

JANUARY

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly Bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
Bush Walkers, C/- Ingersoll Hall, 256 Crown St., Sydney.

No. 158

JANUARY, 1948

Price 6d.

Annual subscription Feb. 1948 to Jan. 1949 5/-.

Editor: Alex Colley, 55 Kirri- Production: Brian Harvey
billi Av., Milson's Pt. Production Asst: Peter Price
Assistant Editor: Dot Butler Sales & Subs: Christo Calnan
Walks Reporter: Kevin Ardill Asst Sales & Sbs: Betty Hurley
Illustrationist: Dennis Gittoes Typed by: Jean Harvey
Business Manager: Maurie Berry

CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial - Offensive Behaviour	1
At Our December Meeting	2
Social Events for January, 1948	3
News from N.Z. - from Ron Knightley and Kath Hardy	4
Wilderness of the Colo, by "M.G."	8
The 2999 Who Were Not Late, by "Taro"	11
On Sunday Hiking, by "Tess"	13
One for the Committee, by "Skip"	14
Federation Notes, by Brian Harvey	15
Why the Bush Fires Make the Streams Dry, by M.B. Byles	16
Paddy's Advt.	18

EDITORIAL

Offensive Behaviour

A good story about nudists is a sure seller of newspapers and the Police, obligingly enough, have once again provided juicy material for the posters and headlines. The reports state that they found the nudists at a spot in the Cronulla sandhills about four miles from Cronulla and a mile and a half from the nearest house. The nudists were kept under observation through binoculars for a time, after which the police "closed in" and made arrests. The charge was "offensive behaviour" and the fines from £2 to £5.

The logic of this charge is peculiar. Firstly, can a person, or persons, behave offensively "in vacuo" - i.e. if nobody else is there to witness the said behaviour? Secondly, behaviour, if offensive, must, one would think, be thrust forcefully upon the attention of the offended one. Surely nobody but a pervert would inflict

2.

upon himself needless mental suffering by seeking out the types of behaviour which offended him and then watching it? If the Police definition is accepted, then we should be arrested every time we have a bath in the bush.

It may be argued that the Police were merely enforcing the law - theirs not to question whether it be a good or a bad law. But they are continually selecting the laws to be enforced. At any given time thousands of people are breaking laws - the Police merely grab one or two here and there, where they think the crimes bad ones. At the time when they were busy spying on the nudists there were probably dozens of people within a few miles of Cronulla behaving both offensively and anti-socially. There were probably quite a few shooting near houses and campers, others destroying wild flowers and some dropping lighted matches or leaving unextinguished fires. But, in the eyes of the Police, these selfish actions were not nearly so wicked as the removal of clothes in a remote stretch of sandhills.

AT OUR DECEMBER MEETING.

The President was in the chair and there were about 60 members present.

At the start of the meeting two new members were welcomed - Harold Gregory and Russell Kennedy.

In the correspondence two letters were read from the Federation. One pointed out the difficulty of doing anything about Narrow Neck. The matter was referred back to the Federation which was asked (again) to find out the location of the land. The next letter described the difficulties of forming an Australian Federation. This unwanted child of our November meeting was replaced gently but firmly on the Federation doorstep. So far the score was even, until Dorothy Lawry moved that the Federation be asked to inquire into and expedite the reservation of the Greater Blue Mountains National Park, thereby providing further subject matter for S.B.W. - Federation correspondence.

The Treasurer's report was rendered clearly by the Assistant Treasurer, Kevin Ardill.

The report of the Assistant Social Secretary, Edna Stretton, made our mouths water, as it contained a complete course-to-course description of the Chinese dinner. Nor was it hard to imagine the diners "staggering" round to the Club after the meal.

Brian Harvey showed us the brass plate which is to be placed on Splendour Rock as a memorial to fallen Bushwalkers. This will be described in a later issue of the Magazine.

It was announced that a new Walks Secretary would be elected at the January meeting to replace Bill Horton, who is now on his way to England. In the meantime the Assistant Walks Secretary, Peggy Bransdon, is preparing the next Walks Programme at short notice. One way and another the Assistants had a busy month in December.

The President announced that the Era working bee, despite (or perhaps because of) the rain, had been very successful. About 25 members were present. They dug three large pits in which were placed all the tins and bottles lying around. Members were asked to note that the pits were not for food and paper, which should be burnt. Tins should be bashed. Members were asked to see that campers use the pits and keep the camping ground as tidy as possible.

So far no appeal had been made to other Clubs for funds to defray legal expenses of the Era land purchase. The sub-committee thought it better to wait until fencing and other costs could be estimated - perhaps a continuing fund to cover general expenses would be best.

It was announced that Roy Bennett had been re-elected as an honorary member.

The proposal for a special celebration of the Club's 21st birthday was discussed. A dinner party, or something on the lines of the Christmas Party, followed by a camp, was suggested, and a sub-committee comprising Arthur Gilroy, Dorothy Lawry, Tom Moppett, Brian Harvey and Eric Rowen was appointed to arrange the celebrations.

