

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER.

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

FESTIVE SEASON.

It has often seemed strange to us that at the very time of the year when the majority of Christianised humanity hugs the family circle, and makes a special bid to live on the fat of the land, there is that small, cantankerous, unconventional group which must go off, far from their more humdrum fellows and relatives, and eat a Christmas dinner of bacon and dried potato. When you think about it quite dispassionately it does seem rather like doing it the hard way.

However there they (we) are, and no doubt there we will remain: and a very good thing it is too. If the day does come when it seems to bushwalkers to be unreasonable to spend their Christmas slugging it out in Tasmanian mud, or shivering in the westerly gale on Townsend, then you may write "finis" to the game of walking. People who

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have the bush in their blood will always find that festive luxuries are poor substitutes for that long holiday trip: if their annual holidays occur over Christmas they will joyfully get by on scroggin and chocolate and a few raisins.

To those who are going to take their Christmas afar may we wish a really good trip: to those who holiday at other times and whom we will probably meet at Era - a Happy Christmas and Good Walking in 1953.

AT THE NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING.

With some sixty-odd members in sight, and the President in the chair, the November meeting got under weigh with a welcome to three new additions to the strength - Clarice Morris, Ken Angel and Frank Barr - the latter two greeted with almost delirious cheering from a section of the audience. The minutes were absorbed without comment, but the correspondence brought an enquiry from Colin Putt. Would a letter which came from Peter Stitt and himself be read to the meeting? Thereupon it was, and it contained the comment that they would be quite happy to refrain from using explosives at Club functions - with one notable exception. They wished to have a shot at the big tree down in the Grose River at Blue Gum - source of much of the strife with bank erosion - and to this end they asked Club assent. There was a motion to the effect that a sub-committee be set up to consider the whole problem, survey where necessary, blast out the tree, and generally essay the plan of bringing the river back to a bed where it would do no harm.

The President suggested that the proper authority to give approval and blessing to such a scheme would be the Blue Gum Forest Trust. Jim Brown, speaking as a Forest Trustee, pointed out that only portions of the area referred to as Blue Gum Forest came under control of the Trust. If the operations were confined to the Trust's section, he believed any scheme to combat erosion would be gratefully and gladly accepted by the Trust, which would be heldng a meeting in the first week of December.

Myles Dunphy hoped that the explosives experts had some previous experience in this kind of job, and Peter Stitt expressed the view that it would be necessary to get well down into the timbers of the offending trunk, and he thought they could provide a suitable drill for this. Jack Wren emphasised that there would be any amount of work not connected with the actual explosions, and a full-scale working bee, inspired by S.B.W. was the proper programme. The detonation experts remarked that their plot was to fire the charges after all campers had vacated the Forest - either late on the Sunday or on the Monday morning.

The vote was taken, and it was agreed to set up the committee, the members of which would be Jack Wren, John Bookluck, Ken Angel, Peter Stitt and Colin Putt. Members of the Blue Gum Trust would be able to participate on an ex-officio basis.

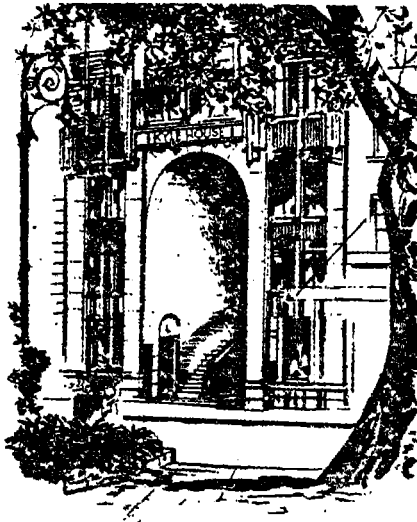
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Kath Brown now raised an allied issue: would it not be a good thing, in the interests of safety of campers generally, if it were made necessary for the approval of a meeting to be gained before any work (including conservation activities) involving use of explosives was commenced. Jack Wren suggested it may not always be desirable to have to await a general meeting's assent: Peter Stitt commented that some kinds of charges may deteriorate to the stage of being dangerous to use if not employed. Neil Schafer enquired if there had ever been "explosives trouble" in the Club before, and if any by-law had been framed about it. The President said, no, but we had been very close to having one. The motion to limit the explosives enthusiasts was then put and lost.

A small backwash to this extended discussion came in the Federation report, when it was mentioned that mysterious blasting had occurred in Bungonia Caves recently. A voice from the back cried urgently "I have an alibi!" Allen Strom took the opportunity to underline the importance of obtaining permission from Trustees or other proper authority before any work, conservational or otherwise, was begun.

Paul Barnes rose, looking hungrily around, seeking a Minutes Secretary for Federation (he ultimately found one in our ranks, we gather) - and volunteers for the Bush Fire Patrols which Federation had arranged in the National Park.

After the Treasurer's Statement had been heard, an ex-Treasurer, Gil Webb, enquired if we were likely to survive the rest of the year, now that all funds were virtually in the kitty. The President said it might be a close thing, but we should be able to live within our means, without dipping into reserves.

The Conservation Report contained the full account from Allen Strom of the deputation to the Premier on Kurnell (see elsewhere in this issue). Myles Dunphy moved a motion of thanks for Allen's representation, and suggested we express our appreciation of the work put into the case by Mr. Guy Moore of the Forestry Advisory Council.

Paul Barnes, speaking of wildflower protection, mentioned that the N.S.W. Ranger Patrol was organising a meeting to decide on ways and means of garnering information on flowers which were growing rare and may be the subject of special protection.

