

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER.

A monthly Bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
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EDITORIAL.

Be Kind to Prospectives.

One of the most pleasant features of belonging to the S.B.W. is the opportunity it presents, not only of forming lasting friendships, but of making newcomers. In the early days of the Club the old members went out of their way to welcome a prospective and make him feel at home in the Clubroom. They took a genuine interest in everyone who looked like becoming a member. It's not so easy, now the Club has grown larger, to take a personal interest in every new member in the Clubroom, but if everyone devotes a little time to this good work it should be quite easy to make the prospectives feel they are welcome.

Walks leaders, more than anyone else, can help them. They should be in the Club room before their walk takes place and be careful to find out the experience and capabilities of any prospective they haven't walked with. Time and again prospectives come out with unsuitable clothing, bad footwear, hopelessly heavy packs, etc. Many of them have no idea what it is like to walk all day over rough bushland. Some come out once, in poor condition and ill-equipped, have a thoroughly exhausting day and never come again. Leaders can prevent them from doing this by having a talk to them, finding out what they have done before, warning them off if the walk is too hard, and telling them what to bring. Some members even put on special easy walks for people interested. Just a few miles through the bush with a pack is an effort for anyone who has never done it before.

Once out on a walk the leader can teach them a lot about how to walk, where to walk, how to find their way etc. If he is an experienced and helpful leader prospectives will pick up a lot of very useful knowledge in the course of a day's walk. The members on a walk can do the same, and we could mention a couple of members who have been doing this for years and are responsible for bringing many good walkers into the Club.

The best way of getting to know and helping the prospectives is to go on official walks. Nearly every bushwalker agrees that it is only when you have been on a walk with people that you really get to know them.

The prospectives must make an effort too. Unless they are prepared to take an interest in the Club and take the trouble to learn the things we teach them about bushcraft, first-aid, map-reading and conservation, they are not likely to make good members. Unless they go on something more than the bare minimum of walks they won't get to know many members. And they can't expect members to sign their forms unless those members know them well enough to vouch for them. Ours is not an easy Club to enter, but nobody of ordinary physique, who liked walking and was prepared to learn and fall in with our ways, has ever been turned down.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR JUNE

by Edna Stretton, Social Sec.

My apologies for the postponement of "Slides of the Orient" on May 19th, but unfortunately Mrs. Jordan had to make an unexpected trip to Queensland. However, I hope the slides on May 26th compensated for your disappointment.

Invitations have been sent to several clubs asking them to attend our next dance on 23rd June. This move should increase the recently disappointing numbers at these functions and make the night go with a swing.

It has been decided to postpone the Photographic Exhibition until later in the year since restricted lighting seems imminent.

AT THE MAY GENERAL MEETING.

By Jim Brown.

At one stage the May General Meeting seemed bound to establish a new record for brevity. Once again (the third consecutive month) there were no new members to be welcomed by the President; and the fifty members present sat stolidly through the familiar recital of minutes and correspondence and reports. Indeed, throughout the first twenty minutes of the meeting, your reporter found nothing to report, and even considered submitting a "Nil Return" to the editor.

It was only when formal proceedings closed, and the "general business" included announcement of a Committee decision to defer the Annual Photographic Exhibition from June to the 27th October that the atmosphere became vibrant. Bill Gillam raised objections to holding the exhibition at Ingersoll Hall with its unfavourable lighting, and moved that we investigate the availability of the Education Department's Gallery.

Dormie assailed this opinion. The extra expense was unwarranted, he maintained, and would create a schism in the club, with some members going to the exhibition and others to the Club rooms. Besides, it would deprive the Treasurer of his best financial scoop of the year. He found an additional argument in long established custom of holding the exhibition at the Club Room late in June, and also protested against the change of date. Ruby Payne Scott argued that social functions held away from the Club Room had frequently been poorly attended, and even though Ingersoll Hall was ill-adapted for the display, it was a very satisfactory meeting place.

