

3/02

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A Monthly Bulletin devoted to matters of interest to  
The Sydney Bush Walkers, 5 Hamilton Street, Sydney

No. 87.

MARCH, 1942.

Price 3d.

Editor: Dorothy Lawry  
Subscriptions: Jean West

Business Manager: Jean West  
Production: Jean West, Betty Walker.

C O N T E N T S

Editorial	...	...	...	Page	1
Report from the Parks & Playgrounds Movement				"	2
Voice of the Social Committee		...	...	"	3
Federation Notes	...	...	...	"	4
Paddy's Advertisement	...	...	...	"	5
Hitch-hiking in New Zealand	by Dorothy Hasluck	...	...	"	6
"The Happy Man" -- reprinted from "Wayfaring"		...	...	"	9
Bunions	...	by "Patient"	...	"	10
Goodman Bros. Photo Supplies - Advertisement		...	...	"	11
At Our Own Meeting	...	....	...	"	11
Letters from the Lads - Nos. 12 and 13 - from Peter Allan and Horrie Salmon		...	...	"	13
Club Gossip	...	...	...	"	16

EDITORIAL

A few days ago we felt very sympathetic towards our comrades of the River Canoe Club -- the Government had ordered the registration of all boats or other craft. As we go to press our sympathy for them has deepened for they, like us, are affected by the new regulation that all tents must be registered. It remains to be seen whether our little tents will be requisitioned or whether our apprehensions of homelessness are groundless. In the meantime we can use our tents, and that is more than the canoeists can do with their craft these days - except, perhaps, as spare storerooms.

These are only small things compared with the tragedies that are being enacted overseas, but they are very personal and as such bring home to bushwalkers the fact that the war is drawing nearer - at an alarming rate. What we can do to prepare against the effects of invasion, we must all do. Whatever we can do to assist our country naturally we will do.

Many bushwalkers are to be found these days in the Navy, Air Force, A.I.F., A.M.F., V.D.C. and N.E.S. as well as in essential industries. There are still, however, a number who for various reasons have not found niches in any of these services, and who are still looking for some means of employing their knowledge, their strength and their talent in the service of Australia. The Federation has now given a lead to draw this residue closer together so that by mutual aid and organised training their bushcraft and initiative can be raised to the Nth degree and, when the time comes, they will be of very real service to Australia in whatever way the authorities decide to use them.

.....

REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS MOVEMENT

Supplied to our Delegate, Mrs. Stoddart, by Mr. W.L. Hume, Acting Hon. Secretary  
- - - - -

The activities of the Parks & Playgrounds Movement have been greatly curtailed owing to the war. General Meetings are now held quarterly instead of monthly. The Executive meets monthly, but all meetings are limited to 90 minutes. Several of the members of the Executive are on active service, and many others are engaged in war work of some kind.

A great number of parks are in the hands of the military authorities, and nearly every park in Sydney is being used for the provision of air raid shelters. The war has demonstrated the enormous value of parks in time of emergency.

In these critical days, when everything must be subordinated to the war effort, it is hopeless to try and interest Governments and Councils in new park proposals. Consequently the Movement has been obliged to restrict its recommendations to projects of the most urgent nature.

In reply to representations from the Movement, the Premier, Mr. McKell, gave an assurance that the Government's plans for Sydney Hospital do not contemplate any encroachment on the Sydney Domain, and the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Dunne, stated that the "C.U.S.A." Hut is to be removed as soon as the war ends.

The Minister for Lands, Mr. Tully, has established a very fine Children's Playground at Wentworth Park, Glebe - the result of agitation by this Movement in co-operation with the Citizen's Association of N.S.W. A further result of this agitation is a plan formulated by the Glebe Council for the provision of a chain of Playgrounds throughout The Glebe. Annandale Council is preparing a similar plan, in response to requests by a number of local residents, with full support and co-operation by this Movement. The outcome will probably be 10 or 12 Playgrounds in these congested suburbs,

The Movement's proposal for a 400-acre park at French's Forest, to serve as a "Moore" Park for the northern suburbs, although not yet definitely approved by the Government, is progressing favourably, the Minister having promised to consult the Movement when the Crown lands in this vicinity are being prepared for sale.

