brendan and Angelo being more accomplished. The river was noteworthy for sudden small water-falls with rapid currents. The further we went, the more frequently the river split into two or more runs, at times with inconvenient overhanging branches and shallow sections requiring the tedium of actually raising oneself off the li-lo. This last task was a considerable effort, given that our packs were sodden and crammed with goodies (Brendan's Khumbu required hydraulic jacks to be lifted onto his li-lo). At these difficult points, my pack often decided it could travel more quickly without the impediment of me ! At other times, we floated through long, tranquil pools, paddling backwards until we could hear rapids approaching.

The chief problem with li-loing is its very slow pace, at the very most about 1 kph. By Sunday night, we were still a considerable distance from Paddy's Flat, although the surrounding land had become predominantly cattle country. Monday was spent travelling wider and more gentle sections of the river. However the final 2k of the river were more exciting; we came to a narrow and extremely fast section gushing past an eroded bank. Brendan and I hit a fallen tree with some force (and with fatal consequences for my lilo). Li-lo less, I had to complete the last section on foot (carrying a swollen pack was an unpleasant change) whilst Brendan and Angelo continued. Brendan's li-lo made the supreme sacrifice later. Angelo with the sole surviving lilo

succeeded in completing the entire trip, overcoming rapid sections which looked appalling from the road (a late bid for Club Hard by Mr Costanzo !).

So ended another exciting UQBWC li-lo trip, considerably rougher than last year's Guy Fawkes expedition but without the demanding walks to and from the river. Now all I need, besides some li-loing ability, is a new lilo.



Mal Roberts



"Something's wrong here, Harriet . . . This is starting to look less and less like Interstate 95."

Byron Bay - Easter 1991

As easter approached it became more and more obvious that no consensus would be reached on a walking destination. In the meantime Mathew was organising a beach bum trip to Byron Bay. With two weeks to go my resolve to do serious walking had evaporated - I opted for four days of melanoma development on N.S.W. beaches.

In the end a large party also opted for the idea of working on their skin cancers, so on Easter Friday at 6am sharp (well, actually a quarter to seven) Werner, Brett, Pat, Mathe and I set off in the vanguard for Cape Byron, eastern-most tip of Australia. We were followed later in the day by Mathew, Kirsten, Peter and Karen. Due to the ravages of the alcohol consumed the previous night Linda, Maire (and Svenja and Philip) turned up much later.

The first day was spent sunning ourselves on the beach. Most of us had retired to the warmth of our tents late in the afternoon, when Linda and co arrived. Svenja and Philip were undeterred by the cool wind blowing along the beach - after all, you need to be made of stern stuff to swim in the north sea, even in summer.

Brett was determined not to turn into a beach potato over the weekend so next day he persuaded us to do a bushwalk. After rising at six, and spending only several hours deciding where we were going to go, we set off at 11.30.

Our destination was Minyon falls, a small part of the huge rainforested arc which heads out west past Nimbin then north to Lamington before finally tapering off near Springbrook on the Gold Coast hinterland. This enormous stretch of (mostly) forested hills and mountains was once a masive volcano with Mount Warning at its centre.

After a drive of thirty-odd minutes we discovered both Minyon falls and the serious fault in the cooling system of Werner's car. Fortunately the drive to the start of the Minyon falls walk was only short so Werner's car made it without seizing up.

The falls are quite impressive. A giant horseshoe of rhyolite cliffs, topped by eucalypt scrub, over which Minyon creek tumbles in a single 100m drop. A six kilometre track walk starts from there and passes a smaller waterfall as well as lower Minyon falls. After an hour or so of walking through the thick stands

of piccabeen palms on this track we came upon lower Minyon falls. The huge white and black striated rhyolite cliffs were an impressive sight after tramping through the featureless rainforest, appearing suddenly and unexpectedly, like Mayan temple -s in the South American jungle.

Philip and I went for the obligatory icy swim beneath the curtain of water.

Next day we arose at six again. Long-standing UQBWC'ers may be surprised by this unheard of enthusiasm. The explanation for our unusual behaviour is simple - we were camped beside the main road in the area, and the way road-trains had of setting the ground underneath our tents shaking like the epi-centre of an earthquake tended, on the whole, to curtail our slumbers.