The meeting closed at the early hour of 9 p.m.

SOCIAL EVENTS FOR JANUARY 1948.

Now that Christmas and New Year are over we can once again get down to the serious business of amusing ourselves.

You have just several weeks to brush up your brains - read encyclopedias, Commonwealth Year Books and authors in the original Sanscrit for the Grand Quiz on Friday, the 30th. I do not know what is "grand" about it, but I suspect that it is the prizes.

It is rather unfortunate starting off the New Year by going to the Tivoli. What is to happen to all our resolutions about seeking only the highest in art, literature and drama. However, it is claimed that everyone must eat a peck of dirt before he dies (I am beginning to regret this metaphor) so come along and get your share

4.

for 1948 over early. Tuesday the 20th is the day.

Keep your ears open for announcements.

. Here's a tip to keep in mind. The "lecture to be arranged" on 27th February will be some excellent colour films of Kosciusko.

NEWS FROM NEW ZEALAND.

Ron Knightley writes: on 11th December:

"Here we are, stuck on the road, under clear blue skies, looking up at crags and bits of hanging glaciers. So far, the trip has been just too, too perfect. The Jack Hunters treated us royally in Auckland, and at Wellington we were welcomed by the Mother and brother of Ray Lamberton, Secretary of Tararuas, at present visiting S.B.W. In Christchurch, we found hospitality at the hands of Norma Barden's ex-landlady, and yarned for a while to Marj Clark and Doug Johnston before they went off for a Sunday afternoon's ramble. All free meals, so far! Then we hit the road. From Christchurch to Te-Anau, some 430 miles, cost us just 6d. in fares, being for trams thru Dunedin. Sunday arvo to Wednesday arvo, per coal trucks, sand lorries, limousines, jallopies - and we even jumped a rattler between Lumsden and Mossburn! Kath Hardy, diffident at first, but definitely catches on fast. Hitch-hiking in N.Z. is not so easy because freighting on main routes may be done only by rail, and one does not find lorries going long distances. We averaged 12 lifts per day, one free meal per day, just over one hundred miles per day, and one blister for the whole trip!

"The scenery up the Eglinton Valley is super plus par excellence, especially as we have had days of perfect weather. Boyoboy! The crags just go up and up, trees giving way to bush, bush to grass, and grass to bare crags - but you've seen it all before. Shall leave other side for Kath. Yours immobilised by a broken petrol pump - "

And this is what Kath Hardy has to say:

"Yes the N.Z. trip has certainly turned out as well as we could have wished and we feel Australian scenery will seem rather tame by contrast from now on. The North Island as seen from the train was unbelievably green and fertile. The harbours of Wellington and Lyttleton are very beautiful as they are surrounded by high hills. The South Island seems mainly pastoral, all the land is cleared, with belts of firs and gum trees, yes gum trees, planted as wind breaks. Very pretty and peaceful, but what a thrill it was to see the high mountains for the first time. Sharp snow-capped peaks breaking the

skyline with undulating hills (something like Kosciusko) in the foreground. Te Anau is a beautiful blue lake surrounded by mountains. Everywhere in N.Z. there is broom (deep yellow) and wild lupins (pale yellow) growing in profusion, and they make a lovely touch of colour. The lupins all along the shores of Lake Te Anau just completed the picture. We have had brilliant sunshine most of the time and in fact everything so far has been perfect. Wishing S.B.W. all the best for Xmas from their N.Z. "tramping" party."

A little later Ron writes again:

"We are now at Ball Hut, 3,900' above the moraine-covered ice of the snout of Tasman Glacier. Rain pours down, but from the kitchen come the uproarious voices of a quartet of tough mountaineers, who are cooking a ten-course dinner in between glasses of the all-powerful amber.

"When last writing we were stuck by the road through Homer Tunnel to Milford Sound. In due course the Milford supply truck passed by, and after loading our packs on board, we set off up the six miles of stony road to the deserted road camp at the mouth of the tunnel. Above us rose four thousand feet of sheer rock - the walls of an ancient glacier valley, a wide U shape with the side spurs all sheared off by ice action - a distinct contrast to the V-shaped valley produced by river action.

For two nights and a day we "camped" in the ghost town by the tunnel entrance - on feather mattresses in the deserted school! What a perfect setting - three thousand feet of sheer rock face rose on every hand. A few stunted bushes clung to the lower slopes giving way to grass at about 4,000 feet, whilst above about 5,000' only the bare rock rose to the ice drifts and little hanging glaciers of the upper slopes. On the one hand, the snow-dome of Mt. Talbot, and on the other, crag and spire rose through snow-drifts to Mt. Christina's 8,000 foot summit.

We scrambled up on to Homer Saddle, to gaze down into the valley on the far side, again to see breathless cliffs and snowy crags and precipices. Coming down, we had a minor casualty - glissading down the snowdrifts, Kath Hardy hit the rocks. A 12 inch bruise and graze on one thigh, since treated with typical bushwalker nonchalance.