Coming to General Business, the President announced the latest edict on fire-lighting in the out-doors. In the eastern and central divisions of the State cooking fires may be lit in properly constructed fireplaces, or containers of a type approved by the Local Councils, provided that a cleared space extended five feet in all directions from the fire. More stringent regulations may be imposed if the fire danger increased, but would probably be proclaimed for limited areas and brief periods only, and reviewed and re-imposed if necessary. Roy Bruggy enquired just what was a "properly constructed fire-place?" It appeared that this was not very clearly defined, and Myles Dunphy suggested that local Councils probably had their individual ideas on the subject.

Finally, perhaps through association of ideas, we came to a suggestion from Don Frost that, in addition to patrols in National Park, a body of walkers may be made available for active fire-fighting in the Park. If they could have the Park's equipment made available, and perhaps a driver, they could stand by at week-ends, when few Park employees were about, and possibly arrest small bushfires before they developed. Some spotting stations were indicated - Peach Tree Trig perhaps, and another elsewhere - and a minimum of thirty-two fire fighters, rostered on duty in parties of eight each weekend.

Edna Garrad enquired if it might not be better to support the patrols already arranged, and Don replied that the fighters could co-operate with the patrols: Myles Dunphy remarked that the Park was still disastrously burnt-out from last summer, but Don countered with the point that there were still some sections which may be lost if unguarded. The matter was then left for further discussion, and to see if a nucleus of the fire fighters could be organised.

Gil Webb enquired how the regulations affected the barbecue, to which the President remarked that the regulations were there, saying "a properly constructed fireplace", and there our deliberations ended for the month. The time - 9.20 p.m.

Owing to the Christmas and New Year Holidays, the January Issue of this magazine will not be on sale until Friday, 9th January, 1953. Annual Subscriptions to the magazine expire on 31st January next.

VICTORIAN SEARCH & RESCUE AT WORK.

By Stuart Brookes.

Marysville is a mountain holiday resort about 60 miles north east of Melbourne, situated in heavily timbered ranges rising to about 4,500-ft. The Southern slopes of the ranges, and particularly the Deep Creek heads of the O'Shannassy Water Reserve, consist of very dense rain forest, with wire grass, fallen timber and all sorts of rubbish between the big trees. The ridge tops are scarcely any better, and the proposed route of the missing party along the Metropolitan Board's boundary line between Mt. Strickland and Mt. Grant has no track, although the Head Ranger, Jack Lewis, a veteran and skilful bushman, does patrol it occasionally. The gullies leading into Deep Creek are very steep, although there are no cliffs.

The party, four men and two girls, were not members of any club, and their ability not more than average, although they apparently held somewhat exaggerated ideas as to their capabilities. One of the girls had only one other trip to her credit. They all behaved pretty sensibly, however, when things went haywire.

The actual distance between Strickland and Grant is not very far along the ridge, and even with the scrub a properly equipped party, with slashers, should do that section in about a day. The weather on the Saturday and Sunday, the days on which they must have gone south off the ridge, was quite good. The bad weather did not commence until Monday and merely added to their troubles.

They set out from the road on Friday afternoon (25th April) up the logging track to the huts near Strickland and camped. Where they went wrong after that, no one has yet found out. The intention was, of course, to complete the round trip to Marysville by Sunday evening.

The parents informed the police in Melbourne on Monday afternoon, and at 9.30 p.m., after a short, fruitless search by locals, the Search and Rescue Section of the Federation was called out - by Russell Street Police Headquarters.

I will digress here to explain the local set-up, as I believe it varies considerably from the N.S.W. scheme, particularly as regards relations with the Police.

The S & R was formed several years ago and placed at the disposal of the Police, who accepted it with reservations. Since then they have made a couple of calls on the S & R, obviously try-outs, and they were, on the whole, convinced that the scheme could be of use in certain circumstances. They called several meetings with S & R representatives and laid down certain conditions. One was that they would decide when a call was to be made. Furthermore the Officer in Charge of Communications at D.24 (radio headquarters) would make the decision and not the local Police in the area.

Also, calls would only be made in cases of dire emergency, and not to look for dead bodies, escaped lunatics and the like. These, and other conditions, were of course all regarded very favourably by S. & R.

The S & R could put on a private search if they wished, but must notify D.24 first.

The call-up system is simply that D.24 'phones the S & R No.1 for the Federation, who 'phones the No.1 of each Club, who contacts members on "A" priority, i.e. ready to leave at four hours' notice. Assembly point is at Russell Street Police Headquarters and transport is provided by the Police. In the latest effort, Police radio cars were also directed to outlying suburbs to pick up key S & R men.

To continue: the first party was requested to assemble at Police Headquarters at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, April 29th. Twenty turned up and we left immediately in "riot" vans (Utilities with wired-in canvas-covered backs) for Marysville. We encountered snow some miles from the town. After a certain amount of mucking about, we set out in company with various local teams. We were dismayed, as we got into the higher country, by the amount of snow already fallen and by the fierce gale, which was bringing more snow.

The locals regarded the conditions as very unusual for the time of year. We learned once again, as we had on previous searches, that it is a mistake to get caught up with the locals, with rare exceptions. They were not terribly enthusiastic to head out into the snow covered scrub, although I must admit that in this particular region they get a lot of calls on their time to search for "lost" parties of young people from guest houses.

The exception in this case was Jack Lewis, Head Ranger of the Melbourne & Metropolitan Board of Works, who control the Water Catchment Reserves.

