

OCTOBER
2010

Thrutch

THE JOURNAL OF THE SYDNEY ROCKCLIMBING CLUB



About the Sydney Rockclimbing Club Inc.

The SRC is a meeting point for climbers and to this end organises outdoor climbing trips, regular gym climbing nights and social meetings as well as holding a monthly meeting. The SRC is not, however, a commercial organisation and does NOT provide instructional courses.

SRC Meetings

Meetings of the SRC are held at 7.30 pm on the first Wednesday of every month (except January) at Wests Ashfield Leagues Club, 115 Liverpool Rd, Ashfield.

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Membership (\$30) is valid for one year from July; discounted membership (\$20) is available for new members from January to June. Existing members can renew before 1 July for \$20.

Membership gets you:

- Subscription to Thrutch (11 issues)
- Accident Insurance on organised club trips
- Discounted guide books and climbing gym entry
- Socialising and entertainment

- Talks/slideshows by occasional guest presenters
- Access to the SRC library

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www.sydneYROCKIES.org.au

Send membership subscriptions, accompanied by the signed waiver/membership form, to:

The Membership Secretary,
Sydney Rockclimbing Club,
PO Box A592, Sydney South, NSW 1235

Thrutch

Thrutch is the Journal of the SRC. Contributions on disk or via email are always welcome, photos especially so.

Send Thrutch Contributions to:

Thrutch Editor,
Sydney Rockclimbing Club Inc.
PO Box A592, Sydney South, NSW, 1235
Email: thrutch@sydneyrockies.org.au



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NEW ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS

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THRUTCH IS INTERACTIVE.

Where possible, website and email addresses are hyperlinked and when clicked should launch a browser to the address or an email message window.

WARNING!

Rock climbing is dangerous. You could be injured or killed if you attempt any of the activities described. There is NO substitute for experience.



Cover photo:
Our club member
profile-ee in
flight at the Bloc
Climbing Centre.

If you want to attend please deposit the required cash (\$28 per person) into the Rockies account via direct deposit WITH YOUR NAME IN THE REFERENCE FIELD so we know who it is from. A follow-up EMAIL is also required advising that the deposit has taken place.

Payment is required prior to the night to make it easier for the volunteer(s) who are organising this on behalf of everyone.

SRC bank account details are:
Bank: Westpac
BSB Number: 732 000
Account Name: Sydney Rock-climbing Club
Account Number: 072673



The per head fee gets you a seat at the Sherpa Banquet. Due to the size of the group non-banquet options are not available, ie. individual a la carte.

Vegetarian types should not despair, "mine host", Khim Neure, says that "vegetarian banquet will have first entree veg momo and second entree sherpa surprise chat. with the mains for veg they will get quati dal, mix veg, chau kerau and paneer curry with rice and roti. We will look after the vegetarian how every they want from the menu".

THE SYDNEY ROCKCLIMBING CLUB

annual dinner

SATURDAY 6:30PM - NOVEMBER 20 - 2010 - SHERPA KITCHEN - KING STREET, NEWTOWN

BOOKING FOR 45 PEOPLE ONLY

THE DINNER IS OPEN TO ROCKIES MEMBERS, FORMER ROCKIES MEMBERS, FRIENDS AND FAMILY. SO GET IN QUICK.

\$500
TRIP LEADER
PRIZE ANNOUNCED

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Cracks in the Rocks



(A very slanted view of history and Blue Mountains climbers)

The Sydney Rock Climbing Club was formed in 1951, and from its early ranks a number of individuals quickly rose to (local) prominence. Names such as Kippax, Roots, Tattersall and Truupold are associated with many of the significant climbs of the period and are recorded for posterity in even the latest climbing guidebooks. But despite this initial flurry of activity, in the space of little more than ten years they had just as quickly all but faded from the local climbing scene – lured away to other adventure activities (such as marriage, cave diving, ocean sailing), or into academic studies, and so forth. However, they did not depart without leaving a very clear “we wuz here” sign.

By 1961, Roots was experimenting with building-industry expansion bolts and, with Tattersall, used them during the first ascent of a route in the Rhum Dhu area (Terrier 1). Encouraged by that success, and with bolt placement better understood, Roots teamed with Kippax to steal a tempting and much-coveted Narrow Neck prize (Fuddyyduddy) from in front of the eyes, and hands, of the emerging ‘new hard men’. Soon after, in what may have been their finest hour, this pair boldly ventured out onto the (then) alarmingly steep and smooth wall below The Boar’s Head and

climbed past the high points of previous attempts and on to the top, creating a route (Tooth & Nail) which today still impresses. Then suddenly, they were gone.

