

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER.

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Editor: Dot Butler, Boundary Road,
Wahroonga. (JW2208)
Business Manager: Jack Gentle

Sales & Subs.: Jess Martin
Typed by Jean Harvey and
Dot Butler
Production: Barbara Brown

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Every experience - everything seen, felt,
heard, touched - is a medium whereby beauty should
take another breath in Life's race; for suspicion
and ugliness are artificial things constructed of vain
imaginings, they are dirty windows through which to
view beauty, distorting light and truth, and rendering
void the very gifts that experience seeks to bestow
on man.

SPIRIT OF THE HILLS - Smythe.

.....

AT OUR MONTHLY MEETING

Alex Colley

What with the 85 miler, the Easter cloud walk, and other stirring events; there was plenty to talk about on the first Wednesday after Easter, so much that the meeting didn't commence till 8.28 p.m. The President was in the Chair and some 45 members were present.

First business of the evening was to welcome two new members - Barbara Brown and Bob Duncan.

Correspondence included a notice from the Federation which stated that "in the view of the Council, the taking of liquor to the Annual Re-Union reacts against the best interests of the Re-Union and offenders may be asked to leave the campsite."

Letters from the Dept. of Lands and the Forestry Commission give grounds for hope that the Greater Blue Mountains National Park (a project first developed by the Mountain Trails Club between 1922 and 1931 and supported by the S.B.W. at every opportunity since 1927) may be created in the not too distant future. The Dept. of Lands wrote that it had made reference to "various Government and other authorities in regard to the area proposed to be comprised within the park" and "upon receipt and consideration of the replies it is expected that the Metropolitan District Surveyor will be in a position to make definite recommendations for the consideration of the Minister." Another letter stated that "the Forestry Commission, which has the authority to issue licenses to cut timber on Crown land, has been requested by this Department to suspend the issue of licenses over the area proposed as the Blue Mountains National Park, pending a final decision as to the area to be comprised therein." On the question of the proposed dedication of land in the Erskine Creek area as a State Forest the Under Secretary for Conservation said that the Commissioner for Forests, with whom he discussed the matter, pointed out that the Commission is not contenting the proposal to declare a very considerable acreage of the Blue Mountains area as a National Park. But the Forestry Commission maintains that the comparatively small section within the Erskine Creek basin should be so managed and protected as to provide a continuing source of timber supplies without constituting any threat to scenic or catchment values. "The Forestry Commission" the letter stated, "has the support of the Council of the City of Blue Mountains in its proposal for dedication of the Erskine Creek Section as a State Forest." The Under-Secretary also pointed out that "timber-getting has been carried out in the locality under special licences for many years without detriment to its scenic qualities."

Allen Strom told us that Federation had approved a donation to the Launceston Walking Club for huts and suggested that the S.B.W. send a donation. The suggestion was warmly supported by Kevin Ardill, who pointed out that a lot of our members had enjoyed the huts, and without further ado £10 was voted for the purpose.

Next it was decided, ulmost unanimously (one dissenting) that Tom Moppett be nominated as a member of Federation's Conservation Bureau.

Heather Joyce reported on our successful "amateur hour" and the entertaining play reading by Malcolm McGregor and Grace Jolley. It was decided to make a booking at Anzac House for the Christmas Party on 2nd Dec., and to make it an 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. party, to which the meeting agreed with one dissenter. It was also resolved to pay for decorations despite Geof Wagg's spirited observation that it was ridiculous because when the room was full of bushwalkers you couldn't see the decorations anyway. However, the majority appeared to believe that they might serve to break the monotony. The Conservation Secretary thought that at least we could "bust them". Jack Wren thought members might decorate their tables in a comic manner and a prize be given for the best. Yet another suggestion was that £3/3/- spent on "Bond 7" would be a more effective inducement to laughter.

Jim Hooper appealed for volunteers for the combined R.A.A.F., Military, Police and Federation Search and Rescue week-end at Wiseman's ferry. It was unfortunate that it came at short notice and after a holiday week-end.

Alan Wilson announced that, as he was resuming at Tech., he would be unable to continue as duplicator operator. Barbara Brown volunteered for the job and suggested that operations be transferred to her home at Blacktown where there is a healthy growing colony of Bush Walkers.

Next Frank Ashdown asked "Did the Club want male members?" (Titters and a female interjection - yes, virile ones!) If so, said Frank, we could extend an invitation to members of the Bushcraft Club who, when they had learnt all Dick Graves had to teach them, just passed on." The motion was defeated, despite female protests.

Still in beneficent vein Frank then moved that the 1st Lindfield Boy Scout Troop be written to thanking them for the help they gave a party of Bushwalkers. Not only had they found the official party, but they had told them where they (the official party) were and put them right. They had lent moral support and ropes and wasted valuable time helping the official party down. This motion was narrowly defeated.

The President announced that there would be a joint instructional walk, corroboree and working bee at Bluegum Forest on 14th and 15th May, also a small operetta. This announcement brought "General Business" to a close at 9.40 p.m.

AUSTRALIA MY STUDIO

- Ray Bean

That little black box, the camera, to most people seems to have about it an air of mystery: just what is the darned thing going to produce next? So it has always been with me. Even though I use it with calculated exactitude which the necessity of making a living demands, I still treat the thing with a certain amount of distrust. However, it has not been unkind, and has taken on the guise of a passport to distant places - a magic carpet to Australia's vast spaces as it were. Which is how I came to be at Halls Creek in the Kimberleys, Western Australia, and there thinking of Bush Walkers.

4.

I had just come over the Turkey Creek Road. You don't know it? I almost wish I didn't! It runs, or perhaps I should say hops, skips and jumps from Wyndham to Halls Creek, and a more cussed journey it would be hard to find in Australia. There are a few cattle stations along its three hundred miles, and if the cattle feed on spinifex and gibbers they must thrive. One station uses camels to muster the cattle, and as cattle country I think that is all the description necessary.

