



# Newcastle Ramblers Bushwalking Club Newsletter July 2025

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*Ramblers on the Mont Blanc Circuit in July 2025*

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## Note from the Editor

Our activity program has been full. The great variety of our program and the interesting activities we are involved in has been commented on by prospective members.

The weather of May and June has been unusually wet interfering with a number of planned walks, however at the end of June and into July it has been beautiful and resulted in very good roll ups to activities.

Peter and Tracy have had a spell from organising the Wednesday Walks, however others have stepped up with beautiful walks each second Wednesday. Lynne W with the cooler temperatures has been enthusiastic with the programming of many interesting short and extended walks. Ingrid and Malcolm have found many easier local walks to fill in empty days.

There have been many excellent car camps organised - Hill End, Royal National Park, Morton NP, Putty Beach, and an extended trip to the Daintree Region of FNQ.,

Bob has passed the banner of Club President to Malcolm who is already a very busy Club member – he is well supported by an energetic Committee. The new Committee has met on two occasions since the well-attended AGM and the enthusiastic involvement in social media is very evident – check out our two Facebook pages. Business cards are being dispensed to bushwalking shops and other outlets since the New Year.

The AGM report for 2024 which summarises the Clubs activities for that year is included in the newsletter.

Thanks to those who provided content for the newsletter – a lighter version than usual. It would be great to receive more diverse interesting stories from other members.

Good walking

Bob

## Elected and Appointed Positions 2025-2026

<b>President</b>	<i>Malcolm M</i>
<b>Vice-President</b>	<i>Ingrid W</i>
<b>Secretary</b>	<i>Brett B</i>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<i>Kay E</i>
<b>Committee</b>	<i>Nell W, Dale G, Kate R</i>

<b>New Member and Visitor Liaison Officers</b>	<i>Kate R</i>	<b>Assistant Treasurer</b>	<i>Peter C, Craig W</i>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	<i>Kate R</i>	<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	<i>Bob C</i>
<b>Activity Officer</b>	<i>Malcolm M</i>	<b>Photo Competition</b>	<i>David M</i>
<b>Assistant Activity Officer</b>	<i>Lynne W</i>	<b>Web-site Manager</b>	<i>vacant</i>
<b>Meetings Planning Officer and PLB Officer</b>	<i>Malcolm M</i>	<b>Club Public Officer</b>	<i>Peter F</i>

## Newcastle Ramblers Bushwalking Club – AGM President’s Report for 2024

I am pleased to present my second President’s report for the year 2024. It has been another successful year with plenty of interesting activities on the program to suit all capabilities and there has been good participation by members. We finished the year with 122 members compared to 150 members in 2023 and we welcomed nine new members. The Club’s success is dependent on having a good interesting program and I thank all leaders for their contributions during the year.

A huge thanks goes to Malcolm M, ably assisted by Ingrid W for his continuing role of Activity Officer as well as that of PLB Office, and supper organiser. Behind the scenes we have appreciated the efforts of Lynne W in keeping our program up to date and having it readily available to members by email and posted on our website.

Day walks these days are tending to be on the easier side being less than three to four hours and more local, and those of greater length and difficulty have been appearing less frequently on the program. I thank those leaders who do enjoy the longer daywalks and extended backpacks particularly to the high country - thanks Lynne, and Alan. Wednesday daywalks have been regular thanks to Tracey and Peter for keeping a focus on them, and the many twilight walks have been most enjoyable. David introduced early morning breakfast walks which have proved popular. Bike rides have also been regular – thanks to Philippa.

Many members now have camper vans which has led to them enjoying more trips away to car camps in interesting national parks and other places. Others who have more recently retired are enjoying overseas travel and cruising.

The Club entered three teams again this year in the 2024 NavShield competition held north of Stroud with nine participants and two support members.

During 2024 our Committee which continues to meet at the Mayfield Wests Leagues Club for its morning meetings met on seven occasions. Thanks Brett, Dale, Kate, Kay, Malcolm, Ingrid, and Ann for your attendance and keen involvement in Club affairs. Many of the recommendations of the 2023 strategic review have been implemented and it is now time for it to be revisited particularly in light of our declining membership, fewer members coming forward to lead walks, and difficulty in recruiting new younger members. The promotional opportunities open to us through our website and Facebook pages are not being fully realised. The Club does have a business card to hand out thanks to Kate’s daughter.

I thank David M for keeping our email and communications systems, and everything else about the Club running in the background. Thanks again for organising the Club Photographic competition in November.

Newsletters, a wonderful information and promotional asset have continued during the year and appear on our website for the public to see. Previous editions of our newsletter are now being added online to the City of Newcastle City Library (search Local History).