Edna Stretton stated that the lighting in the Club Room was being improved, and there would be additional lighting for the exhibition, and Bill Gillam challenged the point that social events failed when held elsewhere - what of the Christmas Party? The motion to seek the Education Department's Gallery was then lost.

Dormie attacked the Committee's decision to vary the date of the Exhibition. June it had been for so long, that it was unthinkable to defer the event. Why? Because of the threat of blackouts, said the President. Dormie found allies in Alex Colley and John Johnson, who pointed out that the Club Room was in the City area, which was never blacked-out except in direst emergency under legislation (as in last year's coal strike) or through a line failure. John Johnson added a rider with the thought that time was rather short for organisation of a June exhibition. "There's no organisation needed", protested Dormie. "You just get members to bring their prints". A narrow margin supported Committee's plan to hold the exhibition in October.

Kevin Ardill now rose to explain that he had approached several members to lead a walk on the next programme: this because the Walks Secretary had been finding difficulty in completing the programme. One of the members he contacted had stated he had no intention of leading a walk, as he was doing most of his walking with another Club.

Letter to the Editor.

"Dear Sir,

I read with interest the Editorial in the May 1950 issue of "The Sydney Bushwalker", and in order that we might correct any misunderstanding I join issue with you (in friendly fashion) on one or two points. Firstly I accept full personal responsibility for the communication, which was not from the Ski Council but from "Don Richardson to Paddy Pallin": I concurred in Mr. Pallin's action in forwarding the letter on. A second letter I sent was in connection with advice from the Kosciusko State Park Trust on interference with wireless sets. I also sent to Mr. Pallin a report on White's River Hut from Mr. Ray Briggs (a bushwalker), on which was my minute reading "...Co-operation such as that given by Mr. Briggs and other thoughtful walkers and skiers is in marked contrast to the abuse and lack of consideration exhibited by the few who by their actions spoil things for the majority".

Subsequently, on reporting my action to the Safety Sub-committee of the Ski Council of N.S.W. (of which I am Convenor, and also performing the duties of Secretary and Chairman), it was agreed that similar letters be sent to Victorian bodies, as Victorians are frequently to be found on the Kosciusko ranges. On 15/5/50 I drafted a circular letter to "Victorian Skiing and Bushwalking Controlling Bodies and Allied Organisations", and have sent copies of this to your Federation, Youth Hostel Association, National Fitness Council and Y.M.C.A. I propose also to send a similar letter to the Boy Scouts Association.

The only inference I can draw from your remark "it is significant that such a letter should be written to the Federation" is that my letter gave you the impression that I was laying the blame on bushwalkers. Believe me, when I say that my object was to seek co-operation and assistance in preventing abuse etc. of huts, and what better bodies than the Ski Council (for winter use) and your Federation (for summer use) to try to stamp out malpractices. Let me quote the last paragraph of my letter of 15/5/50 (signed by me as Convenor of the Safety Sub-Committee): "We know that the acts and omissions complained of are repugnant to the code of behaviour of the organisations whose assistance and co-operation we seek, and consequently we feel confident that our appeal for help will not go unheeded."

We have, during winter, exercised such control that skiers generally observe the rules on the main-range; during summer the task is more difficult. As you say there are many classes of hut users and, while you can discipline members of the Federation just as we can discipline members of skiing clubs, there is little we can do to curb the "others". I have definite evidence that on two occasions, offenders were walkers, not fishermen, shooters or hoboos. Whether these walkers were from N.S.W., or Victoria, or were members of the Federation I cannot say.

I'm afraid I must also join issue on your sweeping assertion that to a skier the term "bushwalker" includes hikers, shooters, etc. etc.

