



bolfa

newsletter

March 2008

Please send your submissions to
bolfa@climbingclubsouthaustralia.asn.au

Hi Folks,

Welcome to the next edition of BOLFA,
First off, sorry it's been a while coming, we have been a little busy with the finalisation of my (Adam) thesis looking for work (Adam) and also laptop being in the hands of my (Adam) eldest son for a few weeks. OK, so it's all my fault!

First off, thanks to all the people who have submitted content for this edition, we think you will be pleased by the variety and quality of photos and articles. Please keep them coming as now that things have settled down a little we'd like to be getting a BOLFA out every couple of months.

An interesting treat this edition is a trip down memory lane for the CCSA; no doubt some of you will enjoy remembering the good ol' days before anyone even knew what Lycra was, never mind that it came in leopard-skin prints!

Amazing photos taken by one of the World's best known climbing photographers too!

With the incredibly hot weather lately we're sure that the amount of climbing has receded a little, our last trip to Araps was fairly sedate, but there's always Backslappers down at Second Valley!

See you on the rock,

Adam & Celia

Final Note: Apologies to Luke, Adam, Mike and Paul for omissions in their trip report "No Picnic on Mount Kenya" the article is reproduced this edition.





Hi all,

Just to remind you all that even in this day of rotary hammer drills we still have a code of ethics we as climbers have to live by. This is not a set of rules laid down by a governing body but a series of guidelines that has evolved over time into what we now call modern climbing. These ethics guide what we do as climbers and these actions relate directly to how the public sees us. This in turn relates to access to the areas that we hold dear. We do not have many cliffs of worth in the Adelaide region and if we were to lose access to the areas due to the inappropriate actions of some, we would be in dire straits. If National Parks (DEH) were to remove access to the cliffs on their land including Morialta and Onkas, which they could easily do, where would we be? Please think about that when you next head out.

This has all come about due to a recent spate of chipping in the Adelaide region. These acts of vandalism threaten access to the cliffs and will not be tolerated by the community. The appropriate authorities have been informed and investigations have started, with prosecution the likely outcome for the offenders.

To help refresh our memories here are a few guidelines to help preserve access to these essential areas.

Look after the environment

- Try not to damage and trample and vegetation. The cliffs are very fragile eco systems and any loss of veg will lead to soil instability and erosion.
- Avoid excessive cleaning of routes. This includes lichen, moss and other veg. **DO NOT USE WIRE BRUSHES**, this permanently damages the rock.
- Do not litter, this means taking everything home with you including fruit cores and skin. These may biodegrade eventually but a banana skin hanging from a tree is an eyesore. Check the area before you leave for rubbish and feel free to take any other litter you see at the crag with you. It all helps.
- Observe any restrictions due to nesting birds. The cliffs are their home, you are just visiting.
- Avoid using too much chalk. We climb in areas frequented by the rest of the public and they don't want to see chalk everywhere. If you must use tick marks because you cannot see the holds make sure you clean them off before you leave. A foot long tick mark to show you where the hold is possibly excessive. Perhaps you could do some more training if the route is that hard or get some glasses...
- **DO NOT CHIP ROUTES!** This is a no brainer. There is absolutely no reason why anyone should need to chip holds. This damages the rock and is an act of vandalism and will be dealt with by the authorities as such.
- Do not place bolts where adequate natural protection exists or within easy reach of established routes.
- Consult widely before placing new bolts. In the Adelaide Hills your new route probably isn't new at all.
- Don't retro bolt, at all. If you cannot do the route without bolts leave it for someone who enjoys that style of climbing.
- Use your head and think about your actions. It affects us all.

Cheers

Craig Ingram
CCSA President

Recently the CCSA was contacted by a very interesting person indeed; David Moriarty who now resides in Queensland was one of the founding members of the CCSA and was interested in finding out whether we were still running, if the likes of George Adams and Doug McLean were known to us and if we were aware that the 19th of September 2007 marked the 40th Anniversary of the club.

David and his wife Christine (of the Shewoodenduit and Shedidit fame) supplied us with some old photos showing how they used to do things in the old days and also sent me a page from the original BOLFA...

While some things like equipment, gear, ethics, and even the format in which BOLFA is now created and distributed may change, it's good to see that others such as the nature of climbers does not;



The practice belay weight; Morialta.

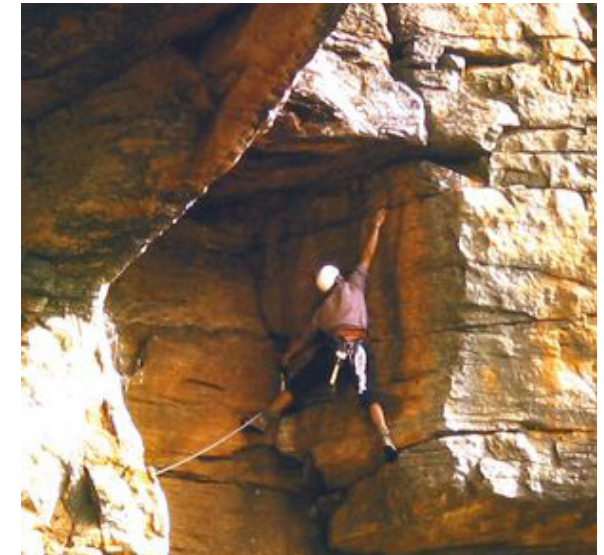


Christine, belay practice, Morialta.

