

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A Monthly Bulletin devoted to matters of interest to the Sydney Bushwalkers
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DAYLIGHT IS DYING

The daylight is dying
Away in the West;
The wild birds are flying
In silence to rest;
In leafage and frondage
Where shadows are deep,
They pass to its bondage -
The kingdom of sleep.

"And watched in their sleeping,
By stars in the height
They rest in your keeping,
O wonderful night.
When night doth her glories
Of starshine unfold
'Tis then that the stories
Of bushland are told."

("BANJO" PATERSON).

IN HISTORIC JOADJA

By J. C. H.

Windowless walls like eyeless faces, white skeletons in the encroaching green, starkly rising chimney stacks that have not smoked for sixty years, and English trees now grown tall and wild with passing of the years - that is Joadja, ghost mining town of the Southern Tablelands, which at one time housed five hundred families.

The mines that had produced the richest shale ever discovered are in the hillsides to the North. With difficulty owing to the overgrown nature of the tracks can be traced the path of the coal and shale to four rows of rusted iron retorts where the crude oil was extracted. Owing to the massive nature of this section decay has proceeded here at a slower rate, but tall saplings grow through crevices in the brickwork.

Standing in the ruins of the refinery now overgrown with blackberry vines a feeling of depression is experienced. Seeing on every hand tumbled ruins and the encroaches of the bush one is troubled with thoughts of the transience of life and the futility of human endeavour. In winter the bare limbs of the strange trees add to the general effect of desolation.

Soundness of construction is indicated in a number of buildings now stripped of floors and roof-iron. The sturdy schoolhouse was for many years untouched, complete with blackboards and school books showing the childish writing of people now in their seventies. The director's house, in attractive red brick, has now disappeared behind its grove of poplar trees. The Manager's house is maintained as a farm-house by the present occupier, a Mr. Trotter. The old groves of fruit and nut trees have been destroyed by fire and now grazing seems to be the only activity in the valley. The community hall has lost its fine dance floor to a hall in Mittagong. This hall, in its day, with the hotel was the scene of many revels when money was plentiful, and cares were few.

The grassy streets are lined with avenues of well-grown imported trees, oaks, pines and sycamores. The houses are in various stages of disrepair, those in what was known as "Stringybark Row" surviving the bushfire only as a chimney or hearthstone.

Joadja creek was spanned by two bridges of which only the concrete pylons now remain. The formation of the rail track can be traced from the bridge to the hills where the steep incline necessitated haulage equipment. From the top the trucks of shale were taken 17 miles along the narrow gauge railway to Mittagong.

The cemetery has a neglected appearance and leaves and bark and even fallen trees lie across the graves. Some of the epitaphs are curious and a survey of the ages of the dead indicates the heavy infant mortality of those days.

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THE WORLD WITHOUT

By D. LAWRY.

One morning I raised my head from my work, and glanced out of the window. My eyes widened as they took in the peaceful, rural scene, and I smiled appreciatively.

Beyond the collection of holes that used to be a metalled road, the tall grasses waved, and flowered on the footpath. Dandelions bloomed there, too, and, from the far side of the fence, trees and palms cast a shade. It was altogether a delightful place to rest, and so thought the shabbily dressed man who reclined against the fence, reading his paper.

Was he a swaggio roaming the "great out-back"? No, just a man at liberty to sit where he pleased - in Waterloo!

Behind the palm in whose shade he sat rose a large factory. Over my head rumbled three floors of machinery. But between those busy factories was a man who reclined at peace among growing things, and read his paper. Read, probably, of the shells whining and bursting as Communist and fellow Chinese spill blood, of riots and bloodshed among the teeming millions of India; of horrors near and far, that show what man can do to fellow-man.

The breeze caught his paper, and he had to clutch it for a moment. Then he turned a page, and relaxed again among the grasses, at peace in the shade of a waving palm.

Youthful hope: "Why can't the Bushwalkers live as one big family?"

Aged despair: "The trouble is, my dear: they do."

HAVE YOU CONTRIBUTED ?