Homer tunnel is a sight indeed. As yet unfinished, and forbidden to trespassers (Oh yeah!), it is drilled $\frac{3}{4}$ mile through solid granite. At the entrance, about 200 yards of one-foot reinforced concrete avalanche shelter lies flattened - mute tribute to the force of avalanches falling from the peaks above. Walking is rough, the tunnel unlined, and water pours from the roof in places, but it is a mere 20 minutes of torchlight.

6.

The eleven miles of rolling stony road to Milford is a marvellous day's walk, with the thick bush around, the sheer cliffs of the old glacier valleys, the towering crags above, and views of minor glaciers, an ethereal pale blue in the sunny distance. Paradise indeed, but boy, was it hot! A N.Z. valley in December heat can be just as enervating as 110° in the Wild Dogs, so that we were very tired when we hit Milford at about 6 p.m. Ah, Milford - wide, pale blue waters between deep green forest on the precipitous shores, rising to the bush, the grass and again the final bare rock and snowdrift, with Pembroke Glacier visible over the shoulders of some "lower" giants.

With intentions of "camping" we cast a professional eye over the deserted huts by the road and sat down to rest for a while. And that was where it happened. Sandflies! You've never seen such monsters! Or such hordes! Or felt such bites! Or scratched so much and cursed so much at the lumps, blisters, scales and holes they left behind! Seething, buzzing, flying, crawling, biting, stinging myriads who drew blood at every bite. We waved and kicked and cursed and spluttered - we went way out over the river bed to cook our tea, yet still we had them in our eyes, our ears, our noses, our potato, our bacon, our apricots - oh, how could hell be worse than this? We piled on trousers and sweaters, gloves, mittens, blizzard hoods, goggles; we anointed ourselves with the costliest insect-repellants recommended by trampers, tourists, climbers, chemists - but alack! They climbed down our mittens and up the sleeves of our sweaters, down our necks, inside our goggles - there was even one more enterprising than the rest who got far enough afield to bite me between the toes! I bow my head in shame, I cower before accusations of "sissy" and cries of "Shame!" - but when someone mentioned the wire doors and fly-proof rooms of the hotel, I was far from last in the race to safety. One pound per day was cheap respite from the pests! We soon took heart, and forgave ourselves the lack of courage against the sandflies, for emblazoned across the Visitors' Book was "Sydney Bush Walkers" and the name - Dorothy Hasluck. We also found the signature of Col Smith, who recently gave us the lecture on New Zealand. Oh bliss! Oh rapture! Two days of soft mattresses, morning tea in bed, soft music, four-course meals and - most of all - freedom from those (censored).

Milford Track back to Te Anau on the far-famed "World's Wonder Walk" was rather an anti-climax after the glories of the Eglington Road and Homer Saddle. Three days of easy rambling and launch trips. Future comers should certainly go in the reverse direction, and would be enchanted all the way - unbelievable crags would lead always to summits higher still.

Arriving at Glade House, on the Northern end of Lake Te Anau at midday on Thursday, December 18th, we took the launch 47 miles down to Te Anau Hotel on the southern end. Again the clear blue waters, deep green bush, final crags and snow drifts round the summits. Again the perfect sunny day - the thirteenth consecutive fine day.

A hasty tea was followed by a conference. Mt. Cook, some 350 miles away, was next port of call. Service car or hitch hike? Cec Way had only 7 days' more leave, so speedy transit was essential. Enquiry at the Public Works camp was fruitless - no trucks would next day cross the 50 mile "wilderness" between us and Lumsden, the nearest town. As we wandered towards the hotel, intent on booking seats on Friday's service car, a huge lorry pulled in and started unloading (yum, yum!) beer! Kath Hardy here unearthed her trump of trumps - within 20 minutes we were speeding on our way to Lumsden, and - mar vel of marvels - the same driver was next day going north to Queenstown, on the shores of Lake Wakatipu! Need I say more? Friday night was spent by the deep blue waters of the lake, on feather mattresses (!!! again!) in the motor camp. Saturday, we descended from glory, to go north from Queenstown in a service car. At Lake Pukaki, we transhipped, and whilst standing around, a tough mountaineer type wandered up to say "Sydney Bush Walkers, eh? I was there at the start of things". Bert Hines (Heinz?), now of Tararuas, wished to send greetings to Maurie Berry and Myles Dunphy.

Last night we bunked down in Sealey Cottage, just by the Hermitage. We were introduced (by a friend of Bert Hines) to Mick Bowie, Chief Guide - he was in Marie Byles party in the Himalayas, and enquired after her current welfare.

