

## THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney  
Bushwalkers, C/- Ingersoll Hall, 256 Crown St., Sydney.  
Box No.4476 G.P.O., Sydney. 'Phone: JW 1462.

---

No.263

OCTOBER, 1956.

Price 9d.

---

Editor: Dot Butler, Boundary Rd.,  
Wahroonga, (JW 2208)  
Business Manager: Jack Gentle

Sales & Subs.: Jess Martin  
Typed by: Dot Butler  
Reproduction: Jess Martin

---

### CONTENTS

Page

At Our September, Half-Yearly Meeting - A.G.Colley	2
The Sanitarium Health Food Shop (Advt.)	3
The Frontier Traverse - Colin Putt	4
Leica Photo Service (Advt.)	5
Siedlecky's Taxi & Tourist Service (Advt.)	7
Walks Report for August - Malcolm McGregor	8
Hattswell's Taxi & Tourist Service (Advt.)	9
Letter from Dave Ingram	10
Walking for Profit - Alex Colley	12
Night Ascent of the Pons Portus - "Liar Bird"	13
What a <u>Leader!</u> or <u>What</u> , a Leader? - Geof Wagg	17
"Bushwalkers, Mugs, etc." (Paddy's advt.)	20

---

.....

Who walks with beauty never feels alone,  
His constant comrades are the moon and sun.  
Shared bushland walks recall the friend now gone  
Invisible hands restore the absent one.

One camp still holds the footprints of the moon  
That came and went a hushed and secret hour;  
A glowing campfire yields the lasting boon -  
Remembered friendship's white immortal flower.

Who takes of beauty wine and daily bread  
Will know no lack when empty years are lean;  
The brimming cup is by, the feast is spread,  
The sun, the moon, the stars his eyes have seen  
Shall still his hunger, and his thirst he stays  
With wine of friendship from remembered days.

---

- Mostly David Morton.

AT OUR SEPTEMBER, HALF-YEARLY MEETING.

The Meeting commenced at 8.20 with the President in the Chair and about 35 members present. First business was a welcome to our newest member - Margaret Innes.

Next Joan Walker, although not present, was elected to the Committee vacancy. As nobody wanted to be Federation delegate the election of a successor to Tom Kenny-Royal was deferred to the next meeting.

A motion was put by Heather Joyce and carried by the meeting, that we should write to the Sydney Morning Herald pointing out that a suggestion made by a correspondent for the formation of volunteer fire fighting squads to protect the park lands had already been carried out.

The President conveyed the good, though unofficial, news that a large part of the survey work for the Blue Mountains National Park had been done, and that land north of the Western line and between Kings Tableland and the Cox might be declared as part of the park.

The proposed Constitutional amendment, designed to make the Literary Editor's membership of the Committee conditional on the wish of the Editor and of the general meeting, was not approved by the Committee and failed to obtain the required three quarters majority of the meeting.

The sub-committee appointed to report on the celebration of the Club's 30th anniversary - in October next year - recommended that no action be taken.

General business started with a discussion of the printing of a new songbook. Frank Young pointed out that it was a big job and a typiste was essential on the proposed song-book committee. Alan Wilson thought the song-book was a waste of time so far as camp fire entertainment was concerned. It was seldom seen at camp fires and added nothing to their enjoyment. Renee Brown, speaking from long experience, said that 50% or more people didn't know the words of songs but liked to sing and the book was for their benefit. Jane Putt's opinion was that the best way to learn the songs was to listen while they were being sung. In reply to a question Jim Brown, who was on the last Committee, said that the book had been designed to prevent the singers from getting on to "la-la-la-la" after the first few lines. About 300 song-books had been sold, and many songs were included because some people liked them and they might well become popular. Jack Wren counselled more care in selection of songs as about a third of the songs in the book were never sung. A sub-committee consisting of Malcolm McGregor, Frank Young, Grace Aird, Colin Putt, Margaret Innes and Yvonne Renwick was appointed to produce a new book. Next it was debated whether or not the sub-committee should submit a list of proposed songs before the book was typed. Frank Barlow thought we should trust the Committee - the title didn't tell you anything about the song and many doubtful

THE   SANITARIUM   HEALTH   FOOD   SHOP

OFFERS

QUALITY DRIED FRUITS, NUTS and BISCUITS

DELICIOUS FRUIT SWEETS

WHOLSOME, LIGHT RY-KING CRISP BREAD

AMAZING, LOW ECONOMY PRICES

---

COME TO OUR STORE,   13   HUNTER   STREET,   SYDNEY

AND SEE OUR WONDERFUL RANGE OF HEALTH-FOODS

- FOR WALKING TRIPS AND HOME USE -

songs had the most innocuous titles - and this seemed to be the general view.

By this time nearly everybody at the meeting had had their say and the next motion provided an opportunity for the remainder. Frank Ashdown moved that the library be disbanded, the books sold by auction and the money added to Club funds. The President immediately declared the motion, in the form proposed, to be unconstitutional, because a motion to sell the Club's assets required fourteen days notice to all members. The motion was altered to read that a notice of intention to move should be sent to members, and the debate proceeded. Jack Wren supported the motion in this form. He said the library had served its purpose and now only harboured silverfish. Other speakers pointed out that this was just another attempt to whittle away yet another of the features which had made the Club what it is now, and instanced the discontinuance of the Club's Annual Concerts, Christmas treat for children, the publication of the Bushwalker Annual etc. as cases in point. The motion was put and lost. (At the close of the meeting a crowd assembled outside the library cabinet and at least one member was seen to leave with four borrowed books in his hand.)