The incorporation of the Movement, and the adoption of an enlarged Constitution were two outstanding achievements during the past year. The Movement now has power to acquire lands by gift, or purchase, or otherwise, for preservation as scenic areas or for other national uses. It also is empowered to deal with roadside beautification, harbour, creek, river and coastal frontages, and other places of recreational or historic interest. The first site acquired is a magnificent viewpoint at Bilgola Headland, which is regarded as one of the finest viewpoints on the coast.

The Town Planning Conference, convened by the Movement, has made good progress, and a promise of a Town Planning Bill has been made by the Premier.

The request made by Miss M. F. Crommelin, with the support of the Movement, for a new Reserve for the protection of native plants and animals, at Patonga, has been granted by the Government.

The efforts of the Movement have been successful in many other directions during the past year, but the foregoing is a brief record of its most important achievements.

The Movement initiated and gave support and encouragement to local efforts in connection with park proposals at Narwee, North Bexley, Hurlstone Park, Hurstville, West Ryde, Denistone, Balmoral, Lindfield and Auburn. An approach was made to the Government to obtain a subsidy for Koala Park. Support is now being given to the Bushwalkers' Federation in its endeavour to induce the Government to set aside various lands as Primitive Areas and Recreational Reserves

Though several kindred bodies have been obliged to suspend operations, it has been found that, even in war-time, there is a great deal of work to be done by the Movement, and efforts are being made to carry on the work, though the ranks are depleted.

. . . . .

THE VOICE OF THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE

S A Y S

HERE'S                      HOPING !!

March 14th & 15th

Re-Union Week-end!!!      WHERE? Before you can receive an answer to that question you must -- pray to the Rain God; visit the Club Room; and ask the Committee!

March 20th  
(Friday)

8.15 p.m. Marie Byles will give a lecture of great interest, illustrated with slides -- "TO CHINA VIA THE BURMA ROAD".

April 17th  
(Friday)

8.15 p.m. Dr. Ian Hogbin, Lecturer in Anthropology at Sydney University, will tell us of the adventures of an "ANTHROPOLOGIST IN THE PACIFIC". This lecture also will be illustrated with slides.

April 19th  
(Wednesday)

8.00 p.m. We will dance! If possible! Details later.

-----

FEDERATION NOTES

Recently a new bushwalking club made contact with the President and Hon. Secretary of the Federation. This was the Railway Institute Bushwalking Club and we hope soon to hear that its members have decided to affiliate with the other organised clubs.

As reported elsewhere in this issue, six members of the S.B.W. have volunteered to serve on the special committee which is to formulate a policy of track marking, making, etc.

At the February Council meeting the following appointments were made to the Publications Committee: Editor: Dorothy Lawry (S.B.W.) Assistant Editor: Bill Watson (Rover Ramblers); Business Manager; Jim Somerville (C.M.W.) and Advertising Manager is still being sought.

An S.B.W. delegate reported the destruction of willows at "Yeola" on the Upper Kangaroo River and asked for an investigation. A delegate from the Campfire Club added a report of timber cutting at the junction of The Oaks and Euroka Tracks in the Blue Labyrinth. Both of these matters were referred to the Conservation Bureau for attention.

Delegates from the Rover Ramblers reported that the track from Glenbrook to St. Helena has recently been very thoroughly blazed. It would be interesting to know who the blazers were. Did they want to be sure of getting home for their next Sunday Dinner?

Mention was made of ex-Secretary Charlie Roberts having been wounded in Malaya. Conflicting reports left considerable doubt as to whether he has recovered and rejoined his unit before the fall of Singapore, or whether he was safely in hospital. It was resolved to write to Charlie a letter of sympathy, greetings and good wishes, in the hope that he had been evacuated to safety and and so could receive it.