OTHER COUNTRIES. OTHER MANNERS ?

The following has been extracted from the New Zealand journal, "Alpinesport". Though the writer obviously has in mind climbing under rather different conditions from those generally met by bushwalkers here it makes interesting reading. Perhaps an adaptation of these precepts by us would make easier the filling of the "leader" column of the Walks Programme:

"There are certain walking manners, the observance of which will do much to promote the harmony of the party and save the leader's temper. If your leader sets the pace keep to it. If it is too slow for you, remember the slowest man for whom it is just right: that is why the leader does it. If your leader makes a slight error in the choice of route, do not pass him on a shorter line; even he is not infallible, and your action implies a criticism of his judgment which is ill-deserved. Concede the mistake and take the longer way. If you are zig-zagging up an open hillside and each member of the party is choosing his own line, it is again good manners to see that your line, however widely spaced from the leader's, does not overtake the level at which he is climbing. Further, if you are converging ultimately on a common object such as the commencement of a track, or a large shady rock, it is his privilege to arrive there first so that he can decide the future movements of the party merely by going on or stopping. Always give your leader the opportunity of making a decision by action rather than by words. His position then becomes the less obvious. After negotiating a slightly steeper or more difficult piece of ground, check your pace when you come to easier terrain. It is annoying for the man behind you on the difficult section to see you forge ahead when his performance has to slow down. When returning from a climb, successful or otherwise, do not race ahead. Others are not as fresh as you and if someone should twist an ankle or slip on easy ground your help is useless a mile further down the track. For what shall it profit man if he gain the summit and lose his own party?"

JUNE HOLIDAY WEEKENDS - WALKS

Although there's been a change in the date of the King's Birthday, Fraser Ratcliff's 3-day jaunt will still take place on June 7-10th. However, itinerary will be: Wentworth Falls - Kedumba Pass - Korrowall Buttress - Cedar Ck - Cox R. - Konangaroo - Mt. Guouogang - Mt. Jenolan - Cox R. - 6 foot Track - Medlow Bath (about 45 miles).

Please note Fraser's 'phone No. FO444 Xtm 509 (not 503 as on Walks Programme). Tickets will be required to Medlow Bath and members are reminded to notify the leader of their intentions of going.

Colin Lloyd reports re other walks:
All are cancelled on the holiday weekends, June 7-10th and June 14-17th.

WHAT A DAY!

J. C. H.

A few Sundays ago, skippered by Rene Brown, 85 eager kiddies spilled themselves from the bus at the gates of National Park, Fuller's Bridge, Chatswood, and with joyous whoops raced along devious paths to the chosen clearing where the annual Xmas Treat (postponed on account of strikes) was to be held.

Despite the coolness of the day the hardier soon donned their costumes and dived and swam in the river: others gathered around a skipping rope or took part in a game of rounders, while a few of the hungrier souls looked on at the busy helpers madly buttering bread and cutting salads (both vegetable and fruit), which were soon to disappear down the yawning throats of our young guests.

Now and again one heard a loud cry of "Oo Miss, look at Johnny", and there would be Johnny hanging from a high branch of a nearby tree: or, "Let me, Sir, oh let me Sir" and one saw Arnie showing his admirers how to stoke a fire and cook the potatoes. One couldn't help noticing Phil Hall devotedly tagged by an acrobatic 6 year-old (female) who turned catherine-wheels to order and did a one-and-a-half somersault without blinking an eyelash.

Shortly (all too shortly for the small band of helpers Rene had) lunch time came, and it didn't take long for the hungry kiddies to form a circle and begin on their eats. What piles of food they devoured - meat and salads, hot mashed potatoes ("Oh boy, mashed potatoes!") accompanied by bread and butter, followed by fruit salad and ice cream. Did I say ice-cream? Never have I seen so much ice-cream eaten by so few! (This applies to the helpers too).