Today we came up by bus to Ball Hut, again in a sunny weather, with cloud banks round the higher peaks. Mt. Cook itself was clear - white, majestic against the deep blue sky - for a few minutes during the early morning. We took a walk up the glacier to the foot of the Hotchstetter Icefall, but as we intend this as a day of rest, we came back to the hut for lunch - which, officially, we cooked ourselves, but a large party from the Hermitage was up for the day, and no one knew tuther from which, so that, when corned beef and salad, prunes and custard and a cuppa were pushed under our noses - well, we're S.B.W's after all.

A party starting out for De La Beche Hut, 6 miles up the glacier, retreated before the rain - so as I sit here, they cook our tea, amid growing clamour as bottle after bottle of dead marines goes on to the mounting pile! The weather is clearing and these boys may take us up to De La Beche tomorrow. On the following day, if the weather is perfect, we may go with them to Graham Saddle, to gaze down the western slopes to the Franz Joseph and Fox Glaciers. That, however, is problematical, and in the meantime we merely gaze up at the towering snows ... the clearing sky ... the screes and crags ... and to our nostrils comes the aroma of steak ... of onions ... of pancakes ... of custard ... Oh, glorious Mt. Cook!

Again, with best wishes to all - Yours at the foot of the mountain, with hopes of climbing it in some year hence, and with thoughts of tea ... "

8.

And Kath Hardy adds another note:

"Ron seems to have covered practically everything in this letter. All I can say is that the trip comes up to expectations in every way, and despite the views of certain S.B.W. members I have decided that hitch-hiking is definitely the way to go places and see things. Of course, the tramping (pardon, I should no doubt still say "walking") is pretty good too, and though I haven't had much chance at the mountains yet the start is most propitious as I am sitting at ease in Ball Hut writing letters, while four hefty males cook dinner for me - not including the 2 males in my own party.

"Best wishes for 1948 to all S.B.W. and hoping all the holiday walking trips are as good as our N.Z. effort."

WILDERNESS OF THE COLO AND THE NEW ROAD
TO SINGLETON.

By M.G.

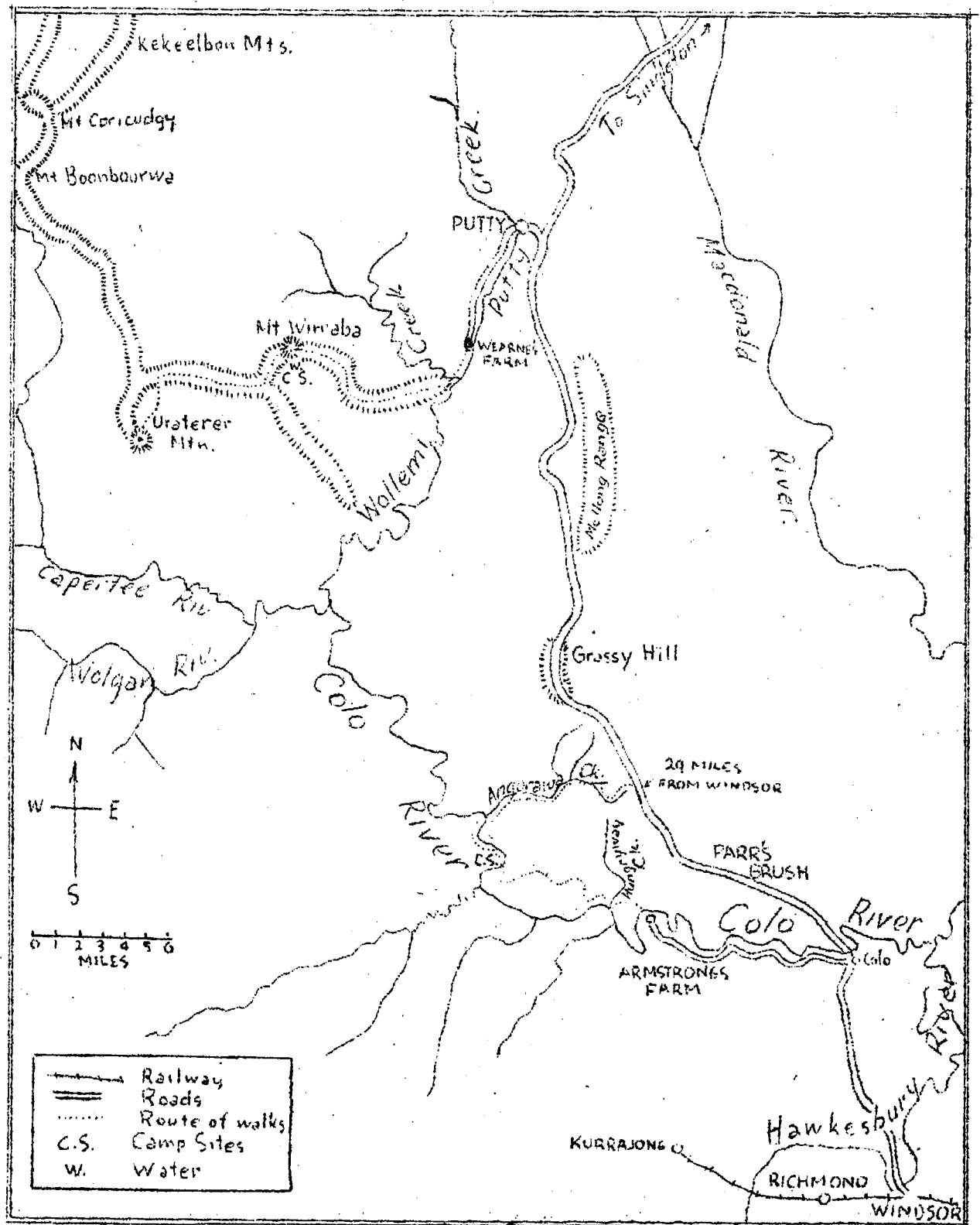
The Capertee River, a sluggish, muddy stream, and the shallow, rockstrewn Wolgan, join to form the Colo, which flows for 50 miles or more to meet the waters of the Hawkesbury, near Lower Portland.