Finally a motion was put, rather tentatively, by Jim Brown that Prospectives be allowed to attend Re-unions. Wal Rootes spoke against the motion saying it was, as its name implied, a re-union of members. But people were getting tired of debating, the hour was late, the motion was put and (much to Jim's secret surprise, I'm sure) was carried; with which the meeting terminated.

- A.G. Colley.

THE FRONTIER TRAVERSE - AUGUST 1956.

- Colin Patt.

Signal Koppe	Lyskamm East	Lyskamm West	Castor	Pollux
14,980 ft.	14,850 ft.	14,680 ft.	13,850 ft.	13,400 ft.

"Tempo bruto," roared the hut guardian, shining a powerful torch in our faces. I prised an eye open and looked at my watch - 3.20 a.m. What on earth did 'tempo bruto' mean? Better get up anyway.

The stars shone cold and bright, but the hut shook and the guy wires strummed and twanged in the grip of a vicious wind. With some misgivings about the weather we forced down some black bread, cheese and coffee, then put on storm clothing, crampons and rope inside the hut. As we stepped into the dark outside the wind enveloped us, it smote and cut at us, it tried even to invade that corner of consciousness which is reserved to control the placing of cramponed feet and the handling of the rope. We nearly ran down the broad ice ridge from the Signalkuppe in our eagerness to escape the wind, and in the lee of the Parrotspitze we were rewarded by an excruciating return of circulation to fingers and toes. As we stepped into the Lysjoch saddle the sun was already touching the top of the long steep ridge before us and the wind seemed less determined.

In two ropes of two we worked steadily up our ridge which was very steep, very narrow, but not complicated by rock steps or ice overhangs. Wind crusted snow and blue ice alternated with bewildering frequency, some large cornices required care, and sudden gusts of wind tried to catch us off balance, but crampons overcame all these things and an hour and a half later we found ourselves rather unexpectedly on the main summit of Lyskamm, a little sloping ice hummock with sheer depths of rock and ice cliff all around it except to the west where a mile or so of narrow winding ridge led to the other peak. The wind had dropped right away, the sky was cloudless and the sun unusually hot. With thoughts of soft snow later in the day we tight-rope walked the ridge at top speed, one foot in Switzerland, the other in Italy, and the ice-axe for a balancing pole. We were feeling fine in spite of the altitude, and we raced over the rock steps in the ridge non-stop, crampons and all. On the West summit we found a party which had just come up the other side, with a guide who seemed to be something of a leg-puller. "Voilà le Cervin!" he shouted to his patrons, pointing to the bulky unmistakable mass of Monte Rosa across the way.

At a good pace we cramponed down the west ridge of Lyskamm on to the Felikjoch, a broad snow plateau feeding two glaciers. Here we began to strike soft snow and really hot sun. We took off our crampons and ploughed on. The ridge up Castor is broad, gentle and long; under conditions of slushy snow and extreme heat it is best not remembered. The west side of the mountain, however, is not a ridge but a steep ice face, complete with bulges of hard blue ice, ice-cliffs and threatening seracs. It was advisable to move one at a time over part of this, and when we had reached the saddle between Castor and Pollux and moved out from below the seracs, it was time for lunch. The meal was shortened by the reappearance of our old

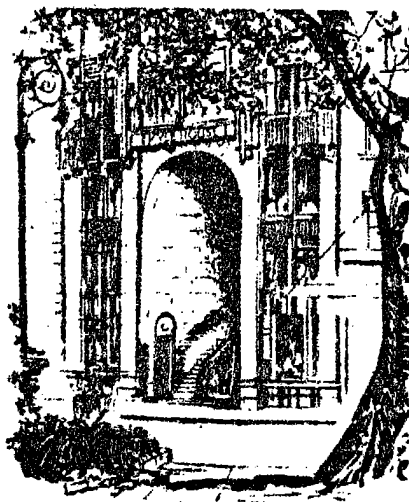
# PHOTOGRAPHY ! ? ! ? !

You press the button, we'll do the rest !

Finegrain  
Developing

Sparkling  
Prints

Perfect  
Enlargements



Your  
Rollfilms

or  
Leica films

deserve the  
best SERVICE

LEICA PHOTO SERVICE

31 Macquarie Place  
SYDNEY N.S.W.

enemy the wind, only as a chilly breeze this time, but enough to call for a sweater and parka again. At the same time "hogsback" clouds suddenly appeared, very high up, over some of the distant peaks. We took the hint and hurried on to the next climb, Pollux. After a short uphill wallow over deep wet snow and a conventional bergschrund, we were at the foot of the east face, our first rock climb of the day, and never have I seen such rotten, broken, unstable rock. Although the face is steep, there is literally nothing sound on it; if you pulled out one fair-sized lump at the bottom, the whole mountain would fall down on top of you. Winding its way up the face of shattered, contorted stone, is the culprit - a band of jet-black porphyritic rock of obviously igneous origin. We picked our way carefully upward, close together to avoid the dangers of displaced rocks, and hardly daring to speak above a whisper. When, near the top of the mountain, we at last got on to snow, it was no better for it was only a thin layer of slush on top of steep ice. A piece which broke away from under my foot started a fair-sized avalanche with the greatest of ease.