Tuesday's search didn't amount to much, and we were just beginning to become orientated. On Wednesday more S & R members arrived, as requested, in lots of twenty. On Wednesday afternoon an unfortunate call was made (unauthorised) over the radio for members of the Red Cross Ski Patrol, and other volunteers, to meet at Russell Street at 11 p.m. This resulted in a great flood of 'phone calls to Police Headquarters, who in error gave out the 'phone number of S & R No.1 contact, who had a frantic time trying to cope with "Collins Street Bushmen" who wanted to be in it. Others turned up at Russell Street and became mixed up with S & R parties about to leave, and had to be sifted out. The Police are now willing to believe that radio appeals for volunteers can have unfortunate results.

At about this time the Police decided to call on the Army for assistance and this was immediately forthcoming on a large scale. The organisers of the search at this stage were the local policeman at Marysville, Jack Lewis and two S & R members. By this time the Police were beginning to rely more and more on S & R men, and it was on their recommendation that Army assistance was sought. Not more than twenty locals participated in the search at any time.

The Army duly arrived Wednesday evening, with a great fleet of trucks and jeeps, radio trucks, cookhouses, etc. The Major in charge and a Captain joined the organising staff, but made no attempt to

YOUR CHRISTMAS CAMP WILL BE THE HAPPIER

WITH GOOD THINGS FROM

T H E S A N I T A R I U M H E A L T H F O O D S H O P

1 3 H U N T E R S T R E E T, S Y D N E Y

CRYSTALISED CAMQUATS AND PINEAPPLE CUBES

TURKISH FIGS APRICOT ROLLS FRUIT NOUGAT

DRIED APRICOTS AND APPLE RINGS

ALMONDS AND RAISINS PACKS SNOWBALLS

CASHEW NUTS - SALTED AND PLAIN

AND ... A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR A GOOD FRIEND

A BOX OF DELICIOUS GLACE FRUITS !!!

dominate proceedings. It was apparent that they could best assist as regards to transport, communications and rationing.

Transport was becoming a bottleneck as by this time there were over 100 S & R members on the spot and they had to be shifted to and from search areas. At a conference that night it was decided to set up five main camps, supplied and maintained by the Army, from which search parties, all bushwalkers, would fan out.

I returned to Melbourne on Tuesday night late, with the parents of the missing people, in order to procure more maps, etc. from Government Departments (which were falling over themselves to assist us by this time), and also to ensure that the large party of S & R members scheduled to leave town on Wednesday had as many petrol stoves as we could get, and full winter kit, such as mittens, two pairs long trousers, etc. I returned to Marysville on the Wednesday night with a party of about 45, including some members of the Ski Patrol. It was thought advisable to have them on hand, though in the areas then being searched the scrub made skis useless.

On Thursday, May 1st, the assistance of the Army made possible the establishment of four forward camps, carried out as follows: Actual searching was to be carried out by bushwalkers assisted by a few locals. All walkers and skiers were lined up before the Police Station (about 150 persons all told) and four search parties were selected, with leaders. All these front-rank searchers carried gear and rations for four days. From the remainder a track cutting party was selected to cut a track to the Paradise Plains Camp (No.2) and the balance, about 30, were to be used to help the Army "back-pack" supplies, radio gear,

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etc. into this camp. These latter stout souls had the hardest job of all, and did it willingly. Some of the radio units weighed 60 lbs.

I was with the No.1 camp party and its set-up was typical. The searchers comprised 20 walkers and skiers, supported by 15 Army personnel under a Captain. For transport we had a jeep, a 3-ton 4 x 4, a 30-cwt. 4 x 4, a 4 x 4 radio truck and a GMC 3-axle drive 10-wheeler. Jack Lewis, the Ranger, also came with us, as he thought the allotted search area a very likely one.