"Skiers can be divided into various categories just as bush trippers can. Many skiers (like myself) were walkers first; and these at least distinguish between the genuine bushwalker and the high-heeled hiker. As an example, note the wording of my letter published in "S.M.H." on 21/5/49, headed "Lost Hikers". In my letter of 15/5/50 above referred to I mention "skiers, bushwalkers and users generally". I have always striven to observe the difference, because I know you are justly proud of your code of behaviour; and it is for this very reason that I appeal for your help, and that the Ski Council seeks the Federation's co-operation. Such huts as Sieman's and Perisher we will never keep free from abuse because these are visited by motorists and hikers in summer and by the fancy-sweater skier in winter, the skier who lights a fire for the heck of it and leaves the place littered with orange peel and other scraps. But out on the main range it is different. Food and fuel might, in blizzard conditions, be the means of saving a life. I was blizzard bound in a hut in 1946 for six days; the wireless was o.k. for receiving but not for sending; we could hear Alpine Hut, thinking we were short of food and knowing we could not survive a main range crossing, saying they would get through to us if possible. Here were people willing to risk their lives for us, and we could not let them know that we were O.K. and had ample food for two weeks or more. This is White's River Hut, extended, lined and fitted out by Kosciusko Alpine Club, and stocked with essential food, fuel etc. Although we charge skiers 5/- per night, we still lose money. If every user played the game I reckon we could reduce our charges to a couple of bob a night. No charge has previously been made for other than winter use, but we contemplate now making a charge to all users, particularly as our greatest cost is replacing equipment damaged or pilfered during summer. The Club's aim is merely to cover expenses; consequently if our honour system works in summer (it works pretty well in winter), and users take care of the hut and contents and food, charges will be reduced accordingly.

This is not a new campaign on my part. I have given publicity through the Press, Ski Annual, etc. to abuses for some years now. I could quote ad.lib. many instances, including skiers of a certain type, of dishonest and utterly selfish actions. Now I am renewing my efforts, this time as an official of the Ski Council and speaking with the voice of the safety-subcommittee. With the concerted efforts of all decent habitues of the bush and snowlands, perhaps we can educate the vandals into decent human beings, capable of appreciating the beauties of nature and of conserving rather than destroying.

With all good wishes, yours sincerely,

Don Richardson."

We were very pleased to receive Mr. Richardson's letter because it puts beyond doubt his appreciation of the ideals and behaviour of the S.B.W. We still believe that most skiers describe almost anyone who camps in the Alps in summer time as a bushwalker, but the point of the editorial was, in part, that they cannot be blamed for doing so. "Bushwalkers" have become an amorphous collection of people and if the

public cannot distinguish between campers with packs, hikers, fishermen etc. and members of our own and other walking clubs, that is largely the fault of the clubs themselves.

On several occasions our skiing part of S.B.W. members has had to spend hours cleaning up filthy huts. Who left them in that condition will never be known, but Mr. Richardson can rely on the co-operation of S.B.W. members in trying to apprehend those responsible for these and other acts of larrikinism.

Though we wish Mr. Richardson success in his campaign we believe that there is little hope of reaching the offenders by publicity or voluntary policing. The task of co-ordinating and supervising the use of huts seems to be one for the Park Trust, acting on the advice of the Ski Council. - Ed.

MYSTERIOUS KATOOMBA.

On the first Narrow Neck is a surveyor's peg. More surveyor's pegs and other alarming signs such as stakes, red and white cards, etc. have been placed near the Megalong Track and along the lower part of the track to Devil's hole. At the top of the Devil's hole we came across a large red disc and thought it must at least mark the spot for the turning of the first sod. On closer examination the sinister object proved to be a child's toy banjo. Does anyone know what all the survey marks are for? It doesn't seem possible that a road could be taken up the Devil's hole, or to the first Narrow Neck.

The mystery of the seaplane on the mountain top - referred to last year - was taken a stage further. The seaplane is now resting, like a seagull in a sink, in a dirty looking pond a bit bigger than Ingersoll Hall. A speedboat races round it in circles. The citizens seem to enjoy it. There were a number of them, in their overcoats, standing round the edge of the pond.

