

# NEWSLETTER MONTHLY



Trip Reports:  
**Danae Brook**

What Else We've Been Doing:  
**OzCanyons Presentation Night,  
Serendipity and Whungee Wheengee**

November 2008

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Cover Shot:

Jim, just after getting seriously wet in Danae Brook.

Photo by Rod Smith



## Last Meeting

Last meeting included the AGM. The new committee was elected, and looked surprisingly like the old one. This was followed by another superb supper before the evening winded up with John Gray showing a selection of slides from his collection.

## Next Meeting

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2009  
Time: 7.30 pm  
Venue: Baden Powell Scout Camp  
Pomona Street, Pennant Hills

## Quote of the Month

“The rock's are attacking me!” - Jim, they won't roll under your feet if you don't stand on them.

## Announcements

There has been an update on the bet between Brett and Dave. Due to the unfortunate cancellation of the November Jenolan trip, the bet has been postponed. It is also worth noting that Brett has lost the bet. As such, the next Jenolan trip that goes ahead, Brett will be supplying lamb shanks (cooked in the slow cooker) and a bottle of Mead.

## Trip Reports

### ***Danae Brook - 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2008***

Participants: Jim Crockett, Rod Smith.

This was now Jim's third attempt, and my second attempt, at Danae Brook. Imagine the continued ridicule we'd receive if we didn't succeed this time! We knew the mistake we'd made last time and we weren't going to make it again.

We left the car at the end of the Kanangra Road at 6:15am and walked back to the firetrail opposite the Dione Dell entry track. It wasn't long before we crossed Kanangra Creek and headed up the hill on the other side. Once we got to the top of the steep rise we started looking for a relatively easy way into the scrub on the right.

The scrub on top of the ridge is rather horrible, so we made our way down the side as quickly as possible. The walking got easier halfway down the side, so we started angling towards the stream. The water was flowing in the right direction, always a good sign! It started looking easier in the creek rather than on the side, so we got our feet wet, cold, but bearable. The rocks are quite slippery, so we didn't rush. After walking for a while Jim said he recognized a rock wall on the left bank, he believed it was where they'd reached the creek on his first attempt. Even the water looked familiar! Soon the water dropped over an edge, we were at the first abseil! It was 8:50am.



Rod on the first pitch of Danae Brook  
Photo: Jim Crockett

Jim rigged the first abseil while I put on my harness. I descended first and immediately rigged the second abseil. I then did the second drop while Jim pulled down his rope. I admired the water pouring down the slot behind us while waiting for Jim to join me.

The third abseil was rigged quickly and I descended while Jim admired the watery slot. We started getting wet here, mainly from the wade at the bottom of the drop. The fourth abseil looked rather non-descript, and again I descended first. After about five metres I went over a chockstone, right into the middle of the waterfall! The cold water was a bit of a shock, especially since I wasn't wearing a wetsuit. The force increased as I descended, I was glad I was wearing a helmet.



Jim's in there somewhere!  
Photo: Rod Smith

Jim came down; he was enjoying it as much as I was. While he pulled the rope down and coiled it, I went in search of the next abseil. I found it, rigged it, and went back to find Jim. We came back down and had a look at a ledge that would lead out to a gendarme, one that apparently has a 20 cent piece secreted on it somewhere. Jim asked where the next abseil was.

"It's down there!" I said, pointing to a hole under a chockstone. I can't remember the exact expletive Jim used, but he was clearly impressed. It was time for Jim to do an abseil first. Another awkward start, a bit harder for Jim being a left-hander. An amazing abseil down a slot with the water pouring down. Two more abseils and we were in the sun. A perfect spot to stop and have a bite to eat. We'd done seven abseils, and it was only 11:15am. We were making good time.

Another three abseils, including a spectacular (and very recognizable from photos) drop beside a waterfall. Next came the boulder chute. Our first, but certainly not last, encounter with stinging nettles occurred at one point where we had to veer left to avoid a rather large drop. I was surprised at how quickly we reached the abseils at the bottom of the chute. There I encountered the first leech, having a go at one of my fingers!