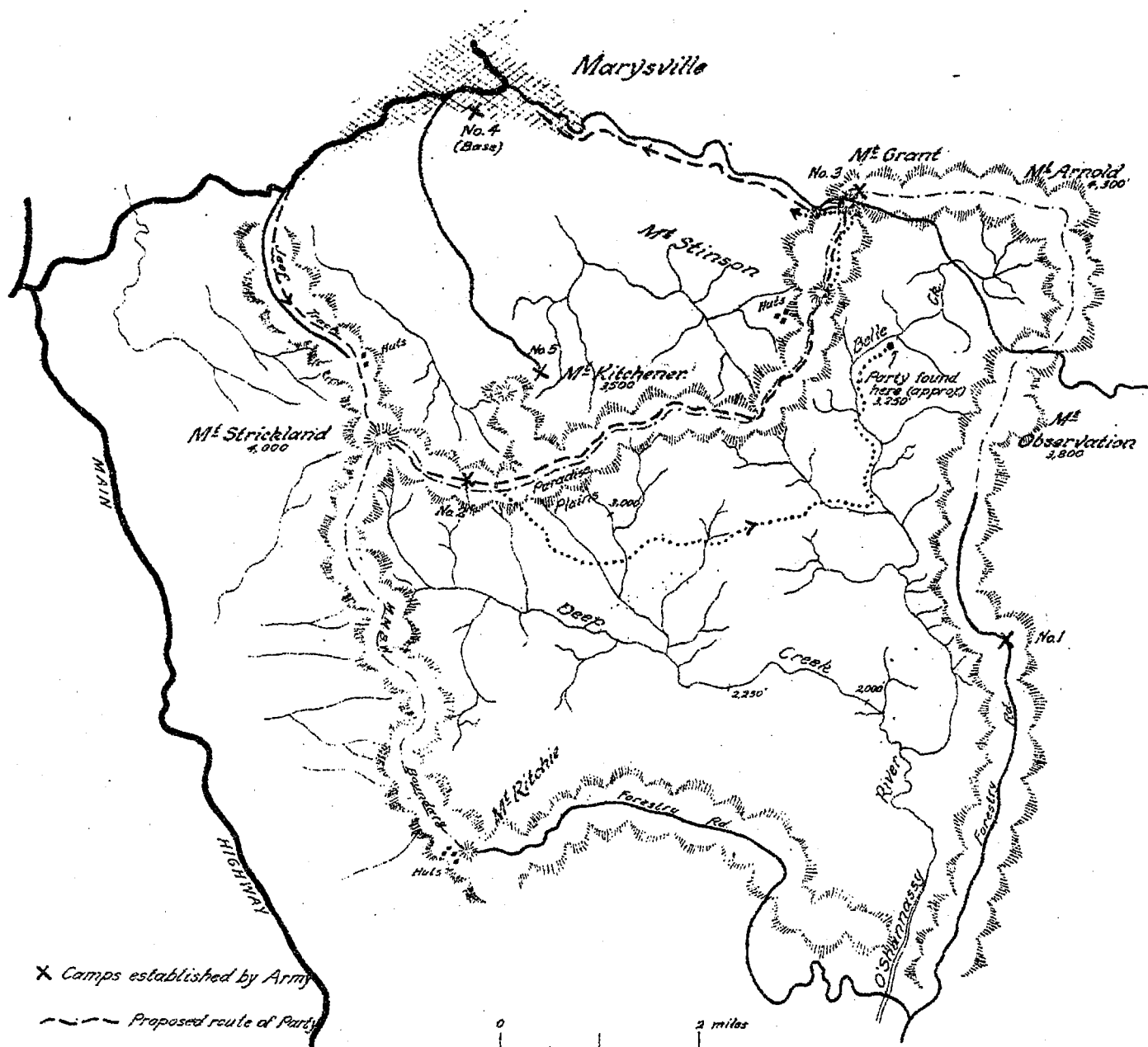
We had to take a circuitous route of over 40 miles to reach the camp site (see map) and whilst the Army set about establishing the camp, we set off into the scrub, led by Jack Lewis. We also had issued to us 12 4-1/2 lb. walkie-talkie radios, but soon discovered their range in scrub or timber is very limited (about 300 yards) so we returned them to the radio truck.

We searched along the river below our camp that afternoon, and on return heard that the party had been found - ironically enough by local graziers, the Keppel Brothers, some of the few locals to take part. They had been into the Bellel Creek area the day before and were asked to give it another go on the Thursday. In the meantime the party was working its way up the creek and met the Keppels at about the place the latter had reached the previous day. The missing party had travelled about 3/4 mile in the meantime. They were in fair condition, but had had trouble in getting two of their number to rise that morning. We have had no opportunity yet to closely question them as to their movements. They do not belong to any walking club, although one or two of them had been out as visitors with various Clubs.

When we returned to our camp it was dark and we were cold and wet, but the Army had tents pitched, a roaring fire for drying clothes, and hot cocoa, followed shortly by a hot meal, on tap. Once they overcame their initial diffidence at working with civilians all of the Army personnel co-operated splendidly. They made no attempt to take control, but summed up the situation rapidly and decided the role they could best fill. The Army officers were much impressed by the equipment carried by the walkers, especially the four days' rations (they didn't believe this at first) and by the teamwork of the search parties comprising as they did members of different clubs. The officers were also at a loss to understand how the leaders could maintain discipline without any apparent authority, and commented on this aspect several times.

With the finding of the missing party, the whole organisation had to be put into reverse. It took over 24 hours to get all the personnel back to Marysville, and could well have taken much longer. The poor devils who packed the military stores into Camp 2 had to pack it all out again, but the track had been cut in for about a mile by this time.

To sum up, the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs, and particularly the S & R Section, is now held in pretty high esteem by the various Government authorities. Right from the start the Police gave full scope to the S & R organisers and acted promptly on all



X Camps established by Army
 - - - Proposed route of Party
 Assumed " " " " (approx)

0 2 miles

SKETCH MAP OF MARYSVILLE (VIC)
SEARCH AREA April 1952

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requests or suggestions made. The Inspector in charge has since had a conference with S & R Convenors, and stated that the Police Department was most satisfied with the efforts of the Section. He requested that the Federation immediately appoint a Liaison Officer, whose duty it would be, on a future call-up to report at once to Police Headquarters and remain there during the search. A similar post, plus deputies, is to be created to do the same job at the Police Station nearest the search area.

The Police are now fully satisfied as to the ability of S & R members and no longer concerned, as apparently they were previously, that the searchers might have to be searched for.

As previously mentioned, Police Headquarters has deliberately chosen to retain control of S & R personnel in that they assess any given situation, and decide whether to call on the S & R. If they do decide, the S & R people are then sent to the local Police who must employ them, whether they like it or not. This method, we feel, is very satisfactory as it ensures that we are not called out without good reason, and when we do go, our time is not wasted.

SHOULD BUSHWALKERS MARRY?

By Alex Colley.