I made use of the early arrival to walk down the beach to the lighthouse. On the way I passed a dozen or so fishermen who all seemed to be having good luck with the fish. They also all seemed to look exactly the same, being old, short and gnarled like tree trunks. I spent the next hour exploring Cape Byron, which apart from being the easterly-most point of Australia is interesting because it shelters a surprising diversity and abundance of lepidozamias, tree ferns, cabbage palms, dracaenas, staghorns and other rainforest species.

By the time I had returned Pat, Brett, Werner and others had already left for Tuntable creek near Nimbin. They returned later that afternoon declaring the area excellent. On the way they encountered a group of naked hippies who expressed surprise at seeing people with clothes on.

That evening was truly memorable. We went down to the beach for an evening swim and a party. During the course of the evening we invented a new drink - red wine and cheap port. By midnight we were so drunk that we had "discovered the perfect mix" which was sure to take the world by storm.

Mathew remained sober enough to take several incriminating photos.

The following day, Easter Monday, was not surprisingly unenjoyable for the majority. We laid around at Cape Byron and Currumbin rock pool recovering from stupendous hangovers.

Brendan O'Malley.

B U S H W A L K I N G G E A R H I R E

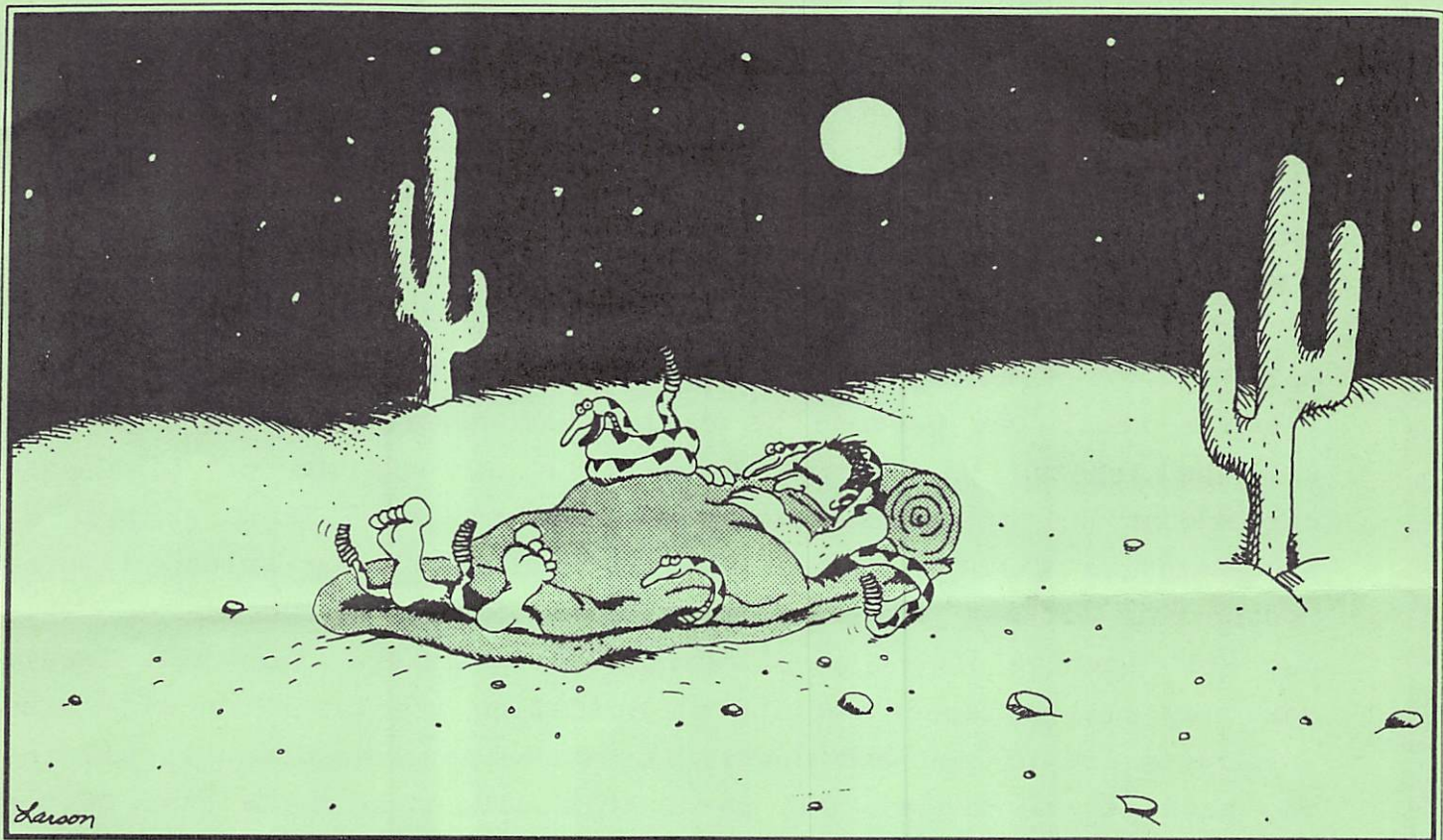
The club has a range of gear for hire to any financial club members. From the 12th May, the gear resides at my (Rob Stevens) place at 7/14 Bishop St, St. Lucia. Ph. 371 6462 after 5:30pm to check on gear hire.