It seems that the names for the two climbs for which Christine is infamous (much to her chagrin) came about as a result of some skylarking and teasing on the day of their first ascents... and apparently Christine is still not happy about it.

David has since been in contact with George Adams and has suggested a reunion of sorts... sounds like fun – maybe we could have one of our next club crag meets guided by one of the original members and all us new-age climbers could get a feel for the old days by wearing hob-nailed boots and using chockstones and machine nuts for protection.

If all that sounds scary at Morialta, imagine doing that sort of thing at Moonarie. No wonder they're grey!

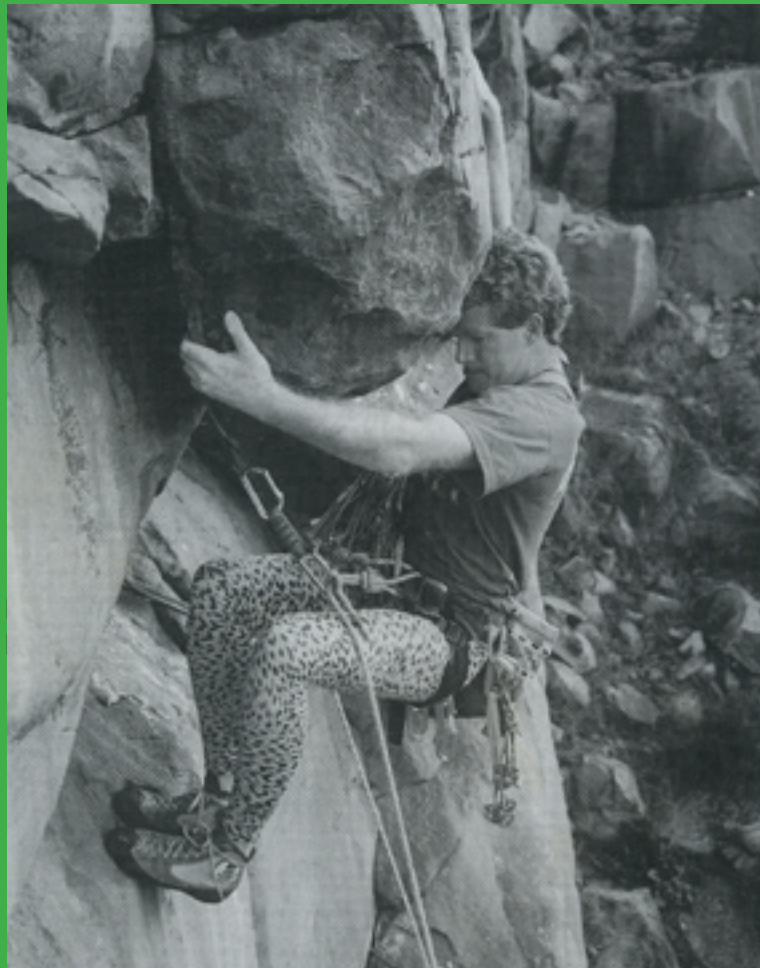


David Moriarty, Golden Echo (18) Kachoong Cliffs, Arapiles.



... the second fall!

David was kind enough to send us a page from one of the original Bolfas, an interesting insight into our history.



Above: another 'interesting' historical insight.

9. NEW CLIMBS

Several weeks ago David Moriarty lead two new climbs at Moriarty. Here are his descriptions.

SEWOODENDUIT VS (6)

A strenuous and technical climb, but satisfying climb up the most prominent buttress (or Dandifino Buttress?) on Far Crag. The climbing is sustained for about the first 40 feet. Protection is good.

First Pitch 60 feet:

Gain height by using rocks on the ground, and reach for a high hold on the nose of the overhang. Pullup over the overhang and continue with difficulty (crux) to a good resting place on the left, where a piton is in place. Move up right and around the overhang into the small, bottomless, roofed chimney. Climb up under the roof and swing around to the right, then follow the crack more easily to the top.

First climbed, David Moriarty and Michael Waite 18/3/68.

(Ed.'s note: A young lady known to most climbers in SA as David's favourite second refused to follow-on.....thus the name, X George Adams who watched the lead, and the excellent effort by the second, smoked seven cigarettes which rates the climb at about VS).

SHEDDIT HS (5 plus)

A strenuous climb up a prominent crack in a small corner set into an arete towards the northern end of Far Crag. Good protection.