The river is navigable for some miles, and a number of small farms and orchards dot its banks on the lower reaches. The last signs of civilisation are at Armstrong's orchard, six miles above Upper Colo. Beyond that stretches a wild and remote region, and its roughness has to be seen and felt to be appreciated.

Years ago, a surveyor's pack horse trail existed along the river. It strayed from the stream, and for a great part of its length wriggled round the sides of cliffs, hundreds of feet above, but with disuse, bushes have overgrown the track, and landslides obliterated large portions of it.

The Colo River is in the form of long smooth pools, alternating with rapids, where the water flows through barriers of boulders. Towering walls of sandstone rise almost from the water's edge, and there are narrow shelves, where gum and turpentine grow wild.

During the recent war years, the construction of the new defence road, from Windsor to Singleton, has made the Colo country more accessible to walkers, and it is now possible to visit the heart of the country in an ordinary two day week end, or a three day holiday trip.



10.

A few months ago, a party of us arranged motor transport, and journeyed along the new Singleton road to a point 29 miles from Windsor. Our walk started from this point, and setting out in a westerly direction we soon passed through the aptly termed Blue Gum Swamp, and continued down the watercourse into Angorawa Creek, which was followed downstream through typical sandstone country. The creek fell more and more during the day, and its cliffs rose even higher, and shortly before entering the Colo the rugged nature of the spot was fascinating.

After a 5 hours' walk from the Singleton road, the Colo River was reached, and we rested a while by a large pool surrounding a sandy island.

Walking downstream along the steep banks of the Colo was not pleasant, as the undergrowth consisted of blackberry bushes, nettles, and lawyer vines. Other vines included the Australian sarsaparilla, while the red flowered Kennedya, and the white flowered Clematis were growing in profusion.

After walking $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles down the Colo from Angorawa junction in 2 hours, we reached the foot of a big gully on the left hand side of the river.

The ascent of this brought us to a saddle, in close proximity to the Island Trig, and thereafter, a few miles along the tops led to Parr South Trig Station.

We rested a while to admire the view, and later walked eastward down a steep ridge to the Colo River again.

A half mile walk down the river brought us to Hungry Way Creek, and of course the track from there to Armstrong's orchard is known to a number of walkers.

When we actually arrived at the orange orchard it was after sundown, and we were pleased to see the lorry driver who was to take us to Windsor. The party had accomplished a rough week end walk, involving 15 hours of actual walking time.

A fortnight later came 8 hour week end and a 3 day trip had been arranged further afield in the Colo country.

It seemed a long motor trip from Windsor to Putty, and then 7 miles down the creek (68 miles in all). Leaving the lorry at Wearne's farm, a pleasant 4 miles walk further down Putty Creek brought us to the Wollemi junction, and we were not surprised to see a good flow of excellent water there. A glance at the map would indicate Wollemi Creek drains a large area of rugged sandstone country and, in fact, the creek is reputed to be always running.

From our lunch site there on the Saturday we ascended a ridge in a westerly direction, and after 5 hours of gradual climbing.

the summit of Mt. Adams was reached. With little daylight remaining, a camp site and water were found in a fern tree gully on the south side of the saddle which separates Mt. Adams from Mt. Wirraba.

A basecamp was made there, and next day a walk was accomplished to Mt. Uraterer and back, without packs.

The country was clothed in typical sandstone country vegetation with a sprinkling of waratahs in bloom.

From the basalt dome of Uraterer the most striking part of the view was perhaps the wild beauty of Capertee Valley, as the hazy atmosphere seemed to screen the longer distance scenery.

The third day of our walk (Monday) was spent making the long descent down the ridge to Wollemi Creek, and so to our waiting motor transport 4 miles up Putty Creek.

Our three days walk had embraced 19 hours of actual walking time, in wild country, and it was quite a contrast to see the bright lights of Sydney at 9 p.m. on Monday evening.

THE 2999 WHO WERE NOT LATE.

Amongst the distinguished gathering at the Town Hall on December 4th was the Duke of Clear Hill, who reports the following regrettable incident.

