

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly Bulletin devoted to matters of interest to
The Sydney Bushwalkers; 5 Hamilton Street, Sydney

No.102.

JUNE, 1943

Price 4d.

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DAY OF THE KINGFISHER

Paul L. Grano.

Look! Look! See, the kingfisher comes--
There where the white log splits the pool.
O the blue flash of him like the thunder cloud!
See, there he goes - over the rock-fall.
Now where the banksias on the creek's elbow
Lean scarlet to scarlet-- O how he flashes!
Look, look - ah! he is gone.
Yet for his coming the laurel more vibrant,
Bolder the bronze of young leaf on the fig,
And softer the gloom-thought green of carel -
How all things now are lovelier since he came!

KOSCIUSKO -- AND TRAVELLER'S TALES.

By G. Edgecombe.

At the end of our first week, Dorothy, Sheila and myself felt 'twas the correct thing to pay a Sunday afternoon call at the Chalet - needless to say, driven also by such ulterior motives as a desire to look at the inside thereof. We decided the building was slightly less offensive to the eyes at close quarters than it had been at a distance. This perhaps due to the lower courses being built in arches of grey granite, into which were set blocks of dazzlingly white crystalline quartz.

We circumnavigated the place trying all the doors, and causing terrific hubbub among the dogs who were tied up (well apart, to prevent fighting) all over the hillside. One shaggy white darling whined most pathetically the moment we stopped petting him, so we concluded no one was home. Seeing a shirt lying on the ground, Dorothy the kind-hearted, having a mind to the ravages of grasshoppers, was replacing it on a fence, when a deep, slow voice from above us called, "If you'll come to the side door I'll let you in."

The owner of the voice turned out to be Mr. Harnett, District Surveyor - tall, rose-cheeked, grey-bearded, with lively blue eyes and that delicious lilting drawl that belongs to mountain people. We thought for a moment that he might accuse us of trying to make off with the aforementioned shirts, but no - he was very interested in our trip, (we having just come back up Hannell's Spur from the Geehi), and invited us in to afternoon tea. We couldn't spoil our reputation for never refusing food; and wandered in to the huge kitchen, where we imbibed tea (with real milk) and completely demolished, crumbs and all, a large portion of plumduff, much to the delight of Mr. Harnett, who was acting as cook for his party, and whose efforts had been sneered at hitherto. While the kettle was boiling we managed to sneak off and have a look at the glowing colours and fine handiwork of the rugs and curtains, returning full of admiration for the person responsible - our friend, Hannah Lemberg. Then, as we still dallied, Mr. Harnett expanded into story-telling mood. He told us how, dotted over the high, cold uplands between here and Canberra, he would, every now and then, come upon the remains of old, extensive, well-built homes; that it was his theory that the very earliest settlers from the old country liked the snow and blizzards and such like; but that later generations, especially with the coming of stage-coaches, had no liking for these rigours, and abandoned them for the sunny valleys.

Somehow, the talk wandered to music in Nature; and of the tales we heard, these remain most vivid to me, as he told them --

"Once, when I was a little feller, I was sent out in the early morning to round up the horses. It was very clear and still, and growing along the hillside were hundreds of young gums, very tall and straight, and evenly spaced, going 'way up before they branched out. Well, as I came up the rise in the growing light, a slight breeze lifted, three times, and three times I heard a low, long-drawn note - the deep note of an organ - which could only have been caused by the wind blowing through the gums, as if on pipes."

And again - "Three of us were going to explore an underground river in the"

Wombeyan Caves. It was too deep to wade, and much too cold to swim; so we made a raft fixed to oil drums. This would hold no more than one of us; so we tossed up, and I went. I had all my surveyor's gear, as well as matches and candles in a waterproof bag. I paddled along and found there was a strong current. Every now and then I cut a piece of candle and fixed it to a rock; the lights flickered as I looked back into the darkness; at one place, the river plunged into an abyss. I got so interested that I had not fixed a candle for a long time, when I saw an enormous broken stalactite hanging over the water and disappearing overhead into the blackness of the roof. As I went past, I thought it would be fun to take a good swinging blow at it with my hammer. Well! A terrific note rang out, went echoing through the caves, and I found myself struggling in inky blackness deep in icy water; the raft gone, but my bag still with me. I couldn't see a sign of the big stalactite, but the current washed me up to a whole forest of little raggedy fellers - I felt my way round them ever so carefully, and came to the raft. That was all right, but not such an easy job getting on to it; because as soon as I tried it, it overturned. So I manoeuvred it along till at last I came to the big stalactite; managed to grab hold of the end, tested it, and found it was firm, took a good grip, and working round with my feet got the raft under me, then with freezing fingers took candle and matches out - and the first one lit! I fixed it on a rock and drew a deep breath. Got back finally after being away for four hours. But talk of music - when I heard that sound of the hammer ring out, it certainly seemed to me the trumpet of doom!"