First Pitch 30 feet:

Climb up the crack until footholds peter out, then layback past the small bulges to the top.

First climbed, David Moriarty, Stuart Fishwick and Christine Shadley.

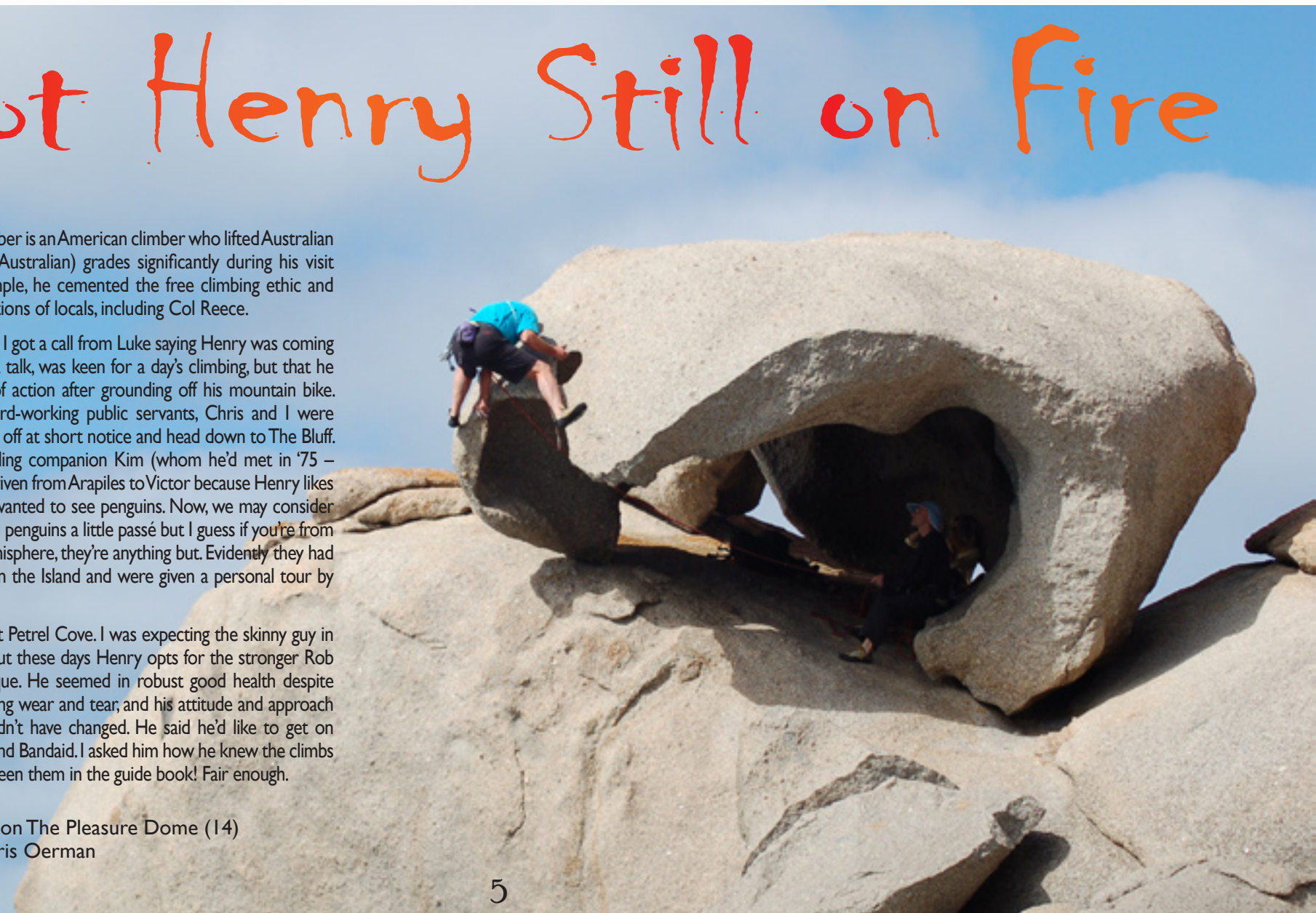
Hot Henry Still on Fire

“Hot” Henry Barber is an American climber who lifted Australian (including South Australian) grades significantly during his visit in 1975. By example, he cemented the free climbing ethic and upped the aspirations of locals, including Col Reece.

The other month I got a call from Luke saying Henry was coming to town to give a talk, was keen for a day's climbing, but that he (Luke) was out of action after grounding off his mountain bike. Despite being hard-working public servants, Chris and I were able to take a day off at short notice and head down to The Bluff. Henry and travelling companion Kim (whom he'd met in '75 – long story) had driven from Arapiles to Victor because Henry likes sea cliffs and he wanted to see penguins. Now, we may consider the Granite Island penguins a little passé but I guess if you're from the northern hemisphere, they're anything but. Evidently they had a fine time out on the Island and were given a personal tour by a ranger.

