

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER.

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
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AT OUR JULY MEETING.

There were about 45 members present when the meeting opened with the President in the Chair. It was a tempestuous meeting, the gale which blew through the open window frames creating a swish and a rustle in the streamers above reminiscent of palm trees in a hurricane. From time to time window panes fell to the footpath with a metallic whine, accentuating what Mr. Allan Hardie described as the "Wuthering Heights atmosphere."

Correspondence informed us that the Club name has been included in the pink pages of the telephone book. Also that the tree to which we had subscribed in the Remembrance Driveway would be planted about 30 miles this side of Canberra, if that would suit. It was decided that it would. A letter from the Department of Lands gave the names of the Trustees of the Warrumbungles National Park. They consisted of representatives of Government Departments, local people and our own member, Alan Strom.

An offer from Miss Drewell (Duch), of two pack for the Club to use as it wished, was accepted with thanks. They will be kept in the space once occupied by duplicating equipment, and will be lent to deserving prospectives.

A report was received from the Northern Parks and Playgrounds Movement on the Barrington Tops. The report recommended two tourist parks and one primitive area. The Movement favoured the Forestry Department taking over the primitive area as a flora reserve. It was decided to write to the Movement drawing attention to the dangers inherent in flora reserves under the control of the Forestry Department, which allowed the issue of permits for timber removal. The total destruction of the magnificent stand of Tasmanian Blue Gum on Mount Cordicudgy was quoted as an example of the fate of timber in a Forestry Department flora reserve.

The Treasurer's report informed us that David Ingram had been appointed Assistant Treasurer. The sum of £45 had been spent on a new typewriter for the magazine. In answer to a query - "did it work?" the editor drew attention to the clean cut duplication of the July magazine.

The Conservation Secretary reported that the Conservation Conference of July 2nd had referred the Caloola Club's proposal for a National Park Act to a sub-committee which had the task of ascertaining the views of the bodies represented at the Conference. To test the feeling of the Club he moved that the Club endorse the proposal, which provided both for security of tenure of parks and for their control. Under the present set up park lands could be alienated merely by Ministerial minute. The proposed Act would make alienation of parklands possible only by Act of Parliament after a public inquiry. The proposal also provided for an Authority to administer the parks. It was hoped that the constitution of this authority would ensure that well qualified individuals would run the parks. After some discussion the debate on the proposal was adjourned to the next meeting.

In reply to a question by Neil Schaefer the President said that the Committee was not obliged to give reasons for not admitting a prospective member. In the case to which Neil referred the President said it could be definitely stated that the prospective had completed his test walks, otherwise the application would not have been considered. The nominator had duly been interviewed and given the reasons for the Committee's action.

Allan Hardie then moved that we write to Mr. Clive Evatt, congratulating him on his opposition to the proposal that Pastures Production Boards should have the power to declare open seasons against protected fauna. Warming to his theme he said that "the cockies have far too much of their own way in this country." It was for their benefit that the exchange rate had been kept at its present level, thus forcing overseas tourists to pay a tax of 25% on everything they bought. Then there was myxomatosis, introduced for their benefit, which had deprived us of rabbit meat - necessary for many invalids - and would eventually force us all to wear straw hats. Tom Moppett thought we should defer this matter to the next meeting, a suggestion which was accepted, possibly because it was such a windy night.

- Alex Colley.

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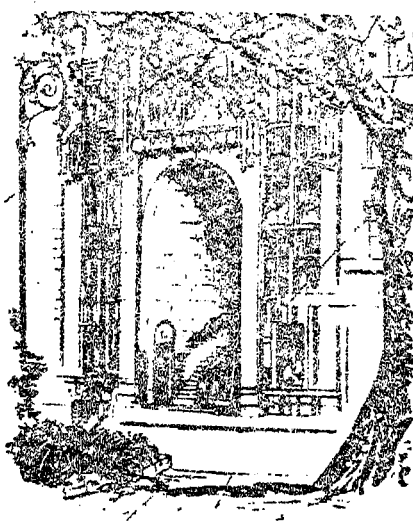
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COMMERCIAL FORESTS AND PRIMITIVE AREAS IN THE HIMALAYAS.

- Marie B. Byles.

Many years ago you will find an editorial in one of the Bushwalker Annuals pointing out that in some countries you tramp, in others you hike, but that in Australia you bushwalk. Now, in India you "trek", with a coolie, or maybe two, to carry your gear, and sometimes with a pony to carry you! I dearly wanted to trek to the Himalaya snows, but I was rather ill, so I took a cook, four coolies, a personal attendant, a pony and a pony waller, too! Never having before travelled like a princess, it would have been most interesting had the body been in somewhat greater comfort.

We travelled for the first days through lordly forests of the turpentine pine, (*pinus longifolia*, the only deciduous pine in the world), passing fascinating little villages with steeply terraced rice and vegetable fields, and then along the banks of a blue-grey river rushing over blue-grey stones with "hills" of terrific steepness towering above, clad in the same stately pine trees. The "hills" rise from valleys of 3,550 feet to tops of 10,000, but they are still only "hills". Beneath these lovely air-fairy pines is an open green grass sward, rather like a cultivated park if you can imagine any parkland as steep. In a few

places we came upon groups of pines which had been tapped, that is, a long slit had been made in the bark and at the bottom end a kind of plant-pot affair had been fastened to collect the turpentine that oozed from the injured tree.