Regular Club meetings on the first and third Mondays of the month have been well attended with 20 or so members and premeeting dinners have continued at Club Charlestown.

We have had wonderful presentations from people both outside of the Club and from our own members – we were taken to the Camino Trail on two occasions (Lisa, and Jenny), the Islands and huts of the Antarctic (Michele and Don) and learned about the Munibung Hill Conservation Society (Stuart Carter) successes, the Scotch Broom Control on the Barrington Tops (NPWS Ranger Boyde Carney), and the exhilarating sport of Gliding (Tracey and Peter), - we thank them all for their time in preparing their presentations and presenting them at our meeting nights.

We held a successful Club auction which raised over \$500 and in November we arranged a remote area first aid workshop with eleven members in attendance. Our financial affairs have been ably managed again this year - thanks to Kay E for her diligent account keeping and her interest in tracking membership, and to Glen B who has audited our accounts. With rising costs and the fact that the Club’s finances are not breaking even, the next Committee will need to look closely at our budget for the next year - we will need to reduce costs where we can and it is foreshadowed that we will need to increase our fees for 2026.

Where to from here? – Last year I finished off my report by responding to that question - *let’s keep on doing what we are doing well namely enjoying each other’s friendship and company at meetings, in the bush and around town. We will need to review our strategic plan to see how we are going, aim to involve more members in the various management roles of the Club, focus our efforts on maintaining a strong activity program, and the promotion of our Club. Let’s see if we can get our kayaking group going again.* My message at the end of 2024 is much the same.

It is with regret that I will have to stand down as President however I will continue to retain a strong interest in Club affairs and its success.

Best wishes for another successful year and I look forward to your company out about on the track soon.

*Bob - President - 14 March 2025*



## Hill End Car Camp – 2 to 6 May 2025

Therese M organised this great three-night car camp to Hill End for twelve Ramblers, with some of the group staying in 'Hosies' heritage accommodation and others camping nearby. Daywalks and trips to explore the history of the surrounds were enjoyed - just a few photos by Jenny Bourke to paint the picture.





## Car Camp Royal NP – 7 to 9 May 2025

*Walkers: Jenni M (leader), Lynne M, and Barry Williams*

We had four glorious days walking in the Royal National Park and camping at Bonnie Vale campground. We walked a total of 48km through bush, along cliff lines, shore lines and suburbia. There was an abundance of flowers, bird life and amazing humpback whale frolics. I will definitely be going back for more.

**Day 1** - Gibbon Track joining a coastal track pass Shelley Beach, Cormorant Rock, The Cobblers and The Balconies. There were lots of Humpback Whales on their northern migration. **Day 2** - Unfortunately I left my phone back at camp so all photos are thanks to Barry. We caught the Bundeena ferry across to Cronulla. Then we walked up the coast line and back. Total of 14km. **Day 3** - We walked from camp around Maianbar. We walked past very impressive houses build on the rocky hills, through bushland looping around back to the camp ground. 14kms. **Day 4** - Today we did a car shuffle from Wattamolla carpark to Curra Moors South carpark, then walked to the coast and followed the coastal walk pass Eagle Rock, Curracurrong Waterfall and Providential Point. We stopped numerous times to enjoy the humpback whale display. It was amazing. 11kms.

Thanks Lynne and Barry for your lovely company.

*Notes by Jenni and photos by Jenni and Barry*





## Munibung Hill – 25 June 2025

*Walkers: Dale G (leader) and 12 Ramblers and visitor Ralf*



This is a delightful location for a morning walk and so close. Congratulations to the Munibung Hill Conservation Society and all of the resident and landcare efforts to provide paths and beautiful patches of weed free bush. Our walk started and finished at the top of Quarry Street. After a short steep and in part rough track to the ridgeline we walked north towards the communication towers for a morning tea stop with extensive views in most directions. Our return retraced the ridgeline and then dropped down along a constructed narrow track to the south east before winding back to the western side of the Hill below the quarry site. The creek line rainforest section is quite stunning. We were back by 12.00 pm and in time to adjourn to One Table at Speers Point Park for coffee.

Just a great walk for someone who has not visited the Hill with a pack of Cubs to fly kites for 40 years – much has changed

*Note and photos by Bob C*



## Big Boots on the Main Range – Club Meeting in May 2025



*Lynne gave an entertaining launch of her sixth childrens book 'Big Boots in Kosciusko'. It featured many scenes of Ramblers walking the Main Range*

## Ramblers Return to Cape Tribulation – 13 to 20 May 2025

*Participants: Bob Clifton (leader), Malcolm M, Ingrid W, Nell W, Lynne M, and Jenni M*



*In the train on the way up to Kuranda*

It was back in August 2006 that our Club walked the Thorsborne Trail on Hinchinbrook Island and afterwards ventured north to Cape Tribulation for a few days to take in the Daintree Rainforest and to snorkel on the Great Barrier Reef. It was a memorable trip.

