

## THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney  
Bush Walkers, C/- Ingersoll Hall, 256 Crown St. Sydney.  
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### NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS.

- The President.

From observations, it would appear that from time to time members come along to the Monthly General Meetings with something in their minds which they intend to bring forward in General Business and invariably move a motion to give their idea effect. However, difficulty seems to be encountered in framing the wording of impromptu motions and it is suggested that these may be written out in advance so that they may be clear and succinct and free from ambiguity. The thought given to framing such motions in advance is at times an advantage in putting forward the motion as the speaker is able to make his points more clear and drive them home and so gain his end.

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To All a Happy New Year and good walking in '57.

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AT OUR DECEMBER MEETING

- A.G. Colley.

The President was in the chair and there were over 50 members present at our December meeting. One new member, Mary Walton, was welcomed into the Club.

In business arising from minutes Frank Ashdown again raised the question of obituary notices in the magazine. He said that two persons with names identical with two club members had recently died and premature condolences had been expressed. The Editor said that, if you wrote to the editor when you died, it would be published, (e.g. "Dear Editor, I'm dying. P.S. I'm dead").

The Conservation Secretary said that he had received a letter from Myles Dunphy asking us to protest to the Minister for Mines and the Minister for Lands against the granting of mining leases in the Colong Caves area - as we did in 1939 about other leases at Yerranderie. He said the leases had not yet been granted. Tom Moppett said that the mining was on behalf of the Metropolitan Cement Co., and that the cement would go their works at Maldon, near Picton. It was said that the Rural Bank and the B.H.P. were interested. The Tourist Bureau had succeeded in stopping a quarry at Wombeyan Caves. In the discussion that followed it was pointed out that this move was connected with the intention of discontinuing quarrying at Bungonia. Limestone was required for industry, and it might be necessary to indicate other deposits not in scenic areas. In the absence of any motion no action was taken.

Ron Knightley told us that no trail had yet been cut over Clear Hill as the organiser was not available on the week-end arranged.

The Social Secretary said that the Christmas Party had been very successful. Eighty members were there and we had come out a little on the credit side. Once again, however, some who said they would buy tickets had not, thus adding to the difficulties of organising, and raising the question of whether they should be charged anyway. The Children's Christmas Treat had been held at Bare Creek and was attended by 20 adults and 21 children.

In his Conservation Report Tom Moppett said that about 20 bushwalkers and about 20 from the Sutherland Brigade had turned out to fight a fire in National Park one evening a couple of weeks earlier. He said that the bushwalkers, who were on the job until about 11.30p.m., were able to do really useful work in putting out the remnants of the fire, which could have broken out again the next day. Tom also announced that a meeting was planned on the afternoon of Sat. 16th Feb., to form the National Parks Association.

Most of the rest of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of a motion that the Club was in favour of the acquisition of a suitable ski hut in the Kosciusko area. Alex Colley said that a great deal of discussion and several unofficial meetings had already taken place. There was much enthusiasm, and those interested felt that the project was now definite enough to be placed before the meeting. He said that accommodation in the snow country was expensive and had to be shared with other organisations. He had found that ski holidays were much easier to organise and more enjoyable with an S.B.W. party who knew

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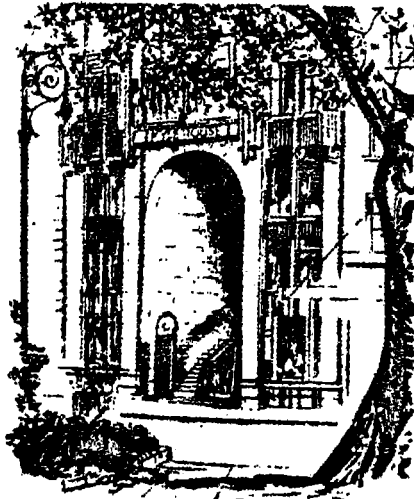
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each other well, and could be depended on to do their share of the many chores in a hut. Many members enjoyed summer holidays too in the snow country, and the hut would be suitable for one of two families. It was a very worth while project, but it should be realised from the outset that the difficulties were formidable. We needed money, labour and organisation. Though the hut now under offer, and believed to be suitable, would cost £300, it had to be moved, foundations built, septic tank, water supply, plumbing, stove and internal fittings installed, and painting to be done. John Scott had estimated, on the scrappy information which could be supplied at this stage, that it would cost altogether £800, but, as building always costs more than estimated, it would be well to budget for at least £1,000. There appeared to be a fair prospect of getting the bulk of this in shares and loans. Finance, however, would probably be the easiest part. Building a hut in a remote place meant constant difficulty in organising materials, transport etc. He thought that between thirty and fifty man-weeks of labour would be required to do the job. This meant thirty to fifty members would have to be prepared to give a week to the work, or, alternatively, less members for longer. It was very tiring to travel 350 miles, work hard, and travel back, and not much could be done in less than a four day trip. The organising of all