Somehow, all our trip seemed to me to be linked with or translated into music, for the next day I went off on my own to explore Lake Albina and Mount Townsend - a clear, sparkling day, and I walked up the semi-circular valley of the Snowy against a strong wind. The gem like clarity of tawny rocks, set in a mosaic of silver, turquoise and greenish-gold, the dancing, icy little river edged with deep mintbush - were all part of a symphony of Sibelius, whose far-off trumpets came in my ears with a wild and thrilling voice. As I went up tussocky, frosty hillsides straight into the wind-swept blue sky, the music lifted until it became the high passionless notes of a violin played ever more softly, until at last it drifted into silence, mingled with the thyme-scented air, and odour, opalescent colour and dream-music were blended into one.

A sudden drop, over the rim of the world, and I was in a most perfect U-shaped valley - flanked with tumbled round sheep-like masses of grey granite, floored with the gently rippling lake, and ending quite abruptly in blue space - veil beyond veil of misty ridges falling towards the Geehi. Tucked in this sheltered little valley of Lake Albina, I was at once cut off from the wind, in the absence of trees, I could not even hear it. With no sound but the ruffled lake splashing on the pebbles. As I lay at the edge on springy, brownish-green moss, studded with scarlet berries and set with tiny white flowers, two eagles came swinging with long slow rhythm, down through the crags. Here at last, I thought, I feel at home on this sad earth. My mind drifted off lazily, and I resolved to look up something that had been puzzling me, surely someone had described these lovely mosses better than I ever could. Sure enough, it was Ruskin - and though he spoke of the Alps, every word of it applies here:-

They will not conceal the form of the rock, but will gather over it in little brown bosses, like small cushions of velvet made of mixed threads of dark ruby silk and gold, rounded over more subdued films of white and grey,

with lightly crisped and curled edges like hoar-frost on fallen leaves, and minute clusters of upright orange stalks with pointed caps, and fibres of deep green, and gold, and faint purple passing into black, all woven together, and following with unimaginable fineness of gentle growth the undulation of the stone they cherish, until it is charged with colour so that it can receive no more; and instead of looking rugged, or cold, or stern, as anything that a rock is held to be at heart, it seemed to be clothed with a soft, dark leopard skin, embroidered with arabesque of purple and silver".

It takes little effort of imagination to visualise the glacier, 600 feet thick, which carved out this U-shaped trough, left its moraine at the end to dam up and form the lake and cut deep grooves in the granite cliffs and platforms at the sides. Now the lake is cutting through the tumbled mass of rock at the end, as a vigorous stream, which then falls suddenly and dizzyingly down a long, steep valley far below. The glacier which formed it was only part of an ice-cap which once encased the Kosciusko plateau. This came down from the 7000' level to about 5000' above the sea. Later it broke up into a number of small Alpine glaciers which left behind them Lakes Cootapatamba and Albina, the Club Lake, Blue Lake and Hadley's Tarn. The last of these glaciers probably disappeared only about 10,000 to 15,000 years ago.

Most of the rocks of the Kosciusko plateau, e.g. the Ramshead and Kosciusko as well as Townsend and Twynam are granitic; grey and crystalline, with a characteristic banded arrangement of light and dark. It is these which produce the porridgy-surfaced hummocks and smooth bare slopes. Interspersed with these are slaty rocks with a golden, silky lustre, called phyllites -- between Mt. Twynam and Lake Albina there is quite a large area of them. I mention these particularly because it appeared at one stage they might help settle a controversy. Mr. Harnett told us that Strzelecki, in his diary, had recorded the presence of "slate" in his trip up from the Murray valley. Now Townsend and Kosciusko are both on gneissic granite; but if a quantity of slate were to be found on one of the western slopes of Townsend and not on Kosciusko it would constitute some slight evidence in favour of the former. So I encircled Townsend with signal lack of success, and reported the sad story to Mr. Harnett on my return. He wrote as follows:-

"Mt. Townsend's claim to be the Kosciusko of Strzelecki has faded to a shadow, no slate! And last week Mr. Barrie showed me a map purporting to be a true copy of that which Strzelecki prepared and sent in with his report to the U.S. Government - this map shows his Kosciusko as being right on the Main Range which he apparently located for some miles to north and south of the peak; past Mt. Tate and past the South Ram's Head. It is not possible to think that he could have mistaken Townsend and "The Abbott" for the Main Range and Great Divide".

And so the matter rests. I for one am secretly relieved to think that the right peak bears Kosciusko's name.

I finished my day of lonely wanderings down the shadowy glen of the Snowy to the Pound's Creek hut chanting happily (and tunelessly) these words, which are said to be a translation of an old God's song - and he must surely have lived in just such a place, and been just such a hopeful egoist as myself:-

I am the overlord of the hills and the high places,
 And it is the changing breath of the mountains that I
 seize and make into words.
 My bed is as high above the clouds as my labouring
 minister, the earth, can lift me up,
 And my thoughts are as far above the stars as my eager
 heart can carry them."

DOES THIS CONCERN YOU?

by C. Kinsella.

"I appreciate the effort on behalf of the youth hostels that are started the better. The more I see and come in contact with city youths, the more I think that for their own salvation we should try our hardest to foster in them a love for the bush and the great out of doors. To me, it seems their minds stink, so let's get them young and endeavour to instil in them an appreciation of things clean and decent."