Lunch over, what next? Races, of course. After the ordinary races, i.e. straight running for all age groups, the fun began. Have you ever seen a frog race? The competitor places the hands on the ground and hops the course in a squatting position. Or a duck waddle race? One gets down on one's haunches and, with hands on knees, waddles the distance! Then there was the wheelbarrow race - generally the barrow collapsed on the wheel and flattened the said wheel in the dust, with accompanying squeals and yells.

The afternoon sped by, but what is that over there? A sick child? And that? A sick Bushwalker? The excitement of the day, plus the huge lunch, had affected quite a few, and the position became nightmarish as one after another became violently ill.

Those able to eat were given their tea - vividly coloured cakes were the highlight - and this meal over, belongings were gathered together and the tired picnickers made their way to the waiting bus. By this time the malady had affected half the kiddies and some of the helpers - six of us were left to get eightyfive back to Central! All didn't go too well, but we managed to disembark the lot at Central, leaving our trail behind us, and by supporting and carrying the ailing ones, delivered them safely home to bed.

"Never again", I was dejectedly thinking, as we trailed up a hill

with our three remaining children, when a lad said "Oh well, Miss, we've had a beaut day, it's the best picnic we ever go to. - but I think we ate too much", and my spirits revived enough to be able to cheerily say "See you at Christmas" as we bade him goodnight.

But, oh boy, what a day!

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BREAKFAST OUT OF DOORS

By K.M.

Well, we cannot always go camping, but the next best thing is to live out of doors as much as possible.

So at 6 a.m. out we go with breakfast, my three furry friends and I. They have already eaten, so it is not the lure of creature comforts but pure sociability that brings them along.

The eldest, a middle-aged bachelor, settles beneath the cypress pine for digestion and meditation. Angela, a demoiselle of tender age, sports with the purple lasiandra petals floating down on the light breeze; but mother-cat lies with one tawny paw draped across my foot and her cheek nestled against my shoe.

This is a habit of hers, and I can never decide whether it betokens affection for me or an irresistible yen for the pungent odour of shoe-leather. I like to think it is the former.

Let me say before going further that if you would enjoy your meal in the garden you must first purge your mind of the deplorable instinct for reform. In the bush you do not say to yourself: "This grass needs cutting. This plant is a weed and should be uprooted." So must it be on your own estate. Once you have rid yourself of the profit motive everything in the garden is lovely. You are free to admire the dandelions blooming bravely in the pumpkin bed, yellow as the great cups of the pumpkin flowers themselves, where bees zoom and nose-dive into the golden depths. You may gaze untroubled at the couch-grass flowering with its four or five (never more, never less) yard-arms, hung with minute creamy bells and bordered with feathery wine-coloured tufts. You may note with astonishment that out of a vile clot of dung has sprung a company of fairy fungus like Japanese umbrellas no bigger round than a lead-pencil, frail and almost as transparent as glass.

You may look with equanimity at the woodspurge flourishing amongst the rhubarb, and think perhaps of poor Rossetti, desolate with grief for his dead wife, staring, head in hands, at this same weed....

Under the wattle tree the bird-table, safe on a high post, does not lack patrons. Willy Wag chatters noisily as he darts down for a mouthful, and wrens and finches keep up a dim perpetual twitter as they

come and go. Mother Magpie, whose left leg was broken long ago and hangs awkwardly at an angle, alights on the bird-table and eyes the fare a trifle querulously. No meat this morning; only bread. Ah well, we are still rationed you know. Her husband stalks about on the ground and finds a stray rabbit bone. Last year the pair raised a fine youngster, and I had great hopes of a repetition this season, as mother was absent for some weeks and father flew off purposefully with any titbits I threw him, instead of consuming them himself. Something must have gone wrong though - one of the small unchronicled tragedies of the bush.

From the quiet house my vigilant clock announces six-thirty, Time to begin the scurry and racket of living: chores to be done, a train to catch, an office to be reached on time.

But from this early half-hour in the garden one goes to face the day, believe me, fortified with more than material food.