At last we reached the top, a short curved piece of snow ridge, and considered what to do next. The huge mass of the Breithorn was

temptingly close, but it was getting late and the snow was becoming dangerously soft, in fact the immediate problem was how to get off Pollux without being mixed up with an avalanche. We chose the north face directly below us; in almost perpetual shadow, it had kept a thin layer of firm snow, well bonded to the ice. As we left the summit a few streaks of racing mist formed around us out of the clear sky; minutes later, as we prepared to leap the bergschrund, the air around us thickened into dense cloud. Once off the steep face we set off down a broad snow ridge at a jog-trot, with the bad weather right behind us. On and on for hours, as fast as we could go, wallowing through knee-deep snow. There was one brief pause to negotiate a steep and avalanchy slope, and another when I broke through a crevasse bridge. At last, soaked in sweat and snow-melt, we reached the left lateral moraine of the Gorner Glacier while volleys of thunder sounded out of black clouds on our peaks of the morning. Two miles of slithering and jumping over the ice-hummocks of the Gorner and we were safe on the track to Zermatt. I stopped to take off two sweaters and a pair of long trousers, and raced off to catch up the others. People of various nationalities all along the track greeted me in English, for who but an Englishman would run uphill with a heavy pack, clad in apparently nothing but a beard, ancient filthy parka, and heavy boots.

At the rack railway a train stopped for us, its doors invitingly open, but knowing that the fare to Zermatt is some 15/-, we made rude signs at it until it moved off. Apparently the conductor was in league with the powers of darkness, for immediately there was a deafening thunderclap, and we were deluged with enormous hailstones. More surprised than pleased, we slithered and skidded down the five miles of steep hail-covered track in record time, and were in Zermatt in time for an excellent and fabulously cheap meal at the Hotel Weisshorn. One of the party went to sleep at the table and dropped his head into his plate of food; I was asleep before I was properly in the tent, my feet were out in the rain all night and I never even noticed it. But what a day, what a terrific day it had been!

---

#### COMING SOCIAL EVENTS for OCTOBER.

Oct. 17th. "WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT SLIDE".  
 Bring along your slides, both good and bad, and have them expertly criticised.  
 There will also be a talk on the scope of colour film.  
 Keith Renwick would like to have your slides handed in as soon as possible.

---

Oct. 24th. MEMBERS' SLIDE NIGHT. Bring along your slides and let us see what you've been taking.

---

Oct. 31. SWITZERLAND. Slides and talk by Don Shepherd.

---

IMPORTANT TRANSPORT NOTICEBUSHWALKERS REQUIRING TRANSPORT FROM BLACKHEATH

ANY HOUR ..... RING, WRITE or CALL ...

SIEDLECKY'S TAXI & TOURIST SERVICE116 STATION STREET, BLACKHEATH24 HOUR SERVICE

BUSHWALKERS arriving late at night without transport  
 booking can ring for car from Railway Station, or call  
 at above address - - - IT'S NEVER TOO LATE

'PHONE: B'HEATH.81, or SYDNEY No. LU3563 after hours  
 or MA3467

FARES:	KANANGRA WALLS	30/-	per head	(minimum 5 passengers)
	PERRY'S LOOKDOWN	3/-	"	"
	JENOLAN STATE FOREST	20/-	"	"
	CARLON'S FARM	10/-	"	"

---

LOOK FOR T.C.3210 or PACKHARD T.V.270

OFFICIAL WALK, OCTOBER 19,20,21.BOMADERRY-CAMBEWARRA-BARREN-GROUNDS-KIAMA

This walk, with variations, at this time of year was once a regular feature of the programme and was well attended. The leader hopes it will be again. There will be about two miles to walk the first night - a full moon has been arranged.

Next day is mostly walking on back roads with about an hour's uphill scrub bashing thrown in.

On Sunday we walk over the Barren Grounds which are just a garden of wild flowers at this time of year.

Most of the walk is on the coastal side of a 2000 ft. range with almost unobstructed views which extend from Cape Banks on the north to Mount Dromedary on the south.

It is fair/medium test walk standard, mostly on tracks.  
 For further details see leader - Alex Colley.

---

### WALKS REPORT for AUGUST 1956.

The programme for August opened with Yvonne Renwick's Field Week-end at Euroka. Beautiful weather brought out 12 members and 3 prospectives and 4 youngsters. Altogether a good week-end.

Snow Brown did not get enough starters for Kanangra, but Heather Joyce, not to be done out of her week-end away, gathered up three others and set off down Elack Jerry's for Harry's River, Bees Nest Creek, Little River, etc. However, with a little extra time in bed on Saturday they didn't make Bees Nest and finally came home a bit late on Sunday.

The Saturday trip with Jess Martin in charge, saw some very fine wild flowers in the Willawarra area of The Chase, and the participants, six members and 1 prospective, enjoyed themselves.

The Blackheath-Bell trip with John White gave a typical white welcome to 3 trippers (2 members and 1 prospective). Snow was encountered on Saturday night, which continued through most of Sunday on the walk into Bell.

On this same week-end the President led seven others, including 2 prospectives, to South Trig for a Corroboree. Dull weather was the order of the day but the flowers were good and a pleasant week-end was the result.

For the last week-end in this report I am rearranging the trip order to give full scope to the Friday night walk. On the Sunday walk Joan Cordell had 5 members, 1 prospective and 1 visitor. She reported that it was a little early for the flowers but all had a good time. Len Fall had only one offer of a starter and by mutual consent the Saturday trip was called off.