When the dust had settled, a number of other SRC members could still be found poking around Blue Mountains cliffs and even sometimes turning-up worthwhile routes, but the glamour of the previous decade seemed to have waned. The enthusiasm (and excesses) of the Rhum Dhu splinter group continued for a while longer but eventually declined as members moved away from Sydney, or came to terms with responsibilities. Two people active in this period, and often associated with new routes of an herbaceous or ‘contrived’ nature, were Litchfield and Westren. One carried the idealism of youth, the other brought maturity and gardening gloves. Their names appear on many of the contemporary routes, in areas ranging from Glenbrook Gorge to Mount Victoria.

A little later in the sixties, closer to the time when the great “E-name”^{*} was to proclaim its dominance on the Australian scene, new route descriptions began appearing which listed the name Ryan amongst the new route ascensionists. Here was new blood, the “new wave” even, and this name

was later to be linked with some of the world’s high mountain ranges, including those of the Andes and the Himalaya. Ryan eventually moved to New Zealand, where, as a further punishment, he became the father of a sport climber.

So that was the fifties and sixties. Now ‘fast forward’ to the nineties, April 1996 in fact, and suddenly we discover all those fossil names again, and together. Yes, all of them, and clustered in one geographic location, at the one crag in fact.

This then was Crocks on the Rocks, the week when Grey power ruled at Arapiles.

It began in 1995, when Carol and Les Tattersall organised a reunion of “Early Members of the Sydney Rockclimbing Club”. Held that April, at Sydney’s Pittwater Youth Hostel, the event proved very successful and gave rise, subsequently, to the notion that it might be possible to encourage some of these old members out onto the rocks once more.

Hence, in late ’95, the idea of a climbing trip was “floated” to measure the potential interest. Mount Arapiles, in western Victoria, was mischievously nominated as the location due to its abundance of low-grade routes, its international standing as a climbing destination, and because none of

the “early Rockies” had ever climbed there!

The concept “clicked”, and the response was much greater than anticipated. Subsequently The “Crocks” made their pilgrimage to Mt Arapiles in April ’96, elated by the prospect of really touching rock again after a lapse, for many of them, of about 35 years.

It was a marvellous week. The weather was (mostly) fine, nobody was injured, food and drink were consumed eagerly, and many climbs were ascended. Tall stories were told, old jokes trotted out again, and the past revisited. In the time-honoured tradition, those not present were slandered, but remembered with affection.

As the days rolled on, all found their old skills returning and worked up through the grades. Climbs, graded 3 to 17, were ascended – in fine style, and without trauma. There were smiles on all the faces, and pleasantly tired muscles in bodies that had discovered they could still “make the moves”.

Each night, at the campsite, assisted by a glass or two of medication, they took part in the telling, and retelling, of all the old tales and legends. As the stars and possums came out, the atmosphere of Arapiles began to take effect. Pussycats



turned into tigers, sparrows soared with the falcons, and old fossils disowned the rigidity of age. By the end of the week it was unlikely that any of the other climbers at Arapiles

could have remained unaware of the Crock's presence. Although the nearby picnic facilities are frequently the focus of bus loads of senior citizens, the actual cliffs are never so intensely dotted with

grey – a form of mobile lichen, infecting first one crag, and then the next. Finally, it was time to return home. All insisted - "we must organise another trip like this". Consequently, planning

has commenced for another reunion and climbing trip to be held in the Blue Mountains next year. They may be old, and grey, but they're not yet finished. They're Cocks on the Rocks!