The President reported that, in view of the growing seriousness of the international position the Federation officers felt that steps should be taken to see if the authorities could use bushwalkers as such. An informal meeting has been held at which possible avenues of service were discussed, and suggestions for training to improve bushcraft, etc. were made. Council endorsed this action, appointed the President convenor of a special committee of those interested, and instructed the committee to go ahead with training weekends and to arrange, if possible, with the authorities to utilise the services of bushwalkers in the event of an emergency.

After the Council Meeting the newly appointed committee met and arranged for a series of weekend camps, details of which are given on a notice displayed on the board at Paddy's.

- - - - -

THIS ALPHABETICAL WAR

Paddy is snowed under supplying demands for gear for  
A.R.P., N.E.S., V.D.C., W.A.N.S., V.A.D., W.V.N.S.,  
R.A.A.F., A.I.F., R.A.N., A.M.F., R.M.C., A.W.A.S.,  
etc. etc. AD LIB.

First Aid Satchells, Packs, Haversacks, Kit Bags,  
Sleeping Bags, Valises, Map Cases, Stretchers,  
Holdalls, Gadgets and bright ideas, all come and go.

Nevertheless, Paddy still has time to fix up his oldest  
alphabetical friends known as the

S. B. W.

-----

PADDY PALLIN,

327 George Street,

Telephone B3101.

SYDNEY

CAMP GEAR FOR WALKERS.

HITCH-HIKING IN NEW ZEALAND

by Dorothy Hasluck.

Contrary to the generally accepted idea, there was more hiking than hitching on our 230 mile trek. Do I hear voices raised in disbelief? If so I shall refer them to the N.Z. Transport regulations, the said transport being mainly owned by the Government and any driver who picks up is immediately dismissed on discovery.

After eleven days' climbing at Mt. Cook I retired to a sheep farm to rest me, but on arrival was met with requests from the two girl friends to take them on a walk when the harvesting was over. We duly went into the matter of qualifications and equipment -- both nil, but decided the former might be remedied by harvesting and the latter by a certain amount of borrowing.

Leaving the train at a place called Methven, we camped beneath a canopy of trees in the showground, our equipment not boasting a tent, which showed extreme optimism on our part as we were to trek down the West Coast, the wettest place in New Zealand. The next day our route led through the Rakaia Gorge to Lake Coleridge, with a nor'wester head on the whole way. Never have I felt glad of a pack before but if it had not been for this usually much maligned article I would have been blown over the edge of the gorge. At this point the river divides, an island being in the middle of the two bridges and creating two funnels through which the wind tore in a terrifying manner. Finding a sheltered spot for lunch, we then went down to the river, its milky looking snow water rushing by in a raging torrent; seeing a quiet backwater, we decided to have a refreshing dip, which was rudely disturbed by Betty, who was paddling, giving an ear-piercing shriek and dragging her foot from the water with what appeared to be a fair sized eel attached to her toe. With renewed strength we now faced the steep zig-zag in the teeth of the nor'wester, struggling a few yards and then literally falling to our knees, and so to the top.

By five O'clock we had had enough and decided to camp, the prospect not being very bright as to light a fire was out of the question and there was no habitation to be seen. Whilst we were contemplating the somewhat bleak outlook, along came a Knight-errant in the shape of Mr. Cran, manager of Bayfield Station, and suggested we stay at one of his huts as he said the weather was going to become much worse!!! He not only provided us with a home complete with bunks, crockery, firewood, etc., but replenished the larder most lavishly, for which we were most thankful as we were marooned for three days with gales and rain, a heavy mantle of snow falling on all the surrounding hills and mountains, covering them almost to the foot.

On leaving, Mr. Cran gave us introductions to other stations and helpful advice and instructions. The hospitality of the people of the South Island was the point that impressed me most, and Mr. Cran was the perfect embodiment of it.

The fall of snow now proved a blessing in disguise as the mountains from Lake Coleridge past Lakes Lyndon and Pearson, presented a series of pictures of sheer beauty instead of the ugly scree slopes which one usually sees in summer. How I hate scree slopes and even more so when traversing them!

Our next bathe, at Lake Pearson, was also attended with mishap, a Kea taking a fancy to my watch, which I had left on a rock. I suffer many pangs when I think of it being used as a decorative piece in the Kea's nest instead of performing its normal function of ticking away the hours on my wrist.