this meant a great deal of work and then the running of the hut, collecting of fees, maintenance - e.g. painting every 3 years - and getting in supplies, called for persons willing to give considerable time to it. But so long as members clearly realised what was involved, and were willing to put their backs into it, there was no difficulty we could not overcome. Other organisations had done it and so could we. In fact we had great advantages because we had a wide variety of practical talent in the club and we met frequently and regularly. The project would be a wonderful thing for the Club. It would bring the members together more and give us a common objective. It would probably attract new members. A big camp on the hut site attended by 30 or more members and families would be most enjoyable.

Paddy Pallin quoted the experience of the Orana Hut, which had started out as just a shack for 8 people, containing three stretchers at the beginning, and with the members doing all the work. But it had been necessary to spend £2,500 over the last 3 or 4 years. Nevertheless he thought the project would raise enthusiasm, attract members, and be a fillip to the Club generally.

Arthur Gilroy raised the question of foundations, which might prove very expensive, and Bob Duncan said that the foundations of the C.S.I.R.D. hut had cost £300. Peter Stitt said that the Trust no longer insisted on a stonemason doing the job. Dot Butler said that the project would draw the members together as had Bluegum Forest. Mr. Cleary had advanced the money to buy the forest and over a period of years, dances, theatre parties and other functions had been arranged to raise funds. These social activities were enjoyed for themselves quite apart from their purpose.

Tom Moppett said that the project had come up before but few people had been interested. He thought it would help the Club spirit. Distance was the greatest difficulty, and the work would have to be done on holidays, Easter and Christmas. The Trust had rejected the huts of the Snowy Mountains Authority because they warped when taken apart and the warping would be worse if the hut was left lying around. (Here it was suggested that the President could insure us against warping). The site was most important because a good summer site - e.g. on Mount Stilwell, would be very unsuitable for winter. We should seek advice from others who had built huts.

Peter Stitt said that some of the dismantled huts had been left lying about for a couple of months, and warping was understandable. In N.Z., Clubs smaller than ours had built huts 80 to 200 miles from the city, and one to four hours walk from the road. A whole hut and ski-tow had been carried up a "real mountainside - an ice-axe job."

Taro said that, far from being a drain on our finances, the hut should be a real money spinner when it was finished, since there would be no large recurring expenses and fees for accommodation in the ski country were high.

Frank Leyden said that he had been Secretary of the Lake Albina Hut for two years. This was in the most hazardous and difficult position of any hut in Australia. It was impossible to make any money and debts aggregated £13,000. Difficulties were almost insuperable beyond Charlottes Pass, particularly since the use of wheeled vehicles off main roads had been banned. He advocated the building of a hut at

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Friday Flat on the Thredbo. Here the Ski-Tourers intended to create a village including a hotel and service station. The road would be usable by this winter and there was no snow on it during last season's falls. Though a developed area might not appeal to members there was a great advantage in getting in supplies, in obtaining quick medical attention if required, and perhaps sharing in electricity and other conveniences. The Ski-Tourers were going to build a ski-lift which would take skiers up to a point near the Ram's Head. He stressed the difficulties of organising transport and working parties in Sydney. It had meant constant telephone calls and demands on his time. It would be advisable to form an executive separate from the Club. Frank Duncan described the troubles of huts in the Perisher area. Supplies and access had been difficult in a heavy snow year with snowmobiles constantly breaking down. He suggested a site on Farm or Blue Cow Creek, which is accessible by a road up the Snowy and is about 2 miles below Pounds Creek Hut. The road to the Guthega Dam nearby had been open all the winter.