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CONGRATS TO CALOOLA

Recent additions to the Library include "Yarrowonda", the first annual of the Caloola Club, pioneered by Allen Strom. As a first production the magazine is excellent, and shows that even new clubs can be high-class. Congrats to Beverley and Elaine Johnstone, the editors, and to the members and associates who contributed to its success.

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'ERE WE COME !!

(By 'Onk 'Onk!)

Applications are invited for a new era in walking! Pioneered by Racing Ratoliff's Burragorang burn-up. Munching on the march supersedes eating at ease, as the four-miles-an-hour minimum slows down to a steady 3 m.p.h. for lunch! We're hours overdue for the bus, but what care we? A timely lift in Rus. Wilkins' jallopy enables us to catch the 3 p.m. Bimlow bus at 3.15. Unionists need not apply.

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A MYTH EXPLODED

"The man in the street tells the popular story about Govett's Leap, of the Bushranger who, pursued by police and determined to evade capture, galloped boldly on his horse to the cliff's edge, and jumped over; but the tale is more fanciful than correct. William Romaine Govett was a Government Surveyor and an explorer of the Blue Mountains, and the waterfall at the head of the Grose was named after him, from the fact that he discovered it".

(W.F. Waters in "The Melbourne Walker, 1946").

MOUNT HOTHAM THROUGH THE WIND SCREEN

By CLEM HALLSTROM)

(With apologies to Mr. William Hatfield).

THE SUBJECT: Roughest and toughest ride that any of Colin Lloyd's party has yet experienced.

THE TRIP: Upwards from Forepuncha, a little township at the foot of Mt. Buffalo.

THE CONVEYANCE: A timber-truck of proverbial bitsa type, with fractious gremlins in every nut and bolt (of which most were missing).

Jumping Jehosaphat, what a ride! You've heard the parody of course:

"Oh milord! How he roared,
In his old tin-fashioned Ford,
Upon the road to Gundagai!"

The very vehicle, folks - the self same one. New, the flooring for instance: just a collection of loose boards forming a tray with no sides, except for a piece of two by three on which to crack the skull at every curve. As for the springing - Roman chariots were lounge chairs, alongside this leviathan of the road.

From the sun there was no protection - no covering at all. The only shadow was cast by a clattering jib overhead, swaying and clanging to the twist and turn, buck and heave of the maddened monster on whose back we had perforce to ride. And not only the sun - for the vehicle itself kicked up dust and flying gravel that all but asphyxiated the unhappy passengers; we poor unfortunates who had imagined that a truck ride was so much better than road walking.

There are those who say that we are governed by instinct, and those who say we are governed by fear - well, we knew all about the fear, and we hoped, the driver had the instinct, for we were certain that he could not see the road. As the windscreen was half-way between translucent and opaque, and crossed by myriad cracks, it was obvious that he saw nothing ahead. Hence, instinct alone was guiding him - and a mighty good instinct, too, as he swerved sickeningly on hairpin bends, with cherns on the outer side! My! what a nightmare! Ah! but what was this? That giraffe-like neck craned outwards from the driver's cab? So that was it! He looked around the wind screen! My estimation of his instincts faded into the dust, even as my fellow passengers had faded into it, long before.

Throughout the trip, Roley was, as usual, very quiet - more quiet than ever. Probably thinking over some matter that meant nothing to no one, but everything to himself (hadn't made out his will, maybe). His apprentice, Luke Priddle, looked all wonder-eyed at the hillside; no doubt visualising the sacks of gold he hoped to deport from the Owens River Valley. Doug Johnston swayed on the brink of eternity; with teeth clenched tight, he held grimly to the edge of the tray, as each bounce and curve threatened to unseat him onto the racing road beneath. For a moment, he almost forgot his vengeful calculations of paying back the woman at Bright for selling him "tinned cow" in lieu of a glass of milk - ah, woe! is unto bushwalkers when civilisation hits the bush!

The curly headed boy was cushioned on the rucsacks, unable to account for the roughness of the ride, and much distraught at not having his pipe. And then we saw the rucsacks cushioned on him! George Dibley seemed contented, but when we dismounted his legs were quivering as he stood behind the driver. Was it twitching muscles, or was that a contemplative look in his eye? Phil Hall was sore and sorry from his jolting on that damnable perversion of automobility, and muttering incoherent epithets about the glories of the quiet bush.