Outside the Kimberley Hotel sat an old-timer gazing down Halls Creek's main and only street. His eyes seemed to be closed, as are the eyes of most of these people who have lived a lifetime in the glare of this arid land. There was nothing in the street except two donkeys and a native in the distance, which for Halls Creek was a crowd scene. I got yarning with the old fellow and told him I had just come down from Wyndham. I cussed the frightful condition of the road and marvelled at the fact that the road was originally made by teamsters from Wyndham bringing in waggons of supplies drawn by donkeys. How they ever found their way through the maze of gullies and flat-topped residuals, I said, was a mystery and a tribute to the Australian pioneers. How they survived the heat and lack of water, the ruts, gibbers and sand was more than I could understand.

The old-timer let me have my say, and then he snorted a snort worthy of any pig. "Young man, he said, when we prospectors came in we brought our supplies with us down that same road - pushed in front of us in a wheel-barrow!

They did too! But why a wheel-barrow? Of all methods of carrying things I can't see that a wheel-barrow could have any advantage over anything. Around the garden, perhaps, but even then I could never keep the thing balanced and generally emptied the contents on to the strawberry bed. But with the need for keeping both hands occupied while the flies are crawling over your face, with the temperature well over a hundred in the shade - if there were any shade in this treeless place - and on this road; no, I can't see it.

That was in the days when coastal boats brought the supplies to the port at Wyndham, and donkey teams of up to seventy-eight beasts hauled loaded waggons down that primitive road. Recently a man wandered into Thangool homestead just south of Broome and asked for water to fill his waterbag. The station owner was amazed that someone should approach his place without him hearing the car engine. The wanderer said that he had no car, he was pushing a wheelbarrow. He had come from Broome and was facing the great sandy stretch of "road" which runs parallel to the Ninety Mile Beach where the great central Australian desert continues westward right to the sea. Even at this stage of the station owner's story I knew what the tragic end would be; I was facing this road for the second time, having come over it on the upward journey, and not with a wheelbarrow but with a modern utility truck carrying my own provisions and water supply. They did their best at Thangool, but nothing would persuade this nomad that his venture was impossible; even should he make the distance between tanks before the sun struck him down, the water was not always drinkable. They found him in the scant shade of a beefwood tree, his barrow with

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its silly six inch diameter wheel long since abandoned.

We also asked for water at Thangool, not so much to fill our water bag (an eighteen gallon tank built into the truck), as to soak the hessian that I had laid under the floor mat and poked in around the clutch and brake pedals to keep out the choking dust as fine as talc that comes up in a cloud behind the truck and works its way into every crack of the truck body.

Setting off from the station on to the terrible road the mirage mocked at us as it twisted and waved the landscape around in front of us like a nightmare; the horizon out in the direction of Roebuck Bay rose and fell in a wave-like manner until the wave crests broke away from the line and dwindled into the air like a long streamer. I found myself looking into the shadow of the occasional tree, half expecting to see there the body of some hapless barrowpusher. Soon there are no trees, and there settles over everyone in the truck a silence born of monotony - the heat, the dust, the everlasting plain of dried grass, a left-over from the last "wet." Suddenly there! Look! a cat! Out here on this near desert we saw many ordinary domestic cats, hundreds of miles from any dwelling and many generations removed from domesticity; probably living on small birds - there seems to be no other sign of life, not even rabbits - and water - there are windmills and water tanks along the sandhills at the back of the beach, for sheep are pastured on the one mile strip of coastal plain between the desert and the sea.

And so this story has to end somehow. Well, it was the barrow-pushers that made me think of Bushwalkers, (not that I don't think of them often - lonely campfires at night have induced a nostalgic yearning for the companionship of many). I can understand the old hands not using a rucksac in their unenlightened age, but why a wheelbarrow?

Recent addition to Club Library:

"THE MOUNTAINS OF NEW ZEALAND"

by

Rodney Hewitt and Mavis Davidson.

This magnificently illustrated book embraces the entire peak country of both Nth. and Sth. Islands of New Zealand. To anyone planning a mountaineering trip to the Dominion it would prove invaluable. It gives the name and height of every peak, means of access, huts available to climbers, tramping, mountaineering and ski clubs to contact in each district, as well as interesting historical facts relating to each mountain described. It is strongly recommended as reading to anyone planning a visit, or better still, a copy in the pocket of your pack. (Copies available from Angus & Robertson).

THE ARTHUR RANGES, NEW ZEALAND - EASTER 1953.

- Geoff Broadhead.

The night was still, humid enough to carry the smell of ripening fruit and tobacco, with the low moon shining down between dissolving banks of cloud. Small pebbles gave way to soft, silencing dust on the slow, ascending road. My mind turned to thoughts of the previous weeks. I'd been tobacco picking at Riwaka in the Nelson District of New Zealand's South Island, and a chance conversation with a local chap had led to plans for this - Easter 1953. Barry had been tramp in the Mount Arthur Ranges before, and his tales aroused my imagination.

Finishing work on the tobacco farm on the Thursday afternoon, and after an early evening meal, we walked into Matueka, spent an hour or so in idle gossip with friends in the night shopping crowd till our bus was ready to leave for Ngatimato, which was the terminus. A nine mile road walk still lay before us as our destination for the night was Pokororo. The road meandered, crossing and recrossing the side rivers flowing into the Wangapeka River, which is one of those rivers that astound Australians, being very wide and fast when up, yet no more when low than a trickling stream among the shingle beds and banks. We followed one of these side rivers up, passing many small farms, till about 12 p.m. when we reached the appointed area. The relief of dumping our rucksacks was exceeded only by the speed at which we put up the tent and retired, an occasional splatter of rain reminding us of the low clouds.

A pleasant surprise awaited us in the morning. Our tent had been pitched on a grassy river bank - the river swift and clear tumbling over smooth water-worn rocks. The background to the tent was wild briars and vines, bushes in autumnal dress of golden yellow ocre, burnt siennas and reds ranging through to scarlet-tipped leaves and berries. In the taller trees bell birds predominated, and the staple breakfast of porridge, bacon and fried Rye-Vitas was a very pleasant affair. Passing the last farm we called in and spent a few minutes chatting with the farmer's wife, an interesting woman

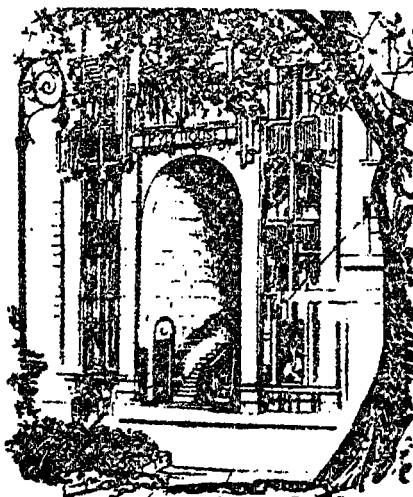
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who told us of the early days when supplies and food were packed in by horse to the gold fields on the West Coast, over the Arthurs and down the Karamea River, part of the track we would follow now.