Having slept the previous night in a roadman's hut, we were now invited to stay at Grassmere Station, the owners of which turned out to be friends of the girls' uncle. We were made most welcome and thoroughly enjoyed the comfort, variety being the spice of life. This station has its own ski-ing fields right at the door as it were, and ice-skating on the lake in front of the homestead, so there is no lack of winter amusement.

After a very steep descent from some hills over which we had taken a shortcut, we proceeded to Bealey, before reaching which we had to ford an arm of the Waimakarini. The gods were again looking after us for as we were about to divest ourselves of shoes and socks, along came a smoking monster known as a bulldozer, its driver telling us to clamber up and he would take us across; so across we went in State!

Our next objective was Arthur's Pass, where there is quite a lot of climbing to be obtained. Having lunched at the Bealey Hotel, which has a quaint, old-world charm, we proceeded through beech forests to the Pass. This, together with some bush at Grassmere Station, was the first timber we had seen and was a refreshing change from the tussock country. There is quite a small settlement at the Pass so, after a few inquiries, we soon found a comfortable place to stay at, and very glad we were as it was piercingly cold, being at about the 3,000 ft. level and surrounded by mountains.

The road from Grassmere Station to Greymouth passes through country which once experienced glaciation, - probably over 100,000 years ago. The ice at this period is said to have been 2,500 ft. thick. There are many signs of ice action such as scratched and fluted rocks due to the scouring of stones, and the great deposit of loose rocks over which the road climbs from the upper Otira flat before descending into the gorge is generally attributed to moraine. As one traverses the gorge the grandeur of the scene beggars description. At the same time one must give man his due. Hats off to the railway tunnel which pierces the mountains for 5 miles, and to the construction of the power lines flung across great chasms with precipitous sides rising to over 2,000 ft., and lastly to the road, over which I would rather someone else did the driving!

From Otira we took the train for 16 miles and then walked through some glorious bush, which is also a bird sanctuary, to Lake Brunner, staying the night there, and then through Greenstone, which was once a large goldmining settlement - piles of stone being the only evidence now remaining of those days - to Kumara, where alluvial sluicing on a large scale is still carried on. A rather interesting landmark was a block of greenstone weighing about a ton. It's a wonder the boys of the village have not considerably reduced this!

We were now well into Westland with its unsurpassed bush; once over the Pass on reaching the foot of the gorge the change in the bush is at once

discernable. The Westland rain forest now holds sway; great stately pines tower into the air, the forest floor becomes covered with filmy ferns, and climbers and treeferns become more numerous.

Train once more for 16 miles to Hokitika and we were now on the last hundred miles down the West Coast to the Glaciers! We camped at Lake Mahinapua with ideas of being lulled to rest by the lapping of the water. Did I say rest? First hordes of sandflies pestered us, then, on the retirement of these, battalions of mosquitoes arrived to hold the fort against the invaders of their domain. Being a warm, muggy night it was bad enough being in sleeping bags, but I was forced to put on my snow jacket, drawing the hood right over my face to protect it from the onslaughts.

I leave the rest to your imagination. My companions had a small piece of net, which I am afraid proved quite inadequate against the attacks. The mosquitoes, I am sure, were quite equal to brushing it aside.

Three very wan individuals arose at dawn and, with one accord, said "What a night!" Having refreshed ourselves in the lake, we set forth for Ross, arriving in pouring rain. As we wanted to go on, we decided to see what my powers of persuasion would do, having found them very successful in obtaining milk on various occasions, so I duly approached the driver of a lorry. After a lot of humming and ha-ing, he consented to take two on his lorry and inveigled the owner of a sheep truck to take me. My truck started about two hours after the lorry, the driver of which on his way back stopped to let me know where he had left the others, pithily remarking "Well, I've left them at the hotel, so you'll probably find them both full up."