"There they were - thousands of 'em - lookers on, fiddlers, fluters, brasseres, a conductor, an organist - choristers of many a choir - ushers, ticket sellers, chuckers out - yea - even a Red Cross nurse or two waiting for a case - AND one or two of the very cream and essence of the S.B.W!

"All - to the totteringest old grandpa - had managed to eat, wash up, get dressed, catch their trains, trams, boats, buses and cars and be all ready for the performance of the Messiah. A goodly gathering it was, and all went smooth as the tick of a clock.

"But stay - ere three numbers had been sung - what is that strange movement on the alto side! YES - it was the tenor who came late!

"As everyone knows - there are no breaks till interval in this oratorio - not even a chink a mouse could creep in. And so - the miserable hound slunk his black way across the fair white face of the choral multitude.

12.

"What a sight! What a blot!"

"Shame upon shame - it was a Sydney Bushwalker! The school tie forbids mention of his name but - though the longing to know it may be dormant - sooner or later it may be gratified."

Down Curtain
Black out,
Nuff said.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY was once again a great success. There was some difficulty finding a hall in town about the right size, but the one at Air Force House just suited nicely - it was big enough to let everybody indulge their fancy in the way of dancing, but not big enough to split up the party. There were quite a few of the older members there whom we don't often see nowadays in the Club. They included the Chardons, Gwen Laurie, Jean Austin, Richard and Marjorie Croker, Francis Ramsay and others. There were plenty of the newer members there too. Supper was a little short because of the 38 who arrived without telling the organisers - despite about fourteen announcements telling them to pay up in the Club room. However the tomato sauce was plentiful and tasty. Gifts were showered upon those who danced in the right places or jumped over brooms before the music stopped. The gifts were distributed with discretion - none of the ladies received shaving soap, nor did the gents get any scent. Costumes were varied - some of the girls wore evening dress and were hardly recognisable as Bush Walkers, others wore more ordinary outfits, but they all looked cool. The blokes stuck to their cosy woollen suits, and all looked hot. It was a good party and the Social Committee deserves the thanks of the revellers for all its organising work.

How tough we are!

"Speaking of active hiking programs, the spring schedule of our Australian contemporaries takes the cake! They conducted from one to three trips every week end during March, April and May, including a Friday evening-to-Sunday excursion each week. Many of these covered distances of 30 to 40 miles!"

From the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club Bulletin July.

ON SUNDAY HIKING.

By "Tess".

This is frankly and unashamedly an article in defence of that much maligned member of the human race, the Sunday hiker. Personally, I think they are tough, but before the wrath of the entire S.B.W. descends upon my head, let me explain.

A few weeks ago I was visiting friends. We went on a picnic. You know, the well organised type, two cars, much food, and appropriate literature. After lunch, I was eagerly anticipating the traditional spinebash, when the son of the house (an energetic type) suggested "a little walk".

Now I was (I trust) becomingly clad in sandals and summer frock, not to mention hairribbon, but with my usual politeness I said "Oh, how lovely!" (Just like that) and we went - Too late I remembered that to the uninitiated, once a bushwalker, always a bushwalker.

I was dragged through undergrowth, up a nasty slope of loose debris that tripped me, and filled my sandals. My skirt was too tight for any but the most ladylike of steps, and the strain was too much for it. My hairribbon stayed to decorate a lawyer vine. Altogether I suffered. And how I suffered! I was only saved from death by exhaustion when my escort collected a thorn in his foot, and expected womanly sympathy at short notice. I must have made a good job of it (the thorn I mean) for after its removal we retraced our steps. Then, while struggling vainly in the rear I missed my footing, and finished the descent in a series of ungainly leaps, horribly hampered by my damaged skirt. I landed, not in the arms of my escort (he had taken rapid evasive action) but wrapped around a very grubby tree. I was not happy!

At last the ordeal was over, and when I removed my sandals to wash in the creek, my left foot was a bloody mess (literally speaking, of course.)

My escort rose to the occasion. He knelt beside me and tenderly washed the blood away. Ah! thought I. This is where being a Sunday Hiker has its compensations. Not a bit of it! As the dreadful wound was revealed he walked to the car, threw me a piece of oily rag from the tool box as a bandage and said carelessly "It was only a leech. You bushwalkers must be used to things like that!"

Now, all I can say is, that either Sunday hikers are tough, or else, that when it comes to technique, Bushwalkers have much to learn!

ONE FOR THE COMMITTEE.

By "Skip".

There was a night in the Clubroom when in my innocence I mentioned, in the course of one of those post-walk reunions where the conversation goes something like this :

"Aaa-a-ah! Good-'ay George! How's things?"

"Orrrr, you know. Hey, got those photo's yet?"

and so on with ecstatic references to former glorious days - you know - when, as I said, I mentioned in the hearing of one of the more solid club members that I'd got there by truck. (Even now I'm shy of mentioning hitch hiking straight out just like that.)