The track was, in width and grade, similar to the Six-Foot track as it rises from the Cox River. Leaving the farmland, the height a few hundred feet above the sea, we followed the track as it wound up around the ridges. Below on the right, with the fern-covered hillside dropping steeply to the shingle-bed river, we saw sheep grazing, gradually thinning in number as we ascended. The vegetation was changing from the open farmland through ferns, shrubs and small timber to the heavier beech and myrtle forest near the saddle. The heavy rains which fall from the Nor'westers on the West Coast make for a thicker, tall, luxuriant vegetation than is to be found inland, and the closer we drew to Flora Saddle the steadier the rain beat down. Passing over the saddle, with not even a view greeting us as consolation for our $3\frac{1}{2}$ thousand foot climb, we were glad to descend to Flora Hut for a rest, food, and a smoke. The rain eased off to a drizzling mist, driven by a cool wind.

Flora Hut is set in a grassy clearing, surrounded by beech forest with small creeks running either side of it, the clearing being at the foot of a spur. All the huts in the area were built by the Nelson

8.

Tramping Club assisted by a £1 for £1 Government grant, which is an excellent idea in a country where huts are needed, Club enthusiasm high but Club funds low. All the huts we stayed in were of the same design: rectangular, divided into 3 sections, either end being living quarters and the centre kept for horses and firewood, the latter being an important item. Fuel is very scarce, green timber rotting as soon as it falls. Wet rot is very prevalent as in all places with a high rainfall. Building materials used for the huts is rough hewn wood slabs and orange painted iron sheeting.

After a luncheon respite from the drizzling mist we started towards Salesbury Hut which was on the plateau. Our track first went to a river junction then rose to the snowgrass plateau. The walking that afternoon was enjoyable, even with the drizzling rain. The track was inches deep with decaying leaves, small and softening to the foot-steps. Lining either side of the track were beech and myrtle forest but not much undergrowth, the deer population keeping it down. From tree-trunks and branches hung thin greyish-green tendrils of thin-fibred moss, and green and white lichen clung to the trunks. The smell of damp rich earth arose through the drizzling mist.

We were walking parallel with Flora Creek, the water level rising swiftly owing to the heavier rains higher on the range. Passing two or three decrepit one-roomed huts, we started ascending Salesbury Hut track. Writhing mist and cloud, reminiscent of the Blue Mountains, replaced the drizzle. Bird life became noticeable, the most insistent being the riflemen, little tubby bundles about $1\frac{1}{4}$ " long, lime green, with a call like a tinkling bell. About 20 of these small birds kept with us for miles, darting ahead, turning the walk into a Roman triumph. Keeping up a medium steady pace (being too chilly to have many smokes), we arrived at Salesbury Hut by 7.15. It is built on snow-grass country, the orange-ochre colour showing prominently among the thigh-high clumps of yellowing snow tussock. The tussock extended over the floor of this very shallow valley with beech forest running in a strip on either side.

We reached the hut to find one half occupied, a few distant rifle shots telling us where the inhabitants were. The twilight faded, and feeling hungry we lit the fire. Unfortunately the chimney faced into the wind, with the draught coming down, and before long the room was full of smoke, making conditions uncomfortable. With the door open it became too cold. Just as we'd finished eating, the other two bods from the hut returned and called in for a cuppa, carrying a leg of venison. They'd just shot a 3-year old stag and kindly gave us a few pounds to supplement our food ration. It is a dark red meat, with a deceptively smooth texture. Being warm, the steam rose in the cold air as Barry carved.

Next day, with the same weather, we decided to have a day trip from the hut and visit some caves that were marked on the map. Before long we were on the plateau, crossing it till we reached a maze of small steep gullies and thickly wooded ridges. An air of unreality pervaded all, the mist reducing visibility among the beech trees with their hanging moss-fronds. The tussock, swollen by the rain, was almost swampy. The first cave, (all at the head of gullies),

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wasn't much more than an underground stream, the floor and walls covered in thick grey mud. More rewarding was the next cave, two tunnels leading from a main chamber, but both blocked by rock falls after a hundred yards or so. Coming out we surprised a fallow doe grazing on the edge of a beech grove. The final cave visited was about a mile off, the entrance small, opening into a chamber about 40 or 50 feet high, roughly the same in depth, and about 100 yards wide, covered mostly with living lime stone and a variety of formations, including some magnificent columns. Near the back were iron-tinted shawls. The limestone looked coarse, maybe the sign of rapid growth. The only passage off was a river cave which we followed for approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, disappearing over a waterfall. Not having much faith in our one torch we came back to the open.

After a quick lunch we climbed the open tussock slopes up from the cave. Quickly a light breeze blew, scattered the mist away, and our reward at last! Mt. Arthur and its companion, the double-headed mountain "The Twins" were directly opposite, separated from us by a narrow deep river valley, the Karamea. The overwhelming impression was of a huge face dropping into the valley, with the mountains rising 4,000 feet at a steep angle. We stood for minutes just watching, till a Government deer-culler came in view on our left. We spent a few minutes talking and found out a little of New Zealand's deer problem. It's comparable with Australia's rabbit problem, both animals aiding erosion. The deer (and there are millions, spread

over 6 or 7 species), strip the young trees of bark and the undergrowth, leaving the ground bare. With the heavy rainfall the ground erodes quickly, silting up the wide rivers. Another introduced animal which has raised the same problem is the possum.