We met Henry at Petrel Cove. I was expecting the skinny guy in the old photos, but these days Henry opts for the stronger Rob Baker-type physique. He seemed in robust good health despite decades of climbing wear and tear, and his attitude and approach to climbing wouldn't have changed. He said he'd like to get on Richard's Route and Bandid. I asked him how he knew the climbs and he said he'd seen them in the guide book! Fair enough.

Henry Barber on The Pleasure Dome (14)
All images: Chris Oerman



First stop was The Pleasure Dome, probably the best 5m grade 14 on the planet. Henry took some time working it out and went leftish up from the window instead of using the easier pebbles to the right. No wonder he pronounced it a sandbag! I should mention that Henry eschews harnesses, preferring just a tape around the waist. His rack consists of a few medium to large stoppers and a couple of medium hexes.

Next it was down to Baudin. Henry placed a good wire in the flake crack and ran it out to the first bolt of the Direct Finish. After considering the options, he finished up the bolted line (17). Then it was over to Richard's Route which Henry climbed in a measured and serious manner, using most of his rack. He thought the runout finish to the original route on slightly less-than-perfect granite was a little brash so opted for the bolt and the LHF (18), as do most. Henry adopts a hunched, beetling style on slabs, pressing down hard on both hands and feet. I pointed out the neighbouring route, the infamous Hopes, but Henry hadn't packed his skyhooks. In any event, my instructions were to not allow Henry on that one, at least not before he'd given his talk!

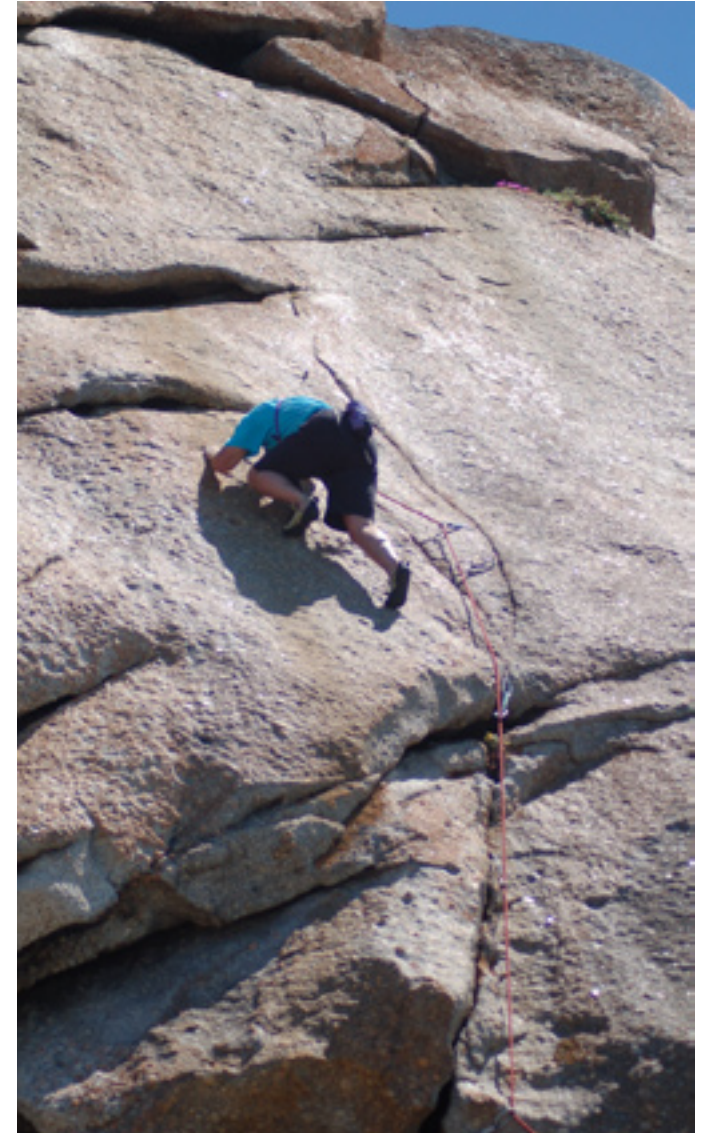
We finished down on Bandid Wall, a place most avoid but the sight of all the cracks got Henry's moustache twitching. He onsighted Bandid (20), a Col Reece wide-hands testpiece that Henry described as technical, and Cockles and Muscles (originally 20 but 19 in Nick's guide) which Henry thought was the tougher climb. I certainly found the cracks tough and I need to go back and practise some of Henry's tips. Fortunately Chris was happy to put the camera down and second these two.

Henry mentioned he'd spotted a koala in 1975 and was very keen to see another. There was no sign of one on The Bluff so, en route to the talk, we took a detour to Chambers Gully and walked 20m up the track. Henry saw his second koala. The evening at the Mercury went well – thanks to the Paddy Pallin team for putting it on. It was a top day with a good bloke, quite a buzz actually.