The above is an extract from a letter written by Peter Page from Nth. Queensland which was given to me for inclusion in The Bushwalker. After reading it I could not help recalling the many opinions aired at recent Monthly Meetings, when the question of Youth Hostels and National Fitness Camps came under discussion.

The impression I gathered at these meetings was that, in regard to the Hostels, while heartily disliking the people who would be likely to use them, the Bushwalker Federation, for its own sake, would be well advised to join the vanguard of the Hostel Movement, or it might find these buildings placed in areas of which it disapproved. (Vide Marley).

As far as National Fitness camps were concerned, the consensus of opinion again was that, they might be put anywhere as long as they did not spoil our primitive areas or interfere with well-beloved walking country or camping spots. When Gibbon Head was discussed as a possible N.F. camp site, while members considered the place unsuitable for this purpose, they washed their hands of it and were quite willing to see it selected because it was not an area of interest to walkers.

One could not help feeling the smug, Pharasaical attitude. "Thank God, I am not as that poor creature 'The Hiker' nor of those lesser breed who would sleep within the four walls of a hostel rather than under the wide sky."

All things are relative and a walk from hostel to hostel may be as great an adventure for those who know no other way as a first week-end trip for the man who carried his tent in his rucksack. There is only one way for the salvation of "The Hiker" and that is to teach him not to be one.

On the same day as getting Peter's extract, I read an article entitled "An Experiment in School Camping" by S.A. Lenehen. I feel that here is an answer to Peter's plea; an indication that while Youth Hostels will cater for the young man and woman of to-day, the N.F. Camps are a training place for the man and woman of to-morrow, a training place for the adolescent so that he

or she will learn to love and respect "the beauty of an unmarred bush" and thus come closer to the Bushwalkers' ideals. More than this, it shows that there are people who not only see the necessity for doing something for the youth of Australia but are themselves prepared to see that it is done.

The writer tells of the planning of these N.F. Camps as "a part of the child's education complementary to school education just as camp life may be complementary to home life and life in the bush complementary to life in the city." He writes of the condition under which so many children spend their school lives, the small playgrounds, inadequate equipment, large classes and the limited school hours that make it impossible to overcome a poor home environment. "Even if school conditions were uniformly good, there would be aspects of education that can be adequately provided only by camp life. In camp we have a cross section of the community. Boys of all types and classes meet and live together. Those to whom the greatest good can be done, either socially or physically are included. For the whole period of the camp strong forces are automatically brought to bear upon character. Each child must learn to live in co-operation with others."

"John, from one of the worst city areas, was the most detested boy in the school. He spent his days baiting teachers and boys (successfully too). His sadistic tendencies seemed, to me, the worst of his many faults. At camp, in 1941, the field work gripped him. During the following year he carried out individual work in botany and zoology, but showed interest in nothing else. As the 1942 camp approached his behaviour changed. He made innumerable personal preparations, and in camp lived fully and supported his leader to such purpose that he was a major factor in the group winning the competition. Despite his past the Camper's Badge, highest award for any one camp was granted him. To-day he has his second-class bar to this badge. From being a potential danger to society, he has now settled to a normal school life and is an elected school prefect."

The writer goes on to tell of the hard work done in the establishing of the camps, the trials and disappointments of the people who were determined to make them a success. He shows the way in which the days are spent.

"The Bushcraft group is seen preparing for a walk. With the compass they orientate the map of the district, prepare their packs and go swinging along the track. They will select their camp site erect the little bushwalkers' tents, learn how to make various fire places and fires and so on. They will learn also how to break camp and they will be led to realise some of the beauty of the unmarred bush."

At the end of the camp badges and awards are given. "The importance of this is stressed by a special ceremony. After 'Lights Out' the lads meet. In complete silence they file through the bush to a glade where an advance party has prepared a fire. Here they sit, an old camper beside a new, in a complete circle, and in the quiet of the night, look into the heart of the fire..... The "Dedication is repeated: 'Here, to-night, with these, my friends about me, with nature's magic in my heart, with the light from the crackling fire on my face, I dedicate myself to the ideals of National Fitness. Here I take that first, fine step towards real service.

Around me all is clean and pure. So shall I strive to make myself clean and strong, and, in the coming years, use the strength my God has given me towards the uplifting of our Australian race.

"The badges are presented and the lads sit again. There are moments here of emotion, for there is great beauty in the scene. Giant gums tower above small boys and a fire. A staff member recites the "Camper's Poem". There are yarns of other camp fires told by boys who have seen many. There are songs softly sung."

"Follow-up" work continues between camps. Advanced courses have been prepared and week-end bush walks taken. So leaders are trained. There are some very definite results. During last camp the average increase in weight was 2½ lb. Moreover there are gains that can never be assessed. The personality of many lads has developed during the weeks; there is the truant lad who has been given new values; the keener health of all must have far-reaching results."

There are many obstacles to overcome before all boys and girls in their teens will be able to participate in such a camp. But so essential is the experience in the life of each child that the vision must have ultimate reality."

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Twenty years ago I knew a man called Jiggins, who had the Health Habit, He used to take a cold plunge every morning. He said it opened his pores. After it he took a hot sponge. He said it closed the pores. He got so that he could open and shut his pores at will.