Kevin Westren, August 1996

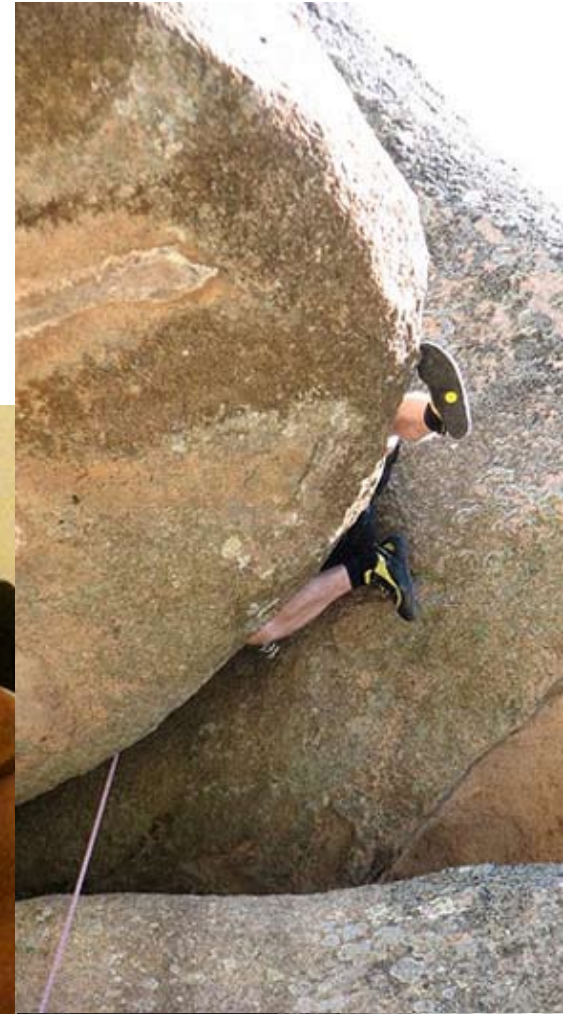
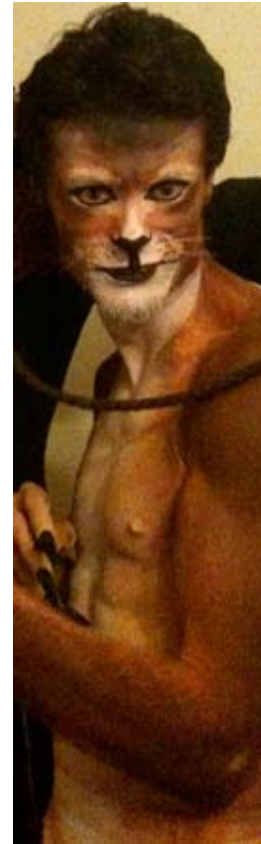
AN ACCOUNT OF A CLIMBING TRIP TO MOUNT ARAPILES, 21ST-27TH APRIL 1996

*John Ewbank

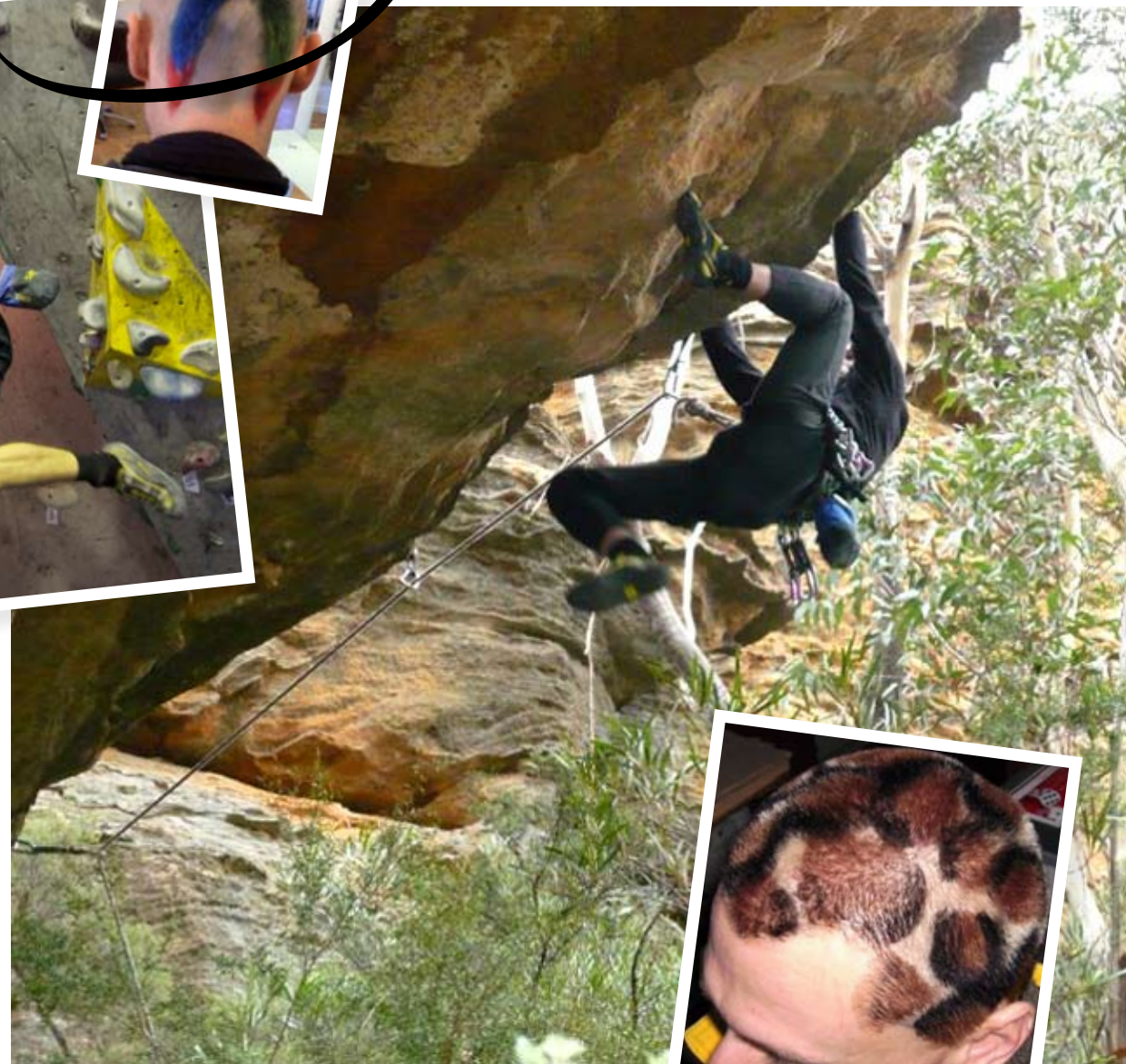
Acknowledgements: The Cocks thank Barbara and David Darmanin, and Kevin Melville, who assisted by leading climbs and in other ways ensured the trip was a success.