For our trip this year we had an interest in being involved in a Daintree Community Planting Day organised by Rainforest Rescue, a community group intent on saving and restoring rainforest in the Daintree region by buying back appropriate residential and rural lands, restoring them and arranging for their long-term conservation.

Our flights on **Tuesday** from Newcastle via Brisbane arrived in Cairns early afternoon for us to pick up a hire car and drive up to our ABB apartment in Trinity Beach, an out of the way holiday resort location. This was our base for three nights allowing us a trip to Kuranda by rail, returning by Sky Rail and a rainforest river tubing adventure on the Little Musgrave River south of Cairns. Whilst at Kuranda we visited the Koala Gardens, Butterfly Farm, and Bird Park – all most impressive and well worthwhile. We also fitted in an afternoon visit to the Cairns Botanic Gardens famous for its palm collection.

On the **Friday** we drove north to walk in Mossman Gorge and then onto Port Douglas to stay in the Port Douglas Motel – very nice roomy 3-star accommodation. Rainforest Rescue had invited us to a cocktail party for its sponsors at the marina in Port Douglas which was a great opportunity to meet its team, sponsors and local rainforest conservationists.

**Saturday** was the big community rainforest planting morning at 'Nightwings' near Daintree village and not far from the ferry crossing on the Daintree River. In less than an hour 3,500 rainforest trees were planted in pre-prepared holes by 165

volunteers in one hectare of a former sugar cane property – it was the last hectare of 10 hectares planted out over the last ten years. It was interesting to see the evolving planting techniques to reduce follow up weed control and the success of earlier plantings.

We drove on north to our Coconut Beach accommodation – a large three-bedroom ABB situated amongst the rainforest and close to the beachfront of Coconut Beach. It was ideal for our group for the three-night stay. That night we drove up to the Cape Tribulation Beach House Resort for a nice meal after enjoying a quiet walk along the Cape Tribulation Beach where the rainforest reaches over the sandy beach to the reef – stunning in the evening.

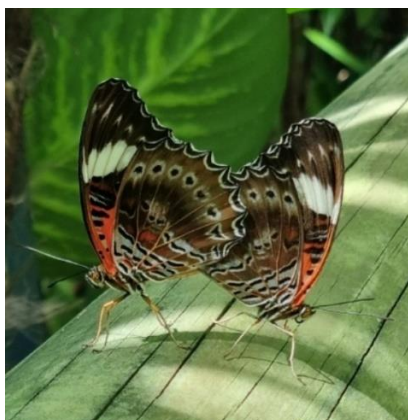
**Sunday**, we had booked Ocean Safari to take us snorkeling to MacKay Reef some 30mins by high power fast boat. We spent an hour initially swimming a section of very beautiful quality reef with all manner of sea life and coral, and later spent an hour on the sandy cay to check out bird life, rays and small sharks. That afternoon we drove further north to Emmagen Creek to walk through rainforest to its beach and later to enjoy a swim in the crocodile free swimming hole upstream.

**Monday** saw us take a beautiful two hour walk through the rainforest to Coconut Beach and along the length of the beach to Myall Creek – again memorable. For the afternoon we drove south to Cow Bay, the Rainforest Discovery Centre and the Daintree Ice Cream Company.

All up a fantastic eight days before driving back to Cairns Airport. Lynne and Jenni were continuing onto Airlie Beach to join the historic sailing yacht 'Solway Lass' built in the Netherlands in 1902 and sail around the Whitsundays for five days. Malcolm and Ingrid commenced their leisurely drive home to Newcastle and Nell headed west to the Undara Lava Tubes and Cobbold Gorge.