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Just one word about fresh air and exercise. Don't bother with either of them. Get the room full of good air then shut the windows and keep it. It will keep for years. Anyway, don't keep using your lungs all the time. Let them rest. As for exercise, if you have to take it, take it and put up with it. But as long as you have the price of a hack and can hire other people to play baseball for you and run races and do gymnastics when you sit in the shade and smoke and watch them - great heavens, what more do you want?

Stephen Leacock "How to Live to h² 200".

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SOME FOLK THEY WOULD A-WALKING GO. - C.K.

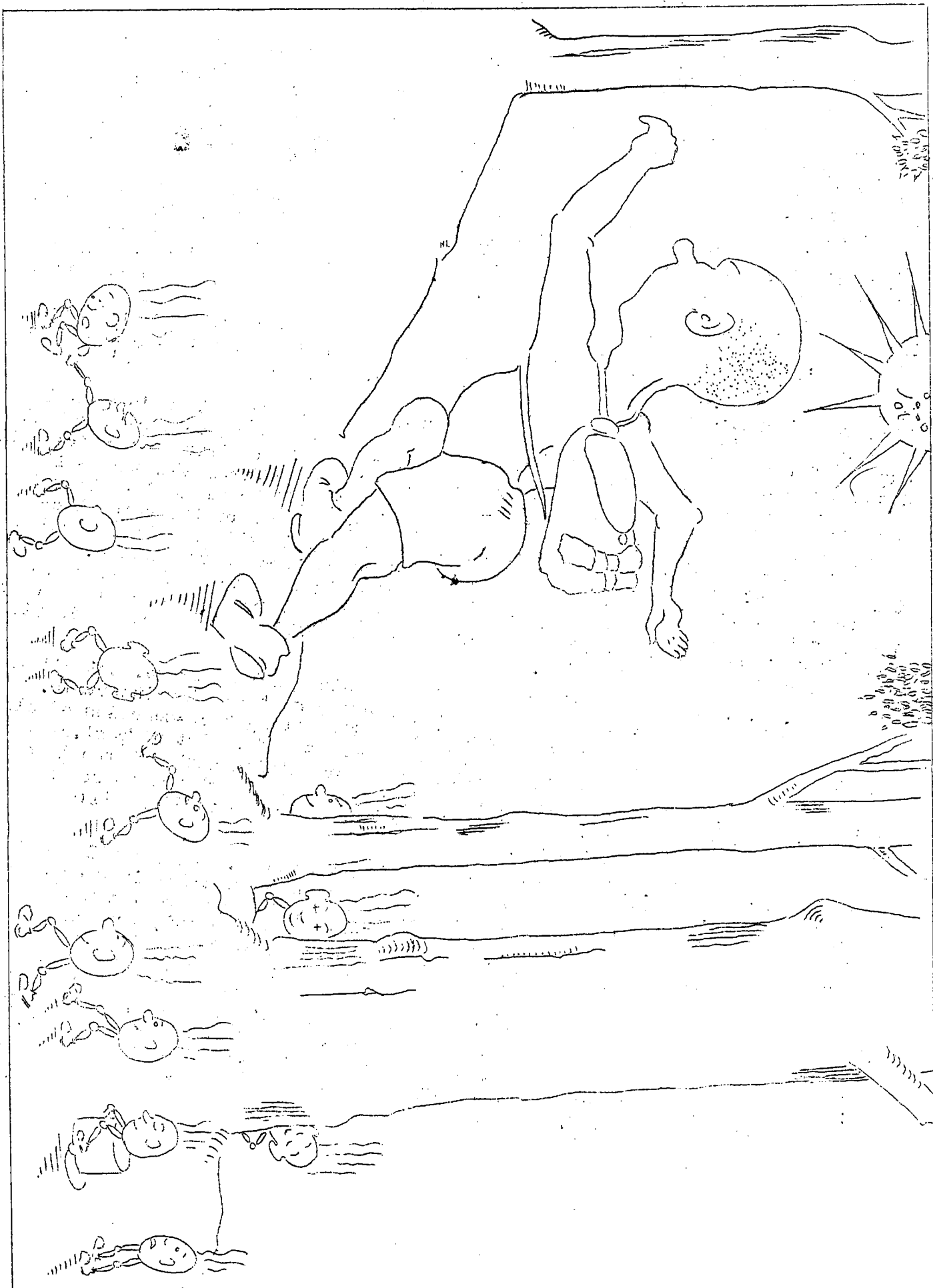
"Now let us all a-walking go."
 "Whoopee!" said Rowley,
 "Whether the trains be crowded or no."
 So Marie and Leslie and George and Joe
 All went with Rollicking Rowley.
 "A dozen eggs someone must bring,"
 "I will", said Rowley.
 "My eggs are always fit for a king,
 I'm not at all fussy about anything
 But those", said Rollicking Rowley.
 When breakfast time came round next day,
 "I'll cook", said Rowley.
 "I'll do my eggs in a special way".
 He sang as he worked so happy and gay.
 "Heigh-ho", sang Rollicking Rowley.
 He broke an egg into the pan.
 "Hells bells!" said Rowley.
 He stood his ground but the others ran.
 There never was so astounded a man.
 "This stinks"! gasped Rollicking Rowley.
 He cracked another, then a third.
 "Blank Blank", said Rowley.
 The fourth contained a little bird,
 And the fifth and the sixth. "Why this is absurd,
 BBlank Blank", cried Rollicking Rowley.
 But when he came to the very last,
 Speechless was Rowley.
 He turned and ran from the scorching blast,
 But the eggs, they upped and followed him fast.
 "Help! Help!" begged Rollicking Rowley.
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LETTERS FROM THE LADS AND LASSES.