John Scott said there should be nothing very difficult about moving and re-erecting the hut. He thought we would save between £300 and £400 by getting the hut offered, and that three building tradesmen could complete the job in three weeks. An architect had told him that the foundations need not be high. Piers could be constructed with little cost.

Colin Putt said that huts on low foundations were most practical, since the main danger was that the hut would be pushed off the foundations, and the lower it was the less this danger. Paddy Pallin said that it might be worth our while to consider buying the Alpine Club Hut, which was for sale for £1,200. It was not on a road.

The motion to acquire a suitable hut was then carried without dissent. Another motion - that members be circularised to ascertain the amount of financial support, labour, and administrative assistance they were prepared to give, was also carried. It was decided to give Frank Duncan, who is going to Kosciusko for a holiday, a letter from the Club to the Park Trust, saying that he was empowered to make inquiries on our behalf and to inform the manager of the Trust and the Snowy Mountains Authority of the steps we had already taken. It was considered this would ensure that the hut under offer would be kept for us.

A Committee was appointed to consider the project further and report back to the next meeting. It consisted of Peter Stitt, Frank Duncan, Bob Duncan, Colin Putt, John Scott, Arthur Gilroy, Dot Butler, Neil Monteith and Alex Colley.

The last business of the meeting, which closed at 10.50, was a motion by Frank Barlow that our Federation Delegates be instructed to vote against the admission of the Eureka Youth League Walking Club to the Federation. After some debate as to whether the motion was in order the President decided to accept it, and it was carried.

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#### IT HAS BEEN REPORTED .....

Bolstered up by their success at the Pages' as reported elsewhere in this issue, the S.B.W. Light Opera Company, by invitation, visited the River Canoe Club-Rooms on the night of Friday 16th November. Panic had swept through the Company earlier in the week when it was realised they only had six stars to see the show through, some members being indisposed and at least one in England, with the grim possibility of Maestro McGregor being absent. However, undaunted and spurred by previous smash hits, they showed their versatility by taking many parts in the "Excerpts from the Operas" and carried the evening. The R.C.C. responded nobly with a slap-bang supper - more than we could eat - and even asked us to come again sometime! It would be worth it for the supper anyway. Members of the Company have since been noticed furtively measuring their heads for larger size hats.

B. Harvey

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Overheard at the Christmas Party:- Digby and Geof wagering dangerous bets - if our teetotaler Walks Secretary could be persuaded to completely imbibe one (1) only glass of the hard stuff, then Digby promised to dance round the floor on his hands! Apparently the awful consequences of either escapade suddenly struck both parties simultaneously as they were seen to quickly come to a gentleman's agreement (?) and call the whole thing quits.

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WE LEFT AN IMPRINT ON THE PAGES

"Mumbedah"

It was not just a coincidence that the Friday night walk and the Saturday afternoon walk of the weekend of 2/3/4 November both met at Jamberoo on the Saturday night. For plans had been laid beforehand (and they didn't go astray) and not only did the perambulating participants in the walks arrive (plus a couple which had temporarily become mislaid), but about 60 additional bods who had motored or trained down from Sydney on the Friday night and during Saturday. The result was to be expected - bodies everywhere, but all cunningly spread over the landscape in little knots - in cabins, caravans, Puttmobiles, giant auto tents and the humble walkers' tents of the lower income group, dotted about on little grassy shelves in the rain forest, which were a green delight to the eye.

All this was to do honour to our old members - Peter and Rachael Page - we won't tell you how long they have been in the S.B.W. or you might start calculating their age, but let us suffice to say Page's Pinnacle on the Gangerang Range was named after Peter quite some time ago!! The facts of the case are that the Pages, ever keen on good music, had heard the legend of our Chronic Operas but were loth to tear themselves away from their mountain fastness, just under Barren-grounds, and come to the sinful city to see and hear for themselves.

8.

So the S.B.W. Light Opera Company came to the mountain.

The afternoon was spent in a social whirl. Those who weren't drinking tea in Colleys' cosy cabin were poking through the Pallins' palace or doddering about Duncans' dandy dove-cote with its cunning attic for overflow (not overflowing) guests. A horde cleaned up Peter's sweet sherry. We never knew so many had cars - now we realise why it's so difficult to fill the Walks Programme!!! There used to be an old saying about walkers not taking to being regimented - "we won't be druv", but, by George, there's a lot of them who are quite happy to be "druv" to the camping spot!