"You did what?" he trembled, looking around to make sure the President was in charge of the meeting at the other end of the hall. Obviously this was some time ago, but I don't think the official attitude has changed meanwhile.

He looked shocked "Think of the Club, old boy! Think of the Federation. What about our Reputation?" and he turned away, sorrowfully wagging his finger. I think he must be one of those repressed characters. Probably his mother made him push the family stroller full of groceries. Or possibly he's a teetotaler.

It's come to the point where habitués of road travel have come to look on their travels as half the trip. It turns out bushwalkers aren't the only morons on the road and self respect hasn't a chance against half a pint at some wayside hostelry. And think how many half pints go to a return ticket.

And tell me if anyone has been given the offer of a furnished cottage for six months in a select mountain village, or has been presented with a dozen cigarettes, in a second class NSWGR compartment.

But I must be fair. A second class ticket does entitle one to rather doubtful comfort inside a carriage on most lines, whereas a seat on a fish truck in a drizzle or the discomfort of a load of cement or bricks may be comparative luxury at no cost, but rather wearing on an older personality. Is the Official Attitude perhaps then sour grapes?

A little advice to the prospective. Wear shorts and a respectable hat. Don't expect any vehicles to pull up for you going uphill - the top of any hill is the best place of all. As a sop to self-respect, if you've got any, take your train fare with you (see above). I had to put this in somewhere.

"Well" - the Committee's works start going round - "see" they say, "they as good as admit to cadging, boozing and having no self-respect. Throw 'em out! Think of our Reputation." (They should hear what the motoring public really thinks about 'hikers'.)

But would they rob us of the undeniable pleasure of plush and padded comfort once in a while; would they deny us a journey to and from home which is twice as fast, sometimes, as what you usually have to pay for; and would they undemocratically stop up from seeing and hearing how the other half lives?

Shame! oh shame, shame! They would suppress the delightful character who took six hours to travel between Parramatta and Penrith on a tractor. They would do away with wirellasses and cabin heaters in cabbage trucks. They would Nationalise road traffic to make the railways pay. Oh shades of freedom!

Most venerable and noble committee men (and women).. Think wistfully on thine early folly, and lend a wise and kindly eye to the peregrinations of healthy youth. If now thine inhibitions suffer pain on splintered bucking boards, suffer theyselves to think this wisdom was mostly garnered in they living years, and spare a sigh for innocents abroad.

FEDERATION NOTES

by Brian Harvey

Blue Gum Forest: A new set of regulations have been drawn up and the Trustees have the right to appoint rangers for the protection of the forest. Interested members should contact Dorothy Lawry.

Blue Mountains National Park: We learn that the Blue Mountains County Council is interested in this project and hope its influence will help to bring about the reservation.

Annual Party: £25 profit has augmented Federation Funds.

Bundeena Road: Nothing further to report. Position being observed closely.

Publicity Officer: Position still vacant and urgently needs filling.

National Park: Sub-committee Report on policy has been finalised and will be circulated to all Clubs.

Bushwalkers' War Memorial: Dedication Ceremony will be held at Splendour Rock at dawn on Anzac Day 25th April. Small donations towards cost will be welcomed.

POSITIONS VACANT

Wanted. A bevy of typistes to cut stencils for Club circulars, reports etc., is required urgently; preferably in city area, but suburbs no bar. Usual rates of pay for honorary work. Reply personally or by letter to Brian Harvey.

LESSON IN CONSERVATION

Every spring, if it is not too wet, the farmers of the Illawarra burn off, on the Barren Grounds and nearby, anything that is inflammable and unpalatable to cattle. This year Marie Byles was there and was horrified to think of this superb scenic and wild flower area being steadily reduced to sand and charcoal. So she wrote to some of the farmers pointing out the dangers of destroying soil cover on stream sources. They were interested - invited Marie to address their Gerringong Conference, which she did. The farmers were impressed and asked many questions, all of which were answered to their satisfaction. This is real conservation work. It is a seldom such views are so seldom heard outside S.B.W. meetings.

Marie also wrote a series of articles for the "Kiama Independent," one of which is reprinted below with the "Independent's" permission.

WHY BUSH FIRES MAKE THE STREAMS DRY UP

by Marie B. Byles

When rain falls on country where the natural bush is still standing, it is dammed back by a myriad little dams formed by the dead leaves and sticks, and the small plants. It does not run off quickly, but has time to sink slowly down into the soil, where again it is held, this time by the sponge of the roots of trees and plants. When the rain stops, the leafy shade prevents the sponge of the roots from drying, except very gradually, and all this time the water is seeping slowly underground and collecting in the streams. That is why in country where there are no bush fires the streams go on flowing for many months after the rain has gone.