Letters were received this month from the following:-

Tom Moppett	S.B.W.
Les Douglas	ex S.B.W.
Bill McCourt	S.B.W.
Bob Binks	S.B.W.

Les Douglas. A strange coincidence prompts me to write you - last night - whilst surrounded by a host of admiring mosquitoes - the weather being a little hot and the hour too early to retire behind my protective net - I searched the archives of the Ward Room for some literature - imagine my surprise to find a copy of "The Sydney Bushwalker" - admittedly 'twas an old one - 1938 - and may have been the property of the peace time tenant of our



present abode - yet nevertheless it was interesting to read of the doings of ~~one "Jack Debert"~~ of the activities of the "Conversation Club" (an entirely new section of our activities - at least to me) and details of the secret new weapons of two of the Queensland members - known as Mal & Doug.

A lot of water has run under many bridges since that issue first saw the light - and I know from information garnered from different sources - that many of the names mentioned therein would have greatly divergent addresses at the present time and that the "Old Club" is well represented in different parts of the world.

It was unfortunate that in my brief visit to Sydney - I couldn't manage to make the Club rooms - for at the time you were meeting I was creating a nuisance of myself at various Naval Depots - endeavouring to obtain gear and clothing sufficient to make my life comfortable in this out of the way place - and by the time I had achieved that object, I've no doubt that you were all comfortably tucked away in your little beds.

I did, however, have the pleasure of meeting Paddy - whom I found doing business at the "old stand" - also Wal who I believe is again taking interest in Committees etc. - don't let him put too much over you - after all he's practically a "Banana-lander" now.

From what I've seen of the country surrounding Moresby - there's a goodly number of tall hills that show much promise as good walking country - whilst the distant vistas of blue mountain ranges are decidedly tantalising - but from all I hear of mosquitoes, rain and other pests - quite apart from the heat - it will be good country to stay out of - however, Wal will be pleased to know that viewed from the butt-end of a fishing rod - certain parts of the coast become quite interesting - nay even profitable - especially is this so when an uninteresting diet of M & V (tinned meat and vegetables) becomes unbearable.

Convey my regards to those members with whom in the piping days of peace I shared the joys of the open road and the snug camp fires - and my hopes that when this fracas is over - all the members of the "Old Club" may share in its useful and expanding activities.

Bob Binks. (H.M.A.S. "Napier") It is months now since I last wrote, but all the time I have been receiving mag zines and photographs at regular intervals. The photographs are especially appreciated as they bring back memories of old haunts and walks that were done in what now seems the far distant past. Since leaving home there have been no opportunities for walking although ten days leave at an -----port some weeks back gave us the chance to see something of the country which, with its wide open spaces and rolling hills resembles our own in many places.

Tom Mopett. The S.B.W. does do some walking over here. Last month I had nine days leave, and spent it wandering about the Lake District in shorts etc. again and in spite of lots of rain, cloud and mist, I had a great time. Due to War and Winter it was solo walking with hardly a soul about, for which I was very grateful. Photography wasn't so good because of the lack of sun, but I have sent Jean a packet of photos just to prove I was there. As can be seen from one of myself, I'm well equipped for walking and have even made use of the hat which I believe gave rise to the name "Curtin's Cowboys". I have joined the Youth Hostel Assn., in case it might be of use, and although I haven't stayed at a hostel yet, I might next month during a cycle tour of the Cotswolds. This is an "on with the correspondence" night so all the best to all Bushwalkers and specially to the B.S.C.

EASTER AT CARLON'S CASUALTY CLEARING STATION
BY No.1 Casualty.

Well, I've never reached the summit of a mountain first, and I've never been first out of bed in the morning, but I was the first admission to Carlon's C.C.S. at Easter.

It was quite simple, just one of those smooth round stones with an inviting expression, and presto, you've got odd feet. This happened about two miles up Little River, so I was forced (literally) to creep under the weight of my completely empty pack to the junction of the Cox and Galong Creek. Have you ever wished that your companions would only leave you so that you could die quietly at your own pace? They never do.

We pitched camp at last at the bottom of Galong. I spent the night dreaming that I was crawling heroically up the creek on my hands and knees, but when morning came cowardice asserted itself, and I developed an intense ambition to ride up Tin Pot track on a horse. I hadn't ridden a horse since I was in short pants, but I hadn't crawled since I was in rompers, so the advance party flew along Galong and in no time, salvation, in the shape of Bertie Carlon and the stalwart steeds Taffy and Minty arrived. I was hoisted with every care and absolutely no ceremony onto Taffy's back and away we went. Oh boy! Can Bertie lead a horse? It was better than a sedan chair.