At the bottom of the abseils we packed up the ropes and harnesses and had another bite to eat. It was now 2:15pm, and, according to the notes from Rick's book, we had another three hours to go.

It wasn't long before we were on the move again, under the Thurat Spires, which reminded me of cheesecake for some reason. We were looking for the junction with Kanangra, which reminded me of a cheese platter.



A serious face for a serious canyon  
Photo: Jim Crockett

Jim was in front of me, but waited at one point for me to catch up. He wanted to show me the rock that had rolled from under his feet. He had barely put any weight on it, and it was the size of a large rock!

A little further along I found that dry rocks, with wet feet, can still be quite slippery. Twice I found myself suddenly sitting down. What a pain in the arse!



We stopped to fill up our water. Looking around I thought we must be getting close to the junction with Kanangra. We had some more food for some energy and pressed on. It seemed almost never ending, the junction must be soon! This was getting annoying. We stopped in an open area and I decided it was time to pull out the GPS. So, where was the junction? About 1km behind us! How did we miss it? So what now?

It seemed like the logical choice to me was to get up to the track. We were going have to do the climb anyway, and track walking would be easier than creek walking.

We started upstream looking for an easy (relatively) way up. Jim found a way that wasn't easy, but better than vertical. It's difficult to dodge stinging nettles and leeches when the ground is steep enough that you're using your hands almost as much as your feet. Thankfully we didn't have to go far to get to more open country, though still very steep.

Most of the climbs in that area seem to go on forever, and this was no exception! It doesn't help when every step slides back down the hill a bit before settling. We were making the most of animal tracks, trees for support, and all the energy we could muster.

Eventually we reached the top, except, it wasn't the top. It was just a knoll on a spur that we'd come up the side of. We turned right and followed the spur, still climbing. We then hit the top, and it was downhill in every direction. But, more importantly, there was now a track we could follow. We found out later that we were at the top of Mt Berry.

We followed the track and it wasn't long before we reached the western end of Crafts Walls. When we reached the eastern end I asked Jim if he wanted to write in the visitors book. The 5 metre walk up to the cave seemed to require too much energy. Halfway along Kilpatrick Causeway we took out our head torches.

It was dark when we got onto Kanangra Walls. Knowing that it can be hard to follow the track, even in daylight, we set off paying close attention to where we were going. It wasn't long before I noticed we were starting to head a bit too far south. We turned around and headed back the way we came, looking for a track heading in the right direction. We found it, and we were off again. We were making good time til Jim exclaimed, "isn't this where we came up?"

It couldn't be! I had a look, it was. We had turned around 180 degrees, how much time and energy had that cost us? We could see a faint glow on the horizon, it must be the lights from Sydney. We had to make sure we kept that behind us to ensure we didn't get turned around again.

This time, with our navigational aid behind us, we had better luck. We still lost the track at one point. I wasn't sure how big the drop off to the right was, but I wasn't going to have a close look. Some back-tracking, check our navigational aid, and we found the track again. A likely looking rock platform then provided a nice spot for a five minute break, and the last of our water was consumed.



Jim rigging one of the abseils  
Photo: Rod Smith

Plodding along we reached a section that was extremely easy to follow. Then Jim, who was in front, asked if I remembered any steps. This sounded promising. Five minutes later we were at the turnoff to the Dancefloor Cave and Murdering Gully was on our right. No stopping now, we were almost there.

We stumbled up to Jim's car at 10:25pm. What an epic! Gear just got chucked into the car and Jim drove us back to Boyd River Campground. A total of 16 hours and 10 minutes, just to get to the MSS Christmas Party. It was worth it!

We arrived to find Dave, Bob and Pam in the shelter shed in front of the fire. They'd enjoyed a nice roast dinner and a couple of bottles of wine. They were planning what to do if we hadn't shown up, having already drunk too much to legally go anywhere that night.

We re-hydrated, and had a roast chicken and salad; we weren't going to cook anything at that point. We couldn't even be bothered pitching the tents, we slept in the shelter shed. We had our roast for lunch the next day before heading home.

Finally we can tick off Danae Brook. What's next?

Rod.