Now for it! Four members and 1 prospective began the Rigby 70 miles. The party camped in snow on Narrow Neck on Friday night and after a brisk walk on Saturday morning the leader, at the foot of Debert's knob, stated his legs were sore and he was going home. The party, minus leader, continued. On Sunday morning the party, (still minus leader) steamed up past Bimlow and on arrival at Sheehy's Creek they noticed an immaculately dressed "gentleman" near a Renault. On closer inspection it proved to be the "leader" who had nipped home on Saturday, slept at home, and had taken the opportunity for a pleasant run on Sunday in the car, no doubt to jeer at any walkers who might come by. However, I am pleased to report that his white-anting was somewhat mitigated by his stowing all 5 bodies and 4 packs into the Renault and driving them home.

So for August the programme trips drew 41 members and 8 prospectives.

---

### PAGING THE PAGES.

You will note on consulting the Walks Programme that on the week-end of 3/4/5/ November the Friday night and Saturday afternoon walks

FOR ALL YOUR TRANSPORT PROBLEMS

CONTACT

HATTSWELL'S TAXI & TOURIST SERVICE

RING, WRITE, WIRE or CALL  
ANY HOUR, DAY or NIGHT.

'Phone: B'heath 128 or 249

Booking Office - 4 doors  
from Gardner's Inn Hotel  
(LOOK FOR THE NEON SIGN).

SPEEDY 5 OR 8 PASSENGER CARS AVAILABLE

LARGE OR SMALL PARTIES CATERED FOR

FARES: KANANGRA WALLS	30/-	per head	(minimum 5 passengers)
PERRY'S LOOKDOWN	3/-	"	"
JENOLAN STATE FOREST	20/-	"	"
CARLON'S FARM	10/-	"	"

---

WE WILL BE PLEASED TO QUOTE OTHER TRIPS OR SPECIAL PARTIES  
ON APPLICATION.

both converge on Peter Page's homestead at Jamberoo, for the Saturday night camp. This has been cunningly arranged so that the S.B.W. Light Opera Company can do "Excerpts from the Operas" in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Page of the Old Hands Division, and for the enjoyment of the many walkers who are expected to come by CAR - in fact, we know of so many it's going to be a minor Reunion. Roll up! Bring your Chronic Opera Books and join in the fun!

---

Dorothy Bridgen has just come back from a six-weeks' tour of the centre where she naturally visited Ayer's Rock, Mt. Olga, McDonnell Ranges, Simpson's Gap and all the usual attractions. She says there is an organised service out to the Rock and Mt. Olga by Tuit's Motor Service operating from Alica Springs. The trip is of five days duration, and food and accommodation is provided, the cost being £40 per head. This gives a complete day at each of the two features, where one can either get around with the guide or just do as one fancies.

---

LETTER FROM DAVE INGRAM

T.S.S. "Southern Cross"  
Atlantic Ocean.

Dear S.B.W's,

I have delayed this letter till the sea voyage is nearly over. Now I can give you a resumé of my activities.

The ship is very comfortable, modern and convenient. The food is generally not up to standard although we occasionally get a really appetising dish. Some of the Belgium waiters are highly amused at the way in which the English chefs on the ship ruin good food - and with some justification. Possibly because the ship doesn't carry cargo, it has an unusual pitching motion which upsets some of the passengers. There was a patch of rough weather off the Southern Coast of Australia which laid about half the passengers low. I missed breakfast and lost the next two meals, and then felt hungry again. All in all I didn't feel any the worse for the temporary indisposition.

As we approached Western Australia the sunny days were delightful. I went to the University to see Shirley Dean. It is a beautiful spot - Shirl took me over most of it - their open air theatres are really good. Then we drove through King's Park to an open air tea house overlooking Perth, for lunch. Most of the passengers were sorry to leave Perth.

It was ten days' steaming to Durban, or 4,300 miles, mostly through warm sunny days and cool nights. Durban is very colourful - rather reminiscent of Brisbane but more modern than B. I had a bus tour to the Valley of 1,000 Hills and was impressed by the number of eucalypts and acacias being used as windbreaks and for beautification. It was two days' steaming to Cape Town where we arrived on a bright cool day - visibility marvellous. Table Mountain is really impressive and so is the trip by cableway from Kloof Nek to the summit, (10/- a go, but well worth it.) As it was Sunday we saw several walking and climbing parties. With my cabin mates we hired a car and drove 200 miles through the neighbouring fruit and vinegrowing towns of Paarl, Transshoek and Elgin, crossing and recrossing the Drakenstein Mts. Some of the mountain passes are most interesting, one being lined by eucalypts instead of a retaining fence. I hope to have a few nice transparencies of the area as I have met an old friend on board who is a great camera enthusiast and has given me considerable advice on the subject. We have already made plans to visit Spain together.

From Cape Town to Canary Is. at Las Palmas was another 4,000 miles. We didn't see a thing other than ocean until a day out of Las Palmas when several ships passed, including the "Stirling Castle" bound for Cape Town. She was a fine sight.

Las Palmas is a free port, so that things are fairly cheap. If the colour in the gardens and the palatial hotels are a sample of what we'll meet in Spain, I'm already keen about it. A party of us

had a car trip of about 30 miles to Monte in the hills amongst citrus and vegetable gardens - the island is intensely cultivated; most of the produce goes to Great Britain. Lunch at the Santa Brigida Hotel was a treat, just slightly better than the "Taiping." Bargaining with the various hawkers was fun, but the beggars were a nuisance. Since leaving Las Palmas the weather has been mainly dull and cool with a fair swell. In fact, it looks like a shower of rain at the moment.