The turpentine pine is of course highly inflammable. A chip of the bark burns like a bunsen burner in the fireplace. Before the rains and the trek I had lived alone on an isolated "hill", 8,000 feet high encircled by snow clad mountains on 135 degree of the horizon, and looking down the hills of pine forests and over the tops of them to the snows beyond. Every night there would be serpents of fire, the edges of the terraced rice fields being burned off by the peasants. These fields were in the midst of this highly inflammable pine forest. Yet not once did I see the least suspicion of a forest fire. In Australia if people burned off in a time of torrid heat, the bushlands around would soon be a scene of blackened desolation, and probably houses and lives would also have been lost. Why did no such fate befall the forests of the Himalaya Hills? Why are these forests a thing of beauty, of artificial beauty, it is true, but not a "cinder heap" as Mr. Swain, the late Forestry Commissioner described the Blue Mountains Forests?

The answer is, that every year or so the Forest Department burns the undergrowth so that no fire can ever get a hold. The result of this controlled burning during the safe season, is magnificent commercial forests of great beauty.

But you cannot get something for nothing. And the price that is paid is a heavy one.

The slopes of the "hills" steepened as the Princess and her retinue drew nearer to the Snows, and we saw landslides on a scale hard to conceive - whole hillsides ripped away and sometimes carrying with them the little farmlets and the terraced fields below. Controlled burning and peasants ceaselessly lopping the undergrowth and small trees for fodder, had denuded the soil of the cover which binds it together, and this was the result.

Further on still we entered virgin forests, glorious primaeval wildernesses, clinging to slopes far steeper still, but here the landslides were negligible. The trees formed a vast symbiotic harmony where deciduous and evergreens, oaks, chestnuts and conifers rose above a tangled undergrowth of dwarf bamboos and flowers, (flowers of which only a few diseased specimens still survived in the outer hills) - geraniums, campanulas, anemones, trumpets - I am not a botanist, I only know that we entered a wilderness of loveliness.

It is said that the dull boy of the English public school family was put into the Indian Forestry Service. If so, the dull boys made a good job of it. The hills are covered with trees, magnificent trees, and the catchments of the streams are protected by forest cover. But Commercial forests are not primitive areas. We need both. No commercial forest can take the place of a primitive wilderness. A proper forestry department, as that of Queensland, should control both, side by side the primitive area and the commercial forest, the same fire control service serving both. But seeing how things stand in the Himalayas, I know it would be foolish to let primitive areas pass into the hands of the N.S.W. Forest Department, which is not sympathetic to the primitive area ideal, and which betrayed its trust to keep the top of Coricudgy as a primitive area, and let it be despoiled of its unique stand of blue gum trees.

IMPORTANT TRANSPORT NOTICE.

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116 STATION STREET, BLACKHEATH.

24 HOUR SERVICE.

BUSHWALKERS arriving at Blackheath late at night
 without transport booking can ring for car from
 Railway Station or call at above address --
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'PHONE B'HEATH 81 or 146. LOOK FOR CARS TC3210 or TV270.

OR BOOK AT MARK SALON RADIO SHOP - OPPOSITE STATION.

IMPORTANT NOTICE. MAKE A NOTE OF THE DATE. INVITE YOUR FRIENDS.

OCT. 19th, 1955 Lecture, accompanied by colour transparencies,

"HIMALAYAN TREK" - Marie Byles.

Towards the end of one of the rare day walks of the current
 programme, the party were approaching Terrey Hills. They were
 surprised to hear mens' voices and the sounds of persons unknown
 crashing through the bush. When the persons unknown emerged from the
 scrub fully dressed for a Sunday car drive, the following conversation
 took place:-

Mens' Leader. "Good day, Mate."

Walk Leader. "How are you? Don't tell me you're lost".

Mens' Leader. "No. The Police just raided the two-up!!"

FOUND. - at Adam's Lookout, Bungonia, PACK containing various articles
 including a handkerchief with name "E. Favler" and initials F.V.
 Now in possession of George Grey, 21 Gordon Street, Hurstville.

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The Editor,

Dear Sir,

At our last meeting it was moved that we support the proposal contained in the Journal of the Caloola Club for a National Park Act. Encouraged by the fact that my amendment to this motion was seconded, and that there are therefore at least two in the Club who are critical of the proposal, I should like to express my views in your pages. The proposal is far reaching and covers a good deal of the subject matter of many years of discussion in the Club, and I feel that we should not endorse it unless we are pretty clear what we are doing.

I doubt that anyone would quarrel with the idea of making it impossible, except by Act of Parliament, to use dedicated parklands for any other purpose. Furthermore the definition quoted from the New Zealand Act seems all that a bushwalker could desire - particularly the part that says that "the public shall have freedom of entry and access to the Parks, so that they may receive in full measure the inspiration, enjoyment, recreation, and other benefits that may be derived from mountains, forests, sounds, lakes, and rivers." There are of course dangers for us in such legislation - it could easily include restrictive clauses, e.g. about the lighting of fires and camping areas, which would make bushwalking as we know it, virtually impossible. We could expect charges for camping in areas where we now go free, and perhaps rangers who would order us to pack up and go to the regular camping ground for motorists. I think that we should carefully guard our freedom to walk and camp. Provided this freedom is not seriously impaired, then anything which facilitates and secures the dedication of national Parks should meet with our wholehearted approval. The Act would not of itself create any new parks, nor would it, or anything else, stand in the way of PROGRESS as represented by the drowning of the Burragorang and Jindabyne valleys and the enormous engineering works in the so-called "Park" at Kosciusko. But it might well halt the bulldozers and logging saws at the boundaries of, for instance, the Mark Morton Primitive Reserve, or the Proposed Barrington Tops Primitive Reserve. As the quest for water, power and timber intensifies, the areas left for bushwalkers will continue to diminish. The Act would help to preserve some of the bushlands, particularly those with little economic potential.