Losing a little height we walked to Balloon Hut, crossing small beech groves and patches of open tussock. Parties come here in winter for skiing, the open, rounded terrain to the west resembling the N.S.W. Alps, although access must be difficult. Returning we surprised a few deer and heard many stags "roaring." Easter time is the mating season; stags give voice with a sound resembling a roar, its main purpose being to attract the does to his harem. After a young stag accepts the roar as a challenge and gives battle. For some reason the stag loses much of his fear for militant humans, and this is the deer culler's most profitable period. Throughout the day we'd heard the roaring, some quite close to the hut, especially at dusk.

The evening was late by the time we returned to Salesbury Hut. While getting some firewood from one of the groves to replenish the dried wood we'd used, our attention was attracted (or maybe the reverse) by a weka or woodhen, a bird related to both the kiwi and the re-discovered notornis. The weka is a very inquisitive bird; it will come within a few feet and raise one eye quizzically. Our bird may have had its confidence misplaced at one time, as one leg was missing. We had it as a constant companion, finally following us to the hut door and becoming quite dejected after being deprived of items like our tin plates and cutlery with which it tried to make off. Later we were informed they have a reputation for acquiring brightly coloured or shiny articles.

The venison we dried, fried in small cubes with onion rings, and after our long day it wasn't long before sleep came. We woke in the morning to frost and a clear sunny day. Leaving the hut by 7.30 we started towards Mt. Arthur, following a disced track through beech forest to Gordon's Pyramid, a steep snow-grass covered hill lying this side of the saddle. The disced track is an extension of the idea of a blazed track. Blazes disappear too quickly among the fast-growing timber. The discs are made of metal (slightly smaller than a jam tin lid), generally painted white, then nailed to trees at a visible distance apart. Among the trees and undergrowth were large areas of sunken ground where the limestone beneath has collapsed, often making it necessary to detour over or under rotting timber.

The beech was replaced by tussock. Over the 2,000 ft. rise the grass, yellow ochre in the strong sun, was broken occasionally by conglomerate outcrops. From the top our view overlooked the Karamea Valley, the Cobb River with smoke lazily rising from the hydro-electricity works under construction, over to Golden Bay and Tasman Bay in the Cook Strait. The strong glare reflecting from the sea was hard on the eyes, so for relief we turned to examine the maze of ranges and peaks that were to the south. An unusual aspect of the steep grey-blue ranges was a belt of destruction caused by the earthquakes in the early 1930's. Curving in a huge S-bend, roughly two or three miles wide, the destruction was on an enormous scale; whole mountainsides had slipped, exposing unhealed scars, the millions of

There was quite a large area on top, slightly rounded, with snow drifts remaining from a fall of week or so earlier. Looking for a place to put up the tent I surprised a group of wild sheep in a hanging basin. They were large and extremely agile, their thick coats reaching the ground - a fortune at present prices, but hard to muster. Meeting Barry back on top we were talking about the view when a cloud came over. Looking through it at the sun we were surprised to see a circular rainbow, and in the centre two shadows. Before we had time to have a good look it broke up and we turned in the opposite direction, only to see the same phenomenon in the cloud there. If we raised an arm, the corresponding figure in the circle would raise the opposite arm. It lasted for about 2 minutes, and had an outsider witnessed it, the scene must have resembled physical exercises. This occurrence is uncommon, and we were extremely fortunate to see such a good example.

Mt. Arthur, just over 6,000 ft., was my first decent mountain in New Zealand from which I had a view. In the North Island Ruapehu had been gracious, but from there the view had been limited to Mt. Egmont, everything else blanketed by thick cloud. Here was country entirely new to me, with terrain and geography constantly delighting. Close under Mt. Arthur to the east lay the fertile river flats of Nelson and Motueka - a chequered pattern of farms, draining into Tasman Bay. Behind the placid town of Nelson lay more ranges, and straining our eyes and imagination hard, could that be the tip of the North Island showing through the late afternoon haze? To the North lay Golden Bay, grey-green, and beyond that Cape Farewell and the long sand bar that's been created a bird sanctuary, Farewell Spit, the northernmost point of the South Island. Draining into Golden Bay were the rivers Takaka, Waingaro, Cobb and Anatoki, almost gentle valleys by comparison with western ones. To the west we were able to follow the Karama out to the coast, dipping and winding its tortuous path to the grey-gold sea lit by the setting sun. Far out to sea was a thick cloud-bank, rearing its angry height in the air. Down to the south and south-east lay our most impressive view. The Twins, the next peak in this range, had a bastion of rock bluffs either side falling steeply to deep valleys. Our plans for next morning's route on it were still undetermined. Further down lay high range after range, snow-capped massifs reaching into the cloud, sheltering lakes and uninhabited country. Across the Wairau River lay the Inland Kiakouras, the limit for our eye-sight as they melted in the moisture-laden haze of evening.

The most urgent need now was a campsite. Between here and the Twins had to be counted out; the ground was even, but at too steep an angle for comfort. Retreating down about 20 feet we found a small tarn formed by the melting snow. Water - one point in its favour, and luckily a small flat area, slightly sheltered from the wind. Through an oversight we were without tent poles so, to serve a double purpose, we constructed a rock wall both as protection from the wind, which was very strong by now, and as something to tie the tent to. Barry crawled into his sleeping bag, then into the tent, holding it up whilst I lashed our tomahawk to his Yukon-type rucksack, making our second tent-pole. Makeshift, yes; but to our delight they held well. Entrance was gained by pulling out a couple of the side pegs and crawling under. Ravenously hungry, we settled for a meal of salami, scroggen, honey and thickly buttered Rye-Vitas. We peeped

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tons of displaced earth fanning out in the valley floors.

Following the ridge down to the saddle we sheltered under the lee away from a sharp little wind to enjoy a well earned lunch. Whilst eating, the relative quiet was shattered by a rifle report, distorted by echoes bouncing from Mt. Arthur's bluffs. Below to our right was a rich, green basin, a favourite of deer and their hunters. More shots followed in quick succession, mingled with the cries of a wild goat, and then our lunch-time quiet returned, broken only by birds and the goat's cry at lengthening intervals.