By Paul Badenoch



Cockles and Muscles (19)



Richard's Route (18)

MOVIE REVIEWS

KING LINES REVIEW

In what can only be described as 'a badly named film', the Big Up Productions team have joined forces with award winning director Peter Mortimer (he of Return to Sender fame) and produced this flick - which should by all accounts be called 'The Chris Sharma Show'.

Nevertheless, this is a minor criticism of what generally is a great bit of cutting edge climbing footage - and by cutting edge I mean 'futuristic'. The lines featured may well turn out to be the hardest climbs in the world, and it will be interesting to use this movie as a point of reference some ten years from now, and see how much harder the difficulty level has risen (if any).

The El Pontas deep water solo in Mallorca is advertised as being the main event, and it quite possibly is. However, far better in my opinion is the footage showing his Mount Clark super project (just outside Las Vegas), which when complete will undoubtedly redefine climbing's top standard.

HARD XS REVIEW

The long awaited sequel to 'Hard Grit' by the award winning Slackjaw team. Unlike its predecessor however, this film extends for three and a half hours and is made up of a number of individual films showcasing a wide range of different rock climbing pursuits within the UK. Ranging from gritstone, limestone, slate, chalk and even choss, this film is - in a word - varied.

As a result it's likely that some of the footage won't appeal to everyone's tastes, but therein lies the beauty of it. For instance, climbing a thoroughly loose shale cliff whereby even the belays are dubious might not be your cup of tea, but it's worth seeing regardless. The narrative by the climbers attempting these feats give great insight into the mindset of what it takes to climb these routes - an insight which all too often gets overlooked in modern day climbing films today.

Highlights depending on your tastes are undoubtedly Steve McClures outstanding project and eventual route of 'Overshadow' (given 9a+/36) at Malham Cove, as well as 17 year old James Pearson launching (and falling) off 'The Zone' (E9 6c), and Sam Whittaker's unbelievable 'Appointment With Death' (E9 6c). Australian Toby Benham also makes an appearance, as does the world of slate climbing and deep water soloing.

All up, a great concept and a film worth having - even if you aren't into climbing a chosspile with an ice pick!

By Steve Kelly



NORTON SUMMIT

Jason Morton has sent in this report of the goings-on at Norton Summit...

The Christy and Evelyn crew are climbing stronger than ever, and we look forward to a report of their recent trip to the east coast where we're sure they ripped though all the hard ticks.

Mike has ticked North Terrace stroll, A pretty impressive achievement and good consolidation at the grade after ticking Eddy misses the point.

The other Mike's looking stronger than ever at the moment sending Punching the pussy in sneakers (!)
(I can do that, I just don't want to - Ed)

The cave looks more like a gym now, finally passing the last step of shame to having permanent malled draws. It's hard to comprehend that once upon a time many of the routes at the cave were trad climbs and there was an uproar when they were first bolted. There are still some trad routes, most of which are overlooked and unclimbed.

Finally, welcome to Bill from Darwin.

Jason



NORTON SUMMIT



The Hole:
Top left and center shots: Fred Bonnet on The Wormhole Linkup (31), Far R Craig on Stugang (29), Bottom L Unknown Climber (sorry) on Lipstick Lesbians (26)

NORTON SUMMIT



SLACK LINING

In late December '07 Ryan Graney from Adelaide and Hans Hornberger from Germany climbed the iconic Totem Pole in Tasmania, and then spent the next few days walking a slackline between the top and the main cliff. As fortune would have it, they were lucky enough to be photographed by none other than Simon Carter and managed to come home with photos that would make anyone jealous!

“We climbed the route on the 27th dec last year and spent 4 days down there walking back and forth...”

All images Simon Carter.





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SNAPSHOTS



Clockwise from left:

Arend Grosse on Kachoong (21), Arapillies.

Mike dismounts North Terrace Stroll (25), Norton Summit.

Quang Doan giving The Frogman Cometh (19) its name, Backslappers, Second Valley.

Kyte coming off Tim In The Gym (26), Norton Summit.

Images Adam Clay



2008 WORLD TOUR: AUSTRALIA

The World's Best Mountain Films

BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL WORLD TOUR

Adelaide Dates:
Mercury Theatre
27-28 May 2008

Tickets \$30 from
Paddy Pallin
(\$27 Pallin Club)

Program:

Entropy:
Norway, 11 min Kiteboarding.

Aint Got No Friends on a Powder Day:
Switzerland, 5 min Skiing.

20 Seconds of Joy:
Germany, 60 minutes BASE Jumping;
Winner *Best Film on Mountain Sports*.

Balance:
Canada, 11 min Skiing.

Badgered:
UK, 7 min Environmental.

Ice Mines:
Canada, 30 min Ice Climbing.