The second portion of the proposed Act covers the administration of National Parks. A National Parks Authority, consisting of thirteen persons, 6 of whom will be permanent public servants, is to be set up. Five Departments - Lands, Chief Secretary, Local Government, Tourist Activities and Education, will be represented. But why stop at five? Surely the Department of Conservation, if not its three constituents - Soil Conservation, Water Conservation and Irrigation and Forestry - should be included? In fact if I were picking the members, Soil Conservation would come first since the areas of greatest interest - as parks are so often important catchment areas. Why not the Health Department, to advise on drinking water, sewerage &c, and the Main Roads Department to advise on access? Thirteen are already too many for efficient administration, but the list could be extended indefinitely. These omnibus authorities, Commissions and the like, are popular in some circles, but they achieve little. One, the

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FROM

THE SANITARIUM HEALTH FOOD SHOP,

13 HUNTER STREET, SYDNEY.

Transport Commission, which wasted much of the time of our top transport men, was abolished after a short life. The Conservation Authority, consisting of a Chairman and three Commissioners (Soil, Water Conservation and Forestry) has conserved nothing. A department under a sole Commissioner, or Director, is likely to prove much more efficient. It is, of course, the duty of any department head to consult other authorities and other departments when he wants advice or co-ordination. But it is not necessary to have all the departments or experts which he has to consult, meeting together regularly. If they do, it is pretty certain that most of them will waste most of their time.

Nor do I see why Parks, scattered throughout the State, should be centrally controlled from Sydney. Will the thirteen, meeting in their Sydney office, have any real knowledge of, or interest in, the problems of park areas, many of which will be in scattered and remote parts which they will seldom, if ever, visit? The proposal provides for Boards or Trusts for each Park, but as the Authority "initiates and approves programmes for the control, development, improvement, maintenance or protection of National Parks," "establishes and controls the National Parks Service," and "regulates the use of National Parks in all its ramifications," providing all officers and servants, rangers, guides, workmen attendants, managers etc; it is difficult to see what there is left for the Trusts to do. Any interest which the Trustees might have would soon be anaethetised by remote control.

I would much prefer to see each Park governed, not by a centralised Authority, but by persons genuinely interested in the area. I think this interest is far more important than scientific knowledge. Probably the most important task of Trustees is to prevent or control

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fires. This is largely a matter of excluding stock, since fires are usually lit for the benefit of stock, and only local public opinion, and local bush fire brigades, are likely to stop them. If bush fires are prevented, timber guarded, and shooting prohibited, the fauna and flora can well look after itself. But such Trusts may err and it is here that a National Park Inspectorate, rather than an Authority or Department, could see that the provisions of the Act were being observed and give useful scientific and practical advice on park management. The present method of appointing Trustees, which has resulted in a preponderance of politicians, and, judging by recent correspondence, resentment at public interest, is to be condemned,

But perhaps the chief danger of abandoning our parks to an Authority is that public interest will disappear once the Government has taken over. If this occurs and there are no demonstrations of public opinion, such as secured us Garrawarra, Bluegum, Bouddi, and Era, then the Government will be under no pressure to create new Parks.

Yours sincerely,

Alex Colley.

Jean Schoen recently returned from England where she was married. Best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Ian Main.

A new little Putt has announced his arrival into this yellow world. Congratulations to Jane and Colin on the birth of a son.

SCENIC MOTOR TOURS,

RAILWAY STEPS,

KATOOMBA.

DAILY TOURS BY PARLOR COACH TO THE WORLD FAMOUS
JENOLAN CAVES AND ALL BLUE MOUNTAIN SIGHTS.

FOR ALL INFORMATION:

WRITE TO P.O. BOX 60, KATOOMBA
TELEPHONE 60, KATOOMBA.

AND AFTER WAGNER

- Jim Brown.

There's a plot afoot to publish an "omnibus" of the Club Operas. Perhaps you've heard about it - perhaps not.

But wait! We're getting ahead of ourself. Perhaps you have'nt even heard of the operas. (Breathes there a Sydney Bushwalker?) To clear up the point anyway, let's make it quite plain that a number of events in the club's recent history, and certain of its everyday goings-on have been recorded in verse and (we blush) put to music. The music has not been exactly original, of course: popular songs, old walking ballads, musical comedies both old and new, the airs of Sir Arthur Sullivan, have all inspired our Crown Street composers, who have been content (with one notable exception) to stick to the lyrics or libretto. And for that notable exception, "Who'd be a Mathews, teaching home-made tunes?" These, then, have been the Club Operas, presented at Reunions and the like over the past few years.

We must confess that the general idea is not entirely original. Back in 1948 Ray Kirkby, inspired by one of the darker spots on the Club's fair history, devised and produced the fore-runner of the present series to tell the story of the Club Treasurer whh was hailed before the Court for alleged evasion of payment of his tram fare. I wasn't lucky enough to see that particular opera..... I had been living too well after a month in the Victorian Alps and didn't get to the Reunion.

The current opera series began in 1952, of course, at the 25th Birthday Party of the Club, and I'm glad to be able to say I was there when the egg was laid. I think it all began when Malcolm McGregor told Paul Barnes and myself that the hectic Instructional

Week-end in August had prompted him to write some verse to a suitable melody for performance at the Bush Party. Paul and I were quite taken with the parody, and I commented that other incidents of the weekend had been worthy of similar treatment. Said Paul, "Of course - why not an opera?"

Whereupon McGregor, the evil genius of these recent operas, went to work with several minions, notably Pat Sullivan, and hatched out "Instruction Plus". The time was opportune, for we had a group with quite fair singing voices, a decided love of campfire entertainments, and a swag of enthusiasm. Though we didn't know it at the time, the next year was to bring in two of our most prolific verse writers.

