



### It's worth a Thought

The advent of electric vehicles and other more environmentally friendly vehicles is surely upon us, especially given the rising price of petrol.

Perhaps it is more than time for governments to become the driving force for change in this area instead of yielding to the politically safe views of the past and present. We need carbon reduction goals and projects now, not many years into the future and this is an area where real changes could be made that would greatly improve the environment.

Now is the time for investment in this technology!

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## Editorial

I'm back with an all new feel and format for 'Kevin's Walk on the Wild Side.' Hopefully this will now become a regular newsletter of events and happenings at kevinswilderness.com, as well as a being vehicle for providing wilderness news, reviews of relevant web sites and lots more.

In this issue things will be quite different to how they were back in issue 14, which was back in September 2006. I think a quick look at the newsletter

will bear that fact out soon enough.

What can you expect in this issue? Well there will be a trip back in time to some journey I made, along with photos of the trip. There will also be some useful web sites and reviews that I think will be of great help to you during your planning for trips into the wilds and/or while your actually doing the trip itself.

I'm hoping to highlight some of the areas of my own web site as well, which

I think may be useful or of interest to visitors.

I'd love to be able to include contributions from others as well – perhaps a brief description of a walk you went on, a holiday or some experiences you had in the wilds of Australia or beyond. So if you have something to contribute, please let me know at:

[nrbcpastorkev@yahoo.com.au](mailto:nrbcpastorkev@yahoo.com.au)

Enjoy the new look newsletter ☺

## Message Boards

The message boards at kevinswilderness.com have been given a complete overhaul. In fact nothing remains the same as I have deleted the previous boards to take up an option on site.

There now exists an option for subscribers and visitors to create our own little community to share news, experience, travel stories, tips, etc – just about anything to do with travelling in the Great Outdoors really!

I'm looking forward to input from all and sundry on the boards, as well as the possibility of getting to

know others who share a love of wilderness and the Great Outdoors, especially here in Australia. So why not have a look at the message boards and begin posting today (or as soon as you like).

Visit the message boards at:

<http://kevinswilderness.com/yabb/YaBB.pl>

So why did I change boards? Well, having the message boards on site allows them to be free of advertisements and hopefully I can control the SPAM more effectively this way as well.

Having the boards on site increases their longevity as well, as nothing gets deleted without my input.

Having the boards on site is just so much more convenient for all and I know they will be as accessible as the web site – no drop outs of service, etc.

So again, please feel free to pop on by the message boards and begin posting as often as you like, when you like – I look forward to hearing from you ☺

# Wilderness News

I don't have a lot to put here at the moment as I haven't really thought about what I should include. Over coming issues of the newsletter there should be heaps of information to add to the newsletter here.

In the final issue of the newsletter before the long break, I included a story about the Steve Irwin death and memorial outside Australia Zoo. Since then it has been interesting to watch the rise of Bindi Irwin to international celebrity status. Bindi now has an action figure and her name is now associated with Australia Zoo in the same way as her father's name was. Some have said that this young girl is being exploited and rushed into adulthood – perhaps there is some truth to this, but it doesn't seem to be harming her too much.

Steve's son 'Bob' was recently bitten by a baby Cobra (he is four) and reports have it that he was really excited 'to have his first hit' and be like his father. Now that's more of a worry I would have thought.

Speaking of Steve Irwin – the ship named after him by the Sea Shepherd group (environmental action group) – has also been in the news of late as it harasses the Japanese whaling fleet in the South Pacific and Southern Ocean. The Australian government has also been

involved in the anti-whaling efforts now that there has been a change of government. Realistically it would seem unlikely that the Japanese will stop whaling anytime soon.

It was also recently reported that the Hammerhead Shark will be placed on the endangered list as numbers are now plummeting rapidly. Why? Because these too are being hunted relentlessly for their fins so that fin soup can be made in Asia. There are quite a number of shark species that are now

rapidly declining.

In good news the drought across Australia seems to be finally giving way to better times resulting in far better river flows across NSW and Queensland in particular. The health of our rivers has desperately needed the rain as environmental flows so-called have hardly been enough to keep our rivers from dying ☺

*"Realistically it would seem unlikely that the Japanese will stop whaling anytime soon."*



**ABOVE: View from Corker Mountain**



**ABOVE: Taking a Dip in the Williams River**

# Barrington Tops Trek

In October 1996 I went on a bushwalking and camping trek across the Barrington Tops. I had organised the trip with four friends and we were to carry everything we needed for the expedition – tents, clothes, food, cooking gear, etc.

