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NO 31

SEPTEMBER 1936



S.B.W.

"THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER"

A Journal devoted to matters of interest to the
Sydney Bush Walkers, 5 Hamilton St., Sydney, N.S.W.

No. 31.

SEPTEMBER 1936.

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E D I T O R I A L.

This is a very thin edition of "The Sydney Bushwalker" because few people seemed inspired to write articles, and of course it is not part of the Editor's task to drag articles from people reluctant to write them.

However, perhaps it is just as well that this issue is small, because "The Sydney Bushwalker Annual" will be published next month full of lovely photos, interesting articles and amusing sketches, and the sixpence you have saved on this bi-monthly issue will be useful to purchase an extra copy of the "Annual" (price 1/-) to send to a friend. Of course you will want several extra copies as well, because, coming out in plenty of time for Christmas, the "Annual" will be much more appropriate than the usual Christmas card, handkerchief or calendar to send away to friends.

If you would like a full edition of the bi-monthly to appear in December let us have your articles as soon as possible. If you are too modest to hand them in yourself, put them in the letter-rack addressed to the Editor. Remember "The Sydney Bushwalker" is what you chose to make it, large or small, interesting or uninteresting, and any suggestions regarding it are readily acted upon.

THE ROOTS UPROOT AGAIN

Since the publication of last issue we have said "goodbye" to Wal and Phil Roots. There are many members who give long and faithful service to the Club, and we never stop to think about them until they cease their labours or leave the Club.

It would be invidious to say the Club owes more to Wal and to Phil than to others; but that it owes them more than will ever be fully appreciated, no one denies.

Wal joined the Club early in 1930 and Phil a few months later. The same year they became secretaries and faithfully carried on the ever-increasing duties of the job until 1934, Wal in between times studying for accountancy exams, and Phil attending to an increasing family. One has to be on the Committee to appreciate the enormous amount of correspondence which fell onto their shoulders, especially in the days before the formation of the Federation relieved them of some of the Club's public activities.

Perhaps the most pleasing memory we have of them is not their public work, but the fact that despite the three babes who put in an appearance one after another during those years, their parents still managed to go bushwalking together, with or without the babes. Many of us will regret that we never took that photo of Phil with a pack on her back, a baby in a sling in front, and leading another child by the hand, till she met Wal with a rucksack, three times the normal size, containing all the necessary extras which such a family requires. How did Phil manage it all and still look no more than seventeen or eighteen years old herself?

In 1935 Wal and Phil resigned from the duties of the secretaryship and took a well-earned year's holiday from the Committee; but Wal filled in the interval as President of the Federation and Trustee of Garawarra Park, which positions he occupied from 1934.

In 1936 they both took up the reins of office again, Wal as President of the Club, Phil as Social Secretary, and they were both ably fulfilling their tasks when business took Wal unexpectedly to Brisbane, where we are now all sure of a warm welcome.

We wish them both the best of happiness in their new life, and envy whichever Brisbane Club will from now on have the benefit of their services.

IN MEMORIAM

We regret to record the death of Beryl Whiddon, the wife of Frank Whiddon and a prospective member of the Club. They had been married only a very short while and seemed ideally happy. It is particularly tragic that the first death in our ranks should be that of such a bright, lovely girl and promising bush-walker, and we give our deepest sympathy to Frank.

WIFF'S QUEST AFTER OLD SOL

Being a Letter from W.W. Knight.

Dear Bush Walkers,

In the first place I left Sydney to find out where Old Sol went in the winter time. I found him hot and strong for two days at Kuranda; then he disappeared behind the clouds and I think he has gone further north. So I intend to follow him as far as the income tax men will let me. I would have gone further, over to New Guinea, but I was told I would have to get a clearance from Sydney, and that would take about three weeks or a month, so I won't bother them. I have booked a passage for wife and self up to the top of Australia and down in the Gulf as far as Normanton. I leave on the 7th. July for that chase of Old Sol.