A POISON PLANT?

In the last issue we had occasion to refer to the condition of the epidermis of various members of Kevin Ardill's Grose-Mount Hay party. Events assumed a more serious turn when those who were scratched developed a type of blood poisoning. Small lumps started to fester and then the scratches became infected too. At least five members of the party were affected, some worse than others. Fortunately all are practically cured now, but probably only because of penicillin ointment.

A few years ago an ex-member, Geoff Parker, went up the Colo to Wollongambe Basin looking for two lost men. He found them, but developed the same type of skin infection on his arms and legs. He spent months in hospital and it was a long time after that before he got rid of the infection. That was before penicillin. He knew of another case too.

It is probably a bacterial infection. The 13 members of Kevin's party could make a useful contribution to the cause of identifying the cause of the infection if they all wrote a statement to show whether they were scratched, whether they developed the complaint, and how it first revealed itself. If these descriptions were sent in to the Department of Health or the C.S.I.R. it might lead to the discovery of the cause of the trouble and would at least furnish valuable data. The fact that five of the party developed the complaint proves that its origin was something in the bush, whereas single cases of blood poisoning could be due to other causes.

GOSSIP.

Complaints have been heard that there is not enough gossip in the magazine. Of course there isn't. But the only complaints that will get a hearing are those from contributors. Remember the editorial policy. No articles, no magazine.

FOR TYROS IN TASMANIA.

By Jim Brown.

PART 2: "THEY ALL FALL INTO THE DITCH."

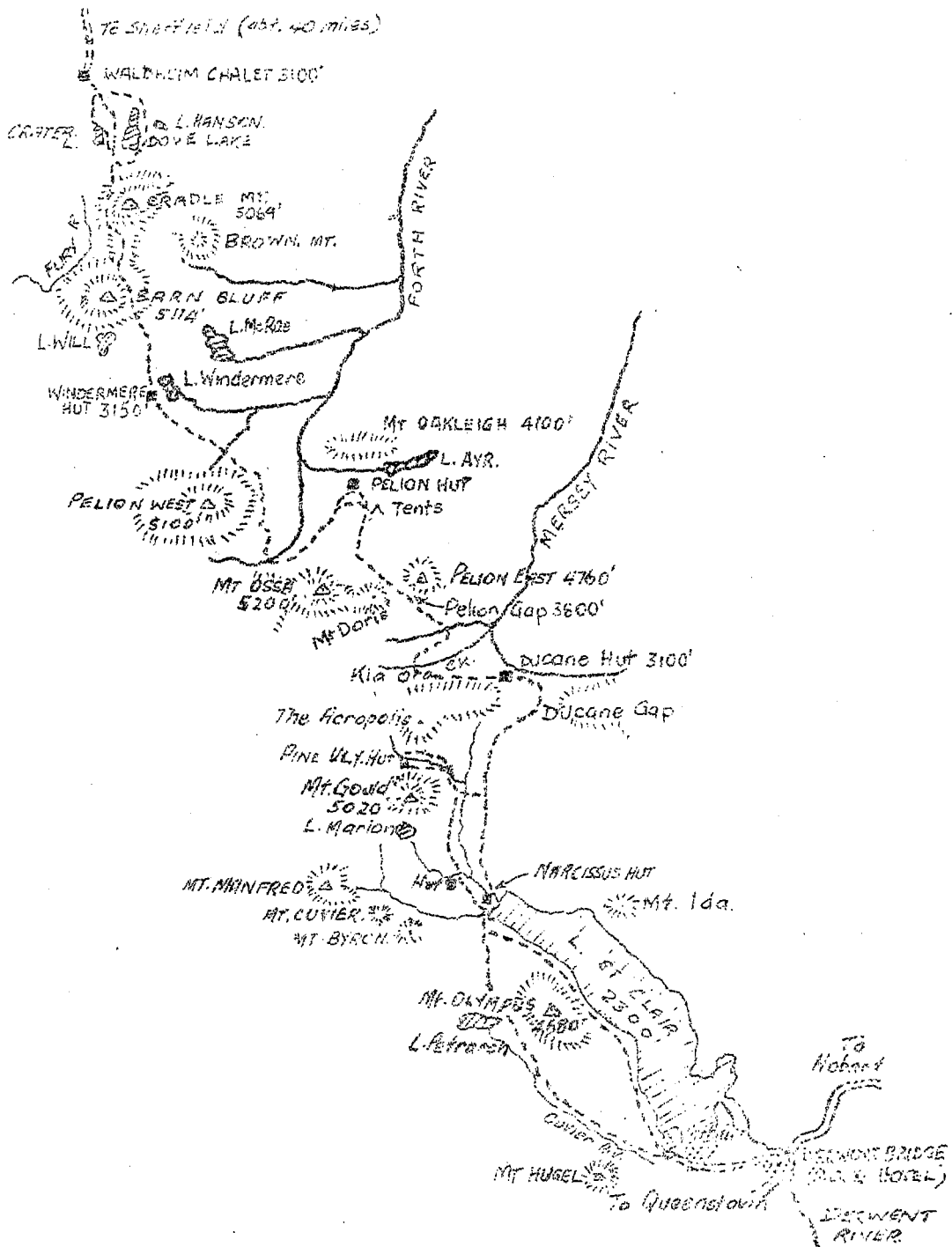
As set out in Part 1 of this epic, this Section is to deal with the three regions most commonly visited by walkers new to the Tasmanian scene. These three areas are recommended because as a "new" Tasmanian myself I visited them last summer: and because I wouldn't suggest tackling wilder country until one has cut one's teeth on the Reserve or the Frenchman. Tassy. walking conditions can be far more severe than those we know near home.