Arriving at the C.C.S. I was greeted with an imposing array of hotwater bottles, crutches, and soft downy beds. My notoriety was short lived however for after this the casualties came thick and fast. Taffy was pressed into service again next morning to bring Emily Livingstone, of the Rucksack Club, up from the Cox, where she was hobbling painfully along, having "gone in the knees".

No sooner was No.2 Casualty bedded down that night, than the next victim was announced by a huge bull's eye lantern piercing the gloom, followed by ambulance, police, bushwalkers and sundries. These latter had come out in the ambulance complete with guns for a night's shooting. The redoubtable Jack Kirby had been commandeered and the whole crowd piled in for tea and a couple of bottles of supper brought by the sundries.

Having decided that Bertie and Jack would be the best ones for the rescue trip down Black Dog, the bushwalkers and sundries, police and ambulance went to bed. We were so excited by the presence of all these men that we scarcely slept, but it wasn't till sunrise that No.3 Casualty showed his wan little face round the dining room door. He really did look sick and only stopped off for tea before being cleared for hospital treatment with a dislocated knee-cap and lacerations.

After the departure of this casualty with the bushwalkers, the ambulance, the police and the sundries; the old C.C.S. seemed a bit quiet and we had to fall back on "Wiff" Knight's sciatica and Mrs. Knight's cold, for diversion. Other entertainment were hopping up hill and making friends with "Lady" who was to carry me to Kirby's in the afternoon.

Emily and I were discharged with due ceremony at 2 p.m. and set off somewhat reluctantly on our homeward trek. The care and attention we received would tempt anyone to chronic incapacity and we would advise all prospective casualties to arrange to be damaged within reasonable distance of Carlon's.

READING MATTER FOR THE TROOPS

No doubt those of you who travel by train or ferry have noticed that Book-stalls on stations and wharfs are sadly lacking in "Penguins", "Pelicans and similar publications which have proved such a boon for all classes of readers since their appearance a few years ago. Bookshops also, show empty shelves.

This dearth of reading matter is being felt by the Services Committee who are finding it extremely difficult to get sufficient reading matter for the men in distant parts. In a recent letter, one of our club members wrote "-----I received some more Penguins for which I thank you very much. I can assure you these books are read by very many once they begin to circulate up here. A BOOK IS PRESERVED LIKE LIFE ITSELF."

So go again over your shelves and through your cupboards. Bring in your copy of The Bulletin, Wireless Weekly, any Penguins or Digests you might still have. If you have any old numbers of the Sydney Bushwalker, would you hand them in, for The Services Committee has found that bushwalkers from other clubs very much appreciate these copies.

VENUS AND JUPITER by "CANOPUS"

This month Venus will be in its brightest phase. Jupiter also is still bright, though it gradually appears a little fainter as the earth travels away from it. The two planets will be in close proximity, and with the new moon in their vicinity will form a very beautiful group in the Eastern sky at the beginning of the month.

THE HAMILTON NIGHT CLUB

June 18th. We invite you to attend the opening of the Hamilton Night Club (Proprietary Limited). All the newspaper threats of the past months come true and ---- dancing until eleven. Sly grog (in the form of fresh milk) must not be brought except by those patrons having duodenal ulcers which must be inspected by a special committee for that purpose.

You are expected to appear in your "bush nighties" - just the things you wear to keep out the icicles - so no excuse will be accepted for evening frocks and tails.

P.S. We should like to draw our patrons' attention to the fact that it is Winter, not Summer.

MISSING AND PERSONAL

O Tempora ! O Mores ! Lovely aluminium butter container who strayed from me on the Easter Wollondilly trip please return. You were my one and only and had "E.R.K." quite clearly on sticking plaster on your bottom. I shall be in the Club every Friday night wearing a dejected and suspicious look and a sprig of Gompholobium Latifolium.

Ray Kirkby.

TRUTH IS STRANGER THAN FICTION
or
THE STORY OF THE INJURED HIKER.

Alex. Colley.

On Easter Friday one of a party of five hikers fell on to a sharp rock and cut his leg. He was rescued by Bert Carlon and Jack Kirby. Bert, by the way, had quite a busy week-end bringing in the wounded from the Cox Valley.

One can readily imagine the scene in the newspaper offices when the story came in. The News Editor handing the story to one of his off-siders - "Here's a report of a hiker hurt in the mountains - write it up, will you. Oh, and don't forget the bits about the rough country, the experienced bushman hacking their way through dense bush with axes, and the goat track with a drop of hundreds of feet on one side" - "Yeah, I know." By adding these well-worn formulae to a few facts and some fiction, the city papers filled about two columns in all.

Here is the story as told by the "picknickers" (Mirror), Vic Bolton and Russell Wilkins, who came on to the party on Sunday evening and took word to the Katoomba police.