Looking at them all, one would think they were really in a bad way, and I felt genuinely sorry for them. Yes, there stirred in my breast many manly sentiments of pity for those beings in agony - me, on the upholstered seat, in the cab beside the driver.



RETURN OF THE NATIVE

She's back! Yes, the girl with the Hannels Spur legs is on us once again! Norma Bardon, returned from hitch-hiking Tasmania from north to south, and east to west. On her own admission, she hiked much more than hitched. What! have Tassie drivers no appreciation of legs?



Anent the ditty on the title page, and yarns when night has fallen, did anyone note the looks upon the faces of the males when one female (strictly practical type) remarked, "What about the moon, anyway? It's only a light, after all." Ah, but how their faces brightened when a brown-eyed damsel cooed "What! Is there no romance in your soul? To me (sighs) a moon suggests a yacht, rippling waters and a soothing breeze . . . "

Vacancy for a male philandropist.



DON'T WASTE BREAD ON YOUR TRIPS

By BONA DEA.

Most Bushwalkers have known what it is to be hungry. Only a very few have known what it is to be genuinely short of food, and realize, as Ninian Melville said on his Colo trip, that food fads did not matter, what did matter was to have some kind of food in your inside, no matter what sort. But no bushwalker has known what it is to starve. Millions of people in Europe are starving, really starving. Every loaf of bread you waste means so much less wheat to send to Europe.



Our Shoalhaven correspondent reports that Bill Cosgrove and John Johnson are still in form. All who sallied forth on the recent hoo noes ware expedishun are now thoroughly versed in the bush bla-bla of camp-fire communism.

UPPER SHOALHAVEN

By FRANK LEYDEN.

"Aha! Marulan at last! Wake Johno." Johno was awakened.

"Time? 2 a.m. Hand out the packs."

"Hallo! Here come Clem and Peter from up front". The party assembled on the platform.

"All here? No! Where's the elite? The First-class passenger?"
Not in sight.

The guard blow his whistle and waved his lamp, whereupon the train started moving out from the platform.

"Look! Look! There he is! We're here, Bill! Get out, quick! Here, grab his gear, someone!"

"Whew! He's just made it! He'll never live this down."

A voluble crescendo of censure was unsuccessfully parried with ineffective refutation as the ten second-class and one first-class sahib bunked down on the floor of the waiting room.

Came 6 a.m. a rising up and a stamping along the main street looking for a truck. An urchin, screamed out "Hey! You's hikers? Dad's goin' to take yers out". So "Dad" filled the radiator and brought his timber truck out into the street. We clambered aboard and after tying on the door set forth for Inverary Park. Somewhere, we passed through a gate and followed the rough road below Cooper's farm. About a mile across the paddocks another gate led us into the bush. Here, we left the truck and walked some half a mile down hill to a hut by a dam. Water was procurable in the tank, and as we breakfasted we sheltered in the hut from icy wind and rain.

What does the map say? Walk due south for forty minutes and then due east until we see the Shoalhaven. We should then be able to pick the ridge leading to the junction of Nerrimunga Creek.

Well, first we beat it out across the paddocks, then into the timber. Johno started off too far to left, and then too far to right of what wasn't right, anyway. The country became a maze of indeterminate little ridges; it was cold, and it was pouring rain. The compass succumbed to instinct, and the dictator of wizardry weaved a vicious circle of confusion as Emaciation vied with Duty for the supremacy of left over right.

Then a track arrived. This brought us to a gold diggings on top of a high ridge. Strange; we thought the Shoalhaven gold was in the river beds. Someone murmured, "Perched river gravels", and another muttered, "Reefs". A view opened up: below was Nerrimunga Creek in a gorge as grand and fearsome as the Upper Kowmung. As our purpose was to follow a ridge to the junction, we

retreated north to head off the creeks, then sidled onto a north-south ridge with the Shoalhaven far below on the eastern side. A track brought us out above the junction, but the ridge ahead seemed far too steep. Working to left, we came to a precipitous creek. Water, and we had lunch.