Thanks everyone for such good company and a very enjoyable trip

*Report and most photos by Bob C*



*Views of the Barron Gorge Falls. The Butterfly Farm at Kuranda was amazing with so many species free flying.*





*We arrived in Cairns to head on up to Trinity Beach in the afternoon to our six star accomodation right opposite the beach – not the usual standard for Ramblers. Trinity Beach is a 30 minute drive north of Cairns and is a great holiday location with a sandy beach and good restaurants. Before an early dinner we walked the beach – we were all a bit tired having been up since 4.00am that morning. Before leaving Port Douglas after our cocktail party with Rainforest Rescue at the marina of Port Douglas we had time to check out Four Mile Beach and the 'St Marys by the Sea' Uniting Church. It was built in 1880 on the hill in Port Douglas and was relocated to the current site on November 1988.*



*The Saturday morning Community Planting Day resulted in 165 volunteers planting 3,500 plants in pre-prepared holes in less than 45 minutes. We spent the rest of the morning networking with music, a few speaches and then morning tea and lunch – all topped off with icecream from the Cape Tribulation Icecream Factory. Ingrid can be seen on the left in a yellow coat*



*On the way to Cape Tribulation we looked over the fence at the new Rainforest Rescue Nursery at Cow Bay which is capable of producing 150,000 rainforest tree per year – very impressive*





*Just some of the amazing vegetation on the Marrdja Boardwalk, a beautifully constructed 1.2km boardwalk along Oliver and Noah Creeks. It takes about 45mins to complete the walk but really don't rush as there is so much to see in the estuarine rainforest habitat.*



*We spent two hours and lunch visiting the Daintree Rainforest Discovery Centre in Cow Bay. The photo shows the view from the 23 metre Rainforest Canopy Tower across the rainforest canopy. The Centre has been there for over twenty-five years and is an important venue for research and monitoring of changes to rainforest. Mackay Cay is located on the north west corner of the Mackay Reef - it is one of many coral cays that are small islands rising mere metres above high tide.*



*(l) Lynne walking through rich rainforest from our accommodation to Coconut Beach. (m) A section of our walk along the beach. (r) An afternoon walk to Emmagen Beach and the entrance of the Emmagen Creek. With all of our beach walks we had the beaches to ourselves with not even a footprint by others.*



## Blue Mountains Music Festival, Katoomba – 13 to 19 March 2025

Participants: Bob C (facilitator) and 12 Ramblers



We travelled to Katoomba separately, some on Thursday and others Friday to stay in various locations – Katoomba Caravan Park, YHA, Katoomba Central Motel, Blue Mountains Heritage Motel. We all managed to meet up for an early dinner on Friday evening at the Old Bank Bistro before the music started at 7.00pm.

The weather for the duration of the festival was unusually hot which was not conducive for pleasant bushwalking, although Anna organised walks each day which commenced near the caravan park and descended the Furber Stairs into the Jamison Valley. Bob led a three hour walk on Saturday morning to Lockleys Pylon and a short walk to Govetts Leap on Sunday.

As usual the festival was a great success with some wonderful artists – the standout for me was Ruth Foster (USA) followed by the East Pointers (Canadian) and 19Twenty (Australian). The festival weekend each year is such a great get away and I'm looking forward already to 2026.

*Note by Bob*

*Ruth Foster from USA was my  
standout performer*



*One of Anna's walks descended the Furber Stairs and followed the trail through rainforest, past the landside and onto the Ruined Castle, and return*



*Bob and Fran on the way to Lockleys Pylon. We ran across many in training for the 100mile long distance event. Govetts leap is always a pleasure to visit*



## Daywalk to Karuah Hill Trig – 1July 2025

*Walkers: Lynne W (leader) and 3 Ramblers*

Most of us probably drive right past Karuah Hill without a glance... but those of us who have reached the trig point (and gazed down on the highway below) will look at the top from the comfort of our car - and remember the day we climbed it. The ridgeline is precariously rocky ... you know, those small unstable rocks hidden by the ground cover, interspersed with unexpected holes ready to grab at unsuspecting ankles. At 1 km per hour (or less!) the relatively short distance takes a very long time! Despite all of this, the glimpses of Port Stephens, the Karuah River, the highway and the distant mountains makes the climb worthwhile

*Note by Lynne*



## Newcastle University Choir Performance - June 2025



*Six Ramblers attended Vivaldi's 'Gloria' by the University of Newcastle Choir at the Main Hall of the University to support our member Mary M – beautiful preformance by all*



## Mont Blanc Circuit – July 2025

*Walkers: Anna B (leader), Sue H, Melissa and Linden M, Ann and Rick B, and Gail and Neil D*

Anna led a most successful overseas trip to walk the Mont Blanc Circuit in great weather – the walk at this time of the year was crowded. Prior to Mont Blanc Anna had returned to Edinburgh and the Scottish Highlands – her favourite overseas destination

Below a few photos from Anna to entice members.



*Anna Braithwaite with five Ramblers led a fabulous circuit walk to Mt Blanc – above some of the views.*



*(l) Anna in the Highlands (m) A visit to the Edinburgh Art Gallery, (r) Anna stayed four nights in the beautiful town of Tobermory on the Isle of Mull, an inner Hebridean Island doing daywalks*