The next day was fine and clear for the last stage to the Franz Josef Glacier and we joyously wended our way along the bush bordered road to Lake Mapourika, where we had a swim in the placid waters, enjoying to the full the lovely light and shadow and glorious reflections. Arriving at the Glacier, we were able to rent a hut for 7/6d a day; food was obtainable at the store owned by the Hotel and there was a bathhouse in the bush fed by hot mineral springs: what more could a walker desire? We spent several days exploring from here and then went down to the Fox Glacier, where we met Franz, one of the guides who was in charge of the Alpine School at Mt. Cook. He said he wouldn't have known me, and I am not surprised as when I left Mt. Cook I was somewhat the worse for wear - glasses patched with plaster in four places, a stone having descended upon me, my lips so badly swollen with sunburn I could hardly open my mouth, and various other discrepancies.

The weather was very overcast so we did not see the Fox at its best, all the peaks being blotted out. I had had some ideas of climbing, but we decided to return as we did not want to be marooned by floods. On the return journey we were to pick up a train at Roos which connected with the Christchurch express but, alas, arriving there in pouring rain at night, we found the timetable had been altered and the train was not running, which meant we had to walk 20 miles to Hokitika that night! However, nothing daunted, after fortifying ourselves with a hot dinner at the hotel, we left at 8 p.m., hoping for the best. I shall draw a veil over the first 5 or 6 miles in pitch darkness and pouring torrents. At this stage the gods once more came to our rescue in the shape of a large Buick



car. The god driving the car turned out to be the owner of the timber mills, so I was being very guarded in regard to lifts on lorries. After a number of searching questions were put to us, things were becoming somewhat involved, so we made full confession. However, he proved to be a very magnanimous god and promised to overlook our delinquencies. As he was going right through to Greymouth, he suggested we come with him, promising to find us a nice quiet place to stay. On arriving at about 11 p.m. he pulled up at what looked to me like the best hotel in the place. Said I, "We can't go in there in this state, wet through and mud to our knees". Said he, "Of course you can with my moral support." So, with a wave of a wand more or less, tea and toast were provided, wet clothes whisked off to the drying room, and, after a hot bath, we were shown to most comfortable rooms and slept the sleep of the just.

Our last flutter was on waking the next morning to find my jodphurs and all toilet articles missing, together with all the train tickets and money of the party! Again all was well as, after a frantic rush to the telephone to make inquiries we found they were in the car, having come out when a strap of my pack was broken. So passed our last hectic moment!

I must here pay a tribute to Pauline and Betty who, previous to this trek, had walked very little. They both stood up to it manfully as 134 miles actual walking in seven days is no mean effort.

As I look back on my first effort in hitch-hiking I can thoroughly recommend a walk through the South Island to restore one's faith in the fundamental kindness and helpfulness of human nature.

-----  
THE HAPPY MAN by --Anon.

Reprinted from "Wayfaring", Journal of the Melbourne Women's Walking Club.

I met a hiker hiking with his needs inside his pack;  
The country lay before him and the city at his back;  
He was hatless, he was humming, and his boots swung to and fro  
As if no mileage mattered once they'd started doing so.

His working week was over; he had pocketed his pay,  
And left the war behind him, striding sturdily away;  
Tent and food were in his rucksack with his kettle and his tea -  
If ever man was happy, then a happy man was he.

Our luxuries grow fewer and for us the times are grim,  
But what of all he values most does fate withhold from him  
Whose hobby is the hardships that the wealthier must abide -  
The call to plainer faring and to walk where they would ride?

He asks no transport but his legs, despising car and train;  
His luxuries - the open road, fresh air - tax-free remain.  
Tough, stubborn stuff for tyranny are surely such as he  
Who knows by heart their threatened land, and live for liberty!

-----

BUNIONS

by "Patient"

The trouble seems to have arisen from a boy who ate a whole chicken for lunch, together with many other lesser things, and then got violently sick, so that he had to be carried from Jerusalem Bay up to Cowan Station. I was the only other one at the tail end of the party, and it fell to me to shoulder three packs up the hill as quickly as possible, so as to get someone else in the party to come back and help.

Apparently the strain on my feet was too great. Walking home from the station they ached miserably and next week the bunions developed.