The route of the trip was to more or less follow the first half of the 'Tops to Myall Heritage Walk,' which is a 14 day expedition. Our trip was to last for about 8 days or so.

Our journey began by travelling from Stratford to the Barrington Guesthouse, which is found at the foot of 'The Corker,' below Lagoon Pinch. Once begun, our first day's walk would involve a steep climb up the Corker Mountain to just below Carey's Peak. This would be the most difficult part of the trek, especially given the fact that we had fully laden back packs and we would be travelling up hill all day.

Our journey up the mountain included a BBQ, a welcome dip in the Williams River and some wonderful views across the mountains. As night close in around us and with tired legs, we decided to make camp before we had even reached our first day's destination. We all slept well that night.

The next morning I decided to see how far off the official camping area was – I soon found it a couple of hundred metres away, just around the corner. We would have had access to water if we had kept moving – never mind.

From here we travelled to the top of Carey's peak, which was a 2.5 km detour from the main track to 'The Big Hole,' which is on the Barrington River.



**ABOVE: Carey's Hut on Carey's Peak**

Carey's Peak provided some terrific views over the mountains and on it we found Carey's Hut (which is in far worse condition these days).

On another trip to Carey's Peak in 2003 I was pummeled by hail while making the climb to the summit. Hoping for shelter in the hut I was disappointed to find the hut in a terrible condition.



**ABOVE: View from Carey's Peak**

From Carey's Peak we made the trip to 'The Big Hole' pretty quickly and on arrival we were looking forward to a dip. However, after a couple of walkers made the mistake of diving in (it was very, very, very cold) and I had someone pour water over my head (caused immediate severe pain to my head – it was so cold), the dip option was put to one side and we put up our tents.

That night at The Big Hole proved to be extremely cold, with the morning revealing thick ice everywhere, especially on the tents. Some of us opted to stay near the fire most of the night in a vain attempt to stay warm. We must have used every bit of firewood we could find that night and we were glad to move on for the next stage of our journey.



**ABOVE: The Big Hole**

**NOTE:** To be continued in the next newsletter.

For more visit:

<http://www.kevinwilderness.com/NSW/trek.html> ©

**BELOW: Photos from the Barrington Tops Trek**



**ABOVE: Camp site in the Gloucester Tops**



**ABOVE: Sydney Blue Gums at 'The Pimple.'**

The Barrington Tops Trek was a 120 km plus slog over the Barrington Tops from the Barrington Guesthouse to north of Craven near the 'Log Dump.' The walk took in Carey's Peak, The Big Hole on the Barrington River, Gloucester Tops and Gloucester River Falls.

## Travel Plans

I haven't done a lot of travelling in the last couple of months (apart from going to work and back) and don't have any major travel plans for some time. This is chiefly because I am in a relatively new job and don't yet have any holiday allotments.

This being so, I still hope to do a little bit of travelling around the region in which I now live and a little further afield during Easter.

My immediate goal by way of getting back into the bush is to simply explore around Mt. Alum at Bulahdelah (I currently live at Bulahdelah) and a few other areas between Tea Gardens and Taree, as well as between Bulahdelah and Gloucester. This area is roughly what I regard as my local area and will provide opportunities for some short visits and exploration.

I had planned a longer trip into the Barrington Tops for Easter, but this is looking unlikely now and I may

consider something else – but time is quickly running out with Easter soon to be here.

Some of the areas that I may be able to visit in the short term include areas around Myall Lakes National Park, The Glen in Craven State Forest and of course Mt. Alum, which dominates the Bulahdelah skyline.

The other thing which is impacting on any travel plans at the moment is the continuing wet weather, which as caused pretty much every stream in the area to break its banks at some point in recent memory. There has now been months of wet weather, with still more expected to come – still, it is better than the seven year drought that is now breaking across the country.