The ridge running up from the saddle to Mt. Arthur was narrow, ending at a rock bluff, not high but covered with spikey sub-alpine plants and loose tussock clumps, making the bluff unpleasant to overcome. With altitude gained, large areas of broken white-grey shale lay exposed among the sub-alpine vegetation. Being unable to follow the ridge owing to a series of large rock steps, we sidled upward on the eastern side of the ridge, rock hopping and scrambling, trying not to waste time as we were in shadow, with a chilly wind coming up the valley. A times a kea would wheel and glide overhead, crying out with his harsh, desolate voice - a being in full sympathy with this star barren home. To gain the top, we finished by going up a wide shallow gully. The rock was extremely rotten, every footstep uphill dislodged minor rock falls. For our own safety we had to climb all at the same height. Coming into the sunlight again on top, and with night not far away, we thought we'd stop there. Being roughly 5-ish we had no alternative but to spend an uncomfortable night. Sunset and sunrise, we hoped, would compensate for being chilly for a few hours.

out of the doorway before settling to sleep. Our sunset was wondrous. The cloud-bank was approaching in over the West Coast, rich fiery colours glowing from the angry clouds. Ah! to have known then what to expect from New Zealand weather! The wind rose in volume, but we were too tired to listen long and slept well.

The morning confirmed our fears. Thick swirling mist, driven by a high wind, put out of the question all thought of the Twins, so we packed up and left quickly, forcing down more honey and Rye-Vitas as breakfast. Finding our way to the right ridge was awkward. The evening before we had taken a very good survey, but as we had a choice with many spurs running off each, we weren't certain of it. The mist reduced visibility to about 15 ft. and even our compass behaved erratically. Barry found a rough cairn, making us both happier, and after some cautious travelling we found another. Our track was now down, over rock, greasy with moisture, across shingle fans when we left the ridge in order to pass bluffs, till we were travelling down over swampy tussock. Soon an occasional stunted tree appeared. It had taken $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours to reach tree level, and we were glad of the shelter from the wind and driven rain. Now the path was a muddy track, rivulets dropping and damming behind tree-trunks. Cabbage-trees appeared among the beech. Flora saddle welcomed us, and down to Flora Hut for lunch and warmth.

Retracing our steps over the saddle we almost strolled down the well-made track, stopping near the bottom to fill our billies with mushrooms, remembering what frugality awaited us back in the "batch." Passing by the farm, the farmer's wife called us in to tea and scones, enquired after our trip, and then asked us how we planned to get back. As we weren't in a hurry we had intended to hitch or walk, but the very kindly farmer's wife rang some neighbours further down the road and found one who was going in to Motueka by car in an hour's time. Fatigue and wet weather made us doubly thankful for this very kind gesture both on her part and the driver's. The miles quickly passed and later that evening, over a meal of mushrooms and bacon, we discussed the best all-round trip either of us had ever done. So ended Easter 1953.

THE SCROUNGE OF THE CENTURY - Alex Colley.

Some walkers have long realised that scrounging saves poundage in the pack, and the art has skilled practitioners. Some admire their neighbour's cooking, others habitually visit spoon in hand. And there are those who arrive without a tent and are taken in. But it remained for mere beginners to achieve the ultimate. It is doubtful whether any scrounger has arrived with nothing but the clothes he stood in and obtained his complete needs for a week-end camp. Nevertheless this was the achievement, not of a single wily walker, but of the entire Croker family! They came to enjoy the re-union camp fire and return that night, but were offered sleeping bags and blankets by the Kirkbys and the Barretts (who drove back after supper), and tents by Mouldy Harrison and the Harveys. Two entire meals and the wherewithal to eat them were contributed by others, and Richard even managed to wring some pipe tobacco out of Jim Brown, so all was well with the Crokers.

FEDERATION REPORT - APRIL.

- Allen A. Strom

BARRINGTON HOUSE: The Proprietor of the House has indicated that he has no objections to Bushwalkers using the access through his property to the track to Carey's Peak. His objections had previously arisen from the actions of some walkers who did not observe the code of ethics. Bushwalkers are therefore advised to be discreet in behaviour when passing the Barrington House.

SAINT HELENA: Federation would like Bushwalkers to know that St. Helena is held on a permissive occupancy by the Federation in an effort to prevent development at that place. Bushwalkers are invited to visit the area regularly and to encourage an interest in the retention of the primitive conditions existing.

CONSERVATION BUREAU: Two new members have been added to the Bureau... Mr. B.W. Peach (C.M.W.), and Mr. Tom Moppett (S.B.W.).

SEARCH AND RESCUE: The Practice Week-end held on April 16/17th was not very satisfactory. Army Signals had taken over completely and generally upset the efficacy of the practice as far as Bushwalkers were concerned. The Police have expressed a similar opinion and thanked the Bushwalkers for their patience and forbearance.

SOCIAL: Miss Edna Stretton (S.B.W.) has volunteered to organise a Bushwalkers' Ball and a committee is being called together.

THE WARRUMBUNGLE NATIONAL PARK: News has been received that the Trust for the Park has been set up. The Federation will ask for the names of the Trustees.

BE AT BLUE GUM - on MAY 13 - 14 - 15.

CONJOINT WORKING BEE - CORROBOREE - INSTRUCTIONAL WEEK-END.

Programme of Events.

- Saturday - Light work to keep the river channel clear and prevent bank erosion (Shovels, spades, pick axes and mattocks useful)
- Sat.night - Campfire under the control of Malcolm McGregor. Possibly another "opera".
- Sunday - Instructional for Prospectives. Fraternising for Members.

Leaders: Ross Laird.
Jim Brown.

T H E C A L O O L A C L U B

..... [Founded 1945]

.....

OUR MAY GEOGRAPHY TOUR, 1955.

(May 20th to June 1st)

.....

THE TOUR will be by Club Coach, visiting Tamworth, Armidale, the old mining town of Hillgrove, the New England National Park at Point Lookout, the Nymboida, Grafton, Port Macquarie, the Comboyne, The Boorganna Faunal Reserve on the Bulga Plateau, Crowdy Head near Taree, and Newcastle.

THE PURPOSE OF THE TOUR will be to afford opportunities to observe the geography and natural history of the areas visited.

COST OF THE TOUR Share in the running cost of the vehicle and food:

£ 10 (ten pounds)

Each member of the party must be affiliated with the Club. This costs 2/6d.

The Club will provide food, cooking and eating utensils and camping gear to be included in the £ 10.