## What Else We've Been Doing

### ***Serendipity, OzCanyons Presentation Night and Whungee Wheengee – 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2008***

If you have never heard of OzCanyons it is an internet Yahoo chat group set up for Aussies who are interested in canyoning and there are many subscribers to this group. The OzCanyon presentation night has been held over the last few years, but this year it was decided to do something different and so it was changed to a new venue as well as serving a meal. The idea was to have the event close to a canyon area and Mt Wilson seemed to be the ideal choice. This gave all the interested canyoners the opportunity to spend the weekend canyoning as well as attending the OzCanyons presentation night.

On Saturday Rod and myself met at the Mt Wilson fire brigade shed at 10am and decided to go to Serendipity canyon for the day. On the way we soon caught up with a group of French tourists from Corsica Is on a commercial trip. We quickly passed them after they allowed us to use their rope on the first abseil. We made our way along the open section of the canyon until we caught up with another group at the next abseil. It is funny because we thought we were the first group through for the morning as we had to fight against all the spiderwebs. It turns out they had come in via the side branch. Amongst this party was Doug Mungoven who was one of the presenters for the evening's activities. He was madly filming away and maybe we will form part of next years presentation. We continued in the canyon with this group, sharing stories and ropes until the finish at the Wollangambe junction. We separated from them while Rod and myself had lunch and did the mandatory jump into the Wollangambe. Again we met up with them on the walk out and chatted all the way back to the fire shed.

We made camp at the Cathedral of Ferns amongst many other groups and then went back to the Mt Wilson community hall, which is only just across the road from the Fire Brigade shed. There we helped Cathi set up the hall for the evening. Tables and chairs were set up, as David Hood was setting up the audio visual equipment. Then out came the food, mountains of it, 3 types of meat, various salads, hot potatoes, wine, soft drinks, tea, coffee and even sumptuous desserts. Cathi had done an outstanding job with the catering, what a feast !

As the 6pm start time neared the hall started to fill up and eventually all the tables were taken but more people poured in taking up every possible spot. Cathi had estimated an attendance of about 50 people but we had over 70 turn up. Luckily there was plenty of food and nobody went hungry.

We sat down and ate as the first presentation started. There were many different styles of presentation some were comical, some beautiful, one was taken with a "Helmet Cam", some were full of action shots and very professional and all contained video mixed in with some still shots.

There was also some international flavour with a number of excellent presentations from Joe Bugden and the visiting American canyoneer Ira Lewis, of canyoning in Europe and USA. Basically the night was an outstanding success and many thanks to Cathi Humphrey-Hood for an outstanding job in organising the night all for only \$7 a head, I don't know how she did so well and so cheap ?. The last job of the night for us was to pack up the hall and back to camp for sleep.



Cathi, Rod, Ira and Jim  
Photo: Jim Crockett

Sunday we had organised with Cathi and Ira to take them both through Whungee Wheengee canyon. We got a reasonably early start and wandered down to the Wollangambe 1 exit and crossed over for the climb up the other side and made our way along the ridge to the first abseil into the creek. A bit of a walk down the creek brought us to the point where the wetsuits were required. This was Ira's first Australian canyon and he was extremely impressed especially by the amount of vegetation surrounding the canyon. The first jump in was refreshing but as the body adjusted to the cold water it became more comfortable. The water level was low enough that a proper duck under was not really required but the dark section was fantastic. After many swims a tricky climb up a log was completed followed by a short abseil and then 2 more before we reached the lower section known as the "Green Room" and the final exit into the warmer waters of the Wollangambe.

We had decided to use the tricky secret exit 200m downstream of the junction and Ira completed the first climb from the creek level sending down a handline for the rest. The next pitch was a little more difficult and Cathi opted to get a belay for this one. The next was also difficult but I scouted around and found an easier option. It was then a bit of an uphill scrub bash to meet the Wollangambe 2 exit track and follow it back to the Cathedral of Ferns. We later made a rendezvous with Joe Bugden out at the Bells Line of Road junction as Ira was now going to spend some time with Joe.



Jim doing some roof sniffing  
Photo: Cathi Humphrey-Hood

Cathi, Rod and myself then met up at the Bilpin Apple Bar for dinner where we feasted on prosciutto pizza and said our goodbyes to an outstanding weekend.