When a bush fire has been allowed to sweep through the bush, the myriad little dams of the leaves, sticks and plants have gone. The rain falls and rushes off at once, and worse still carries the soil away with it, causing what is known as sheet erosion. A stream which comes from a thickly wooded country is clear even after heavy rain; a stream from cleared and badly burned country is muddy with the soil it is carrying away with it, and you will notice that this stream is very swollen during rain, and falls very rapidly once the rain has gone. When the trees and undergrowth have completely gone, the last bit of spongy mass has gone too, and there is nothing whatever to hold the water.

Bush has to be removed if we are to have farm-lands, but every foot of bush and scrub not needed for cultivation should be carefully cherished. Only so can we keep constantly flowing streams, and no greater folly can be imagined than deliberately to burn the bush in an agricultural country. It is true that burning may bring a few extra blades of grass, but even this can go on for only a few years, for burning destroys the humus, the decaying leaves, which the food on which the young grass lives

In the older countries of the world, whose civilization has survived, China, for instance, burning the bush would be regarded as a heathen practice, like burning witches. Such countries would never have survived if they had burned their land, and Australia will not continue to survive if we go on burning the bush. Already the streams around Kiama and Gerringong are drier than they used to be when I first went bushwalking there, and they will go on getting drier and drier during the summer months until we stop burning our best water-protector, the bush.

"THE TASMANIAN TRAMP" - A complimentary copy of this magazine, published by the Hobart Walking Club, is to hand. It appears to be modelled on the "Bushwalker Annual" and provides useful information for anyone contemplating a trip to Tasmania. Places described include La Perouse - Pinder's Peak, Precipitous Bluff, Walls of Jerusalem, Great Lake to Lake St. Clair, the Arthurs and Chain of Lagoons - St. Helen's Hostel Route. Maps of most of these places are included. Cost is 1/- plus postage and the address of the Club is C/o Miss N.E. Shaw, 251 Davey St., Hobart.

CHRISTMAS TRIPS IN N.Z. - At a recent meeting it was lamented that there was no S.B.W. Christmas trip. The Tararua Tramping Club, however, publishes details of no less than eight Christmas trips in its August magazine. Some of the trips are limited to 6, 12, or up to 18 starters. Costs are usually about £6 to £9, but go as high as £15.

SKI GEAR - Another note of interest in the Tararua magazine for July is a report on the Club's Gear which says, inter alia, "Seventeen pairs of skis are in stock, 13 in good condition."

ZEAL: From report of Tararua Club annual meeting - "The Chief Guide's account of his search for bloodhounds for use on searches made one wonder whether the bloodhounds, had they been found, would not have provided an anti-climax in the matter of tenacity of purpose."

TIMELY WARNING - In our Christmas issue appeared an article entitled "The Mistletoe Menace." Complaints have been received, but not from the married.

CANOEING MAP: Mr. E. Caines Phillips advises that map no. 44 of Wright's Creek (Macdonald River)(Hawkesbury River system) showing the complete tidal and canoeing section is now available.

WHY NOT USE BRICKS? - "On many big private holdings where great belts of timber still stand....softwoods and hardwoods are being mown down in swathes. It is the quick way to wealth, leaving behind a ravaged and bare sloping soil, soon to be spoiled by water erosion" - "Waratah" in S.M.H., 19/12/47.

BACKYARD BUSHWALKING

"Dad" came an urgent whisper in that dim light that is before the dawn. "Go back to bed" said I with the automatic response of a parent heavy with sleep. "But there are four owls outside the verandah." It dawned on my waking mind that the child must be sleep walking. I rose reluctantly to conduct her back to bed. But no! Sure enough there were four owls on a branch just outside the verandah. I could have poked them with a stick. There they were fast asleep in that ridiculous pose that some birds adopt, as though someone had wrung their necks and propped them up on the branch. We only knew they had heads when one stirred in its sleep and showed an eye and a beak amongst that bunch of feathers which was at the end of their necks. They were certainly asleep and what a noise they made with a snore-like sound. I didn't find out whether they were mopokes (which don't say "mopoke") or whether they were the not-mopokes which do say "mopoke," but I do know they looked thoroughly miserable. They looked as though they were thoroughly fed up with the weeks of wet weather we had had and had lined themselves up on a branch waiting for the sun to rise to dry and warm themselves.

They spent the whole day on the branch and were still there when I returned in the evening from the city.

In the garden I have planted out some gigantic lily seedlings. They will be "gigantic" one day but at present they are about two inches high, but if they survive droughts, floods and westerly winds plus rabbits and bandicoots they will be big fellows one day.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

WHAT HAS PADDY GOT?

Those Yankee plastic proofed short coats have had a boom during the wet spell. Still a few left at 18/- and no coupons. A light handy garment for those who prefer to walk in a proper jacket when it rains.

Steel frame rucksacks. Bushwalker 4 pocket type, price £3/10/6
Ladies 3 pocket frame rucksack price £2/15/6.

Rucksacks without frames camping sizes ^{s d} 20/6 to ^{s d} 32/6

PADDY PALLIN

CAMP GEAR FOR WALKERS

327 George St.,

Phone BX3595

Note new number

SYDNEY