Trial and Error:
Canada, 8 min Mountain Biking, Environment.

King Lines:
USA, 13 min Climbing.



Welcome to the Banff Mountain Festival

Each year since 1976 The Banff Centre in Alberta Canada has hosted the Banff Mountain Film Festival in the first week of November. Just days after the Banff Mountain Film Festival wraps up in the Canadian Rockies, the World Tour heads out the door for the first of approximately 480 screenings around the world. Between November 2007 and October 2008, over 200,000 mountain film enthusiasts in about 30 countries will share heart-stopping action, heart-warming stories and mountains of inspiration. In 2006 the festival even made its way to Antarctica where it screened to a combined audience of over 650 eager people.

For the last 10 years Paddy Pallin has been bringing the Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour to Australian audiences. The Australian tour has grown from humble beginnings. Once screened just for Sydney audiences the festival has grown in size and recognition and now screens for 16 nights across 9 cities nationally. Last year saw the Banff Mountain Film Festival make its way to Cairns and Hobart for the first time and 2008 will be the first year that the festival screens in Launceston.

Ultimately, it is the audience that defines and creates the unique experience at each screening of the Banff Mountain Film Festival. Your cheers, your laughter, your

gasps, and your long-standing support of mountain film makes the festival the unique and fun event that it is today.

Back in Banff, The Banff Centre does much more than films. A globally respected arts, cultural, and educational institution and conference facility, The Banff Centre provides the perfect venue for the Banff Mountain Book Festival, Banff Mountain Photography Competition, Banff Adventure Filmmakers' Seminar, Banff Mountain Writing Program, Banff Adventure Photography Workshop, Banff Mountain Grants Program, Mountain Summits and environmental conferences. Pretty impressive for a small mountain town.

This year Paddy Pallin, Canadian Tourism Commission and Air New Zealand are giving you and a friend the opportunity to visit the home of the Banff Mountain Film Festival. Read more about the prize you can be enjoying on page 18 and be sure to enter the competition on the night of the screenings.

At Paddy Pallin we are proud to share with you our passion for the outdoors, the adventurous spirit and mountain culture. We hope that you enjoy this year's selection of films at the Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour and encourage you to let the films take you on a journey of discovery and adventure.

Jemima Robinson
Marketing Manager and Festival Organiser
Paddy Pallin

Banff Mountain Film Festival Statistics

TOTAL AUDIENCE:

Audiences totaling over 12,000 attend the Banff Mountain Festivals in Banff each October/November. Selected films hit the road immediately after the festival, and are enjoyed by over 200,000 people annually.

COUNTRIES VISITED:

About 30 countries including South Africa, Finland, India, Iceland and Argentina.

NUMBER OF SCREENINGS:

Approximately 480 tour screenings each year.

OLDEST THEATRE:

One of the oldest theatres to host a screening is The Music Hall in Portsmouth, NH – it was built in 1878.

MOST UNUSUAL REQUEST:

A couple in Maine contacted Jacques Blackstone, the composer of the Festival's theme music, for permission to play it at their wedding.

GREENER PARKING:

The Madison, Wisconsin screening offered valet service for bikes as part of their Earth Day initiative.

BUYING THE FILMS:

The Banff Centre does not own the home video rights to any of the films you see on tour, so we cannot sell you a copy for home viewing or produce a compilation DVD for sale. However, many films can be sourced online. Knowing the title and producer/director can help.

For more information:

www.banffmountainfestivals.ca

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Paddy Pallin leaders in travel and outdoor adventure

PRINCIPAL SPONSORS:



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inspiring creativity

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HALF BRICK AWARD

Numerous nominees this time around.

Nomination 1: Chippers. Anyone who feels the need to have to bang with a chisel in order to get up should find other ways in which to prove how hard they can get.

Nomination 2: Paintballing weekend warriors. Shooting the cliff face at Far Crag just to prove one is a man of standing actually just shows that being trapped in a menial job is not holding you back from being a true hero; it's actually doing the human race a favour by reducing the time you have to procreate.

Nomination 3: Ed's Will

BOLFA has been contacted by the executors of the estate of a mountaineer of international standing who died recently. The executors have the honour of passing on this great man's words and doing what they can to enable his dying wishes to be fulfilled.

The mountaineer wishes to remain anonymous.

BOLFA is advised that this man's will took a fairly typical form but was supplemented by a lengthy treatise on life, climbing and how he had been truly blessed to have met so many wonderful people.

Having led a good, fulfilling life and having achieved significant mountaineering, expeditionary and humanitarian goals on many continents this mountaineer had few regrets.

In a fashion that is reflective of such a modest and selfless man, regrets are limited to the inaction of other people and how great potential has been and continues to be ignored or wasted.

The Adelaide rock climbing community was singled out for particular comment in this regard. The executors have been rather diplomatic but it would seem that the will contains strings of expletives, great vehemence and in a manner so untypical of this man, great despair, disappointment and a lack of hope.