Jim.

# Future Trips

Welcome to the new look future trips section. Anyone with artistic abilities are welcome to submit their own icons for any of the categories here, and/or any other categories. If we use your icon then you'll have to be prepared to accept the praise and admiration from your fellow club members. Send your icons, or any other feedback, to [roderick\\_smith@hotmail.com](mailto:roderick_smith@hotmail.com).

## Legend:

### Activity



Caving



Canyoning



Diving



Hiking



Abseiling



Cycling



Horse Riding



Kayaking



Climbing



Skiing

### Grade



Easy



Easy/Medium



Medium



Medium/Hard



Hard



Extreme

### Accommodation



Camping



Cottage

### Extras

































Kites



Camp Ovens



Where	When	Activity	Grade	Trip Leader	Accommodation (if applicable)	Additional Costs	Let Trip Leader Know By:	No. of Spots Left
Wollangambe	26 <sup>th</sup> Dec			Dave Stuckey 0414 590 305 stuckedl@cba.com.au			19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Claustral	27 <sup>th</sup> Dec			Rod Smith 0438 444 262 <a href="mailto:roderick_smith@hotmail.com">roderick_smith@hotmail.com</a> (that's 2 underscores)			19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Dargans	28 <sup>th</sup> Dec			TBA			19 <sup>th</sup> Dec	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
New Zealand – Routeburn trail	Jan 2009			Johan Verhagen 4758 9811 <a href="mailto:johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au">johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au</a>		Hut fees, flights	<b>20<sup>th</sup> Jun</b>	
<b>Other Info:</b> This needs to be booked and paid for, specifically the huts on the walk, thus the early notice required. Gourmet eating. 								
Olympic Park Cycling plus kite test flights	17 <sup>th</sup> Jan			Dave Stuckey 0414 590 305 stuckedl@cba.com.au			14 <sup>th</sup> Jan	
<b>Other Info:</b> This will be a great opportunity for those coming on the Kites over Kosci walk to test fly their kites. 								
Annual Dinner	17 <sup>th</sup> Jan		Delicious	Dave Stuckey 0414 590 305 stuckedl@cba.com.au			1 <sup>st</sup> Jan	

Where	When	Activity	Grade	Trip Leader	Accommodation (if applicable)	Additional Costs	Let Trip Leader Know By:	No. of Spots Left
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Kites over Kosci	24 <sup>th</sup> - 26 <sup>th</sup> Jan			Johan Verhagen 4758 9811 johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au			20 <sup>th</sup> Jan	
<b>Other Info:</b> 								
Alcatraz & mystery canyon	7 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> Feb			John Gray 0427 876 679 john.gray@sydneywater.com.au			3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Mt Wilson	21 <sup>st</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> Feb			Jim Crockett 0407 284 256 jim.crockett@reach.com			18 <sup>th</sup> Feb	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Kangaroo Valley	7 <sup>th</sup> Mar			Dave Stuckey 0414 590 305 stuckedl@cba.com.au			3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Little Big Hole and Daylight Tunnel	14 <sup>th</sup> Mar			Rob Clyne 0409 033 224 caver@people.net.au			10 <sup>th</sup> Mar	
<b>Other Info:</b>								



Where	When	Activity	Grade	Trip Leader	Accommodation (if applicable)	Additional Costs	Let Trip Leader Know By:	No. of Spots Left
Malaita Point	15 <sup>th</sup> Mar			Rob Clyne 0409 033 224 caver@people.net.au			10 <sup>th</sup> Mar	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Jenolan	21 <sup>st</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar			Rob Clyne 0409 033 224 caver@people.net.au			17 <sup>th</sup> Mar	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar	Field Day	Instructional	Johan Verhagen 4758 9811 johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au			25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Boars Head and Sahara (new route!)	4 <sup>th</sup> Apr			Johan Verhagen 4758 9811 johan.verhagen@sydneywater.com.au			1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	
<b>Other Info:</b>								
Jenolan	1 <sup>st</sup> - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Aug			Rob Clyne 0409 033 224 caver@people.net.au			27 <sup>th</sup> Jul	
<b>Other Info:</b>								