The Tour will be under the leadership of Allen A. Strom, A.W. Dingeldei will be in charge of vehicles and (Mrs) E.M. Dingeldei in charge of catering. Each member of party will be required to undertake Camp Duties which will include preparation and distribution of food, camp cleaning and tenting.

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW INVITED: Each application must be accompanied by a deposit of three pounds (£ 3) plus the affiliation fee of 2/6d. where such is applicable.

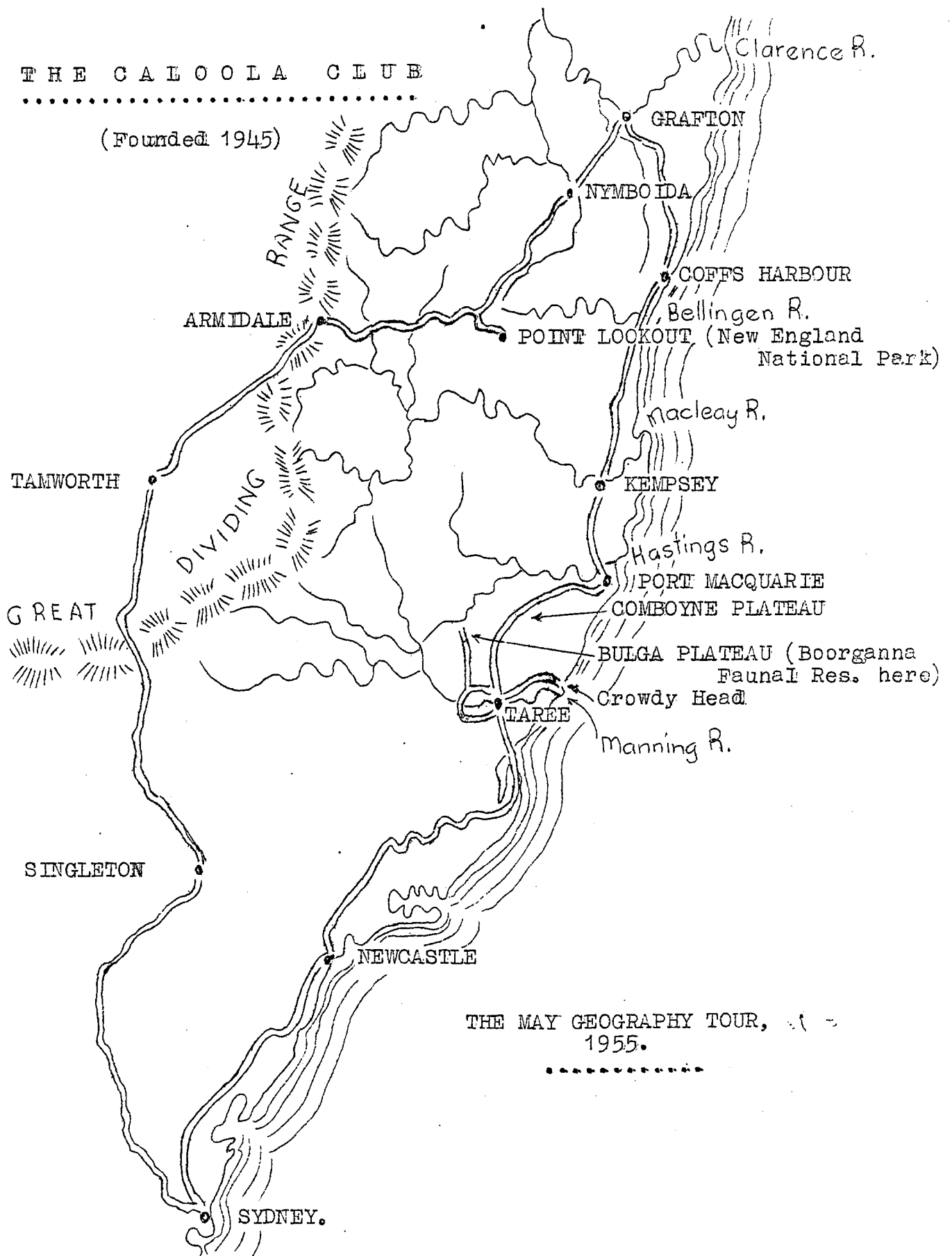
Further details and application forms available from

Allen A. Strom,
The Teachers' College,
Smith Street, BALMAIN.
WB 2528

(Mrs) E.M. Dingeldei,
42 Byron Street,
CROYDON.
UA 2983

THE CALOOLA CLUB

(Founded 1945)



THE MAY GEOGRAPHY TOUR, 1955.

ONE VERSION OF THE 85-MILER

- Kevin Ardill

"The longest way round is the sweetest way home" - Oh Yeah - and might I also add, "There's no fool like an old fool." The foregoing is just about enough description of the trip, but a week has passed, the legs are beginning to feel like legs again, the clicking has almost disappeared from the knee caps, blisters healing nicely, thank you, and when I've deseeded my socks I'll stagger in to the Club and resign.

I'm pretty sure it was Jim Brown's fault. I consider he talked me into it, but he assures me that the opposite is correct. We thought to gain slight advantage by going to Katoomba on "The Fish," and I booked accordingly. I met Jim at a quarter to five and found seats 50 and 51, Car 7, a little difficult to locate in a carriage of 48 seats. After a little simple calculation by the conductor we found ourselves in seats 2 and 3, Car 9. Amazin' what? Soon we are joined by Geof Wagg, Grace Aird, Don Newis and Heather Joyce, all holders of seats 50 and 51. A gentle glow steals through my frame when Heather asks to be allowed to sit next to me. Would I mind? The glow soon departs when Heather mentions that the window seat is the attraction. Your eyes shall be as full of coal as Bunnerong, Miss Joyce, but I shall not lift handkerchief or dig with match on your behalf. No Sir! I disclose that I have a 25-lb pack, and Jim with a no-frame pack has slightly less. I've never had such a light pack - it floated like a gossamer.

At Katoomba we marched past a line of taxis towards the Devil's Hole - a lovely night, everyone happy and bright, Dot Butler looking astoundingly athletic and the whole bunch in top gear along the Western Road. Well, we were last after half a mile, and we let 'em go. Jim and I had decided to walk at our own steady pace, and walk long hours, if necessary, to cover the milage. We were both badly out of condition. I had done a couple of day walks since last winter and Jim was nearly in the same condition, but was fortunate enough to have had a trip in Victoria earlier in the year.