QUISNAM
AGO VACUUS
INSANIA
VEL RABIES
EST NON UT
SAPIENS UT
IS FIDES!*

HAVING JUST CLIMBED ON ROCK FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 9 MONTHS I ALMOST DON'T FEEL I QUALIFY AS A CLIMBER, YET THESE WORDS ARE TO APPEAR IN THRUTCH. LET ME THEN INTRODUCE MYSELF AS A CLUB MEMBER AND APRÈS CLIMBER WHO ONCE WAS VERY MUCH A CLIMBER AND HARBOURS AMBITIONS TO BE SO AGAIN ONE DAY.....



Showing his attraction to the unusual at Tarana. Top pic: Second pitch of Bloodbath and below, Through the Looking Glass (?).



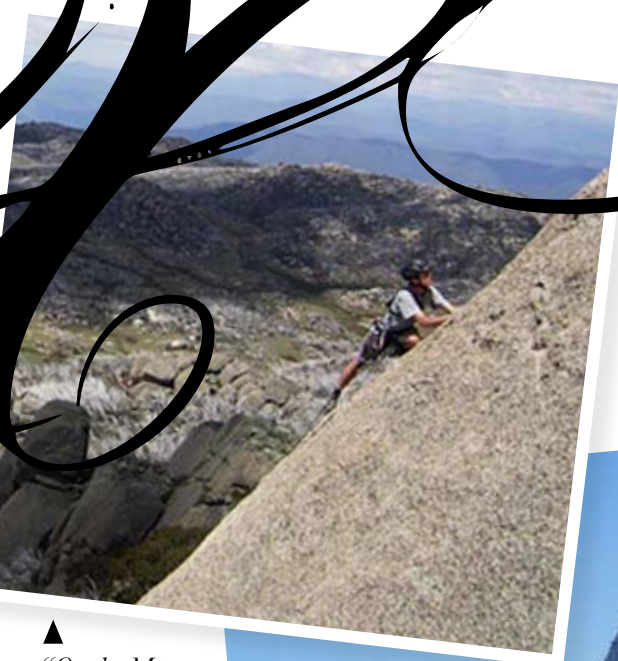
►
Unknown steepness at Sahara Point, Blue Mountains.



My name is unimportant but like a good dog I usually answer to Rossco, other names that also prick up my ears are Aratek and Ara. I have been a Rockies member for 4 or 5 years now. During which time I have been on a few trips and lead a few trips, but mostly I just read with envy about the exploits of others in this very publication.