When hiring equipment...

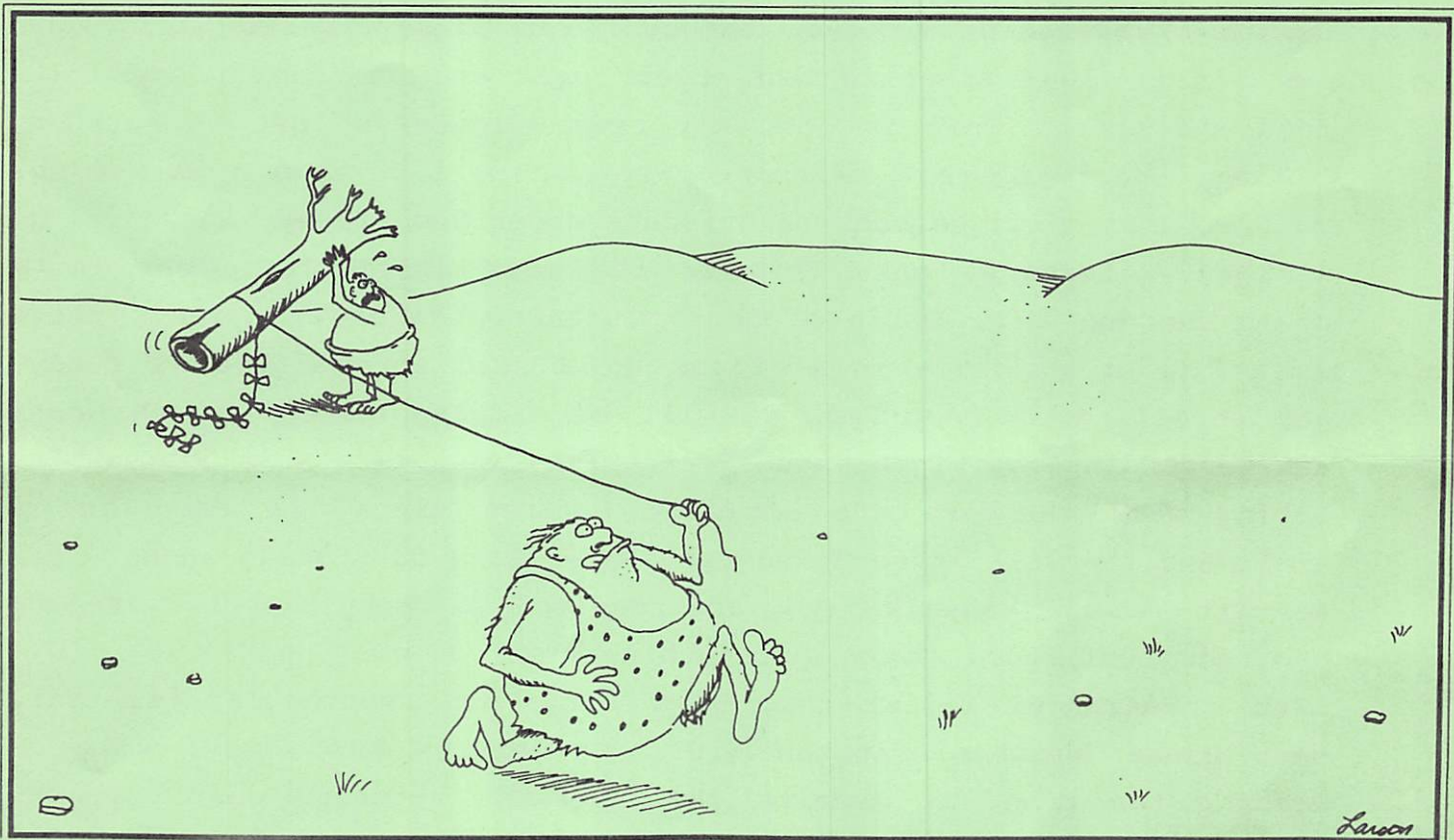
- * Book gear by the WEDNESDAY BEFORE the trip, preferably.
- * Pay for the gear when you pick it up. A receipt will be issued.
- * Return the gear by the WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING the trip.
- * Return the gear in the condition you hired it in (or better). For example:
 - * DRY out all wet or damp gear.
 - * Sleeping Bags are provided with inner sheets : these MUST be used, and then WASHED after use.
 - * Check ALL pegs, poles, ropes, etc are found before returning tents. New pegs WILL cost you \$1.50 each.
 - * Camping Gaz stoves are provided with an extra Butane cylinder. Replace when necessary - if you don't, the next person hiring it will have to.
 - * First Aid kits are available at no charge, providing all items used are replaced.