There was a kind of hiatus after October '52, and the re-union of 1953 passed with the same type of campfire as many before. It was a good show, but McGregor very rightly concluded that a campfire was better if there was a central item to build into the programme. We started to write again later that year in preparation for Reunion 1954, and the result was "With a Dong on my Gong". Wagg and Matthews contributed generously to the libretto, and the opening verse "Who'd be a Walker" with its Matthews-devised melody has been a source of embarrassment to its author ever since. "With a Dong-" told a slightly exaggerated tale of the doings at a normal monthly meeting.

The thing snowballed after that. There was just no containing it. We had planned a good part for Paddy in the opera for Reunion '55, then found Paddy was going overseas in January, so we sent him abroad with the airs of "Paddy Pallin Limited" on his mind. At the Reunion '55 "Bobbies and Bushies" recounted the mixed bag of encounters between ourselves and the Police, both on searches (and less creditable occasions). Finally the Blue Gum Working Bee in May was enlivened by the gala premiere of "By Jet with Geof", vocal depiction of the 85-mile marathon which occurred the previous month.

That gives us the five "operas" to be published in the projected omnibus. The present intention is to supply something in the nature of programme notes to tell the story behind the verse.

Those are the bare bones of the proposal, but the whole thing has many allied features. You know, I intended to write this in a vein as light-hearted as the operas themselves, but I can see that there are some quite serious ramifications. There has been the effect on the Club - and a really remarkable effect: apart from making our camp fire entertainment go with real zest and vigour, the operas have had the surprising effect of bringing together people who might have remained in little private cliques, and making them work together, and play together and laugh together. Old hands and new members alike. The contribution of the operas to better and better relations in the Club can't be assessed, but it must be considerable.

Two other features are deserving of attention: the humour of the operas has been directed against the Club and its own members (very often the writers and performers themselves). There has been no malice of any kind, and with the exception of the gentle libels on police and lost parties in "Bobbies and Bushies", we have been quite

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content to laugh at ourselves. Nor has there been any smut. Certainly we have used the Great Australian Adjective, one one occasion "ad absurdum", but otherwise our operas have been most virtuous and innocuous - far less suggestive than most musical comedies of recent years!

Of course we concede that our operas are parodies (with the exception of some Mathews productions). It is very easy to deride this kind of writing, to class it as obviously and generically inferior, and all of this is probably true - to a degree. At the same time parody writing introduces certain limitations, as the verse must scan and has to conform to the mould of the melody being used. In addition, in our particular case, the parody must tell a given story or relate to a specific subject: it should be light-hearted if not downright humorous, and the rhymes should be true - unless deliberately forced for added effect. To some extent, too, the new words should carry the feeling of the original, or the parody will sound out of keeping with the tempo and effect of the tune. Despite all this, I sometimes think a few of our parodies have better words than the original! Prejudice, perhaps, and not to be applied to those cases where William Gilbert was the original librettist.

There has been one diverting trend in the last couple of operas. We have been taking some quite bawdy old ballads, with jolly, rollicking choruses, and dubbing in words which could not bring a blush to the most innocent cheek. At first I was rather proud of this. It seemed a most worthy work, cleaning up these dirty old smoko songs. More recently I've begun to wonder how a stern ex-Serviceman parent would react if his favourite teen-age daughter-walker went about the house humming the air of, say, "One-Eye Reilly." Also, how the devil are we going to name the parent melody in our Opera Omnibus? Oh, well, worry about that one later.

THE SPIRES AND BIG MISTY.

- Dot Butler.

"Put anything down and I'll lead it," said I to silence the Walks Secretary who would not desist from brandishing a partly-filled Walks Programme under my nose, so Geof put down "Kanangra-Thurat Spires-Big Misty (Climbing Expedition)" and told me it was mine for June. Thus I had literally thrust upon me the chance of fulfilling one of the ambitions of my green youth. In those heroic days, when I would be up that way with the Tigers, I would gaze yearningly across Murdering Gully at the almost perpendicular bald rock faces of Big Misty as at a distant lover, but always our week-end destination would be 50 or 60 or 80 odd miles hence, and climbing on Big Misty would have to be foregone as one of the impermissible desires of my life. But now the wheel had come full cycle, and here at last was the chance to make a closer acquaintance.

The weather (for the sake of those who may read this ten years hence) had been raining for four months solid, and who were we to expect it to be fine for us. Snow rang me from Blackheath;

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"It's raining like mad up here," he said. "But, I rang the Meteorological Station, and the week-end forecast is misty mornings, clearing to fine days, with mild seas."

"Good for you Snow. We'll pick you up as we come through Katoomba at 8.30."

The three other cars were all somewhere on the way when we stopped outside Snow's house and tramped onto the front verandah - that is, all except Geof and Grace. "Geof's being unnaturally reticent," passed through my mind, then was promptly forgotten. "Let's give him a rousing welcome," cried Colin, so we carried on our chorus from the car:

"When I die-ee (bang! bang! on the door)
Take my saddle from the wa-all (ring! ring! ring! on the bell)
Le-e-ead out my po-o-o-ony (ring! ring! thump! thump!)
Lead him ow-out from his stall....

"Here he comes to open the door; come on! Pep it up!"

"Tie my bo-o-o-ones to the sa-a-adle.....

(the door opens) "Hell, this isn't Snow's place." "We're very sorry. Excuse us. We've come to the wrong house," and we retreated feeling awful dumsilly, and there were Geof and Grace laughing themselves puce out on the pavement - the heels!

Next shot we did get Snow. We all had cups of tea and toast from the hospitable Mrs. Brown, then tied Snow's pack and climbing rope on the boot along with the overflowing others, and crammed Snow somehow into the back with the three bods already there, and we were off non-stop to Morong Creek by midnight. A few energetic types put tents up, and the remainder bedded down on one side of the Putt marquee and pulled the other side over them and hoped for 5 or 6 hours sleep.