A visitor to the Club rooms on Friday 31st October might have noted that the sounding of the gong for the commencement of the debate was the signal for the assorted bushwalkers present to act in a manner reminiscent of eventide in a fowlyard. As the chattering groups separated to circumvent the furnishings there was a slight hush, followed by renewed tongue-wagging as they arranged themselves in three long parallel rows. Gradually the chatter subsided until gossip was suspended. Then, hammer in hand, and within easy reach of the contestants, Brian Harvey introduced the teams. On his right the Government, led by Mr. Jim Brown, one who had taken the plunge; next him Mr. Ken Meadows, the Club's most popular bachelor; and - here he hesitated while the third member simpered and the audience teetered - Miss Edna Stretton, one "well versed in love". On his left the Opposition, led by Mr. Neil Schafer, without beard. Next Mr. Clem Hallstrom, one who, though only recently married had had enough of it (cries of "I've had it" from Mr. Hallstrom), and Mr. Roy Bruggy, evidently of the same mind.

Mr. Jim Brown, opening the case for the Government, proclaimed that marriage was good for human beings. Anticipating that he would be outflanked on this argument, he went as far as to assert that bushwalkers were human beings, but this was as far as definition could be stretched - he knew people who would not include them in the species homo sapiens. Lately, he said, many "crusty old bachelors" as well as younger members had decided to marry. He instanced Mr. Frost, who had been bitten, Mr. Fall, about to take a tumble, and Mr. Colley, now on the leash. Then he went on to describe a few of the virtues they had probably found in matrimony. Consider, for instance, that unhygienic mess, the bachelor's billy and the menace of food poisoning. The Opposition, no doubt, had a bevy of lovely ladies in attendance ready

to satisfy their every whim, but there was ^{no} hope for the male members of the Government except marriage.

Mr. Harry Neil Scott Schafer (without beard) came right out into the open and declared himself to be not only the Club's No.1 misogynist (woman-hater) but also No.1 misogamist (hater of marriage). Describing the Government's arguments as eyewash and poppycock he turned to science and placed his reliance on statistics (no fear of figures this anti-feminist). Bushwalking, he said, was a healthy activity, but when bushwalkers turn to marriage, what is the result? Quoting our ex-Treasurer, there were 52 active members married to each other, a polygamous state of affairs which shouldn't be tolerated. A Schafer survey had proved that three years before marriage walkers did 13.652 walks per annum, and three years after marriage 13.650, drop of .002 walks per annum. This was the result of the reluctance of wives to let husbands go walking.

Mr. Ken Meadows, second Government speaker, was all for marriage, if only for gastronomic reasons. Consider, he enjoined us, the mess consumed by Clem Hallstrom before he was married - oatmeal, raisins and powdered milk stirred up in cold water. But marriage, ah! think of the kitchen tea, where you eat somebody else's food; the wedding breakfast, with all the bushwalker guests guzzling round a heaped table next the kitchen. After the wedding married couples could be visited - more food: and then the christening with its ample provender (at this stage a drop of saliva escaped from the corner of Mr. Meadow's mouth). Then think of the Club's membership - the best members would come from good bushwalking stock. Think too of the money you saved - 2/6d. a year each in subs. - and the gossip you provided when marriage was impending. Then when you were married you could sit back and watch the unmarried "scrambling for mates". Best of all there would be no more of those damn fool questions about co-tenting.

Clem Hallstrom, after slating the Government's unsound reasoning, started off on the fields, the birds and the bees. Ears twitched in anticipation of further enlightenment, but his purpose in describing the beauties of nature was to contrast the sorry lot of the married bushwalker. Single bushwalkers might be misfits, but they were happy misfits and better a misfit than married, confined within a 6-foot paling fence, growing lettuces (cries of "Wot! No cucumbers?") and running messages. The trials of bushwalking - flies, heat, sleeping in the wet etc. were as nothing compared to the mollycoddling that went on within the confines of the paling fence.

Edna Stretton described the Opposition as "revelling in confusion" and put it down to ignorance. This being the case she would give them a lesson. The girls could see her lines and copy. On the first walk it was well to be conventionally clad - skirts, stockings and the rest. Thereafter a slow strip tease extending over about five week-ends would stimulate interest. After these preliminaries it was time to get down to business - leave out the billy and mention the fact in front of the victim - he was sure to ask you to share his. Next leave out the tent, and so on - progressively.

Mr. Bruggy referred to his note book, regretting that it didn't contain the items it used to before he was married. However it evidently did contain a nostalgic reference to dirty billies, and the joy of just getting up and eating the remainder of what was half cooked the night before. What was more his billies were now even dirtier than before, having been thoroughly burnt by his wife. It also contained a reference to the cold wet night he had spent pressed against the side of his tent by his spouse. Mr. Bruggy was just warming to his theme when a hidden hand, or perhaps a note inserted by his wife, restrained him. At all events his eloquence ceased with a brief "that's all I have to say" and some cad in the audience said "That's all he's allowed to say".

After a brief reply by the leader of the Government, Mr. Harvey put the matter to the vote. He declared the motion carried despite considerable dissent. From this we gather that bushwalkers should marry, and thus honour is preserved. Nevertheless we hope the matter will not be left thus suspended unsatisfactorily in mid-air and that the next debate will be more specific - i.e. which bushwalkers should marry and who should they marry?

PATTERN TEST WALKS.

Published in accordance with the requirements of By-Law No.14, Section K.

2-DAY WALKS.

Katoomba - Six Foot Track - Gibraltar Creek - Cox's River - Tin Pot Hill - Carlon's - Katoomba.

1½-DAY WALKS.

1. Bundeena - Marley - Wattamolla - Garie - Burning Palms - Bola Heights - Wilson's Creek - Helensburgh.
2. Blackheath - Govett's Leap - Blue Gum Forest - Grose River - Mt. Victoria.
3. Campbelltown - Minerva Pool - O'Hare's Creek - Pheasant's Creek - Wedderburn Bridge - Campbelltown.

DAY WALKS.