As Peter says is usual in his part of the comtry, it became dark after tea and all gathered round a large camp-fire in the Duncans' paddock, on the edge of the trees where the wind was not so fierce. After a short bash at the old camp-fire opening tunes and rounds, the Light Opera Company took over and for an hour and three quarters had the assemblage spell-bound - whether they were amused or simply amazed at our nerve, we shall never know. Excerpt after excerpt fell from their parched throats, and in the end they were applauded, probably a signal of relief. Great credit goes to Maestro McGregorio for his fine presentations. Peter had invited a few "locals" along but we haven't heard their reactions - yet.

It was quite chilly by this time up on the heights in spite of the summer season and before long the people who had been on the outer fringe of the crowd were warming the seats of their pants before the fire. Some of the die-hards sang the old songs for a while but the comfort of the cosy cots had too strong an appeal to keep many there for long.

Sunday dawned bright and sunny and the forenoon was spent in inter-visiting between tents and cabins, whilst a few energetic folk went up to the edge of the Barrengrounds for a stroll. The kiddies had an enjoyable time catching taddies in the tinkling rills. The Pages' place was like Pitt Street. With their sherry gone, some were busily inspecting the goat-houses whilst inside Mouldy took charge of the curtain material cutting department before a large admiring audience. Long discourses on cats, chooks, the view, goats - fond farewells till next time.

The weekend bona fide walkers swallowed their pride and gladly accepted lifts down to Kiama Station while their more fortunate colleagues were druv back to Sydney. It was a grand weekend and the biggest "little re-union" on record, I'm sure.

Another chapter in the life of the Pages.

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#### WALKS REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 1956.

- Malcolm McGregor.

Apart from the Pages' weekend on 2, 3, 4, November this month's walking has been most disheartening from the point of view of number. The programme trips brought out only 21 members, 12 prospectives, and 1 visitor. An extra, led by Jim Brown increased the member tally by 3. The Pages' weekend was attended by approximately 90 people, with say, 60 members in that total, but only 11 of these did any walking, so the



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grand totals were - 35 members, 12 prospectives and 1 visitor.

The trip up Brogher's Creek on Saturday 3rd was most interesting and was good fun for those who came along, but once on the Barren Ground the wind was cold and the rain was wet. The skill of the leader was well demonstrated when he lost only two of the party and even then they got to Pages' before he did. The campfire held in Frank Duncan's "backyard" was a howling success. The wind howled as did the opera team. It was most pleasant to see so many of the "faces" there including Kath Mackay, Peter Jones complete with wife and family as well as Pete and Ray. - Sunday 4th had Henry Ford in the van with 2 members, 3 prospectives, 1 visitor on the way down Middle Harbour Creek and all went well. - The next programme trip was Blue Gum Forest on the 16th, with Sheila, Kath Brown and Ed Garrard the starters. Off hand I would say they had a wonderful time.

Oooer! I almost forgot, those scores will need some adjustment. A special trip went to Kanangra on this weekend to show Dr. Pratt, whose talk we enjoyed recently, some of our scenery first hand. Seventeen people were there all transported in the Puttmobile. Dr. Pratt was heard to say "Travelling in the Puttmobile is a social experience." With 17 on board, I can well imagine it. For the trip itself - it was foul extremely high winds and very cold. - Ron Knightly, a trusty leader had fun on Sunday 18th. He thought Bundeena to Garie was track and easy but his report states "Good test walk-all tracks beyond Wattamolla completely overgrown with hakea banksia and other flesh-searing species." However 5 prospectives and 6 members followed him and I understand, returned afterwards. For information, anyone wanting to catch the 9.35a.m. ferry from Cronulla will be interested to know it doesn't run anymore. The current times are 9.05a.m. and 10.05 a.m.

Finally the instructional led by Frank Young scored 9 members, and 4 prospectives. O'Hares Creek lived up to reputation and the sun shone overhead, need I say anymore.