Climbing is not my principal sporting enjoyment, that podium place is held by Mountain biking but not the kind where you meander through pleasant forest tracks, more the kind where the rock steps and obstacles are such that if you get it wrong and don't go to hospital you have had a good result. That said, climbing is a close second followed by many other contenders for my time and finances, four wheel driving (again at the more adventurous end of the scale), martial arts (wing chung kung fu and tan lung combat), motor biking, paragliding, fencing and kayaking et al.

Such pursuits are often laddled as extreme by the mass media and to many they may well be so, but to me and I suspect many of you they offer a reason for life! Not only does that glorious splitter crack, deadly trail or tumbling rapid call you because of its own inherent beauty but they call because they offer you passage to another place. This place is only reached however when near at or beyond your limit of strength, ability and or comfort. It is in this place where your mortgage repayments are irrelevant, that upcoming court case meaningless and that lost love, or failed romantic gesture to a lover that will never be, no longer pulls upon your heart. It is rarefied air indeed that you find in this place and I breathe it all to seldom. That I more than once have gives me the strength not to do so, knowing that I may do so again.



▲ *“On the Mt. Buffalo route The Pintle 16, climbed in December 2009.”*

We all take different roads into climbing mine was one that started at about age 15. I had just started to receive independent income thanks to Engadine McDonalds and not too far from my first employer opened Sydney’s first indoor climbing gym - The Rocknasium at Taren Point. At this time in my life I was an infinite ball of energy, weekdays consisted of riding to school then riding home to then eater go riding or go to work, weekends where more often than not riding to work then to the gym climbing then riding home.

During this time in true bowerbird fashion harnesses and ropes where acquired along with other shiny and colourful bits of metal. Either it wasn’t an option or just not considered necessary but without any formal training or the company of an experienced leader local rocks where soon scaled with said equipment. A little later guidebooks where added to the kit pile and bigger rocks where scaled. Soon after 2 most useful objects each very much dependant upon the other arrived in my life. A car and a licence.

From age 15-21 mountain biking was king of my world even my choice of post McDonalds full time work was for the sake of mountain biking. I became a Metal Fabricator Welder Machinist thus enabling me to build my own bikes. Climbing however was always number 2. The strange social convention of full time work no longer afforded me the luxury of riding weekdays and often consumed Saturdays as well, but what remained of my leisure time would alternate between climbing and riding.

Some time during my 21st trip around the sun my sister who lived in the United Kingdom decided that she was to marry an Englishman. On pain of death from my parents I was to fund my own way over to London to witness this event (oh joy, sigh). I was by this point a tradesman with itchy feet and also had a friend who was doing some riding in Germany. Reluctant to spend so much to see so little I decided to pack up camp and see what some of the rest of the world was like. I set up one of my bikes for touring arranged a working visa and boarded a UK bound plain on a one way ticket.

I arrived in London a few weeks before my parents and stayed with some family friends of my future brother in law who just happened to rock climb. A phone call later had my chalk bag, shoes and harness

added to my parent’s luggage. This was how I came to meet the Crystal Palace social climbing club.

After minding my sisters flat during their honeymoon I hoped on my bike caught a train to Belgium from there I started riding. I met my friend in Germany and rode with him threw that country then Austria, Switzerland And Italy. Rome was the place where one of us had to return to the real world of work and one of us did not, so I carried on down Italy then Greece, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel, Jordan and Egypt. By this point I had formed the vague plan of going around the other ½ of the Mediterranean but bike and rider where a little bit broken after 10,000km so it was to be a metallic bird that winged me back to London.

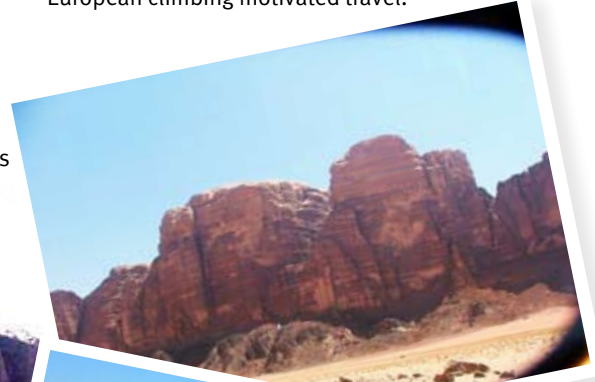
It was about 2 weeks after getting a job and a flat in London that my bike was stolen thus ending the long reign of mountain bikes dominating my life. The insurance pay out on my stolen push bike bought me my first motorbike and so begun the next few years of London based European climbing motivated travel.