The task of packing up will be on today as I hear that there will be a party on tomorrow night in our cabin. Being Sunday night there will be no farewell dance. We're due in Southampton on Monday. My three cabin mates have been very pleasant company - two are English and the other a Swede with an American accent.

I don't know when I'll get a chance to write again, so don't expect too much. I trust that the rain has eased at last (we read of the recent floods on the South Coast), and that the Walks programme is in full swing.

With best wishes,

DAVID.

---

IT WILL BE NEW COUNTRY FOR SOME.

Just a few words on what to expect on Jean Harvey's Official Walk of Oct. 26/27/28. The train is the 6.33 p.m., tickets to Glenbrook. There is a walk of about six miles on Friday night to the Oaks, where the camp will be a fixed one until Sunday morning. Good camp site - plenty of tent-poles waiting from last time. Be sure your battery is fresh.

On Saturday morning, not TOO early, the way will be along an easy ridge to Monkey Vines Creek and down on to Erskine Creek, which just abounds in deep, smooth rock swimming pools. Following the creek two or three miles, and after lunch the party will move off up back to the tops and so back to camp along a pleasant track to the waiting camp.

On Sunday morning, again not TOO early, the route is down a long gentle ridge to Euroka Clearing for lunch, thence into Glenbrook, catching the 5.3 p.m. back to the Big Smoke.

Note: White-ants may remain ensconced safely in camp all day Saturday if desired. Enquiries to JW1462.

---

CORRECTION: In the report of our August General Meeting it was stated that the Youth Hostels Assn. was planning to sell shares for the building of a ski hut at Kiandra, whereas it is the BUSHCRAFT ASSN. which is sponsoring the scheme. We trust no inconvenience has been caused to the Youth Hostels Assn. by this error.

---

WALKING FOR PROFIT

- Alex Colley

"Beat the vultures - walk!" exhorted the Harbour Bridge footway philosopher in his chalked message of July 1st. The fare rise must really have got under his skin because a little further on, in place of the usual "Repent", or a specific appeal directed just to the sinners of this extra wicked State in the form "Repent N.S.W.", he had written "Repent, or go to Hell!"

Though doubtful whether any amount of repentance could affect my future, it seemed to me that he might be right about the vultures. Approaching the problem scientifically I have estimated how much can be saved in time and money by walking instead of catching a tram. The assumptions I have made are:

1. that the average wait for a tram is five minutes,
2. that trams do a mile in 10 minutes,
3. that a pair of shoes, three half soles and four pairs of socks, at a cost of £8 in all, will do about 1,000 miles, making cost per mile 2d.
4. that a bushwalker can do a mile "track and easy," without a pack, in 16 minutes.

The profits of walking would then be as follows: (The lower profits are when you start at the beginning of the section, and the higher limit for journeys which involve an additional section.)

<u>Distance</u>	<u>Travelling and wait- ing time</u>	<u>Walking Time</u>	<u>Time saved or lost</u>	<u>Fares</u>	<u>Footwear Cost</u>	<u>Profit</u>
<u>miles</u>	<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Minutes</u>	s. d.	d.	d.
$\frac{1}{4}$	$7\frac{1}{2}$	4	$3\frac{1}{2}$ saved	6d.-9d	$\frac{1}{2}$	$5\frac{1}{2}$ - $8\frac{1}{2}$
$\frac{1}{2}$	10	8	2 "	6d.-9d	1	5-8
1	15	16	1 lost	6d.-9d	2	4-7
2	25	32	7 2	9d.-1/-	4	5-8
3	35	48	13 "	1/- 1/3	6	6-9
4	45	64	19 "	1/3	8	7
5	55	80	25 "	1/3-1/6	10	5-8

For distances over 5 miles the profit margin narrows, until it cuts out altogether at 13 miles.

There are, I admit, some imperfections in this accounting. You may not have to wait 5 minutes for a tram, particularly in the city. But it's not often than a city tram does a mile in 10 minutes. It may average better than a mile in 10 minutes when it gets outside the city approaches, but the odds are you will have to wait longer for it if it is a long distance tram. If you catch a bus it will save more time but the same amount of money will be lost. So, for distances up to one mile you will save no time by catching a tram and you will certainly lost financially. For distances between 1 and 13 miles, how far you walk will depend on how much you value your time. Myself, I shall walk

NIGHT ASCENT OF THE PONS PORTUS.

- By "Liar Bird"

We were talking in the Club one evening, and the gist of the subject matter was that we wanted to get high.

"Stitt and Garth have already achieved that noble distinction," said Colin, "But why the rest of you?"

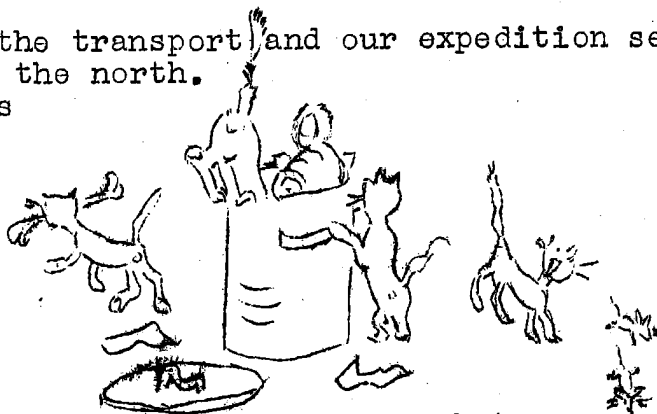
"Bathing weakens you, doesn't it Garth!" cried Snow gaily. This seemed to me to be apropos of nothing in particular. I put it down as just one of Snow's inscrutable witticisms.