Never having fallen before in the Devil's Hole, I rectified that omission, but was dopey enough to get up again. The picking up process, plus cursing time, allowed the torches ahead to disappear, and we were alone. Now I'll tell you about the private trip Jim Brown and I did from Katoomba to Picton.

The sloppy tracks in Megalong damped both our feet and enthusiasm for the Cox on the morrow. However, the road was firm and dry, the moon shone brightly, we shared an orange under a gum and registered the first complaint from the lower limbs as the road consistently climbed towards Black Jerry's. As ten years had elapsed since Jim came up that way, and I had never been there before, the gentle reader may not be surprised to learn that we went adrift. We walked about 2 miles trying to find the start of the track, survived a number of determined attacks by a sheep or ram who wanted to butt in, and then resorted to tracking the gym boots worn by members of the leading bunch.. Jim had just about qualified for his Tenderfoot's

badge when the clock struck twelve and the gym boots leapt into thin air. We pitched the tent and rolled into our bags. Had a most restful night disturbed only by hunger pains, thirst, anxiety and finally got out of the tent to tell some lost motorist where he wasn't. Could have told him where to go to but couldn't see how big he was, and so back to bed.

We rose at 5 a.m. and were away 10 minutes later. Found the track in no time and ambled down to the Cox. Breakfast at the first side creek, doing nicely on oats and sardines on toast. At Breakfast Creek we saw the well-known figure of Peter Stitt. He and three others had ex-ecuted Sydney on the 6.23 p.m. the previous night and had walked via Carlons. After about two and a half words of conversation he bounded off after his retreating comrades and we were delightfully private once again. The Cox was crossed at Harry's River, and there and then we decided that after every gravelly crossing we would stop and clean gravel out of our shoes and socks. This resolution paid dividends by eliminating one source of blisters and providing welcome brief rests. On the subject of rests - we stopped for five minutes every hour. Forty-five minutes were allowed for lunch at Kanangra Creek - ham sandwiches and dates. When deciding on food the the trip I mentioned to the girls at work that I was taking a pound of dates. Later one girl asked how they ? would find us if we got lost, and Kath piped up, "They'll follow the date stones!" And here we were with seedless dates!

At 12.45 p.m. we left Kanangra Crk. and swinging round a bend of the river we met John White, Bev Price and Eric Adcock. John had had a fall, and a bad knee was causing trouble. Bob Abernethy, returning to John's aid, informed us that the main party had left the Kowmung about half an hour earlier. The afternoon passed quite uneventfully, but through bad judgement on my part we were on the rough side of the Cox for the last mile above Kedumba Creek. At 6.15 p.m. we downed packs at Harry's Humpy and decided to dine. A good large steak (fresh) each, with plenty of rice, and apricots plus rice, mugs of coffee, a short rest, and at 7.45 p.m. we picked up our lightened packs once more. For the time being we left the Cox and followed the roads towards McMahons. Conversation on other walks in the area, the usual rests and gulps of water in creeks and puddles (until I struck a stagnant pool), soon put the miles behind us, and about 10 p.m. we returned to the river. We passed one fire before descending to the river level, and about a mile further on saw several sleeping bodies under a tree. Half a mile further on there were another two weary walkers under another tree. - us.

Even my stiffening thighs didn't keep me awake, and at 4.45 a.m. we were optimistic enough to crawl from our bags and tape our soles and heels with 3" elastoplast. John de Bovay of the Hobart Walking Club put me on to this lurk years ago. Roadbashing, after the feet have been soaking for a considerable period, can be torment, and the tape idea is wonderful. Rolled oats and bacon and eggs occupied our attention, and at 6 a.m. we were footing it once more. After a few yards I noticed Jim was limping and he made the surprising admission that his ankle was most painful and he couldn't walk any faster. At this pace we were soon overtaken by Geof Wagg and Neil Monteith. At

the last wet crossing of the Cox below McMahons the duo surged ahead and Jim suggested I should follow them while he limped in to Bimlow. So I took off, and although the others had only 5 minutes start, I'm darned if I caught a sight of them. The short rests were forgotten and I was within a mile of Bimlow before I sighted five figures ahead.

Exactly three hours after leaving Jim I squatted beside Heather Joyce, Geof Wagg, Dave Brown, Neil Monteith and, surprisingly - Arne Johnsson. Arne had lost a boot in some rapids, and a sock padded with grass and strapped with a thin leather was being used as a substitute. Geof plastered his blisters, a map was the subject of some peering and debate, and with Heather leading the way we grunted and groaned out of Bimlow. With Neil a conscientious objector the pilgrims were now five. I was sure some of the tough boys were ahead, but Arne was insistent that we were the first through Bimlow. Now I was paying the penalty for my three hour non-stop morning dash. The short stop in Bimlow made my legs feel like tomato stakes, and when Len and Gladys Fall stopped in their motor chariot I stopped also. They were down for a day's drive to see the battered Bushies, and did I fit the bill! However, on hearing of Jim's ankle the Falls floated on, and off I shuffled again. The sun was warm, and a nice patch of grass invited me to rest. The pack was like a feather pillow, and only the thought of the miles ahead shifted me. I leapt to my feet and sped on refreshed.....You're a liar, Ardill - you rolled onto your stomach and levered yourself stiff-legged to your feet because you couldn't get up any other way. Sure, I'll come clean. One word describes my condition, and you wouldn't print it, Madam Editor. The steps had lengthened to about nine inches when Mr. Ingram braked to a stop and offered a bag of glucose sweets "to keep you going." My eagle eye saw an empty back seat, and I startled David by putting my pack in the boot and my tail on the empty seat. Back to Bimlow for me and my old mate James. We swung round a bend half a mile further on and Holy Smoke! the ghost walks! Mrs. Brown's little boy Jim in person, plus pack. And then the ghost spoke; the ankle had improved, the spirit was still unconquered, and Picton here comes James! Poor David, he doesn't know whether he's coming or going. One moment he has a cot-case and another one in sight, and then a few minutes later the back seat is empty once more and the private walk is on again.