In Brisbane we purchased two tram tickets for a shilling each and these entitled us to ride that day everywhere a tram went. We rode nearly everywhere - till three o'clock in the afternoon, and then we both got tram sick. That is nearly as bad as sea-sickness, only you can get out when you have had enough.

Leaving Brisbane in a rough sea, but a splendid boat, we never felt like being sea-sick, and it was a glorious trip.

From Townsville we went to Magnetic Island for a swim in Alma Bay, but the Island did not appeal to me - too civilized! From Cairns we left for Kuranda. I can't describe the trip up. It was something totally different from our scenery in N.S.W. - first through rich cane fields, and paw paw farms at Red Lynch, then the climb like leaving Emu Plains. The gullies and their tropical vegetation make bush walking almost impossible. I say "almost", because the local Club members do it. They leave Saturday afternoon in a lorry or car for their objective, get out and camp until the first sign of daylight, then set off fully clothed - no shorts here, but old clothes - the lawyer vines would tear your bare legs and bare head to pieces - scrub knives to cut their way through, and only little haversacks with tucker for the day - they could not carry our big packs. They scale the ridges and walk for miles along and are picked up at the other end at night, at about 8 o'clock, and so back to town. Sleeping bags and ground sheets are no good here. The ground is a bog and could not be slept on. The Lawyers are different to those in N.S.W.; the tops have great feelers, about ten feet long, with saw spikes all along, which enable the cane to catch on to trees, and they climb right up to the top of the tallest trees in the jungle. I am told that they are 100 or 200 feet long. Fancy telling a school boy that the canes I got when a boy grew that long. I would have wished they were only six inches long!

Arriving at Stony Creek Falls, we all got out of the train and walked over the bridge to view them. I must say, after seeing Queensland's Falls, that N.S.W. has no falls. They are only trickles compared with the Barron and Tully, which I saw in dry times. Stony Creek Falls fall right under the train, and in the wet season spray all over it.

Arriving at Kuranda, 21 miles from Cairns, we parked at Fitzgerald's Hotel, but only to find a good camp site. We found the only one that was available; no other place would suit, and I am not hard to please. It was at the first railway

bridge past the station, about a quarter of a mile up, grassy and high above the river. The ground here never dries. The roads are bogs, and a steep road is most difficult to climb. All cars have chains, and I wanted spikes on my shoes in some places, and something like snow-shoes in others to get through the mud, so don't be hard on me for not walking too far.

I put my small tent up as it was fine and hot. The big tent and fly I put on the ground to make a bed. The river was warm to swim in, but running very fast, so I could not take risks with the rocks and snags. We had two fine days and two wet ones. I tried to buy fruit, paw-paws and bananas, but could not, so had to be content with mandarines. I found an abandoned place with half a dozen big trees with mandarines on them. We had our fill of these every day. Provisions were hard to get, except bread and meat which we did not want. There was no milk as the milk-man did not have enough for his regular customers. Food goes mouldy in a very short time up here; bacon, dates and even bread won't keep.

The Maze and Fairyland Jungles are wonderful. Every valuable wood you can think of grows in them. One firm paid £1,148 for one tree in the bush. I saw Kauri trees with 30 feet girth, 70 feet to the first branch, 140 feet high, 1,150 years old, 27,000 super feet in the trunk and valued at £125. These measurements were at the foot of one tree at Lake Barrine. There was also maple, and all kinds of oak, mustard wood and stinkwood - if you put that on a fire in a house everybody would have to clear out - nepia, beanwood, applewood, almond wood, rosewood, cedar, mahogany, and a hundred others - a real gold mine in timber - and not one eucalyptus tree in the jungle, but palms and treeferns too numerous to mention. I thought I was in dreamland, looking at such wonderful timbers and ferns. The ground never dries in these places and the air is full of moisture. Baden-Powell ought to come and try to light a fire here with two matches - or with two boxes of them! I never failed to get a fire in New South Wales in wet weather, but to get one here in dry weather you have to use all the kerosene language you know of before it will burn, and then you have to watch it like a hawk to stop it from going out... We gave up cooking and often had a cold meal, the weather being warm if wet. I walked in every direction at Kuranda until I heard a rumour that two poor people were camped on the river living on fruit. Then I thought it time to move, before we got into the poor-house.