Of course, bunions may be caused in a number of ways -- ill-fitting shoes, for instance -- but among bushwalkers they are most likely to be caused by some extra and unusual strain on the feet when the owner of the feet has muscles and ligaments not overstrong. I shall not enter into a medical explanation, mainly because I am not qualified to do so, but after conferring with Dorothy English, who, as you know, earns her living by treating people's bones and muscles -- and, incidentally, goes barefoot herself -- I am offering this note of advice in the hope that it may save other people from the same mishap as myself.

Unless you are satisfied your feet and muscles are stronger than the average, do not set out on a strenuous bushwalk unless you either wear strong boots or shoes to support the feet, or, if you wear light shoes, wear also an elastic band round the ball of the foot and the instep for the same purpose. It is not necessary to take these precautions if the walk is to be merely a gentle stroll along footpaths, but, as the gentle stroll may easily turn strenuous if someone gets sick, it is well always to carry the elastic bands with you even if you do not wear them. (Editorial query - In the event of such an emergency would you stop to put them on?)

If, in spite of my advice, you develop this complaint and you desire a cure, you have no alternative but to face up to an operation. You will be told comfortably that it is only a local anaesthetic one, but if you want to know what torture really is, just have a local anaesthetic injected into your feet. It gives you a more vivid idea than all the descriptions in story books.

There follows a fortnight in bed, plus, I understand, some months before you are good for bushwalking again. Further, unless you are operated on by one of the very few competent orthopedic surgeons, the operation may well leave you a suffering cripple for the rest of your life, the same as if you had had nothing done.

I hope I have painted the picture sufficiently black!

- - - - -

Don't rest on your laurels, they make a poor mattress.

--Anon.

ALL YOUR PHOTOGRAPHIC REQUIREMENTS  
AND A CAREFUL, EXPERT, DEVELOPING  
PRINTING AND ENLARGING SERVICE,

at

GOODMAN BROS. PHOTO SUPPLIES

20 Hunter Street, Sydney.

(opposite Wynyard)

AT OUR OWN MEETING

New Members welcomed at the January meeting were Mary Stevenson, Betty Noble, Marie Urquhart; and Les Harper.

Ira Butler has transferred to the Non-Active list as he has departed to Melbourne, and Joan Hocking and Rudi Lemberg have resigned.

From the report of the Bushwalkers' Services Committee we learned that a copy of "Australia, my Country" had been sent to each of the Boys on Service and that two copies of "Active Service" had been received, one from Bill Burke and the other from Don Wallace. A number of members have already had the pleasure of glancing through these books in the Club Room - but, really, the atmosphere there on Friday nights is not the best for the full enjoyment of a book and many can be expected to queue up to borrow "Active Service" from the Club Library.

Arising out of the Federation Report, six members answered a call for volunteers to serve on the sub-committee to draw up a Federation Policy on track improvement, blazing etc.

Dorothy Lawry announced that Play ground Walks would start again in March and called for suggestions for routes and any extra volunteers as leaders. On March 22nd the children will be taken to National Park and the more helpers the merrier, and the more chance of the children getting valuable hints on bushwalking technique.

When the meeting was asked, "What is the opinion of this Club? Should the Federation hold a Ball this year; or not?" the answer was, emphatically,

"NO!" However, it was suggested that if the Federation decided to arrange some small, informal tea dances for the social intercourse of members of all Clubs while raising funds for the Federation, these dances would have the support of a number of S.B.W's.

At the suggestion of "Wiff" Knight the following resolution was passed:-  
"That this Club endorses the action of those residents of Bulli Shire who are petitioning Bulli Shire Council to resume for camping and public recreation portion of Era Estate as we feel the Council will be more likely to look after it better than a private owner".

Joan Savage told members the Royal Life Saving Society was anxious to teach as many civilians as possible the finer points of resuscitation work as there may be a lot of this to do in an emergency. Thirty members agreed to join a class to be formed and held on four successive Friday nights from 6.45 p.m. to 7.45 p.m. at the Club Room. Permission to use the Club Room was given by the meeting.