Vic and Russell were coming through Black Dog Canyon about half past four on Sunday afternoon when they met two boys aged about 17. They were equipped with a full-sized axe and a camera. One was clad in dripping wet shorts. He explained that he had thrown the axe at a turtle which was swimming in 7 feet of water. Naturally the axe went to the bottom and he had to go there after it. They had been camped with three others at the junction of Black Dog Creek and the Cox since Friday night. When asked why they had remained in the one spot so long they explained casually that one of their mates had hurt his leg. The axe-thrower and his associate then went on their way and Vic and Russell walked on down the river. On the way they heard several shots and a bullet whined past. Later they found that one of the amusements of these light-hearted lads was to throw 303 bullets into the fire.

At Black Dog Creek they came upon three tents (hired from Paddy) - one 6' x 8' "A" tent, and two 6' x 8' walled tents (for five!). As they came closer they found three boys of about 17 lying down in their sleeping bags enjoying a smoke and a game of cards. The game was for the sake of coin rather than mental uplift. They lay in the midst of a great mess. Nearby was a ground-sheet covered with flour, jam, dripping and dirt. Scattered around were cartons of flour, many tins, a large coil of 1½ inch rope, three enamel bowls and numerous billies, not to mention the inevitable frying pans (three large ones including a twelve incher) and several pounds of dripping. ("All they had to eat was some tinned meat and a few sandwiches" - Sun).

The subject of the injured leg came up. It appeared that, on Friday, it had taken them from 12 noon till five o'clock to get from Clear Hill to the ridge overlooking the Cox. By that time it was getting dark, and they were thirsty, so they raced straight over the edge towards the Cox. Their packs were all around the 60 lb. mark, with the result that they lost control and started to slide. Les Coy was unlucky as he happened to land heavily on a sharp piece of granite which cut to the bone just above the knee. The leg started to swell, so they made camp on the river and stayed there.

Vic and Russell gave them some bandages, plaster, and Condy's crystals and asked them when and how they were going back. They said they were going to start off the next day, go to Moody's and then up Kedumba. Vic and Russell offered to get help at Katoomba, to which the boys agreed.

When Vic and Russell reported the accident at 3.30 next afternoon (Monday), the police reacted in no uncertain terms. It was some minutes before the air cleared sufficiently for Vic and Russell to explain that the injured one was not one of their party, and was, moreover, one of that inferior order known as hikers. Had they been old members they might have gone on to say that the police had never been called upon to rescue a Club member. They could have gone on to instance some of the searches in which the Bush Walkers have sent out large parties to assist the police. As it was they explained where the spot was and marked it on a map, but as the police didn't know the country they asked Vic and Russell to come back with them.

The rescue party, consisting of a constable, a police cadet, two ambulance men and a friend who was an experienced bushman aged about 16, and Vic and Russell, set off in the ambulance at 6.30 p.m. On the way they picked up Jack Kirby. They got out of the ambulance at the top of Carlon's hill. Two went in front with police searchlights, and then came the ambulance man with his gun. Plenty of rabbits, dazzled by the glare, sat up at close range, but the ambulance man couldn't shoot very straight.

At Carlon's Vic Russell and Bert Carlon caught three horses with which Jack Kirby and Bert set off for the Cox at 10.30 p.m. Shortly afterwards the police and the ambulance man set out for some more shooting. Once more their aim was uncertain.

Bert Carlon and Jack Kirby reached the Cox in the early hours of Tuesday morning. They placed the injured one on a horse, making a rope sling for the bad leg. The other four, who remained in their sleeping bags, resumed their interrupted slumber. Bert and Jack Kirby arrived back with the injured Les Coy at 6.30 in the morning. There was a little more rabbit-shooting, but still no kill; then at 9 o'clock the police, the ambulance man, the experienced bushman, Vic, Russell, and Les Coy set off for Katoomba, where they arrived at 10.30 a.m.

Leslie Coy's wound was found to be only superficial and he was allowed to return to Sydney by car with his parents.

A sweet young romantic named Tuggie
Went out for a ride in a buggy
She cooed "Kiss me my pet
But he wiped off the sweat
And said "Not while the weather's so muggy".

AT OUR OWN MEETING

It was resolved that, if another hostel is to be placed in National Park the Club would not oppose its being placed at the foot of Nioka ridge. At a previous meeting the erection of hostels in the park was opposed and this opposition was not modified.

Marie Byles asked the meeting to consider whether South Era was a suitable site for a hostel, in view of the fact that a track would be necessary in order to bring down the building materials. The annual rental value of Byrnes' Estate was £100 and the owners would consider leasing the area to the Federation. The possibility of the Federation leasing the area was discussed. Bill Hall said that we should take the opportunity, even if it meant loss, and that it was better to concentrate on this piece of land which was near to the city as parts further out were less likely to be taken from us. He was supported by Roy Edser and others. Jean Moppett drew attention to the danger of commercial interests taking it over. Laurie Rayner thought that the rental values would be low during the war and rent difficult to collect.

A suggestion by the Youth Hostels' Planning Committee for making farms in the Megalong Valley and a house on Hat Hill Road available as hostels, was approved.

Grace Edgecombe and John Noble were elected room stewards.

FEDERATION NOTES

A cheque for £90 was received from the Public Trustee, being payment of the legacy left by Arnold Rae.

The N.S.W. Govt. Railways advise that the 12.55 p.m. train will stop at Lilyvale, as requested by the Federation.