1. Mt. Kuring-gai - Crosslands - Berowra Creek - Fish Ponds - Hornsby.
2. Waterfall - Mt. Westmacott - Myuna Creek - Heathcote Creek - Scouters Mountain - Woronora River - Sabugal Crossing - Engadine.
3. Waterfall - The Mill - Island Track - Palona Brook - Garie Trig - Era - Lilyvale.
4. Gordon - Rocky Creek - Middle Harbour Creek - Cowan Creek - track to Sphinx - Cockle Creek - Wahroonga.

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TELEPHONE 60, KATOOMBA.

OIL REFINERY AT KURNELL.

(From the report submitted to the Club by Allen Strom, who represented the Wild Life Preservation Society, Federation of Bush Walking Clubs and S.B.W. on the deputation of protest to the Premier, October 23rd.)

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The deputation represented numerous bodies, including the Royal Australian Historical Society, National Trust, N.S.W. Teachers' Federation, Parks and Playgrounds Movement, Forestry Advisory Council, League of Oyster Fishermen, Local Councils (excluding Sutherland Shire) Cook's River Improvement League and the National Council of Women. It was organised and led by Mr. Guy Moore of the Forestry Advisory Council, and introduced by Colonel Bruxner, Leader of the Country Party who stressed four points :

- (1) Preservation of places of early Australian history.
- (2) Industrial usage and preservation of flora and fauna cannot go hand in hand.
- (3) The desirability of decentralisation.
- (4) The war time hazard of placing a vulnerable point at Kurnell.

Mr. A. Halloran of the Historical Society placed emphasis on the fact that the Landing Place Reserve was already too small, and should not be despoiled. Mr. O.H. Wyndham of the National Trust made the point that increasing population made it more and more difficult to repossess places of National importance, and Mr. H. Heath (Teachers' Federation) said we could never develop a tradition without the places to enshrine.

14.

Mr. W.L. Hume (Parks & Playgrounds) summarised the history of Caltex's application to use Kurnell, and underlined the evidence of apparent coercion and shilly-shallying to procure Kurnell for industrial purposes. Allen Strom put forward the following points:

1. The Landing Place Reserve had been "improved" thus reducing the picture of the true Kurnell when Cook landed.
2. Establishment of the Refinery, and consequent development of the peninsula for housing would seal the fate of wild life in the Reserve.
3. After having reserved land (largely at the prompting of Conservation Bodies) the Government was not to let all go to private enterprise.
4. The Peninsula contained many plants largely peculiar to the kind of habitat. (Lists of plants and birds prepared by Mrs. T. Stead and Mr. J.A. Palmer were handed to the Premier.)
5. Despite the vastness of our land, less than 1% has been dedicated to National Parks for preservation of wildlife and natural beauty.

Mr. Guy Moore (Forestry Advisory Council) reiterated that the most important point for the Government was the accomplishment of its ideal of decentralisation. Speakers from the Oyster Fishermen, Councils, Progress Associations, etc. were perturbed about the oil discharge problem, dust haze and similar effluents common to these industries. Ill-effects upon the panorama and the recurrence of the Bunnerong nuisances were also mentioned.

In his reply the Premier indicated that all matters brought forward by the deputation would be considered, but he felt that no new ground had been opened up and, in consequence, he could say that the Cabinet had concerned itself with all the evidence available, and had made its decision consequent upon such consideration.

WHAT IS A CORROBOREE?

- Quiz Kid No.1: A blackfellow's ceremony, with dancing.
Quizmaster: Correct, but that's not what we're thinking of.
Any other ideas?
- Quiz Kid No.2: A ballet - music by Antill (so appropriately named) - I forget who did the choreography.
Quizmaster: Also correct, but still not what we're getting at.
- Quiz Kid No.3: I't a special get-together of the members of Sydney Bush Walkers. The first one is set down on the programme for January 16/17/18, and the venue will probably be Morella Karong. The intention is to provide a kind of junior re-union, about three or four times a year. The full correct title is "Club Corroboree".
- Quizmaster: Excellent! Give the lad a bottle of sulphuric acid.

THE COMMANDOS.

By "XYZ".

"The Walker walks for miles and miles
 And fondly thinks that Nature smiles.
 I think that Nature's most polite
 Because it doesn't laugh outright".

(Verse attributed to Colin Putt.)

A neatly typed notice on our notice board attracted my attention. On reading through interest was aroused. Was it a challenge to the older generation of bushwalkers whom I have often heard remark about the fickle walkers of today? (Note - word 'fickle' only used because it sounds nice.) Or was bushwalking to be revolutionised? Curiosity got the better of me. I threw away my chance of learning the secrets of the marriage question to go on the Aird-Sullivan trip along the Cox, super-doooper lightweight - no sleeping bags, no tents, no extra clothes but a handkerchief, with a few dried vegs for food.

Bad ideas formed in my mind of being a saboteur and watching my fellow-bushwalkers freeze to death. They did not die (worse luck). Why?

I met the scheduled party at Wentworth Falls with a fiendish grin, for the cold wind had forced me to do gymnastics, and who were these high-spirited bushwalkers (correction, Mr. Editor) hikers?

1. The popular Pat Sullivan, actress and folk-songster
2. Jean Aird, 1st class swimming instructress
3. Lovely Betty Swain
4. Beverley Price, keen photographer and swami girl
5. Ross Laird, S.B.W., S.R.C., N.T.C.B.W., N.U.T.S., etc.
6. Ben Bishop, man of mystery
7. Brian Anderson, of the chrome vomitorium (see footnote)
8. Colin Putt, man from N.Z. with tribal head-gear
9. Jack Wren, model bushwalker
10. John Bookluck, of S.B.W. (Sydney Bow-tie Walker).