The following Gear Hire rates apply for 1991 :

Item	Price per Day/Night	Price per Week
Rucksacks		
'Lowe' Weekend Packs..	\$1.00	\$5.00
Day Packs.....	\$0.50	\$2.50
Sleeping Bags		
2-3 Season.....	\$1.00	\$5.00
4 Season.....	\$2.00	\$10.00
Sleeping Mats.....	\$ Please ask!	
Stoves		
Camping Gaz (Butane)..	\$0.50	\$ N/A
Trangia (Kerosene)....	\$0.50	\$ N/A
Tents (with Groundsheet)		
Outer Fly only.....	\$0.50	\$2.50
Inner + Outer.....	\$1.00	\$5.00
Snow Tents		
Ultimate.....	\$1.50	\$6.00
Black Ice Meridian....	\$2.00	\$8.00
Macpac Olympus.....	\$ N/A	\$20.00
Rock Climbing Gear.....	\$ Please ask	



"Okay . . . On the count of three everybody rattles."



"Okay, Bob! Go! Go!"

TRIP PREVIEWS

April

27/28th - Binna Burra via Numinbah valley. Anthony Smith 300 3488

This will be an overnight walk leaving 7.30am on Saturday, and returning Sunday between 3 and 5. It involves some cross country walking on Sunday. Leaves from Binnaburra and finishing at Natural Arch. There are excellent views along the border track, so bring your camera. You will need to carry at least 2 l water. Grade : Easy.

MAY

4/6th - Labor Day Weekend Mt Ballow throughwalk. Dave Boston (3906181) will be leading this trip. He will be leaving the hitching post carpark at uni on Friday night (ie the 3rd) at 7.30pm. Arrival at the campsite will be about 10pm. Next day will be spent climbing Montserrat lookout and then proceeding on to Mt Durrumlea. This day will involve strenuous climbing (but no cliffs, just hillsides). Next day will be spent getting to Mt Ballow itself, which will also involve a lot of ups and downs. Day three will be downhill all the way back to the Grace's Hut road. This walk requires a fair degree of physical fitness since climbing is necessary and packs will be heavy. It is also off-track, however there is not much thick or scratchy vegetation to push through. You will need to carry your own (or a club) sleeping bag, tent, pack and gas/fuel stove, plus food and water. This is the only true wilderness left in southern QLD and the rainforest is superb, so you will be well rewarded for your efforts. Will be back in Brisbane about 8pm Monday.

11/12th - Leaning Peak. This is the most difficult ascent route of Mt Barney, S.E. QLD's highest mountain. Grades are steep, there is a lot of exposure in sections so a head for heights is handy, and abseiling is required. We will be camping on top of the peak and descending via picturesque Egan creek. This is a hard but exhilarating walk. Numbers are strictly limited since the campsite is small and the walk is hard, so ring Peter Zund (371 8622) soon.

As with all throughwalks, you are required to carry a tent, sleeping bag, gas/fuel stove, food and anything else you will need.

12th - Ballanjui falls. This is a large and spectacular waterfall near Binna Burra, Lamington N.P. Reg Pollitt (371 7087) will be leading the trip. It departs 7am from the hitching post carpark. You can either do the circuit walk, which is easy, short and scenic, or abseil down the falls and join up with the track. Bring a day pack with lunch, water, a torch and raincoat, plus insect repellent.

