

Emu Thoughts

1998

Adrians, Helen S, and Jim & Mary did the 5 Days which were in ACT ---- the usual long walks to the Start – being the only M75A Paul duly won; Dorothy won on Day 5 and Helen on days 3, 4 &5, being second overall. Gill celebrated her entry into W60A by inviting friends and orienteers to her 88 acre property at North Harcourt -- two dams now excavated and large tanks acquired – all it needs now is rain. There were more meetings re Maldon Gold, a colossal amount of planning re personnel and equipment; the three maps were ready, \$15,600 before printing. We bought new plates for the street series and had a carpenter construct a new Control Card box with plans for a box or boxes for our plates and chains. We also bought new water containers, colored black to make them less obvious in the bush (Ron F's idea). And we also cast out the old fiddly putting-together tables and bought 5 new fold up trestle ones for \$850. We'd also bought some easels to support notice boards for use at street events. Also bought 3000 safety pins and 250 toilet rolls. Peter Searle installed the MG program on Erica's computer encompassing clothing, camping, crèche, rogaining, contacts, meals, university entrants, ages, classes and all manner of things. There is triple paper shuffling between Erica, Marion and scribe in verifying ages, classifications, payments (one person overpaid by \$90). There were the usual street series, one had 206 attending, and at one there was a new member in Judith Adrian and children, Thomas and Alexandra.

The bush year began with a rogaine, a mountain bike event, then Macedon, Wattle Gulley, Petticoat Gully amazing really, in normal life one wouldn't dream of marching off into such forbidding terrain but put an orienteering marker there and it becomes magical. There were a number of DNFs but Marion and scribe persevered albeit for times of 158 and 212. Next was our Little Hard Hills. Ron W course setter called for the controls during the week and Derek put them out, Ross took the trailer. And then had to pick up chemical toilets (then mandatory) from Ballarat. As the attendance was an exceptionally good 255 the added expense of the toilets was not of concern but for smaller events could be a serious cost. We made \$920 on the event. The regrowth after the bushfires has been intense and most of the time runners were in coffee bush to waist or shoulder level. Arthur & Janet set off to man the manned control but took an hour to find it! Imagine collecting 70 controls afterwards. A tough day, Js did not get home until almost 9.00pm. Then Spargo – a few days earlier we were complaining of 40C – and now 'freezing' in 14C. The Vic Relays had to be cancelled as it was a Fire Ban day. Next event was Kookaburra Rises. For these events our usual winners won their categories, Helen E 2, Carolyn 1, Helen S 3, Fiona 1, Colin 3, Kevin 2 (once best on course), Dorothy 1, Joyce 2, Lewis 1, Melinda 1, Alice E 1, Rachel E once best on course. All told some 63 NEs did either bush or street events at this time.

However, MG was the overriding concern with meetings and discussions. Closing date saw entries reach 825 a little below break-even point but late entries brought it up to over 900. The average fee was \$51 and VOA and OFA levies \$12, leaving \$39 to meet map and event costs estimated at \$34,000. We bought a new axe, then found the old one, bought a small ladder for reaching the Results' beams, packed the electric drill and charger to replace any hooks that became damaged --- Rex called to collect 109 controls. Good Friday was the family relays at Castlemaine and also a Rogaine at Mt Alexander (Ron & Cheryl won the Mix Vets). Our setting up for Day 1 at Smiths Reef went well, tents, banners, finish chute, ten toilets standing sentry-like. It was a bright and colorful scene; commentary was by Russell Bourke, Sue Sturges and Blair Trewin, a local body provided rolls and fruit a caterer provided breakfast and evening meal in a large marquee

Caroline, Warren and Helen S were our daily badge winners. The ambulance people had some work; one case was a broken collarbone. One competitor on a lesser course had been out for 5 hours, search parties could not find him, and police were called but he was picked up by NEV 2 as he walked the road near Muckleford. The second day was at Blowmine – cold and blustery, actually not unpleasant out in the bush, gold mining terrain, lots of holes and shafts -- but very cold for those working and helping in the open. Badges went to the same 3 plus Paul. There was packing up and relocation yet again – the perimeter of the oval at Maldon was forming a lake and when the Results unit was almost erected it slowly collapsed in concertina fashion, breaking the 5th beam. Ian nailed it up and it served the purpose. It certainly was bleak; Peter H forsook his tent and took refuge with relations in Bendigo. A shock the following morning on arrival at Maldon; the Results unit was down again (and some tents) – no further damage however, and willing hands in the heavy rain soon had it re-erected. The map was Mt Tarrengower with the steep climbs and descents, and lots of prickly pear, not strictly the same as the *Cactoblastus cactorum* that had devastated Qld in the 30's but remarkably similar.