We reached the Nattai and lunched at the first pool. Saw the leading four on the track above and let them go. Popped in for a swim with Jim looking on. He admitted afterwards the thought entered his mind that he might have to rescue me, but he hadn't decided just how. Even a cramp wouldn't have made my legs any stiffer, and I emerged under my own steam. Lunch and a short rest improved us both and we maintained a steady 3 miles per hour to the Nattai crossing. A couple of hundred yards downstream the leading quartet were sighted, and with a coo and a wave we headed up the hill. Stopping at the pools near the summit for a date or two we were passed again, and did not see our fellow travellers again.

When we hit the road there were two cars waiting - David and Jack Gentle. How mad can this bushwalking get you? - we decided to walk - the honour old boy - oh really! So David and Jack scooted off, and down the road stepped we with a fresh brew of tea

and cakes inside us supplied by the lady passengers Isabel Wilkie and Pat Gentle. May Allah shower blessings on them - we did. The road bash is not described - but the plaster stuck to us. Some blokes have no sense of humour; David must have thought we meant it when we said we would walk into Picton. He's sure to come back to see how we're going - good old David. Good old nothing! - and at 7 p.m. we saw the lights of Picton - arriving outside the Royal George to hear the glad news that the beer had just gone off. Good old David - he had waited for us, and then in the manner of the Samaritan drove us both home.

Strangely enough I was almost normal next morning, and James ditto. I reckon the walk took three years off my life and about the same number of layers of skin off my big toes. Walking at Easter? Not me! I'm staying home to polish my car, 'cause it's going to get plenty of use from now on.

NEW ZEALAND LETTER

From Keith Renwick

Dear S.B.W's,

Well, the tour is over and at last I am on the way home. By the time you get this I will be home, but it finishes up what I have been up to since the last letter.

On Christmas day we left Christchurch with the Christchurch Tramping Club bound for Lewis Pass, then via Cannibal Gorge and Ada Pass to Ada Valley. From here some of the party climbed Gloriana; then we went down Ada Valley to Lake Guyon and over Maling Pass to Lake Tennyson. Unfortunately I had been suffering for the past three days from sunstroke and food poisoning, so had to pull out here via Clarence Valley and Jack's Pass to Hanmer and back to Christchurch. The Club was going through to Lake Roto Iti.

A few days rest in Christchurch and I caught the train to Greymouth with Keith Fitzgerald, a Christchurch chap, and up to Fox River Caves south of Westport. These we went through again, together with some new ones, and met up with Barry Hartley who came down from the Club trip after it had come out at Lake Roto Iti. The three of us then went down to the Fox Glacier where we were immediately asked to join in on the search for the chaps overdue on Sefton. This occupied us for the next few days, during which we had a wonderful morning up on the Douglas Nevé, reaching a high col just under the final slope to the summit, but being on the search we couldn't go off and finish the climb of course. This trip was very good experience into Search & Rescue methods in N.Z., which are very well organised.

We turned then over the Copeland Pass and out to the Hermitage. A few days rest here and a short trip up the Tasman Glacier. It was just at this time that the unfortunate accident occurred with John Younger and party. After it was decided that nothing further could be done, Barry and I went on down the inland road to Queenstown for a few days. A few more side trips, such as Skippers and Pigeon Island on Lake Wanaka, and we went out through Alexandria and Roxborough to

Dunedin. I then took a bus trip right round the East Coast through Chaselands to Invercargill. Then another bus out to the Waiau Caves where I spent the night and the next day exploring. Back by bus through Riverton to Invercargill, and train to Dunedin.

Turning northwards once more we returned to Christchurch via the coast road, calling at Palmerston Caves and Morakie Boulders. We worked then for three weeks at Christchurch. Then the ferry boat "Moari" took us to Wellington where we stayed a couple of days, then north to Taupo and out to Napier. We just saw the last few ganetts at the Ganett sanctuary on Cape Kidnappers. We also had 13 inches of rain in 24 hours.

From Napier we turned south to Palmerston North and out to New Plymouth for a week. A bus trip round the Mountain and short trips from New Plymouth were all I could get in because of the weather which since we had started on the West Coast after the Club trip in the beginning of January, had been continuously cloudy and wet. We have broken the drought in every place we visited right through.

I then came back to Auckland to meet Yvonne and Shirley who arrived on March 20th. Later that week we went to Waitomo Caves and Ruapehu. We went up to look at the Whakapapa Glacier which is terribly broken up. From National Park we went to Taupo and Wairaki for a day, then up to Rotorua for another day. Once the girls arrived the weather changed and we had beautiful fine days right up to the time I left.

From Rotorua we went to Waikarimoana, a day there, then on to Gisborne. After a good look round we went through to Opetiki where I left the girls as they were going down near New Plymouth for Easter. I continued right along the north coast through Tauranga and Paeroa to Auckland.

To conclude, over Easter I did a round trip of the North Auckland Peninsular, including a visit to several more caves. And that is about the extent of my wanderings in N.Z. Although it amounts to some 16,000 miles there is still an awful lot I would like to see and shall have to return some time to finish off.

GOSSIP

Gladys Fall entertained about 20 ladies, mostly S.B.W. members at her home on Sat. 19th March. The occasion was Joe Newlands' approaching marriage, which took place the following week. As Joe herself said, the surprise party "really knocked her." Imagine Jo at a loss for words.

Frank Ashdown made history recently when he got a hitch in a ROLLS ROYCE! - and it didn't cost anything.

PADDY MADE

May already and with winter just around the corner some of us are thinking of snow, good slopes and good ski-ing.

For those of you with such thoughts who intend to go to the snow this year Paddy has the best range of gear yet, and the quality and prices are keen (but they won't cut too big holes in your pocket). You'll be surprised at some of the low prices.

A few examples:-

Climbing Skins	£3. 5. 0 pair.
Ski Trousers	£6. to £7.16. 0 pair.
Italian Ski Boots	from £8. 3. 6 pair.
Skis	from £10.10. 0 pair.
Goggles	from 8. 6 pair.
Bindings	£3.15. 0 set

and dozens of other necessities for your ski-ing holiday.

Imported gear is already arriving and it will pay you to be early.

Ski Heil you ski bunnys.

.....

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