18/19th - Mt Mitchell sunrise. Les Tillack (378 7551) will be leading a trip to Mt Mitchell, Cunningham's Gap, to see the sunrise. He will be leaving either late Saturday (the 18th) or early *Sunday* (ie about

TRIP LIST SUMMARY cont'd

Mt Mitchell cont'd - 3am). The walk up to Mitchell is on a graded track and is short (1-2 hours at most) but steep. Bring breakfast - maybe champagne and strawberries if you are decadent. A very easy and pleasant day trip.

25/26th - Commando trail/Moran's falls. This is a very scenic area of Lamington N.P. Murray Parkinson (870 3620) will be leading. The trip leaves the hitching post carpark at 7pm on Friday 24th and arrival back in Brisbane is expected around 4-5pm on Sunday 26th. The commando trail is fairly steep but does not require a head for heights. There is some easy and short rockhopping around Moran's falls. Bring tent, pack, sleeping bag, stove, food etc. This is a good way for beginners to experience an extended walk since it combines track walking with some easy off-track sections and a small amount of easy rockhopping.

26th - Kinnanes falls/Mt Wilson. Dave Boston will be leading. Leaves 7.30am Sunday 26th from the hitching post. Depending on the route there will be some climbing, but nothing any average person could not handle. The track is faint or non-existent, but walking conditions are easy. A good beginner's trip. Bring a day pack, lunch, water, torch and raincoat, even if it looks fine. Arrival back in Brisbane expected about 7-8pm. Ring 390 6181 for more details.

JUNE

1/2nd - Lost World. This is one of the best parts of Lamington - great views and great forest. Refer to the description in the February mini-heybob if you have it. Rob will be leaving the hitching post at 7.30pm on Friday 31st May. The first day involves a steep climb up a grassy slope, which would be hard for the unfit. Saturday's camp will be set up on the plateau itself. Day two will be harder, involving a scramble over an exposed ridgeline, where a head for heights would come in handy, and a steep descent to the Albert river. Following this there will be a lot of rockhopping, so if you hate rockhopping this is not a trip you will enjoy. To make up for your efforts this section of Lamington N.P is particularly spectacular and the memory of it will remain with you for a long time. Ring Rob Stevens on 371 6462 for more details.

TRIP LIST SUMMARY

n.b. If you intend coming on any of the following walks you must contact the trip leader by the Wednesday beforehand at the latest.

APRIL

20/21 n.b. The Lost World trip planned for this weekend has been cancelled. The trip leader has hurt his leg so this walk has been postponed till June - sorry.

27/28th - Binna Burra throughwalk. This walk will cover a large section of Lamington national park, the premier rainforest wilderness around Brisbane. Contact Anthony Smith for details on 300 3488.

MAY

1st - Meeting. 7pm in the old 4ZZZ room (in the union building, near the schonell, carpark side). Reg will be holding a Carnarvon Gorge slide show. General business will also be discussed.

4-6th - Labor Day Weekend Mt Ballow throughwalk. Monday is a holiday so this will give us an opportunity to explore the magnificent Ballow region, near Mt Barney. This is the only large area of true rainforest wilderness in southern QLD. Ring Dave Boston (3906181)

11/12th - Leaning Peak, Mt Barney. This ascent of S.E. QLD's highest mountain is extremely steep and will involve abseiling but is guaranteed terrific. Numbers limited - call Peter Zund (3718622)

12th - Ballanjui Falls. Either an easy or a more difficult daywalk depending on if you wish to abseil the falls. Abseilers must be experienced. Contact Reg on 371 7087.

18th - Training day. Don Roberts will be conducting a morning of training in areas related to bushwalking. Depending on the size of the group activities may include navigation, first aid, bush-sense or abseiling/climbing skills. Ring Don on 371 4865 for more details.

18/19th - Sunrise from Mt Mitchell. Les Tillack will be leading a trip to watch the sun rise. An easy and fun way to start the day. Ring 378 7551 for details.

25/26th - Commando trail/Moran's falls. This is a very scenic area of Lamington N.P. and should provide easy and interesting walking, A good beginner's walk. Contact Murray on 870 3620.

26th - Wilson's Peak/Kinnanes falls. This is a walk which has featured prominently in club walks in recent years - and for good reason. The views are good, there is some nice forest and a great waterfall. Contact Dave if interested on 390 6181.

JUNE

1/2nd - Lost World. At last! (The Lost World plateau is a terrific, but difficult, walk. Contact Rob Stevens on 371 6462.

5th - Meeting. 7pm in the clubs and socs meeting room, near bikeshop.