Little comment is made of recent chipping and bolting misdemeanours but considerable comment is directed to the community's inability to grasp the importance of a new route of international standing that has not seen a second ascent.



This man asks how it is possible for a crag like Norton Summit to have such a new route, let alone how it could be neglected and treated in such a tawdry manner. He points out that Henry Barber telephoned him after his recent trip here to let him know of the climb and to say, almost apologetically, that he had not been made aware of the climb until just before his departure and that was the reason he did not give it a go. It would seem that Henry does not want to have his reputation tainted.

So Adelaide, what's the go? The climb?

"Don't Rain On The Parade" at an unconfirmed grade of 24.

Editors note: The first person who can correctly identify the author of this article by return email wins a genuine antique (and corroded) sticht plate found recently at Far Crag.

NO PICNIC ON MT KENYA

Just before leaving for Africa, I found a small paperback book that had been lost during a recent house move. "Upon that Mountain" by Eric Shipton, published in the 1950s, describes his ascents of Mt Kenya in 1929-1930. Shipton made the first recorded ascent of Nelion (5188m) and the first traverse over Nelion and Batian (5199m), the twin summits of Mt Kenya. He was a truly amazing pioneer of unexplored areas of the world. Thus, I set off inspired.

The four of us arrived in Nairobi on a Sunday afternoon after 30hrs of travelling via Kuala Lumpur and Qatar. On the recommendation of a travel agent, I had arranged some cheap accommodation over the net prior to leaving. But two places in the same street in Upperhill had similar names and we ended up staying not in the campground as intended but in a backpackers called the Bush House & Camp! This turned out to be a happy mistake because our host Zipporah was extremely well-connected and could arrange anything by making a call or two. The Bush House (www.bush-house.com) was our base in Nairobi for the next 3 weeks of adventures. We spent the Monday exploring the city, buying food, and booking transport and porters.

Mt Kenya was the first objective and we decided to get to the climbing from the north via the Sirimon track. The bus ride to Nanyuki was exciting as the rural road network is in disrepair (not that the streets in Nairobi were much better). We met the porters in Nanyuki and continued on to where a dirt road headed into the hills. There, at 2000m, we left the transport and walked 9km to the park gate at 2700m. This gave us an extra day to get acclimatized and used to walking with packs. The next morning, we each handed over US\$90.00 entry fee at the gate and headed up through a forest to Old Moses Camp at 3300m. We saw baboons, Colobus monkeys, water buck and a zebra. And we wondered why the porters hadn't clipped the waist belts of the packs. They explained that when an elephant comes charging out, you need to get rid of the pack quickly. As there was clear evidence of elephants and cape buffalo in the area, we quietly unclipped the buckles on our day packs! It had been easy walking, so we pitched camp and then headed up a hill to a meteorological station at 3700m to further acclimatize.



Leaving early the next day, we walked 6 hours to Shipton's Camp at 4200m. The path took us up Mackinder Valley into an Afro-alpine zone of unique flora and fauna. The giant groundsel (*Senecio keniodendron*) and what we referred to as "Cousin It" plants (Telek's giant lobelias) were particularly impressive. We saw a number of rock hyraces. The porters pushed us quite hard as they wanted to get up, dump our packs, and go back down to solicit more business. We paid them \$15 per day plus a \$20 tip, about the going rate.

Shipton's Camp was our base for the ascent of Batián. The afternoon we arrived, Mike, Adam and I were still feeling OK and wanted to find the start of the technical climbing. Paul was complaining of bronchitis, gastro, an allergy, altitude sickness and anything else he could think of so he opted out. We set out about 3.30 and climbed a scree slope for an hour till we found the start of the North Face Standard Route (IV+). Just near the tongue of the Kranf Glacier, the start was marked with a chipped cross and blue paint. Back at camp by 5:30, we were excited to be in position to start the climb.

Tim McCartney-Snape had recommended to bivi in the Amphitheatre, about 300m up the route, and then head for the summit the next day. With this in mind, we left Shipton's at 10am with biggish packs containing sleeping bags, bivi bags, stoves, food, fuel, and climbing gear. Slogging up the scree for the second time in less than 24 hours was tiring but, once at the start of the route, all else was forgotten. Rockclimbing with big packs was a different experience; I found I had to adjust my technique and rely on footwork a lot more. We climbed in teams of two to keep the climbing interesting and to minimize waiting at belays. After 8 pitches and some moving together we arrived at a spacious ledge in the Amphitheatre where we could wander around unroped. We spent a comfortable evening at about 4700m under the stars in the bright night sky.

The next day began with some easy scrambling and then 2 pitches to access Firmin's Tower. We climbed the Tower in 4 pitches, the crux pitch being about grade 17. A short abseil was followed by 3 more pitches to join the northwest ridge. The rock was alpine granite with ample cracks for jams and protection, nice edges for crimps, and great friction for smearing. Ice appeared in the cracks and then icicles as we moved higher.