We caught a train, or something that was out of date 50 years ago, with side-seats, so that you sat on your feet to look out of the window, or got a pain in the neck straining round to admire the scenery.

Wareeba was the next call, a tobacco-growing area, but the locals will not smoke their tobacco at any price - rather smoke gum leaves, they told me. So I suppose they palm it off on to you down there who don't know any difference.

We got into a motor train and set off, on a straight line I could not see the end of, for Ravenshoe, whence we went through various places to Lake Barrine where we stayed a day. The lake is about a mile wide by two miles long. I had a couple of swims and a row on the lake, and saw a blackfellow climb or run up a tree. It was done with a lawyer-cane round the tree held in both hands, a jerk up, and then a step up. He went so quickly, I doubt if I could have run as fast along the trunk of the tree had it been lying on the ground. I believe he could have done 100 feet in ten seconds, but he went only about 30 feet up and down again. We gave him 5/- for the stunt and offered him another 5/- if he would climb another tree, but he would not. I could see that he had had a enough, and that it had taken a lot out of him.

The day after we got back to Cairns I was walking along the street, when Mr. White, of the Alpine Club, came up, introduced himself and took me along to the local paper for an interview. So I got a write-up as somebody of importance visiting this place! He also invited me to tackle Bartle Frea, Queensland's highest mountain, on the 21st. June, but unfortunately, I can't see myself going.

I have now been two weeks on Green Island fishing. Old Sol has deserted me. It rained from Sunday afternoon to Thursday at dinner time, and then it started the Sunday after and rained until to-day, Thursday, with breaks between, but it has never stopped blowing a gale all the time.

Your Club-mate,

Wiff.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

By Our Bushwalking Expert "Reklawhsub"

- Q. Who is the best "feller" in the Club?
A. Ernie Austen wields a good axe, but he is not much chop.
- Q. What is the greatest art in bushwalking technique?
A. Food-scrourging.
- Q. Do the men usually carry razors on camping trips?
A. Not as a rule, but nevertheless they manage to have some close shaves.
- Q. What do you recommend as the best emergency ration to take away on a trip?
A. Dog biscuits, because then you can always sit down to a good square meal.
- Q. What part of the Cox has the most extensive view?
A. Seymour's.
- Q. I am to lead a party of 144 persons. Where would be the best place to take them?
A. To the Grose Valley.
- Q. My dearest bush-walking friend has gone away and I feel that the light of my life has gone out. What can I do about it?
A. Strike another match.
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R E V I E W S

Cookery in Camp and on the Trail: A compilation of Sources of Information by E.A. Dench, American Nature Association, Washington D.C. 10 cents.

Americans seem to be especially proficient at preparing handy, comprehensive lists of literature on a particular subject. This little booklet covers, not only literature dealing with camp cookery, but also lists of firms which supply camp foods, camp utensils and the like, and lists of foods themselves. It is interesting to compare the food lists with those compiled by ourselves from time to time. Most of the items mentioned can be obtained in Sydney, but egg powder is something we might willingly add to our lists if it could be purchased. We shall pass the booklet on to Paddy, so perhaps in due course egg powder will be added to his already well-stocked shop.

Six Sunday Walks, Book 1: by E.Caines-Phillips, published by E.C. Phillips and F.A. Pallin, Sydney, 6d.

Book-sellers inform us that there is an increasing demand in Sydney for suggestions for "hikes", so this little book should meet a great need, supplementing, as it does, "Bush Walks and Byeways." The six walks outlined are within the ability of a reasonably active walker, and even experienced bushwalkers will find them by no means beneath contempt. Each is accompanied by a small map which makes the directions perfectly clear, or at any rate perfectly clear to anyone who can use a compass, and we suggest that, if a second series of "Six Sunday Walks" is published as promised, it should contain an advertisement for compasses. The only complaint we have to make about the book is that its author has evidently not studied those excellent articles of A.P. Herbert in recent issues of "Punch" on how to write clear English. If he had he would not confuse the reader by using objectionable words like "same" when he means "it", or "traverse" when he means "walk".