Charles Jones spoke of a book "Youth in Action" reporting the proceedings at a "Youth Parliament" held in Sydney last Easter and suggested the Club should affiliate with this movement. Considerable discussion ensued as most people knew nothing at all of the movement, and at 10 p.m. the meeting was adjourned for a month. By next meeting perhaps members will know enough about the Youth Parliament to make up their minds.

-----  
DRAGON FLIES

From "Sunlit Trails" by Archer Russell --

....Both in its larvae stage and in its life perfected the dragon fly is the inveterate enemy of the mosquito -- one of the greatest of pests and the worst germ-carrier among insects. -- and as such is the friend of man.

Next time you meet with the dragon fly pay special heed to the insect's eyes. Wondrous eyes are these. And what magnitude, too. Why, the head seems to be all eyes. Little wonder is it that the dragon fly is able to see all ways at once -- above, below, to right, to left, in front, behind. And what power and speed of wing. Try, for instance, to follow its gliding movements as it hunts the air above the pools for food. Some movements you may see, but not all; no human eyes were ever made that could follow such astounding movement. In speed and power of wing, in all-round vision, and as an enemy of its fellow creatures, the dragon fly is probably the foremost of the insect world. To man, or beast, however, it is wholly inoffensive, possessing neither sting, venom, nor desire to hurt.

-----

LETTERS FROM THE LADS -- Nos. 12 and 13.

No. 12 - from Peter Allan. Aus. 15348 L.A.C. Allan, P.G.  
Royal Aust. Air Force  
Care Records Office  
Gloucester,  
England,  
12/12/41.

Dear Dunk,

I received your cheery letter a few days ago. It is certainly full of news about the S.B.W. When one is so far away it is great to receive such a letter. It is dated 14/9/41 and in it you mention sending a Christmas Parcel and some photos of the Sports Carnival. Both of them arrived three or four weeks ago. I have already written and thanked you for them and once again I do so.

The letter came by air mail, and our experience is that airmail is very unsatisfactory. They take as long or longer than ordinary mail. Another thing, you always put the letter "N" before my number, it should be "AUS". So far nothing has gone astray but you never know.

Last week I wrote and told you the August issue of the magazine had not arrived. I had hardly posted the letter when I received it. Our mail is all over the place, we never know when we shall get them. I have received July letters with September.

Our weather is very changeable it is very seldom that we see the sun. It is cloudy most of the time with showers now and again. The place never gets a chance to dry up and as the middle of winter approaches the mud is getting worse. We had a snow storm last Monday but it only lasted half an hour but that was enough. Night flying was in progress and within 10 minutes two planes had crashed. The boys came into the hut covered in it. Incidentally it was the first snow I have seen. When it was all over I went outside and it was like stepping into a new world. We had about half an inch and the next day it was still on the ground at mid-day. If snow would last that long on the Blue Mountains most of us slaves would see a lot more of it.

Today I am hut orderly and am filling in time writing and catching up with my letters. We have to tidy up the hut and sweep up and then the rest of the day is your own. Of course you can only leave the hut for meals.

Two other Australians and myself are going to Stratford tomorrow. It is our day off. Mainly we are going along to get some good meals. The food has been very bad on this station lately. There was fish for breakfast yesterday and we could smell it when fifty yards from the mess door. Aw, I could go on writing pages about the deficiencies of our mess, but I suppose I had better shut up. Shakespeare was born in Stratford

but we have seen his place. We shall try and find out if there are other historic or interesting places in or around the town.

We (the other Australians and myself) only go out on our days off and believe me news is hard to find. I am going to London on Sunday week and may have something interesting to let you know after our visit there.

Once again I would like to thank the Services Committee for what they have done. I can assure you I am very grateful.

Remember me to the members of the S.B.W.

(Signed) PETER ALLAN.

.....

No.13 - from Horrie Salmon.  
of the Trampers' Club.  
(Known to many a Bush Walker)  
(as "The Trout". )

L.A.C. SALMON, H.  
Hut 45  
No.1 B. & G. School  
R.A.A.F.  
Evans Head, N.S.W.  
7/2/42/

Dear Dunc,

Tonight's mail brought me 2 mailings from the Services Committee included in which was the little book by Barratt & so I felt that I must immediately sit me down and rattle off my thanks.