▲ *“The Penon is on the Costa Blanca coast of Spain, on the doorstep of the beach city of Calpat at which I spent 2 weeks climbing during 2002. She rises 332M from sea level with routes from 5 to 11 pitches and has a fantastic walk off.”*



Wadi Rum: See caption 2 pages forward. ►





▲ With his 1999 GT LTS. "Not such a weapon by today's standards but in her day she was. Now one of my favourite classic rides."



For 4 years my London life consisted of working just enough to support my 3 nights a week martial arts training, 2 nights gym climbing and weekends away to climb, ride or kayak. With the great bunch of people I met threw the Crystal Palace social climbing club crags to numerous to mention where visited across 8 countries. Slate was climbed, Grit stone was climbed, limestone was climbed, Sandstone was climbed Conglomerate was climbed, Vertical dry mud was climbed, Chalk was climbed with tools as was frozen water and mixed routs of rock and ice. There where evenings spent on distant desert stacks, some planed some not. Climbs of up to 36 pitches and as small as one move boulders where all fair game. Heated discussions where entered into regarding the relative merits of various belaying and tying in methods, the social responsibilities of free soloing verse trusting bad gear. Some of the many lessons learned during this time were that

rope makes a poor blanket, seagull chicks poor hand holds, making fire with only sticks and prussic cord after climbing for 15 hours is not easy and not surprisingly, that feeling a lumpy rope going through your belay device on abseil only to see when the lumpy bit reaches eye level that both strands cut 90% through will spoil your day. Were I to have been writing these words during those years I would have not had to start by questioning weather or not I qualify as a climber. Though there was always someone better than me and a good many routes I could not do I was pretty happy with what mischief I was getting up to in the vertical world. For reasons various circa 2004 my time as a European resident was to end and Australia was again to be home, and then the many things that where going so well in my world started to do the opposite. A serious car accident saw me cut 7 tendons 2 nerves and 2 arteries in my right wrist. Result: no riding for 1yr and no climbing for 2yrs. I'm still not so great at feeling things and pretty much stuffed when it's cold.

◀ "I spent 2 weeks climbing here in 2003. The track is the condemned Kings Walkway in one of Spain's climbing Mecca's, El Choro. There are climbs up to and from what remains of the track and in the surrounding areas. They are particularly memorable for the amazing steep tufa climbs."

During my convalescence work pretty much took over my life and ever since then has been reluctant to give it back. Now my greatest sporting loves are sadly what I do least of, why I do more reading of Thrutch than actual climbing. Perhaps it is the fate of all greedy capitalists that they lose the will to do that which they love, but I hope not..... If you have read this far just think of all the climbing you could have done!



▲ WADI RUM: (From two pages previous). Very much the home of all my most memorable climbing experiences for reasons good and bad. A truly awesome place though not to everyone's taste. It is located in southern Jordan not to far from the famous tourist spot of Petra. I have spent a good many weeks on those jebbls (towers) in 1999-2004. The climbing varies between big and huge with rock quality ranging from woeful to passably adequate. The

layering of the local sandstone often leads to potentially dangerous thin horizontal iron stone protrusions excellent for severing ropes and not so good for gear placement or hand/foot holds. Jebbl Rum Ishrin (picture with truck for scale - bottom right, two pages previous) rises 750M from the valley floor and its longest rout is Ru De Amphitheatre, 32 pitches that I managed to do in 36 over a period of three days.



HAIR STYLES/BODY GROWTH SCULPTURE:

I am yet to see any evidence to support the notion that life is serious!



▲ 4X4'S:

Black and white shot is of 1985 Range Rover modified by myself on Unimog Hill, Lake Lyle NSW. Above right is LROC TT, (Land Rover Owners Club NSW) 1994 Land Rover Discovery Bush Ranger which I bought, modified and continually develop climbing one of the many rock steps on Hell Hill, Watagans state forest NSW.



COSTUMING/BODY PAINTING:

I need little excuse to do so. There's something I don't like about my shy introverted personality that just evaporates when I'm only wearing a g-string and a tail. Over the last few years my best annual party has been the Katoomba Winter Magic Ball. My part in this year's circus theme was lioness.



Who lives without folly or madness is not as wise as he believes!



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