"There's a limit to how high you can get before the President throws you out," said Geoffo.

We attributed these remarks on the part of Putt and company to sheer lack of soul and continued our discussion. Suddenly we had it: "What about a night climb of the Pons Portus?"

Agreed! And over our coffee and drinks we excitedly sketched our plan of attack. Beryl was a bit abashed at our audacity and some thought to deter us by hinting at likely hidden ambushes and uttered grim warnings on the danger of trying to infiltrate this forbidden territory, but that only inflamed our desire the more; we would be particularly careful to respect the rights of the natives, and no act of vandalism or defacing of shrines or holy relics would sully the splendour of our passage.

Garth and Peter organised the transport, and our expedition set out. We journeyed ever towards the north. At one of the native encampments we surprised some animals of the genus *Felis* scavenging amongst the native middens. We marvelled at their apparent tameness but did not disturb them. Small rodent-like animals were also in evidence.



As our party proceeded, sudden rain sheeted down, but except that it made us slightly uneasy about our prospects, it failed to dampen our determination.

Leaving behind at last the mundane traffic and somewhat squalid dwellings of the natives, we wound through the foothills and established base camp in a grassy area among trees. To the west, between us and a great drop-away into space, was a rounded hill supporting some magnificent specimens of giant *Ficus*, their broad, glossy green leaves making a dense canopy over the thick branches, contoured strangely like human limbs and torsos. On the east we were sheltered by a great white wall, practically vertical but curiously free from avalanches. To the north soared our objective flanked by two

great symmetrical bastions of granite.

Canada may have its Rockies; Switzerland may have its Alps; these mountains, cold, remote and antiseptic, are all inland, far removed from the wild tang of the ocean whose salt is in the very blood of all Sydneysiders. As we gazed on our Heart's Desire we felt that here, for us, was the answer to the mountaineer's dream a magnificent challenge, its feet actually bathed by the bottle-green waters of the Pacific while its summit soared above us into the night - mysterious depths of ocean below and equally mysterious heights of sky above - not to mention great chunks of mysterious mystery all the way up to the summit, and the same again, no doubt, down the other side. As Snow, I think it was, so aptly put it on a previous occasion, "the mysteriousness of it sorta gets you in."

Almost always, when mountaineering, before the climbing actually begins, you find yourself obliged to plug for miles up a glacier flanked with rather monotonous grey mounds of lateral moraine. The moist air beaded our hair and eyebrows with tiny white droplets as we plugged along the curved sweep, the walls on either side shining with a grey metallic gleam. And so to the base of the climb

"Forward, Onward and Upward!" cried Colin. "When danger threatens and adventure calls only the pedestrian fool would fail to heed. Excelsior! It's all yours; I'll wait for you down here."

So Pete and Garth and Nobby and I hitched up our pants and tucked our whatnots into our underbelows respectively and prepared to climb over the first obstacle. Suddenly, with the thunderous roar of an avalanche, a hissing, screaming death from the darkness bore down towards us. A great blast of wind engulfed us, our ears were filled with a deafening clatter, then the noise gradually diminished as this harbinger of death disappeared into some dark crevasse or underground cave.

We peered into the murk of night, as black as the back side of the moon, listening intently for any further hint of danger, then took our courage in both hands and made swift individual dashes over the avalanche chute to relative safety.

Now the climbing really began. We surmounted the first obstacle with some difficulty - real toe and finger work of a spiky unpleasant nature, but once surmounted we found ourselves on a veritable stairway, wet and slippery, but nevertheless a stairway. This led us to the first terrace, so to speak.

I recalled the two other occasions I had been on this climb. Once with Geof and Ross, the latter unsuitably clad in dancing pumps - Geof and I had waylaid him for a brief workout to improve his dancing steps. He was at great pains to keep his footwear free of scratches, but didn't succeed. "Serves him right!" said Colin, "I have no patience with Mountaineers who go round masquerading as Citizens!" - with which sentiments all, including Rosso, concurred

On this occasion we had found ourselves trapped at the beginning

of the summit sweep by an impassible obstacle which would have necessitated an unjustifiably risky traverse over a great space filled with nothingness, or, alternately, a return to the base of the climb and the choosing of another route, which time did not permit if Rosso's social life was to remain unshattered, so we called it a glorious failure and postponed our attempt to the sweet future.

On the other occasion our party had done a complete traverse and come down the northern arrête. Snow was constant. "Gee, Colin would like this," he cried, "No filthy vegetation. This is about the first climb I've been on where there's been no waste rabbit-food to clutter up the prospect!"

And now here we were again. The lie of the terrain now necessitated a bit of extremely steep upward progression, dark and windy and exposed, then the long sweep to the main summit began.

How can one best describe that glorious ascent? The sense of depth and space all around us, accentuated by the moonless night, so that we felt that if we stepped either to right or left of the narrow arrête we were on, we would surely be walking on air.

At one place a dark rectangular obstacle caused us some concern. We thought it wisest to avoid it altogether and were forced to make a risky detour out on to the grey slabs, fingers scrabbling over a scattering of nobbly handholds, feet scratting desperately for holds. It is strange how the mind, in times of stress, turns to extraneous subjects, as if unwilling to acknowledge the existence of the obstacle confronting it - I distinctly remember that at this stage Pete and Nobby were engrossed in a discussion on electronic eyes, to which Garth lent an attentive ear.