In the short term, stay tuned for news of a journey to Mt. Alum ☺

## Web Review

I have recently come across a web site that may be of interest to some travelers in Australia, especially for those who seem to always need a visit to the loo – which frustrates many drivers and travelling companions. The site I'm reviewing is found at:

<http://www.toiletmap.gov.au/>

I once knew a girl who seemed to view it as a requirement that she visit every toilet she came across in national parks, country towns, etc. Perhaps she is the mastermind of this web site, but then again probably not, as she liked to give a review of each one – which isn't done here. Perhaps a 1 or 2 scale could be used to review

each loo, but that could be confusing – labeling a toilet a number 1 or a number 2.

In case you have guessed yet, the web site has to do with toilets or more specifically, where they are actually located around Australia – public toilets that is.

If you are on the open road

it may just be useful to know where the nearest toilet is, especially if you happen to be travelling with my before mentioned friend.

The site even has location maps for you, in case you aren't sure just where you need to go (no pun intended) ☺

## Web Site News

As mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter I have replaced the Message Boards and added a Travel Blog to the web site. These mark the beginning of my latest review and upgrade of the kevinwilderness.com site – I haven't even completed the previous review yet!!!

I still have a fair bit of work on the site to complete, especially in regards to the many photos that are currently spread all over the Internet, hosted by various providers. I am trying to bring these all back home to my own site now and I still have a bit of work to do in achieving this – but I am getting closer.

Given the large number of photos I now have, it will be

necessary to find some more room somewhere for hosting them and I am still considering my options. Obviously I would still prefer to have them all hosted on my own sites, rather than placing them on Webshots, Flickr or the like. This will allow me to be able to keep people from having to register and from having to view copious advertisements.

Of course the new newsletter format is obvious to all who are reading it and I hope to further develop it as I go along.

The subscription process for the newsletter now includes subscribing to 'Kevin's Wilderness Walkers' Mail Group. Of course the archives are still freely

available online at the web site, but should you wish to get a copy of the latest newsletter immediately it becomes available you need to subscribe at:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Kevins\\_wildwalkers/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Kevins_wildwalkers/)

Or, alternatively you can send an email to:

[Kevins\\_wildwalkers\\_subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:Kevins_wildwalkers_subscribe@yahoo.com)

As you roam over the site you will venture upon many changes and updates in the weeks and months ahead. Hopefully these will be for the better and prove of value to those who visit the site ☺



**ABOVE: Packed for the Barrington Tops Trek**

*"The Travel Blog will only be used while I'm on the road (or in the bush) so that family, friends and visitors to the site can keep up to date on what I'm doing, with access to a travelling journal or diary, photos, videos, maps, etc."*

## Travel Blogs

I have now added the convenience of a 'Travel Blog' to the kevinwilderness.com experience. This Blog is hosted off site, but what it allows me to do is to have a Blog available for updating while I actually travel, complete with maps to show just where I am and have been.

The Travel Blog will only be used while I'm on the road (or in the bush) so that family, friends and visitors to the site can keep up to date on what I'm doing, with access to a travelling journal or diary, photos, videos, maps, etc. The Blog will also allow people to

leave comments on what I post, etc. The end product will be a complete journal of my trip or trips.

If you want to visit my Travel Blog, simply go to:

<http://www.travelpod.com/members/wildernesskev>

On the front page of my web site, just simply navigate to my diary and blog page for the link to my Travel Blog.

Should you wish to have your own Travel Blog to record all that happens in your travels simply visit:

<http://www.travelpod.com>

If you already have a Facebook or MySpace page, it is possible to add an application from your Travel Blog onto these sites. You can also place a gadget onto your own web site as I have done.

I am yet to start using my Travel Blog, but it is a tool I'm really looking forward to using as I travel – very handy given I have a lap top and a wireless broadband connection to the Internet. It will certainly be far more convenient than what I currently do (lots of handwriting) ☺

Kevin Matthews

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## Web Site Addresses

**To visit my web sites, visit:**

kevinswilderness.com.com: <http://kevinswilderness.com>

Kevin's Wild Walkers Mail Group: [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kevins\\_wildwalkers/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kevins_wildwalkers/)

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Feel free to pass on any comments you might have.



**ABOVE:** Camp Site at The Big Hole



**We're on the Web!**

See us at:

<http://kevinswilderness.com>

**NOTE:** Photos appearing throughout this issue were taken during the October 1996 trek across the Barrington Tops.