After lunch, we attacked what appeared to be the middle of three ridges leading down to the junction - this ridge brought us out above everything on either hand. It turned downward, and dropped with ever-increasing steepness; no more than a few yards were visible as a foreground to the depths below. But soon we found a knife-edge spur with more gradual angle; escape after all, with no need for parachutes. To the left was a smooth wall of granite cut by a waterfall, whilst ahead across the creek was a high steep ridge of talus, and to the right the gorge of Nerrimunga Creek, curved back into blue distance. The knife-edge itself was easy, and led all the way to the creek.

At last, in the solitude of the Shoalhaven we stopped to rest, and now relaxed on red-brown rocks in sunlight, enjoying the beauty and peace of the scene. Suddenly with a rustling in the bushes, two dogs appeared and a bearded figure rushed out with a loaded shotgun. "Ha! aha! Good day! Yous blokes ain't the blokes been rustling my sheep, takin' 'em across the river?" Then he saw Betty and checked himself visibly. "Oh, you're a woman!?" (Blushes from Bet.). His demeanour changed under Betty's spell, he became quite affable.

This was Mr. Wells, a local, and after assuring him that we knew nothing of rustling sheep, we had a long yarn about local history, gold mining and the fearsome Tallong Tiger.

A Tiger at Tallong? Yairs! he'd seen the beast himself! He'd seen its spoor along the banks; he'd seen a kangaroo, the back of which had been broken at one blow, and the body fearfully mauled. Yes, and in the end he'd seen the foreign creature in a tree, one day while mustering sheep! Our suggestion of a dingy received vehement denial, as he proceeded on another tale. Yes, a story of man's evil to fellow man, and to substantiate the yarn he produced a nugget of gold from a tin in a sugar bag. It seems that he'd become interested in a gold mining venture, and took in two partners to help him work the claim. In dead of night the two blackguards had attempted to murder their benefactor. Such ingratitude! However, he had made a timely escape by the aid of an unloaded shotgun; and the solitary nugget serves to perpetuate his mistrust of man.

With doubting looks, we turned to go. The river was low and muddy. Following the right-hand bank, we came to Little Horseshow Bend, where we camped for the night.

Again we were up at six. Bacon and eggs, harmonica and "ghoul hash" for breakfast. Big Horseshoe Bend was next on the itinerary, and after a swim we went up the track on the inside ridge.

This track is plain and well graded, affording easy access to this part of the Shoalhaven. Looking downstream from the top, we had a view of the upper end of the Blockup. Four miles along the track, we found the

hut where we had breakfasted on the morning before. After lunch we walked into Inveray Park, there to meet transport for the eighteen miles back into Marulan.

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to complete the set. Good price offered.
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RIVER CANOE CLUB - TOPOGRAPHICAL SECTION

MR. TED. GAINES PHILLIPS, 39 SILVER STREET ST. PETERS convenor of the above section, advises that the following map is now available for perusal by those interested.

Map No.35. Webb's Creek (Hawkesbury River) -
Complete tidal section
Phone: LA2667.

We are still hearing of fish, reputedly a trout, given to a party of five on the Geehi. How their eyes glisten when they tell us of it, and how often! Latest estimates give its dimensions as twenty inches long, six inches deep and fifteen pounds around the girth.

Convulsive noises from the Comitt. Room each Friday night represent nothing more than the apoplectic explosions of Joan Savage trying to knock shape into aspiring stars. But we remind you: the Play Night is now scheduled for May 24 instead of May 31. Bearers of rotten eggs will be refused admission.

Subterfuge is still amongst us. The current Walks Programme included a walk to Mt. Guouogang but impromptu variations at the start found eight fine young bucks far from their scheduled course, and all we have heard of Guouogang savours of blue distance. The car ride across the Megalong is reported to be comfortable.