Yes, they were a bright and merry lot of hikers with such a conglomeration of packs. The most novel yet superlightweight packs belonged to Colin and Ben. Ben's consisted of half a sugar bag, cut in its longest direction, tied with string, while Colin's was a full sugar bag, 56-lbs. nett, "Use No Hooks", tied at the bottom corners by ropes which were slung over his shoulder. The remaining bags were mainly of army shoulder or rucksack type. The heaviest sack was the standard frameless bushwalker pack.

Along the track to Kedumba Pass torches had very little use for the few that brought them. Moonlight proved stronger. In less than two hours from the station camp was made. This is where we learn a small fire about the size of an average S.B.W. re-union type was lit, thus

(FOOTNOTE: We don't know what a vomitorium is, even less a chrome one. Perhaps we misread the manuscript, but that's what it looks like, and its too lovely a word to alter. - Ed.)

raising the surrounding temperature to about 500°C, which fell to 0°C by 4 a.m. This type of camping can be positively thrilling to the types who like to be on the track by 5.45 a.m. (see footnote). You sweat to rise early in the cold of the morning.

By 6.30 we were burning along the track to cool off in the Cox. By 9 a.m. you would have sworn it was noon. This is unnatural for the lazy city toiler.

Old Father Cox was very frisky, but not so with us. That day Colin introduced us to the sport of Running the Rapids. This game is played in boots by running along with the rapids, making sure you lift your feet well. It could be recommended, but is rather an expensive sport. Peter and Ross "did in" their walking boots.

Walking and swimming go hand in hand along the Cox, and this is how our kind leaders led us. I forgave them for their early rising. Before the heat of the day gave way to the cool of the evening the party had one last swim, entertainment tax free by Jean (instructor) and Pat (instructed) on how to swim. Tea followed, the main bulk of the party cooking in cramped style on the river's edge, while the mystery man Ben ate something cold out of a bag by himself (by the way, this Ben had two days' precaution rations).

The after-tea walk was most delightful. The full stomach, the friendly mood, the songs and the magic of the moonlit trail, led us along the Cox in high spirits. Our views were of silvery sheen on the water and the silhouetted flowing curves of the mountains. This is what I like - but this I didn't --

Our leaders, being Amazons, didn't like to see us enjoying ourselves. "You're commandos now". So, to cool off our spirits we crossed the Cox a few times. Comments are left to your imagination - the editor would assuredly censor them.

Sleep that night was organised successfully. The party grouped and shared groundsheet over and under, with a layer of bracken. A Gold Star goes to Miss Pat Sullivan, who slept, as the saying has it, snug as a bug in a rug, between two bags, Jean and Jack with groundsheet over (see footnote)*. Some had bags. A Victoria Cross goes to Ben, who did a deep freeze act or watched the fire burn out. He chose a spot furthest from the fire and in the wind. (P.S. Ben had a tent in his sugar bag.)

Sunday passed uneventfully, except for the antics of Colin, Peter and Ross (see footnote) who were too lazy to walk. They travelled by

(FOOTNOTE: Perhaps title of story should be "Commandos Strike (camp) At Dawn".

* If Jean and Jack wish to protest against being styled "bags" will they please submit their complaints (in writing) not later than the 20th of the month.

Who is "Peter" - what is he? Not referred to in list of members present at beginning of story - possibly hidden in the Putt 56-lb. sugar bag. - Ed.)

water. At one stage, I am told, a local saw these three bods floating down the Cox looking quite dead, when suddenly one with a band round his head and fully clothed made an appearance on the road, bowed to the amazed local, and disappeared back over the brink. The apparition was too much for the local, for when the banded one looked up again, the local's long face was replaced by the cloud of dust from behind his sulky.

All good things must come to an end. Even Ross Laird's scroggin, on which he fasted like a martyr all the weekend. So also Colin's famous community 1-gallon billy from which dozens of cups of brew were drawn must go home.

Reflections on the 'bus decidedly put me in favour of the Commando style, with a few modifications, i.e. take sleeping bag, tent, torch, extra billy, extra food, extra clothes, map, compass, camera, spare string, towels, trunks, etc.

PLEASE TO REMEMBER THE NINETEENTH DECEMBER.

We almost held another party in town as a Christmas celebration ... then wiser counsel prevailed. We say wiser counsel because the Club coffers couldn't very well stand another slug like the 25th Anniversary Celebrations this year.

However, all is not lost. Ingersoll Hall may be an indifferent substitute for the flesh pots of the city, but the spirit of the night is what counts. December 19th is the night of our local Christmas Party, the "Fun and Games Night".

Be in it to win it ... and BRING YOUR OWN GRUB.

.....

THE COMMANDO TOUCH.

The Commandos are infiltrating. One crept out on the official Nattai River walk of a couple of weeks back. Making concession to the weaker vessels of orthodox temperament in the party (and perhaps the unduly chill weather) he produced tent and sleeping bag, but starved on his stern regimen of puffed wheat.

However, you could see his eyes light up with unholy satisfaction when a 5.30 a.m. start was decreed for Saturday. After Sunday's breakfast he was down to 2 slices of bread and a small quantity of honey. With some slight assistance he was still able to board the 'bus at Central Burraborang.

.....

NOT ALL THERE. There was a time on this same Nattai River trip when three of the party were 'way ahead (Commando included). Presently leader and party, wandering along a broad trail, heard loud and insistent "Coos" from the wilderness on the far bank. Conversation followed:

Leader: Hello!