1. THE CRADLE MOUNTAIN - LAKE ST. CLAIR SCENIC RESERVE.

MAPS. The Walkers' Guide and Map - Cradle Mt., - Lake St. Clair National Park - obtainable from Tasmanian Tourist Bureau. Is not particularly accurate, but quite sufficient and easily followed.

Sketch map, West Coast of Tasmania (South Sketch), is useful for general layout of the region and environs (including Frenchman's Cap). Probably available from Paddy. 1" = 2½ miles.

STORES: If entering the Reserve from the northern end (Cradle Mt.) it is advisable to pick up stores at Launceston or Burnie (whichever is the landfall from the Mainland). Bring dehydrated stuff (except dried milk) from Sydney, but all normal grocery lines may be left for Tasmanian stores. If time in Launceston is short, or if arrival there is on Sunday, a letter and cheque forwarded to Ingles Pty., Grocers,



CRADLE MT. - LAKE ST. CLAIR
 SCENIC RESERVE
 Approx. scale 1" = 5 MILES

The Quadrant, Launceston, will bring good service. At our request, they delivered the groceries required, including eggs carefully packed, to the Airways office at Launceston, where we collected them on arrival. Any items forgotten at Launceston may be picked up at Sheffield, a fair sized town en route to Waldheim Chalet (Cradle Mt.).

If the attack on the Reserve is to be made from the south (Lake St. Clair) rationing arrangements would depend on the town from which the trip commenced. Bring your dried stuff from Sydney, but rely for normal grocery items on Hobart or Queenstown, while the Ranger at Lake St. Clair (Mr. A.J. Lamont, Ranger, Lake St. Clair, via Derwent Bridge) runs a small store which stocks most camping requisites, including eggs, chocolate, tinned meats, bacon, porridge etc. (Bread if ordered in advance.) To lighten one's pack for travelling, parcels of food, clothing, etc., may also be sent to Mr. Lamont, who will collect them from Derwent Bridge Post Office and store them for a small charge. If required, he will arrange transport of such packages or foodstuffs from his own store up the Lake to Narcissus Hut for parties coming from the north. Naturally, written advice and payment for stores and services should be sent well in advance.