The leader had noted with some misgivings that she was showing traces of laryngitis, which the singing in the car hadn't improved. Our sleeping site seemed more than usually draughty. All night long the wild west wind whiffled through our wind funnel, to the delight of six billion streptococci who thrived and multiplied in my throat, and I awoke in the morning speechless. Thank heavens the Putt has a carrying voice.

Colin had set an alarm clock for 6.0 a.m. but forestalled it by five minutes. The nerves of the sleeping camp were spared the shock of an alarm ringing in the pre-dawn silence, and the more comforting and familiar bushwalking sound of sticks being broken for a fire and the clatter of billies soon brought them to their senses. Despite the fact that we prepared them a communal porridge breakfast complete with milk and sugar, they were still fiddling around with food at 7 o'clock, what time the leader paced restlessly up and down, but as she couldn't raise her voice above a whisper her authority was so much blancmange. Good old Putt whipped the party together by about 7.30, and we were off to the Walls.

We left the Tops at 8 a.m. - one hour behind schedule and me champing at the bit. I had allowed two hours for getting down to Kanangra Creek opposite the Spires, thinking some of the party might be slow, but they all slid down so speedily that we made up the lost hour and were down at the creek by 9. As we rock-hopped downstream over the green slimy boulders someone was bound to fall in. The victim (could it have been Digby?) was picking his way carefully to keep his feet dry.....

"O laith, laith were our Scots lords' sons

To wet their cork-heeled shoon!

But lang or all the play was owre,

They wet their hats aboon"

quoted Colin as an unhappy

figure emerged from the yellow water. Truly he had been loath to wet his rubber-soled shoon, and the only reason he hadn't wet above his hat was because he wasn't wearing one.

We plunged into the creek-side thicket and so on to the long steep scree-slide which pours down between the two highest spires. As we struggled up the huge chunks of rock we were given, quite gratuitously, a comprehensive geology lecture, and here Digby's affection for his wet torn long'uns waned to extinction and he abandoned them on a hunk of metamorphosed schist. "Conservation!" yelled Snow. "You can't litter the mountain with your cast-off clothes," and he poked them into a crevice. "You'll be sorry," chorused the mob, who were still burdened with their own long pants. "There'll be cold winds up top!"

I had planned this trip as the New Zealand mountaineers do - in hours not miles: 1 hour from the Tops to Kanangra Creek; 2 hours to climb the Spires; 1 hour down the other side and lunch; leaving us 4 or 5 hours of daylight to do Big Misty and back to the road by 4, then pick up the cars and back to camp before dark at 5 - this being the shortest day of the year.

There were nine of us climbing and we had four ropes. The original plan was that we would climb as individual units of two or three to a rope, which theoretically should have been quicker, but in practice we found we left the first man's rope fixed while the whole party came down it, and ditto with the second and third, while the last man down brought the fixed rope, having passed on his to the front party. It worked well enough.

No rope-work was needed to get us to the top of the Spires - dead on schedule at 11 o'clock. Several of us had been on the Spires before, but now we were to embark on the unknown - down the back of the Spires and up Big Misty. We soon found it necessary to use the ropes. Garth led off like a seasoned veteran, with joy singing in his heart. An abseil down over one ledge, then a bit of ridge, then more rope work, then another bit of ridge, and a third abseil which brought us to the narrow bit of ridge joining the Spires to Big Misty. Looking back up, the route appeared unbelievably sheer. Fixed ropes dangled down the entire length of the climb, complete with bodies in various stages of descent. Way up top we could make out Digby and Putt, the latter wearing a white crash helmet by courtesy

of I.C.I. The Hooper cine camera, complete with telephoto lense, was hastily set up on its tripod - they shouted to Geof who was just tetering on the brink of a precipice to stay where he was while Jim changed his film, then he was given the signal to proceed. Unfortunately the camera jammed, and so Geof had to reverse direction in mid air, so to speak, and go back for another shot. Something went wrong here too, so poor old Geoffo was sent back again to wait while the defect was remedied. At last everything was to Jim's satisfaction and Geof and Grace were allowed to descend, Grace, as she peered through the green leaves, looking as shy and pretty as a wood-nymph - never mind the long pants.

During this interlude the others had caught up, so we decided to climb up to a patch of sunlight and have lunch - which we had brought in paper bags, precut on Friday so as not to delay our early morning start. While coming down the Spires I had spotted out what I considered a good route up Big Misty, so we set off to our beckoning patch of sunlight and lunch. Somehow it took longer than we thought. It was necessary to climb up a crack and tie the rope to an over-hanging gumtree for the party to be belayed up. If I'd been able to speak I'd have been much happier. Snow and Colin chose another way up, but at length we were all together with noses in our feed-bags while everyone recounted their adventures to date. It appeared some of the decayed sandstone ledges we others had used had not been equal to the Putt 14 stone. "There am I replacing some handholds for the next person to use," says Snow, "when Colin shoots through the air in a neat parabola and lands on his head about 15 feet below." "Oh Dear," breathes Beryl anxiously, "That was a major catastrophe." "Aw no," says Colin, "It was one of those mild C's the Weather Bureau promised us - my crash helmet saved me."