The early rain cleared, and it became fine. The presentations, ably conducted by new OV President Laurie, were very long as there were so many people to thank. Then there was packing up, returning equipment (including minor welding of the trailer) and tent drying for a week. The Js saw very few NEs, no social contact at all, work and early to bed, but between 50-60 NEs had helped in some way. The Hudsons had been parking officers and Geoff was so impressed by the organisation that he is eager to organise the ARDF champs in 2000. Overall, our winners were Carolyn, Helen E and Paul, seconds to Lisa, & Dorothy, thirds to Helen S & Joyce. Graeme Baker, back from Qld, attended.

The VOA and OFA did very well out of Maldon Gold but not so good for the partners, BG and NE. There were indeed problems. Firstly, the toilet hire firm had double booked and we were forced to get toilets all the way from Dandenong --- further it was a public holiday and double time rates applied (\$3900). Secondly there

was a huge blow-out in printing costs that somehow had not been budgetted for, and thirdly there was trouble with the caterer whose marquee meals were very poorly patronised, meals which were delivered from Bendigo. These had not been known to me, as treasurer, at the time, and with sufficient funds I returned the \$20,000 seed money to both clubs only to have to ask them, a few months later, to refund \$2000 to meet the final shortfall. There had been threat from the caterer, who had incurred large losses, of possible legal action based on misrepresentation. He had expected greater patronage not realising that orienteering had mainly family groups, were health conscious and were not the beer swilling brigade; BG and NE however paid some his debt. NE was said to have lost about \$1000 but had a supply of maps conservatively valued at \$7350 which could be converted to money in the future --- this might have been somewhat dubious for later years were to see maps produced as required, electronically, rendering hard copy-stocks almost worthless.

Joyce arranged a social day at Herring Island, a perfect Autumn day, blue sky. Mild sunshine, not a cloud, no breeze – but a few wasps. Passage across the river was by punt -- and it progressed across in a rounded curve which promoted scribe to utter the pun of a lifetime - “We go in an arc!”. There were about 25 NEs there and by a fantastic coincidence at the only other rotunda, celebrating his 21st, was Ben, who had run a few times for us six years earlier. He is the son of Tim, the member who suicided in 1992. I had recounted this to Laurie at an event and was nonplussed, embarrassed, when she replied, “Tim was my brother.” Ben was about to go overseas competing as a canoeist. Politicians, Rupert and David Hamer were Laurie’s uncles.

The deferred club relays were at Jim Crow where we had 13 teams entered (club paid), two of which were third. Lisa got the wrong map and found herself on the hard course, returned 184 minutes later but still smiling. Next event was Mt Beckworth and then Sedgwick. We did not register at all at the former (!) but at the latter, Carolyn, Helen E & S, Colin, Paul, Dorothy, Joyce, Lewis & Max won their categories, Derek and Rachel E best on course. Further to Gill’s article on hippotherapy in 1996 there was a follow-up “Not just horseplay!” And Arthur gave us a page report on the Masters Games event at Buninyong. There were only 24 official entries, and most of those were NEs, nine of whom receive badges. The Aslunguls and the nuns wrote to signify non-renewal due to other duties, and three unsighted newcomers from last year bombed out. As with non-renewals in the previous two years the club as an active body is little affected with quite a good participation rate from the present 48 m’ships. Ian has replaced Mary on Ctte.

A North East weekend saw a day on the new Wallace’s Gully map at Chiltern and then Kangaroo Crossing at Eldorado where there was a 2km uphill walk to the Start. Several elites say it is the hardest mapped area in Victoria. A number DNFd – Kevin had a good run in 46 however, while Marion took 212. Then came the inter club competition at Mt Alexander, several rogaines, and then the Winter Classic. The first day in fine weather was at Mt Franklin Gorge where Peter H tackled course 1 (and

survived), day 2 was in the same area, courses being in Hagerby loops, maps hanging from clothesline. Melinda, Adrian, Helens, Paul, Lewis, Kevin merited badges for first, Jeff, Alan, Fiona, Joyce, James, Peter J, Russell, Janet F for second, and Stuart, Dorothy and scribe (great rarity!) for third.

Xmas in June was at Fredericks with Gordon Clarke again 'le grand chef'. The Adrians left for orienteering in the Czech Republic. NE had two events on the same day (!). One was Mountain Biking at Lake St George --- rained ALL the time. Carolyn says that some riders were so mud covered on their return that that rode straight into the lake, still pedalling, to clean both themselves and bikes. The other was at Tourourrong where there was a second map on the chief course – and somebody ran off with the master map by mistake --- a very red face at this end! Then came Kimbolton South, Macedon scribe met pair of stunned newcomers – we do not have to go in THERE do we? – “yes”. Our usual place getters did well in the above bush events, young Alice Edmonds usually best on her course, Rosemarie one day too. Ctte meetings discussed possible new maps (Whroo, Campbells Ck, East Metcalf), the need for more club controllers of which 10 were accredited for OY events and 2 for major ones; Laurie and Don were added. The Boyces are back after nearly three years in Qld.