It will not be possible to obtain art paper for the Bushwalker Annual, so sketches will have to be substituted for photographs. The editor (Dorothy Lawry) will be glad to receive contributions, including cover designs, as it is intended to publish this year, or as soon as the paper position allows.

A letter is being written to the Youth Hostels' Planning Committee opposing any suggestion to erect a hostel in the heavily timbered country in National Park.

It was decided to adopt the names "Primitive", "Protected", and "Improved" for roadless reserves.

A report was received that a shale mine is being operated in Megalong Valley and that it is rumoured that plans are afoot to install a railway to take the shale up onto Narrow Neck, and to build a retort somewhere out beyond Diamond Falls. Mr. Harry Whaite of the Conservation Bureau is making enquiries.

It was decided to write to the Youth Hostels Planning Committee recommending Government resumption for national fitness purposes (including Bushwalking) of the whole of the Era lands. The C.M.W. have withdrawn their opposition to the report of the special sub-committee on Tracks and Blazes, and the matter will be reviewed at the next meeting.

G O S S I P

It is with a certain amount of pleasure that we notice that Hilma, our new Secretary, is creeping round mighty subdued lately. A very pleasing transfiguration we must say, but not likely to last long, so we must take advantage of it.

The cause of this "hang-dog" look being, that for two weeks running she has "mislaid" the keys of the club room, in fact, on Friday the 14th of May 1943, for the first time in the annals of the Club, members could not get in. Jean would never have allowed such a depressing debacle to occur.

On the night mentioned, early arrivals were greeted with a horrible scene. Hostile Bushwalkers milled in mutinous groups in the spacious carpeted foyer and overflowed on the grand stairway, while the elevator swiftly and silently and with relentless precision disgorged more and yet more members, who each according to their lights bore up or broke down on hearing the shattered news. (Meanwhile Hilma, to get away from it all took a taxi and toured the Eastern Suburbs).

Soon the more resilient members tried to do something about forcing the doors and they all tried at once, yet the majestic doors of this grand institution remained closed. Enter the Hero, one Richard Croker who grasped the situation and stilled the rising panic. Placing his manly length on the floor alongside the doors, he quietly whistled underneath, some slight incantation we think, rose and lo! the doors swung back. Still badly shaken the Bushwalkers filed in. My word Hilma! We feel sure that our new Secretary will go far in her career. And how the ex-secretary purred!

Debonair Tim Coffey you know is absolutely allergic to a collar and tie and had no reason as far as he could see to abandon his ideas in this respect, when he left for a country town for his holidays. But there he met a lass and was swayed by the gentler emotions (the ones our Tim scoffs at) and the news seeped through to Sydney that he wore a collar and tie for a whole week, for her sweet sake. Do not be alarmed for Tim's bachelordom however, for it is true as one Bushwalker said the other day, "Tim's romances are short and sweet like a donkey's gallop."

Bobbie Cooper has been transferred back to Sydney. We were pleased to see her in the club again. She brought news of Betty Isaacs who is still in Melbourne and Betty Pryde has been transferred to Adelaide.

We are seriously thinking of appointing a Melbourne correspondent to watch our interests there. Latest news from there is the marriage of Ira Butler to Dot English.

Can anyone tell us why Arthur Gilroy, after doing a strenuous Easter trip to Splendour Rock, went racing down Perry's late on Sunday evening? We know he is a great collector of coloured leaves. Was he in search of the russet maiden-hair that lit up Bluegum that week-end?

YOUR SOCIAL CALENDAR FOR JUNE & JULY

18th June: 8 p.m. Clubroom Party
Dancing & supper.
(see special announcement).

25th June: 8 p.m. Annual Photographic Exhibition.
Don't forget to look out your
prints and so make this night
a success. DO IT NOW!

7th July: 7.45 p.m. A skating night at the Glaciarium.
Come along and if you can't skate
you'll enjoy watching those who
think they can.

16th July: Free night.

23rd July: 8 p.m. Palmer Kent promises an interesting
lecture on "The Real Facts Behind
The Malayan Campaign."

30th July: 8 p.m. Clubroom Dance.

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HOW THINGS STAND AT PADDY'S

So that members will have an idea how things are as regards the supply of camping gear, here is a resume' of the state of Paddy's stock:-

SLEEPING BAGS:

No stock on hand. No orders taken. About 10 feather filled sleeping bags of assorted lengths available (cost £2.15.0 for 5'10" length) each Thursday morning at 9 a.m. Some time in July there may be some down bags available at £3.9.6 for the standard length (5'10"). Regret no orders can be taken. Look out for special announcement next month.

TENTS.

No stock but orders taken each month for tents in white, willemsden or lightweight green japara.

RUCKSACKS & PACKS.

Packs and rucksacks without frames are generally to be had from stock. Orders taken if no stock.

Cane frame rucksacks - none available.

Steel frame rucksacks. None in stock. Orders taken if you can get frame welded.

GROUND SHEETS.

6' x 3' Groundsheets and 6' x 4' cape groundsheets (no collars or hoods attached) generally available at the beginning of each week. Orders generally taken if no stock.

REPAIRS.

Repairs of all kinds and reproofing of groundsheets done. No tents can be reproofed.

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