Lunch was finished, but the photographers still showed a tendency to linger. "Moving off in five minutes," I whispered hoarsely, but the status quo was in no way disturbed. So I picked on Digby who had thrown his pants away and should have been cold enough to want to start climbing, and whispered in his ear, "Tell them we're moving off." "Dot says you can have another half-hour," said the traitorous Digby, so I wrung his neck and threw him over the precipice. The photographers were happy to have it all their own way. I got Snow by the ear, "Tell them we're moving off RIGHT NOW! I hoarsed." "Dot says you can stay as long as you like," cried Snow gaily. So I wrung his deceitful young neck and threw him over the precipice too. Well, that got the party on their feet and we were off. The remainder of the ascent was a steep scramble, but no more rope work was required to reach the top. "Out to the road by 4 o'clock," so we took a look at the sun, noted where our shadows lay, then bee-lined for the road which we reached, just by the mud hut, at one minute to 4. Then ten minutes down the road to the cars, and merrily back to Morong Creek camp. Here Alison took pity on my lost voice and fed me Dichlorodiphenyltrichlorethane Trinitrotoluene tablets as prescribed by her friend's friend's doctor, whence the tablets originated. Alas I should have stuck to my principles and left the job to Nature, but I was captured by the impressive name and the promise that they would give me back my voice for tomorrow.

Before turning in for the night we built up a big fire. I decided to sleep right by it and breath hot air all night for the good of my voice. Soon sleep lay lightly on our somnolent forms; the real world rolled away and phantasy took over. We are all at Thule heading for the North Pole. Ulysses Putt, figure of eternal adventure, is standing by his dog-drawn sled holding forth to the mob in typical Putt fashion: "See those white powdery patches on the snow? That's salt. I always let my dogs fan out - they lick up the salt and prevent it clogging the sled runners." Nearby is a gondola-like contraption on runners, with a roof and glassed in sides. Reclining inside, legs crossed and feet on the ceiling, is Snow, and his voice comes clearly through the frozen air, "You'd pay quids for this if you were in Venice." I awoke and put more logs on the fire, threw a tent over Alison and myself as a light rain was falling, then drifted back to dreams.

The morning dawned misty, for all we knew there were mild seas, and as the Weather Bureau had promised us a fine day we decided on a trip down to Morong Falls. Colin stayed behind to mend punctures, planning to catch up later. We left far too late, at 9.30. Even if we had been a fast party we probably would not have reached the Falls before lunch. We were not a fast party, and 12.30 found us still some distance off. It was too late to go on. Also we had lost sight of Geof and Snow, so we stopped for lunch, then as the day was overcast and cold we retraced our steps. Half a mile along the ridge we heard a coo-ee. "Oh, good! That's Geof and Snow," but it wasn't; it was Colin who had met up with us, and our missing two were still missing. We got back to camp at 4 and packed up. The golden glory was fading from the sky and still no sign of the wanderers, so we prepared to light a beacon fire on the rising ground to guide them back to camp. However coo-ees called us back to find Geof had returned and reported Snow on the way with a sprained ankle. So Colin sped off with the car up the road to the timber track, and there we found poor old Snow limping along on a couple of sticks with an ankle twice its normal size. We got back to camp and bandaged him up, then crossed the swampy creek in the waning light and all three cars headed for home.

Round about Hampton we pulled up suddenly to see why Digby and Ken had stopped.. They were having a panic about petrol, but did I care? Oh dear no! Find me a quiet secluded nook where I can bring up pill No.6. I returned to the car and we set off again, this time with me by the window. From then on in short bouts the earth swam upwards, the stars reeled past, and by the time we reached Snow's place I had successively given up pills No. 5,4,3,2 and 1. "Gee," said Colin, "Maybe your stomach has more sense than you have." (Dubious consolation!) All I wanted to do was lie down on the car seat and die, but we all went in as they carried the injured Snow in and presented him to his family. And here they all drank tea (ugh!) and ate cream cake (shudder!) with chocolate icing (ugh! How could they!) Then we all got in the car and went home. Considering my enfeebled condition I was dropped off right at the front letter box. "Cheer up," they told me brightly, "You've qualified for membership of the Chrome Vomitorium Club." With this elevating thought to sustain me I staggered inside to bed. Oh, the shame of it!

CONSERVATION REPORT.

- Tom Moppett.

This conference was held at St. James Hall, Phillip Street, on Saturday afternoon, 2nd July, to discuss general conservation matters. The Chief Guardian of Fauna, Mr. F.J. Griffiths, made the arrangements, prepared an agenda from suggestions submitted by the represented Bodies, and duly suffered by being elected Chairman. About 50 delegates attended, including a considerable number from the Flora and Fauna Preservation Societies which have come into existence in the last few years.

The first motion was one submitted by the Caloola Club - a proposal for a National Parks Act to be recommended to the State Government. Allen Strom referred to the recently published Yarrowonda No. 10 in which the main details of the proposal were set out and suggested these be used as a starting point for discussion.

He explained briefly the proposed Act, which would set out the nature and purpose of National Parks and provide for security of tenure, the establishment of a controlling authority, and the provision of finance from the State budget. He stressed the importance of security of tenure - only recently the Minister for Lands approved of 42 acres being taken from The Royal National Park without any sort of public enquiry being held.

(This behind-the-scenes procedure is possible because all our National Parks, except the Kosciusko State Park which was established under a separate Act of Parliament, are merely "Reserves for the protection of flora and fauna" or "for public recreation" or both, and these reservations can be amended or cancelled by the Minister for Lands by ministerial minute and without consulting anyone.)

Several speakers mentioned points for consideration - for example Mr. Hume suggested "Dedication in perpetuity" and "Funds to be provided by Federal as well as State budgets". However, most of the points mentioned were already covered in Yarrowonda. Others said the matter needed closer inspection, which the mover had envisaged in the first place. As time for the debate was running out and it looked as though the motion might be defeated in the confusion, a Federation delegate moved that the question be referred to a committee which would consult the represented Bodies and report to a later conference. This was approved.

The advantage of such a proposal to the Government being endorsed by all the Conservation Bodies seems clear - even if a lot of effort has to be expended in reaching agreement.