At about 5100m, on gaining the summit ridge, we found a small bivi site. Time was getting on (it was 2.30 by then) and we had to decide whether to go for the summit or abseil back to our gear in the Amphitheatre. The decision was to continue, hoping that it would only take an hour or so to get to the top. But soon the sky clouded over and it began to snow which slowed progress a little more. We traversed just below the ridge top for 120m to Shipton's Notch which was negotiated with a short pitch of grade 14. A bit more traversing got us to the final vertical pitch. Adam and I topped out first, Mike and Paul arriving a few minutes later. The summit was somewhat anticlimactic: we shook hands and sat in the snow, happy to have finally made it but a little fearful of what the night would bring.





We soon descended back along the ridge to the little high bivi, reaching it at 6pm. We would be somewhat protected by a ½ metre-high stone wall, but four guys had to fit into a space where perhaps two would have been comfortable. We spread the ropes out onto the floor to give a little insulation. We had two space blankets, minimal chocolate, and just a little water which froze anyway. It was a case of snuggling up, coping with the discomfort and leg cramps, and counting down the hours til dawn. First light was much anticipated and sunrise was a beautiful sight. Once we'd warmed up, it was 7 abseils back to the Amphitheatre for a very welcome brunch.

After a rest, we packed the gear and descended to the start of 6 more abseils. This lower gully was a shooting gallery, full of loose blocks of all sizes. Mike was hit on the wrist and foot when pulling a rope and was lucky it wasn't more serious. We got to the base of the route at about 4pm and headed back down the scree to our welcoming tents. Everyone was feeling hungry and exhausted: a quick soup then straight to sleep. Waking the next morning, we realized how lucky we'd been with the weather. It had snowed most of the night and the mountain was plastered.

Keen to get back to Nairobi, we hired two porters to help carry the gear and walked the 23km to the park gate in a day. I arranged a 4WD and driver to take us to Nanyuki where we hopped on a mini-bus. The equator lies a little south of Nanyuki so we stopped for a photo. Spying a likely looking shop, Mike disappeared and emerged with a 25kg wooden rhino that the vendor had assured him was solid ebony. Things then became squeezey in the back seat but, nevertheless, we made it back to the Bush House that evening. Four large pizzas washed down with Tusker beer was a great celebration.

The next objective was Kilimanjaro (5895m). We packed away the climbing hardware, tents and stoves as the only practical way to climb Kilimanjaro is to pay a tour company to run the trek. Again, Zipporah arranged everything (\$996 Nairobi-to-Nairobi). A slow day's bus trip to Arusha, interrupted by formalities at the Tanzania border, then 2 hours travelling along the southern flank of the mountain got us to the Marangu Gate.

We met our guide Fredrick, his assistant John, the cook and six porters. We were to ascend the so-called "Coca Cola" route which is the fastest way up Kilimanjaro. Three days trekking, beginning in rainforest and finishing in high alpine desert, got us up to Kibo Hut at 4700m. Highlights along the way included the gardens of proteas and giant groundsels, this time the Kilimanjaro variety *Senecio jonstonii*. We left Kibo at midnight to avoid the usual cloudy afternoon weather and, hopefully, to greet dawn from the top of Africa. It's fair to say that the ascent was tougher than we were expecting considering we'd done the hard yards on Mt Kenya. While only a walk, the dark hours trudging up the endless scree slope were tiring and very cold. The water in our packs froze and we all complained of cold feet. It was about -10°C. We reached the rim of the volcano (about 5600m) at about 4.30, and marched on for another couple of hours to reach the high point. It was Adam's turn to feel the altitude and he celebrated topping out with an impressive vomit. Africa's highest mountain is now a little higher. The sunrise on a crisp August morning made all the hard work worthwhile; Kilimanjaro's shadow is surely the biggest on the planet. We returned to Kibo for a rest and some lunch before continuing on to Horombo Hut at 3700m. We were shattered from being on the go for 16 hours but happy to have ticked the second mountain of the trip. One more day saw us back in Arusha for a good feed and Kilimanjaro beer.

Arriving back in Nairobi, we had one day spare before flying home. Adam had run out of money so had a quiet day. I went gift shopping. Paul went to Nairobi National Park. Mike spent the morning unwrapping and rewrapping rhino at the Nairobi Post Office, and the afternoon explaining to Zipporah how she could make a million bucks through property development. The evening at Carnivore dining on ostrich, crocodile and other meats was a great way to wind up our African adventure. We agreed that Carnivore is a must-do for every visitor to Nairobi (there's a vegetarian menu as well).

Hopefully, rhino will arrive safely in Adelaide in the near future - we intend to belay off him at Norton!

Special Thanks to Paul Badenoch for editing, adding the facts to my fiction and generally making this article readable

By Luke Adams



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