It is essential in a book of this nature that the wording should be kept as simple and easy as possible, and that unusual words should not be used at all, certainly not used in an incorrect sense. It is perhaps unkind to object to details like this in an otherwise excellent publication, but we are promised a second series of the "Six Sunday Walks", and we feel sure that the author would like that to be even more admirable than the present instalment. In the meantime we consider every member of the Club should obtain a copy of what has been published so far.

Journal of the New Zealand Alpine Club, 1936.

That the members of this Club are particularly active is clear from the records in this Journal, but perhaps the most interesting feature of the present issue, from our point of view, is the prominence of bush-walking and pack-carrying in connection with exploratory expeditions. It is plain that the desire to get into new country occupies as great a part in the hearts of our New Zealand cousins as it does in our own, the only difference being that in their case they have a mountain peak to top it off, so to speak. The accounts of the various expeditions are very well written, and as the Journal will be added to the Club Library, we shall all have an opportunity of reading them.

THE TONALLI PEAKS

By Marie B. Byles.

We did not really intend to go as far as Yerranderie, but Kath's car, Maria, started off along the Yerranderie Road before we realised what she was doing, and we thought we might as well let her have her way. I might mention that Kath is the author of those immortal lines, usually ascribed to "Anon":-

"Burn and bury all your rubbish and your tins,
And hide your bottles as you would your sins,"

also that Maria looks like Black Maria, and probably is, but Kath has a strange complex against going to jail, so the "Black" part of the name has been dropped.

Having reached Yerranderie we parked Maria, gave a large tip to a little lad to see no one drove off with her, and get out into the bush where we found a suitable spot - not far from the Tonalli River - and made camp. By the way, Tonalli should be pronounced with a whining sound on the middle syllable. According to Kath, who is a student of Italian, this means that you are pronouncing the double "l" properly. Another thing about the Tonalli River is that it is not a river, but merely a very twopenny-halfpenny creek, and this for a while prevented us from getting our bearings properly.

Having come to an unintended place we had no special objective, but the little rocky peaks of the Tonalli Range were a lodestar to me, and Kath, who is the sweetest and most adaptable of persons, at once agreed. They certainly present landmarks sufficient to attract anyone whose soul is not quite dead to the call of the high places. Why these peaks should be, was a matter which puzzled me all the week-end, and which apparently puzzles the geologists also. The rocks which form their cliffs are not composed of the Hawkesbury sandstone of the Blue Mountains Plateau, but of older, Upper Palaeozoic rocks, the same as you find forming the cliffs south of Newcastle where there is coal-mining and where the sea has hollowed them out into huge caverns. The same cavernous effect is found in the Tonalli cliffs and gives them a gigantic honeycomb appearance when seen from afar.

But why should these particular cliffs have weathered away to form peaky hills? The other ranges around Yerranderie are composed of precisely the same rocks, and so are the Dog Ranges, with which we are all familiar, yet none of them has weathered away into peaks like those of the Tonalli Range, 1000 feet above the valley and 2000 feet above the Burratorang; tiny peaks, as peaks go, but more conspicuous than the Blue Mountains Plateau and its surroundings usually produces.

There was no difficulty in reaching the Tonalli Range. We simply took the main Kowmung Track, neglected the fascinating igneous rocks in the Tonalli Creek - beg pardon - River, and struck up the footpath to Byrne's Gap whence we climbed up between the two buttresses of the more southerly peak. It was not quite so easy to top the final rocks. Kath climbed the first rocky top. I didn't! The second was impossible to anyone except a Dot English and perhaps so even to her. The third, and highest so far, was easy, and we built a cairn, hoping it was virgin, but it probably wasn't. The fourth, and highest of all, took a little bit of circumambulation, and as far as I could ascertain, there was only one easy break in its rim rocks, in which it resembles the Warrigal. There was a series of further peaks all equally good, but Kath developed a sick tummy and my sprained ankle had not