Voice: Hello! (identified as Commando)

Leader: Are you all there?

Voice: I like that! I never thought you'd comment on my mental powers!

FEDERATION NOTES.

By Allen A. Strom.

BOUDDI NATURAL PARK: The Trust is organising a work party for March 28/29th.

NATIONAL TRUST: O.H. Wyndham has been elected President and another delegate was sought to represent the Federation. Stan Cottier was elected. The Trust will press for the reservation of the lands adjoining the Warrah Sanctuary and known as "The Kariong National Park" scheme. It is proposed to use some reference to King George VI as a memorial National Park.

FORESTRY COMMISSION is attempting control on Phasmids (Leaf Insects) that cause defoliation on wide areas of forests. Bushwalkers are asked to report the incidence of these insects at any time to the Forestry Commissioner, Margaret Street, Sydney.

BUSHFIRE PATROLS IN NATIONAL PARK: A Roster of thirty names has been prepared. The President expressed disappointment at the number of blanks appearing on the list and asked for further volunteers. All communications to Paul H. Barnes, UBL351.

A list of names has been sent to the Manager, National Park, for the issue of Special Ranger's Warrants.

The zones to be patrolled and general hints on patrol work have been prepared and will be circulated to members of patrols.

KOWMUNG HOUSE AND BUTLER'S HUT: Mr. Hawke of Katoomba reports that there is water still remaining in the tanks at these places.

SEARCH AND RESCUE: The pamphlet prepared by S & R has been well received. Police will ask the Press and Broadcasting Stations to use the information when giving warnings at holiday times. The Police are hopeful that Katoomba Press, Broadcasting Station and Guest Houses will circulate the advice. May 2/3rd 1953 to be practice S & R Weekend.

INFORMATION is still lagging because Club officers are not returning sheets. Action is earnestly requested. The President and Assistant Information Officer of the Federation propose to visit Clubs in new year to make personal appeals and contacts.

COPIES OF THE ANNUAL REPORT are available.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE was elected to organise the 1953 Bushwalker Ball. Norman Allen (Convener), John Cotter, Joy Russell, M. Bernasconi and Ken Stewart.

FEDERATION INSIGNIA: Proposed designs are required by the third Tuesday in December, 1952.

OUTDOORS EXHIBITION: Ron Waudrop reported he had been approached by Mr. Hudson of "Outdoors and Fishing" to organise a display for the N.S.W. Federation of Bushwalking Clubs. Approval had been obtained and the results of the display had been good.

AUSTRALIAN SECRETARIAT: The Federation will approach the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs, the Launceston and Hobart Walking Clubs, W.A., S.A., and Brisbane Walking Clubs to test their feelings on the establishment of an Australian Secretariat for Bushwalking.

YES, WE KNOW, WE SAID IT BEFORE, but the BARBECUE is still being held on Saturday, December 13th. The venue is still Wal Roots' home. The address is the same - 93 Grosvenor Road, Wahroonga.

There has been no change in the catering arrangements - you should still receive :- barbecued lamb, potatoes or rolls, tea. You still require to bring :- knife, fork, spoon, cup or pannikin, milk and sugar. The anticipated price is five bob a head.

The Roots' back yard is still available for camping - no favoured positions have been sold in advance.

And, to the best of our knowledge, Eddie Stretton's walk will still be down into the Chase on the Sunday, following the night of the barbecue.

REGRETS: That the second prize-winning photograph from the Annual Exhibition was not available for inclusion in this issue as intended. Shortage of manpower and time responsible. We hope to have it for the January issue.

...

CONGRATULATIONS TO Gladys and Len Fall, who, in spite of the dire warnings of the debate, were duly joined in matrimony on November 15th.

...

On the concert night, as Lynette Whillier "went through the hoops" in her contortion act, we heard Colin Putt murmur at a tense moment: "It's all right, I've got a hacksaw in my kit".

...

Dormie, making a triumphal re-appearance at the recent concert night, has the most valuable walking gear in the country, to judge from a Perth newspaper. It reported his equipment as "insured for £2,000". Of course, there was one "0" too many, but after all, "0" is only a cipher.

...

LOWER INCOME GROUP DEPARTMENT: Save 6d! Don't buy the new Railway Timetable dated November 23rd. The table issued twelve months before will do for most walking trips. Only change we've noted so far is that the 6.37 p.m. west on Fridays now reaches Katoomba at 9.44 p.m. (It used to be tabled there at 9.41.)

...



PADDY MADE

PEACE ON EARTH & GOODWILL TOWARDS MEN.

Paddy knows no better Christmas wish than to hope that all his Bushwalker friends may have that peace and serenity of spirit which comes from the quiet of the bush and the majesty of the everlasting mountains. Also that we may all give and receive more than our share of goodwill.

The Spring weather has been good and the bush is looking lovelier than ever. May we all be able to enjoy it at Christmas and throughout the coming year.

The position regarding stocks of materials is better than we dared hope when import restrictions were applied and there are good stocks of practically all lines. What next year will bring we know not.

Seasonal suggestions for trips and gifts:

Vegetables. Powdered potato. Dried potato, cabbage, carrot, parsnip, onion and mixed vegetables.

Dried Eggs. 13/-.

Tent Pegs.

Knife, Fork, Spoon Sets. 6/-.

Torches.

Books: Bushcraft Handbooks.
"Bush Hut-making".
"Food and Water in the Bush".
"Knots and Lashings". 3/- each.

Full supplies of sleeping bags, rucksacks, tents and aluminium ware.

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