I don't know whose bright idea it was to send the book but I imagine that it came from your fertile brain; anyhow wherever it came from, thanks a lot, I can assure you that it is very much appreciated. Needless to say I have not read it yet but look forward with much pleasure to the chance of doing so. Although this is not a thickly populated area, one does miss the tang of the bush.

I got quite a surprise yesterday when Geoff Hume (C.M.W.) arrived here. He did not stay long and I only had time to say Hewdey to him as I was flat out in the Library as this is my busiest time in the month.

It will please you to know that I am able to pass on the various mailings that I receive to other chaps. Somehow or other there always seems to be someone about who was a walker before the mad dog got loose in Europe and I have been really surprised to find the number of chaps that have roamed around the mountains and coast and really know it quite well although they have never joined up with the various clubs. I think that when this show is over we should make a really big drive to recruit them into the Federation.

The 'Wet' Season has set in here and we have had quite a bit of rain since the beginning of this week, as a result the country is starting to look really well again; in fact as I returned from Sydney last Sunday the country north of Wauchope looked quite well and it is hard to realise that the North Coast had just had one of its worst drought. I have hopes that the fishing will improve as a result of the rain and if so I will spend Sunday on the beach surfing and endeavouring to persuade the little fish that they are hungry enough to take my bait complete with hook. Incidentally that is the most exciting way of spending one's weekends in this part of the World.

What is the news of Charles Roberts? I have not heard from him since before Xmas and needless to say I am wondering whether he is still safe after the withdrawal from Malaya. (Editor's note: Charlie was wounded in January; at present we do not know whether he was evacuated safely or not; possibly he may have rejoined his unit).

And now Dunc I think that this is all the news except that I was sorry to hear that the bushfires have been through the Glue Gum and I can only hope that the rain we are getting will extend to the mountains and that the Forest will soon rehabilitate itself.

And so Cheerio, my regards to all good Bushwalkers (are there any bad ones?) best wishes to yourself and once again thanks a lot for the mailings.

Yours as ever

(signed) Horrie.

-----

I have need of the sky,  
I have business with the grass;  
I will up and get me away where the hawk is wheeling  
Lone and high,  
And the slow clouds go by.  
I will get me away to the waters that glass  
The clouds as they pass.  
I will get me away to the woods.

---Ricjard Hovey. 1864-1900.

-----

C L U B   G O S S I P

Recently a few club members had the pleasure of a visit from Thel. and Rastus Hellyer, and two-year-old daughter Rhondda. They are now living in Melbourne, and, unfortunately, they did not manage to get in to the Club Room during their brief visit. Better luck next time!

Saw Betty (Bell) Gordon for a few minutes the other day. She is working day and night, and was hungry for Club news; hopes she may manage to get along to Re-Union on the Sunday. A lot depends on whether Don has leave that week-end or not.

A recent week-end saw a large muster at a Field Week-end (about twenty members and two prospectives) - at Era. The same week-end a very small but select (of course) working party, led by the Rolfes, cleaned out some of the weeds from the swimming pool at "Morella-karong". IF we have a week's rain beforehand - like we did one year - we could easily hold the Re-Union at "Morella-karong". Otherwise, well, everyone has been looking for sites. The working party saw a good one about half-a-mile further down Heathcote Creek, complete with a real swimming hole! That's something for Frank Duncan and his Re-Union Committee to get their heads together about. You have noticed them recently at the Club Room, haven't you? They are always going into huddles in corners.

After about nine months in Melbourne, Gladys Roberts has returned to Sydney, so don't be surprised if she is among the many bushwalkers who re-appear at the Annual Meeting on March 13th.

Have you decided what jobs you will accept nomination for? And whom you will nominate for the various positions? Have you obtained their consent to stand for election? Or are you going to leave the work on the shoulders of the same old group of willing horses, who realise the work must be done if the Club is to be carried on, and someone must do it?

- - - - -