There were no further obstacles as we followed the beautiful curve and sweep to the summit. "Gee, this is crack-on!" cried Garth enthusiastically. Although there was no moon, there was sufficient light from the stars to give visibility. "Gee, this is colossal," said Garth. "This is mighty!" Away to the east the ocean stretched, dark and mysterious. Below us the flat area gleamed and shone with an unearthly radiance. "Gee, this is bang-on!" said Garth. How some people do burble when they're happy - can't hold their beans.

The photographers wished and mourned for their cameras. They would not mind waiting round for a lengthy time exposure either - the resulting picture would offset frostbitten ears and fingers caused by loitering around in the rarefied atmosphere at that height. However they had no cameras, and after admiring the view for a while longer we commenced the descent, noting below us at least four avalanche thoughts, two of which we would have to cross on the return route.

Eventually we dropped down to the avalanche chutes and dashed swiftly across without being overwhelmed with black ruin. Then the long plug back along the glacier bed. We had a wash and a drink at a spring bubbling up under a rocky overhang, and sighted one lone

16.

native who might have been hostile. Then back to our base camp and a great welcome by Colin and the waiting others.

"So you weren't copped!" said Putto.

"It wasn't an electronic eye," explained Pete, "It was a hot water system."

What a curious thing for him to say. Now what the Hell are they talking about?

---

FEDERATION REPORT, SEPTEMBER

- Allen A. Strom

Two important matters arose from the discussion on the Committee Report on The Decline in Membership of Bushwalking Clubs:-

1. A Committee has been set up to organise "Junior Walks" for boys and girls 14 to 16 years. It will meet with Paddy Pallin as convenor, we work out a working plan.
2. It was decided to proceed with Trail Blazing in bushlands near Sydney. By the November meeting, Clubs are asked to submit personelle for a Committee to be set up to handle this work.

Other points raised by the Report are being followed up by further contacts and enquiries.

A new Publicity Officer is required and Clubs have been asked to advertise the vacancy.

The Assistant Information Officer complains that new Walks Programmes and Walks Reports are not being forwarded to him with regularity. This is defeating the purpose of the Officer's work and bushwalkers are asked to give greater co-operation.

Assistance with repairs to the Main Entrance Track at The Bouddi Natural Park is required on week-end Oct.26/27/28.  
Phone: UA2983.

The Member for Bulli, The Minister for Lands and The Premier have all promised attention to protests against alienating portion of The Royal National Park for housing.

The Dept. of Lands reports that information for a National Parks Act is being collected.

Now that The Barren Grounds has been declared Faunal Reserve No.3, bushwalkers are asked to impress upon their friends its true significance. A party will visit the area on Oct.12/13/14.  
Phone: UA2983.

---

WHAT A LEADER or WHAT, A LEADER?

- Geof Wagg.

The miles, the miles, the miles, the weary miles. Once more walkers fling themselves against the barrier of miles and time, with little hope of success.

The programme stated: Katoomba-Black-Dog-Cox R.-Wollondilli R.-Nattai R.-Hilltop; distance 72 miles. How often and how fruitlessly has this appeared on a programme, and how often must Time and Miles have laughed up their sleeves at the hollow bravado of the idea. So why should four walkers, conscious of all this, pit their puny strength against the impossible? I'll tell you. It was the name in the last column but one - the column marked "Leader." This name, this man, whose calm detached thinking and quiet unanswerable logic has landed so many tough trips at Blue Gum, and so many Blue Gum trips at the Hydro Majestic "from the highest point of which," so he says, "you can obtain a splendid view of Kanangra Walls."

I scarcely remember the memorable night at the meeting when our leader sprang to his feet and in his ringing voice cried, "Who will venture forth to Hilltop with me, to glory in his manhood with toil and sweat, to feel the heat that blisters and the stinging snows?"

John Scott, John Manning and Snow all shouted "I".

Hadn't been listening myself so only caught the last bit and murmured "Aye" from force of habit then found it too late to retract.

Our leader is a man of democratic character, and although he owns a blue Renault car he travelled up with his party by train, leading them successfully on to the train at Central and off again at Katoomba. But at Katoomba! We stepped out of our steam-heated compartment just as the first fluttering silver snowflake landed on the pavement like a speck of dandruff on a navy blue coat. That was only the first. More came - and more and more and more. They twirled and twizzled and did a little dance round our legs and settled on our cold noses. Over the frosted pavements our leader led us, past the Carrington, past the Homesdale and the Belvedere, out into the teeth of the blizzard on Narrow Neck. Snow uttered a small wail as we passed within sight of his warm bed at home in Lurline Street.

It was only masterful leadership that got the party past the warm dry cave at Coral Swamp, but on the second neck, as we received the full unchecked force of the biting south-west wind, he finally realised that he could drive us no further and gratefully we sank into oblivion in the meagre shelter of the overhang beside the track. We had been oblivious for scarcely 15 minutes when along came John Manning who had caught a train an hour later than ours, so must have accomplished the distance in approximately half the time it had taken us. This seemed a phenomenal feat, particularly for an unled party.

We spent an extremely cold and uncomfortable night, and at times could not help making the perhaps rather unfair comparison

between this shelter and the luxurious cave at Coral Swamp. However the wisdom of the leader's decision was obvious when he roused us shortly before dawn next morning, because every one of the party without exception was almost pleased to be moving again. After driving the prospective out to light the fire we ate a dark breakfast and thawed our boots. Our wet long trousers which had frozen in the night we folded, being careful not to snap off the legs, and stowed in our packs.