At the Kangaroo Gully event Bruce Paterson came across a hanging, a hanged person. Police were summoned, but not before Bruce had finished his course. Vin Maloney day was at Creswick Diggings, and then came Two Kangaroos Creeks. For these three events NE had the usual winners and placings with the Fell boys and Edmonds girls doing well. Joyce and the Jacksons went to the NSW Champs at Matodoro Ridge a long very rugged 11.5km drive to assembly across a farming property. Carolyn was first in W35 & Melinda second in W12. There had been rogaining champs in Canada in hot 33C conditions where Derek and partner came third in Male Vet and ninth overall. Nigel Aylott & partner were first, and David Rowlands (son of Joyce) and partner were second. The Yeomans walked the whole length of the then new Creswick Miners Walk, 24.5km from Creswick to Ballarat. Derek set the course for the Maxi Score; two teams got the whole 600 points in 2 hours rather than three, the winning one including Nigel Aylott. Peter & Carolyn, the two Helens, and Adrian & partner, won their categories.

There were a few social activities organised such as a film night and a day at Warrnambool that gave Joyce her moments of fame with her group of 16 being paged (on the train) and addressed over the PA. Actually, the only NEs were Joyce, Marion and scribe; the others were Rosemarie's parents, and people from BK and YV clubs. Many enthused over the whales, “fantastic”, but it did not do anything for scribe – just a few blobs heaving about. The maritime museum was exceptionally good, though – and a Devonshire Tea gave a free dollar token which scribe duly put into a 5c pokie somewhat horrified to do such a thing --- elation when coins rushed back, \$26. Peter Kempster is now in WA and Carmel is on a 3-month European trip. Rachel J

competed in National Cross-Country Champs in ACT. She had local success, but this was with some Commonwealth Games competitors – she was 24th out of 40. St George's Lake was our usual team effort in organising and setting up, and with our usual winners and place getters though some were away in WA at the time. Scribe went wildly off course and came across unexpected fruit tree blossom and on inspecting it lo and behold a plaque on a small cairn. There was a picture of an old bark hut that had stood there a century earlier, the very primitive home of one William Guthrie Spense, who was instrumental in forming the ALP, was in the first Commonwealth Parliament and was Post Master General in 1914. Mineral Springs was the next event, near the Glenluce Spring, very deep erosion gullies. Arthur & Janet were absent on a wildflower trip, and Colin Steer had had unexpected heart surgery. The last OY for the year (and Marion was probably the only person to have done and completed all 15, scribe had a DNF along the way) was at South Boundary Ck where Bernard Barnewall was a new member. Adrians were away on their 4th Nepal trip.

Adrian Jackson and Stuart Fell (\$200 each for expenses) were with the Junior team in WA, Warren again the team manager. Fiona gave us notes re the WA and Australian Champs which were at Dryandra (a small scrubby tree known as Parrot Bush), Evedon Ridge high on the range amongst cow pats and mud, very steep and open – great spectator sport unless you were the spectacle – the Fell mobile required a tow truck. The cows were not unfriendly but the magpies living near the finish took offence at the uninvited -- one organiser with stick took up the position to protect finishers. The junior boys, and girls, came second. The Aust Champs were at Malmalling meaning some sort of palm thing, boulders everywhere. A poor day result-wise but NE & YV youngsters went skinny-dipping in the local creek. The Relays were at Yetar and the Junior Boys won by 2 seconds --- pine forest, grass trees, she oaks, open running. 80% of competitors had brought back ticks as mementoes.

The Vic Champs were at the new Magenta map near Chiltern – we had 33 entrants from 18 m'ship units, about a 40% participation. Derek, Kevin, Janet F, Helen E & Doreen won their sections. Tourourrong saw the Primary School Champs, Western – Gordon Clarke, as so many times in the past, picked up the Results Unit, frame, slats, hessian, pegs and accessories. Helen Cusworth (BK) had devised a computer program for her VCE studies that printed out the 700 names (many being jaw breakers) – saved a great deal of effort. It was a long 9 hour day with coaches and buses pulling in, teachers, marshalling kids, general chaos and confusion. NE helpers were Marion, scribe, Janet F, Joyce, Sue, Don, Fiona. Rachel & Alice were 1st and 2nd, Rob Fell 4th. The Eastern zone was at Cardinia a week later where Sally Brownridge, a new member, helped. Jarrod Boyce and Melinda Jackson were 1st and 2nd.

The VOA and Relay day was at Wattle Gully, a strange form of “star” relay, only 12 controls but numerous loops consisting of only two or three. The OY presentations