The next motion, "That the alienation of land from National Parks or State Reserves for purposes other than conservation be stopped immediately", was agreed to without dissent. "Immediately" was pointed to as the operative word. However, how to do it was left to the "Committee of Five". During the debate further possible inroads into The Royal National Park in the Heathcote area were rumoured.

At this stage of the meeting, the "Committee of Five" did not exist - it was just an anticipatory item in the notice of meeting. Nevertheless, it had already collected two jobs.

A motion that the Municipality of Manly be congratulated on its decision not to extend the residential area on North Head produced considerable opposition, and unfortunately for those who, like the writer, knew nothing of the matter, a clearcut review was lacking. The key may have been given near the end of the debate, when someone explained that the personnel of Manly Council had changed recently and it was thought a good idea to show the new members, who evidently were more conservation minded than the old, that their efforts were appreciated. The motion was carried with an addition that the Federal Government be urged to proclaim public land at North Head a national monument for all time.

The motion "That the Army be totally prohibited from using National Parks...." brought forth a strong appeal from an old soldier not to interfere with the defence effort. However, another old soldier considered that there was no point in having National Parks if we were to allow them to be damaged by the Army. The N.S.W. Ranger Patrol reported definite damage in The Royal National Park. The motion was altered to a more polite form "....approach the Federal Government with a view to the discontinuance of the use.....", and carried.

"That this Conference supports the efforts of the Blue Mountains Fauna and Flora Preservation Society to have a national park established on the Blue Mountains and urges the Minister for Lands to expedite the formation of such a Park" was agreed to after "Conservation Bodies" had been substituted for "Blue Mountains Fauna and Flora Preservation Society". It was pointed out that the N.P.P.A.C. supported by other conservation bodies had been working on the project since about 1930.

The Caloola Club moved that a number of Faunal Reserves be created in the western districts. After your Conservation Secretary had assured the meeting that members of that Club had investigated on the spot and knew the problems and that there was no need to refer to the Committee of Five for investigation, the motion was agreed to.

Conference also approved a motion "That.....legislation of the States and Commonwealth in relation to conservations should be co-ordinated". The idea behind this motion is that where action is required on matters of interest to more than one State, State and Federal authorities should attempt to agree on a policy. Co-ordination would be desirable, for example, where national parks are situated on each side of a state boundary, and when considering bird life which does not recognise state boundaries.

The last motion for which there was time was "That this conference urges the Government to prohibit the sale of protected Australian wildflowers". This motion was moved by the Mount Colah Branch of the North Shore Flora and Fauna Preservation Society,

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whose representative stated that the Branch was still heatedly debating the question, although there was a definite opinion that the only way to stop the taking of flowers from parks and reserves was to prohibit their sale altogether. Mrs. Parry of "Flora Lands" Gosford, representative of the Gosford Flora and Fauna Preservation Society, said that she cultivated wildflowers and the way to preserve them was to encourage their cultivation and have everyone growing them and using them in their homes, as is done now with Xmas Bush. Mrs. Parry invited those present to inspect "Flora Lands". Malcolm McGregor said this appeared to be commercialism. He pointed out that native rose was definitely making a come-back since its sale was banned, and, further, that we did not want to see wild flowers in our homes, but in the bush in their natural surroundings. This motion was referred to the Committee of Five for investigation. .

To round off the afternoon, now very wet incidentally, the Conference, now very cold, decided to meet again in three months' time, to send out the agenda six weeks in advance, that Five would be the strength of the tidying up and investigating committee, and that its members would be Mrs. Stead (Wild Life) Mr. Tipper (Muogamarra) and Messrs. Dunphy, Strom, and Moppett.

Mr. Griffiths and his secretary, Miss Kenny, who had generously given up her afternoon to assist, were thanked then some of the representatives carefully tiptoed out so as not to disturb the play being performed downstairs.

All those who have not yet got over the effects of Pat and Ian's farewell party, will be envying them their leisure to relax. News comes from North Queensland where they are having a wonderful honeymoon per motor bike. They have been across to, one of the Barrier Reef islands, spent a lot of time basking in the sun of the sub-tropic beaches, and have included a rope in their luggage with a view to using it on the Glass House Mountains - perhaps.

Bert Whillier says "There is no need to miss out on your skiing practise between seasons".

He appeared one night last month at the Club Room with a pack load of skis by moonlight on the Botany Sandhills.

From all accounts it was a very profitable evening.

BOUND FOR BOWRAL.

- Jim Brown.

This is the last that you will hear
This is the last time we will mention
Eighty-odd milers till next year (LIES! WHAT DAMNABLE LIES!)

Time destroys all good intention (OH, HOW VERY TRUE!)

That was the way the last "opera" (you know, the one recording the First Post-Tiger Marathon) closed.

Perhaps Jet Wagg's intentions were good, and perhaps he didn't intend mentioning eighty-odd milers till next year. But then that cantankerous Admiral character, he of the 24-hour clock, destroyed all good intentions, and programmed another eighty-odd miler for September. I don't see any obvious connection with the 24-hour clock, but I feel there must be, because the verse says "time destroys all good intentions."

Well, where do we go from here? Katoomba to Bowral if we are to believe the Admiral, by way of Narrow Necks, Black Dog, Cedar Road, Scott's Main, Yerranderie, The Sheepwalk, Wollondilly, Burnt Flat Creek, Wanganderry and the Wombeyan Caves Road for the ultimate roadbash.

I shuddered on hearing of it. Remembered the three occasions I'd pounded wearily along that Wombeyan Caves Road - once on a February day when the parched landscape quivered in crushing heat: Once on a lovely September day (almost exactly 8 years before this marathon) with my boots breaking up, and screws and nails to be pulled out every few miles: once after a wash-out at Wanganderry, a kind of Retreat from Moscow.