It must have snowed heavily during the night, because all the ridges towards Jenolan were carrying quite a mantle of white, and so indeed was the Neck itself, which made the bush-brushing even more than usually painful. Going down to Glenraphael an unfortunate accident occurred which caused the party some discomfort. It was just one of those little things for which no one can be blamed suddenly we noticed that the prospective, John Manning, had been allowed to slip into the lead, and from then on the pace began to blister. But we didn't notice the cold any more.

Snow Brown secured the premier position in the skithier down Taro's Ladder and we looked forward eagerly to a reduction in pace. Instead he broke into a run. The impetus of this carried us over Debert's where we re-assembled. Somehow, (probably to assure a moderation of pace) I was thrust into the lead. But what was wrong this morning? I found that Black Dog was all down hill, that it was a beautiful morning and the wattle was out, and suddenly the ground started racing backwards under my feet. Next thing I knew I was on the Cox and the others were tumbling down the hill like apples out of a barrel. John Scott found that the pace wasn't the only thing that had been blistering.

But where was our leader? Whipping in stragglers? No, he alone was missing. We decided, however, that some leaderly task must be delaying him and made the rather rash decision to push on knowing that he would soon overtake us. In this forbidding country we felt very much the lack of leadership and were quite relieved to find ourselves at Harry's Humpy by lunchtime, especially as the oranges were on. We waited here for an hour and a half, expecting at any moment to see our leader's countenance come into view, but as neither his nor John Scott's did we assumed that they were either having lunch at Kill's Defile or they knew a better orchard elsewhere. (As regards our Leader, this may easily have been the case.) When we tried to move on after lunch we again felt the lack of wise counsel as something told us we might have been somewhat immoderate with the oranges.

By the time we reached the McMahon's crossing we knew most of the fire was out of us and we barely had the energy to drive the prospective accross so we could see how deep it was. As it appeared to be quite safe Snow and I made the attempt and received our first of several clues that finally led us to deduce the fact that John's legs are about 12" longer than ours. Now we found the once beautiful Cox Valley a desolation of blackberry and erosion. Also, with no leader we mistook our route and, taking the new road for a timber track, we tried to pick our way along the remains of the old one which got us into all sorts of trouble because there are now no bridges. Each

successive crossing was deeper and colder, and sometimes even John had trouble. We felt great sympathy for our absent leader, whose legs are shorter than ours.

These troubles had cost us time, and although we walked for more than an hour after dark, we made our miserable camp only a few hundred yards short of Bimlow. As we cooked on a fire of fence posts we tried to comfort ourselves but it was useless. Here we were, three lonely bods in a strange and alien landscape with no shelter for the night, but worst of all, no leader. No one woke us shortly before dawn next morning, no one had us striding gaily ahead by 6 o'clock, no one was always ready with a cheery confidence to assure us we were on the right track. Is it any wonder our stride became a stroll, or our stroll became a struggle? At the Nattai Bridge our struggle became a fullstop while we talked things over. It was clear by now that with the loss of our expert guidance we had lost our chance of reaching Hilltop. So what did it matter? It was just a pleasant stroll up the Nattai to Sheehy's Creek, then an easy climb to the road. Perhaps it was rather a long way to Picton, but certainly no worse than Narrow Neck. Lots of worse ways of spending a Sunday.

.....

John and I were just stepping out of the scrub on to the Picton Road as a blue Renault drove past. Much to our surprise it slowed down - stopped - the door opened and out climbed the last person we expected to see. Hair combed, clean face, an ironed shirt and knife-edge creases in his trousers, shined shoes. It was our leader!

"G'day fellers! Just thought I'd drive out to see how you were getting on."

Oh, the relief with which we punched him to make sure he was real. How we pounded and pummelled him, swung him round and tossed him in the air. Snow coming up just then struck him with a large piece of wood while passing motorists stared. Yes, he was real all right. John Scott was there too (he'd been picked up at Bimlow), so we were all together again. Packs were stowed aboard, walkers likewise, and the prospective in the back seat with his head between his knees found a disadvantage in long legs. The leader climbed in and away we went.

And so it ended. Once more our leader was leading us, assuring us about the route, passing the hours with cheerful anecdote - the old immaculate Digby. Everything was right.

.....

Footnote: The story of how and why he met us where he did is Digby's, and he appears to be sticking to it!

---

WANTED TO BUY: A sleeping bag. If anyone has one they wish to dispose of, please contact Tom Moppett (Phone: JA8873)

---



# PADDY MAIDE

## WALKERS, MUGS, ETC.

Paddy doesn't suggest that walkers have any connection with mugs except when they are drinking. However, on a recent trip with the Brisbane Bushwalkers it transpired that one of the most remarkable things about the Sydney walkers, in the eyes of the B.B.'s, was that they didn't use plastic bowls.

With the B.B.'s the flexible plastic bowl (about 1 pint capacity) is the maid-of-all-work. It acts as drinking cup, plate, mixing bowl and (with a pressed in lid) a food container.

The B.B.'s like them so much that they seem to carry 3 each, and to avoid confusion each person has his own device or initials painted thereon.

It certainly is an idea.

Paddy has prepared himself for the rush and has bowls complete with lids -

3 for 8/9.

or

3/- each.

'Phone : BM2685



**PADDY PALLIN**  
Lightweight Camp Gear  
201 CASTLE REACH ST SYDNEY