ACCESS: To the northern end by way of Launceston or Burnie. Trains leave those points daily (except Sunday) at about 9.30 a.m. and 6.30 a.m. respectively. Change trains at Railton Junction, and join rail motor to Sheffield. Fare from Launceston to Sheffield about 12/-. The proprietor of Waldheim Chalet (Mr. E. Connell, "Waldheim", Cradle Valley, via Sheffield) will arrange motor transport from Sheffield to Waldheim Chalet, at a cost of about £5 per car load (car carries five) but the charge is more or less standard, irrespective of number carried. Accommodation at the Chalet may also be arranged at a tariff of about 13/- per day. Naturally, requests for transport or lodging must be made some time ahead, either direct to Mr. Connell, or through the Tasmanian Government Tourist Bureau.

If not desirous of staying at the Chalet, camping in that vicinity would be unpleasant under weather conditions we experienced, but may be satisfactory in a fine spell. Advance request to Mr. Connell may secure use of the Picnic Hut near the Chalet. Do not confuse this with Kitchen Hut, 3 miles away and on the shoulder of Cradle Mt. Kitchen Hut is at best an emergency refuge, and not worthy of overnight halt except in case of trouble.

Access to the south of the Reserve is by way of the Hobart-Queenstown road. During last summer buses left Hobart at 8 a.m. daily, also 2 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, arriving Derwent Bridge about 5 hours later. Return services leave Queenstown at 8 a.m. daily and 2 p.m. on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, pass Derwent Bridge about 2½ hours later, and reach Hobart about 4 p.m. and 9.30 p.m. respectively. Derwent Bridge is 2½ miles from Lake St. Clair, where small cabins may be rented from the Ranger at a few shillings per night. The Ranger also operates a launch service up the lake to Narcissus Hut, if one desires to avoid a day's march to that point. Bus fare Hobart to Derwent Bridge about 25/-, launch fare about 5/-. Parties coming through the Reserve from the north may arrange to be

picked up by launch at Narcissus, by writing the Ranger some time ahead and specifying date.

THE RESERVE WALK.

The map issued by the Tourist Bureau covers this very completely, and only a few notes are needed here, supplementing the general comments of Part 1. The trail is well staked and clearly defined throughout, and although generally muddy, it should be practically impossible to lose one's way. Walking will be fairly slow, as a rule, but summer days are very long.

Except for the first day out from Waldheim, generally regarded as a "long" 12 miles, the remaining stages from hut to hut are well within the capacity of modest walkers. Indeed, if you are a "tiger" party, it may be possible to telescope two of the shorter stages into one day, provided you are content to see only the mud at your feet. Even timid climbers should find some of the peaks reasonably easy (notwithstanding which, I confess we didn't completely surmount any ourselves). The rock formation consists mainly of a platform of sandstone, capped by ragged columns of dolerite, which make a striking skyline.

The huts forming the end of each stage (Windermere, Pelion, Ducane, Narcissus - from north to south) are comfortable, though usually liable to overcrowding between mid-December and mid-January. The smallest hut, Pelion, sleeps only 3 with comfort, but a mile south on the main trail (the hut being on a loop to the north-east) two permanent tents give alternative shelter. Needless to say, one always ensures leaving a supply of firewood for the next party to reach the hut. Camping would be possible in a number of places under fair weather conditions, but these points are rather widely separated by thickly grown or swampy areas. Don't rely on being able to camp when one feels inclined.

The majority of significant mountains, lakes and beauty spots can be seen from the trail itself in clear weather, and one may explore them at discretion. One detour which is recommended is that into Pine Valley, where there is a comfortable hut, and a day or two spent in trips, using the hut as a base, would not be wasted. Owing to overcrowding at Pine Valley Hut and dismal weather, we missed a scheduled stay there, and so failed to explore the Labyrinth or ascend the Acropolis - noted local attractions. Another deviation recommended is to Lake Marion, prettily situated in the shadow of Mt. Gould and the Guardians.