Four times is too many, I said to myself. Fancy doing that dreary fifteen miles at the end! Anyway, Wagg was talking about another long jaunt from Marulan to Nowra via Shoalhaven Gorge. Now that would be quite interesting, even though the mileage would be less. He should have insisted that the Admiral put that on the programme. At this stage a strange little niggling doubt crawled into my mind. It was like trying to remember a dream, and the substance kept slipping away, but I seemed to recall saying to Geof, "I've often thought of another route that may do for a long gallop some time. Come off the Wombeyan Caves Road, out near Bullio, cross the 'dilly, get through to Yerranderie, along Scott's Main, and you could finish up either into Wentworth Falls by Kedumba, or else over Cookem, Black Dog and the Necks into Katoomba."

Surely I wouldn't have said anything silly like that. Why, that's very nearly the reverse of the Admiral's canter.

I wouldn't - couldn't - have sowed the seeds of this latest folly! Or did I? Or did the Admiral just happen to think about it too? Well, having kind of sponsored the thing, I'll have to give it a flutter, I suppose. Idiot!

How can we justify ourself? Oh, well, I can always say, I don't get out very often, I don't meet the active walkers as much as I should. These stunts are good because they draw out so many of the keen walkers. (Dolt, you know perfectly well you'll have to walk your own rythm, probably at the rear of the field all the way. Best you can hope for is to have another creaking veteran like Ardill. Otherwise you'll be talking to the wallabies).

Well, then, how about this? I've wanted to go along Scott's Main this past 17 years, and never got around to doing it. Never seen a Club trip go that way before. (Hm. Scott's Main is about 10 miles from Bran Jan to the Water Gulley at the top of Butcher's Creek. Why walk another 75 miles to do that? By all accounts it isn't worth doing, anyhow).

It's a good way to keep in condition. (Ha, ha! a good way to get out of condition! Anyway, the last marathon was called 85, but it was only 77 miles by my reckoning, maybe 80 if you were chased all over Black Jerry's by a sheep at midnight. This one looks like an honest-to-goodness 85. A good way to ruin oneself!)

But it's easier walking. Only a couple of river crossings, so you won't have to keep on stopping to clear out sand from shoes and socks every mile or so to save walking on sandpaper surfaces. (Now, you're only trying to kid yourself. Anyone knows hard ground is worst for walking on. A lot of the track on this trip will be almost as tough as road).

What a wonderfull subject for another opera, then. Think of the songs "Sleepwalk down the Sheepwalk", "Roasted on Cookem", "Burnt Off at Burnt Flat" (Yeah, remember the last opera, and how you were represented at Picton - "the only thing he wanted was a place to park his tail". That was so very true, too)

What's left? How can I rationalise the urge to give it a go. Why bother? All walkers are slightly ratbag, and couldn't care less. Better not look for a reason.

Unless something happens to disable me in advance, I dare say I'll start out with you, Admiral. Maybe you won't see me at Bowral though. No rash promises.

FEDERATION REPORT FOR JULY, 1955.

The 1955 Annual Meeting was held at the commencement of proceedings. The Annual Report was adopted and will be duplicated and circulated. The Accumulated Funds now stand at £308.10. 4 in addition to £233. 6. 6 held in Trust Funds.

The election of officers resulted as follows.....

President	-	Paul H. Barnes.
Vice-President	-	Norman Allen and Allen A. Strom
Honorary Secretary	-	Position is vacant.
Asst. Secretary	-	Tina Koetsier.
Hon. Treasurer	-	Tom Kenny-Royal.
Publicity Officer	-	Stan Cottier.

A volunteer to fill the position of Honorary Secretary is urgently required.

Search and Rescue Section expects to receive a report on the Mount Baw Baw (Victoria) Searches and the work being done on Search and Rescue in that State.

A new Social Committee has been formed in an attempt to arrange for a Bushwalkers' Ball.

Messrs. Bruce Little and Norman Allen were elected to the position of Joint Organisers of the Bushfire Fighting and Patrol Squad for 1955. They will shortly be seeking volunteers.

Warrumbungles National Park. A list of the Trustees was received from the Department of Lands. As neither recommendation of the Federation was appointed, it was decided to write to the Department of Lands pointing out that the geological and walking interests both very important in this instance...had been neglected.

Wooden Steps on Tarro's Ladder: The Federation agreed to the Sydney Bushwalkers replacing the wood with metal rungs.

Garrawarra: The Trust has decided to request the appointment of a bushwalker to replace the representative of the Wollongong Council. Stan Cottier was elected by the Federation to take the position, should the Trust be successful in its approach to the Department of Lands. The Trust of this Park has also decided to remove four more huts from Burning Palms.

The Federation is investigating the purchase of a duplicator.

Affiliation Fees are now due.

There was some discussion on the matter of arranging for the publication of a magazine. A panel was appointed to carry the matter forward.

- Allen Strom.



PADDY MADE



STOP PRESS.

Just landed. Some more continental aluminium ware. These are well made articles and have been in short supply for years. So cast your peepers over the list and their prices.

Screw topped aluminium containers with removable glass lining 5/3 ea.

Field flasks (or waterbottles) very handy size and cloth covered Screw on cap. 23/- ea.

Food containers - oval shape with spring held lid. Leak proof rubber gasket. 12/6 ea.

Tea infusers with chain 2/6 ea.

We have also just unpacked some lightweight compact petrol stoves made by PRIMUS of Sweden - £2. 9. 0 ea.

Remember these goods are in limited quantities owing to import restrictions, so be early.



PADDY PALLIN
Lightweight Camp Gear
201 CASTLEREACH ST SYDNEY