By walking the accepted stages on successive days, and taking no rest days, the trip through from Waldheim to Narcissus Hut occupies four days. (1. Waldheim-Windermere, 12 miles: 2. Pelion Hut 10 Miles: 3: Ducane Hut, 3 miles: 4. Narcissus Hut, 12 miles). It is much better, if time permits to have a day or two in reserve for side trips, to allow for bad weather; while a day spent browsing around Dove Lake and the other environs of Cradle Mountain is a happy thought.

Well, it was intended to cover all three significant walking areas in Tasmania in this Part 2 - but the length of the foregoing alarms me: perhaps you will find that the editor chips in here, and defers the rest for a further edition. If so, I accept that as the penalty for using too many words.

FEDERATION NOTES.

by Brian G. Harvey.

CLEAR HILL "SECONDARY" LADDER. It appears that the fencing wire ladder referred to in last month's Notes was not as infirm as reported, and was no worse than Tarro's Ladder before the latter was replaced by pitons. A watchful eye is to be maintained on its condition.

BOUDDI NATURAL PARK. Mr. Allen Strom of S.B.W. and Miss Daphne Ball of C.M.W. have been appointed trustees of this reservation in lieu of Miss Marie Byles and Mr. Theo Atkinson. Appreciation of the work of the retiring trustees was recorded.

WAMBERAL BUSHLANDS PRESERVATION COMMITTEE was given support in its protests to the Minister for Lands regarding the leasing of a tract of flora and fauna reserve at Wamberal for the establishment of a Trades and Labour Council holiday camp. Indignation was expressed at the action of the alienation of the land and the effect on the light subsoil and encroaching sand dunes, as at Kurnell.

FEDERATION REUNION Camp Committee reported that approximately 180 were present at Euroka, where water, firewood and ample camping space were available in large quantities. The campfire concert was a great success, and the absence of motor-bikes and larrikinism was greatly appreciated. It was shown that sites approachable only on foot are the ideal, as in the past Macquarie Fields has proved very unsatisfactory. The report contained much admiration for Dorman Long's rendering of "Donkey's Serenade" and "Ghost Riders in the Sky". It was resolved that future reunions would be held in May of each year on the weekend nearest the first full moon.

FEDERATION DANCE in March resulted in a net profit of £18.17.3d.

RIVER CANOE CLUB suggested affiliated clubs increase annual subscriptions so that a free copy of a "bushwalker Annual" may be posted to all members. The suggestion was not enthusiastically greeted, and it was felt an annual produced under such conditions would result in a publication of poor literary standard. The magazine should sell on its own merits. Owing to the persisting high printing costs there will be no annual this year.

CODE OF ETHICS. A supply has been forwarded to all clubs and we now await criticisms (if any).

MARK MORETON PRIMITIVE AREA. The question of timber cutting in this area was again raised, and it was learnt that as difficult was being met in the demarkation of the reserve boundary, the matter was resting in a dusty Department of Lands pigeon hole.

Letter to the Editor.CUCUMBERS.

"Sir:

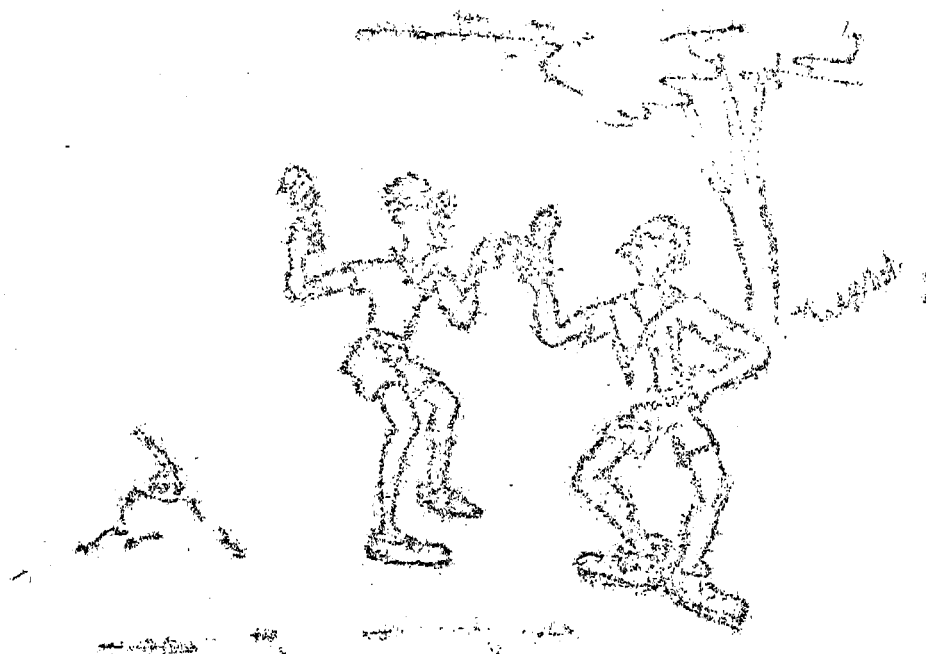
It was amusing, reading of my cucumbers, but unfitting that they should be placed in the same class as the many concoctions for "various and assorted palates". These concoctions are known only too well to bushwalkers. At times, admittedly, one must laugh at the eating habits of some people, but the eating of cucumbers is quite in order and should not be looked upon as abnormal.

A cream horn decked with a spread of peanut butter is on a par with an ice cream on a choice tender steak. Still, likes and dislikes are the marks of individuality. It is certainly not unusual, and yet it is always surprising, how easy it is for one to become singled out and have the finger of scorn pointed in mockery because one does what one wishes. I know, because I have had it pointed at me many times for eating cucumbers, which are said to be poisonous. That same finger makes one laugh on realising the ignorance behind its oscillating movement.

The gentleman who consumed that odd combination, to the amazement of witnesses, is intrepid. But I wonder if the same gentleman, on devouring that same cream-horn-plus-peanut-butter combination would feel assured of stamina, as would another eating food of proven worth. If he feels so assured, then he can point the finger without fear of being humiliated.

Cucumber rates high as a food, whereas the other combinations are worse than second rate. In diet I have no rivals, and what you think about that doesn't matter, but don't despise the cucumber.

- Clem Hallstrom -"



BIGGER, BRIGHTER AND BETTER BUSH GARDENS.

On a recent trip Paddy visited Adelaide and had the pleasure of doing an overnight camping trip in the Onkaringa Gorge (known affectionately as the "Onka perstinka" or just plain "Onk" to the Adelaide Bushwalkers). It was an interesting trip. Not the least interesting was the discovery of a tree which in ignorance we assumed to be confined to the Sydney district - the Port Jackson Pine (also known as the Middle Harbour pine - Callitris Cupressiformis). There grew quite a little copse of them in the gorge and we went up and shook their hands - delighted to find familiar faces so far from home.

On the way back to the city we paid a visit to a real native garden (there seemed to be acres of it) where were collected some of the finest West Australian and Victorian species. The good lady who owned the place came out armed with secateurs and a bundle of envelopes and now we have a stack of native shrub seeds which will give us work for years to come.

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What has Paddy Got?

White japara tents. Lightweight japara groundsheets. Steel frame rucksacks. Billies upright and squat types. Plastic screw top jars.

Orders for sleeping bags opened 1st March. There may still be some left. Give Paddy a ring.

PADDY FALLIN,

Camp Gear for Walkers

Phone
BX 3595

327 George St.,

SYDNEY.