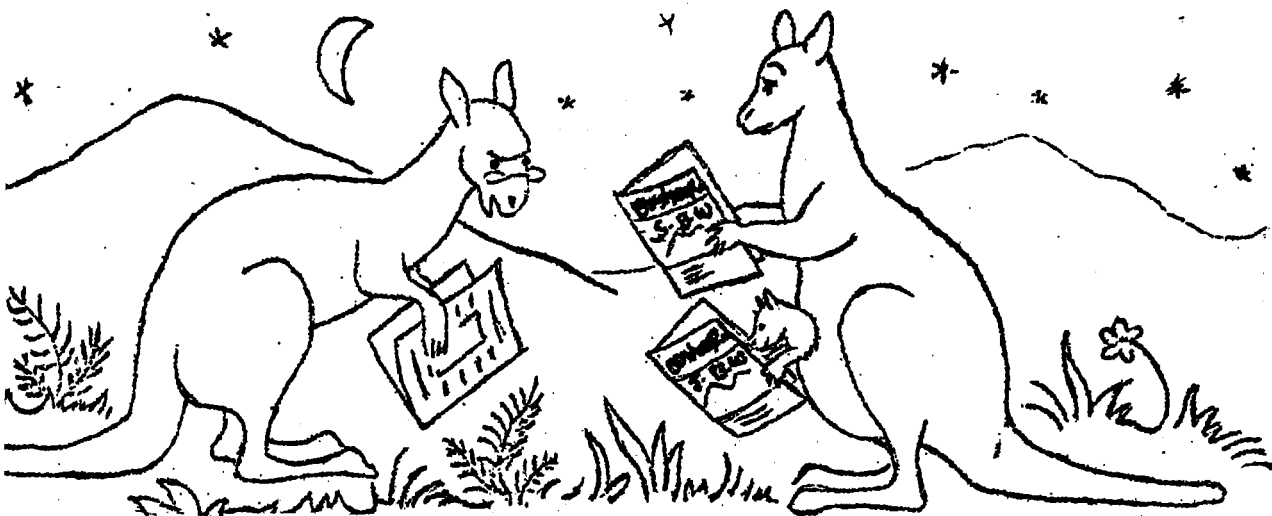
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AXE-PLAY IN MAHRATTA AVENUE.

- Our Special Correspondent.

Those who heard such expressions as "We'll raze them to the ground - roots and all!" "Starve the white-ants!" "Not even a blade of grass!" falling from the lips of Federation Delegate Ron Knightley and Vice-President Alex Colley at the Christmas party, might have thought they were merely off-loading their inhibitions. Had they been present in Mahratta Avenue, Wahroonga, the next day, they would have seen that these were no idle words. The Federation Delegate and the Vice-President started in with their axes on the Knightley block in the morning. Soon they were joined by the President, with his axe, and by Tim Coffee. The effects of the Christmas Party were evidenced by a certain amount of heavy breathing and grunting, but soon the avenue resounded to the regular ring of axes, the thud of mattocks, and the crash of trees. Nervous neighbours looked over their fences to see which way the next one would fall, and the children gathered around. The climax to the day's fun came when the top branches of a 50 foot iron bark brought down the power lines. Sparkling and crackling lines dropped to earth and fire-works ran from pole to pole. The Land Rover, which was joined to the schemozzle of branches and wires by a wire rope, was electrified, but not, to the disappointment of the neighbours, its driver. As night descended the F.D. and the V.P. drove off, leaving the Council electricians busily at the top of their poles, and the muttering residents of Mahratta Avenue groping for their candles and primuses.

On the Sunday the F.D. and the V.P. sought peace and relaxation in the bush. They went to the Christmas treat at Bare Creek. But the Boy Scouts had got there first with their axes. When they had nothing better to do, which was most of the time, they hacked into a three foot log. By the end of the day, after many thousands of blows had been struck, they had severed the log with a vertical cut two feet wide all the way down. This sort of thing should be stopped.



"It may be a good issue of the "Bushwalker", Gertrude, but I still say he'll ruin his eyesight reading in bed."

THE BLANK SPACES

- Jim Brown

During September the "S.M.Herald" published a "Holiday Supplement", mostly made up of advertising matter, ranging from lavish guest house entreaties (you know, "first class cuisine," "cosy and attractive lounge bar" stuff) to travel goods. Sandwiched in between were a few articles on scenic and tourist resorts and I looked at these with a lack-lustre eye until I noticed a map of the Blue Mts.

It was one of those lovely little maps with nothing to scale, but adorned with sketches and comments - something like those mediaeval charts which depict whales spouting or queer fish whenever the cartographer was at a loss. Except that, in this case, the little figures used to fill in the blank spaces were mostly hikers. So I looked again, with an alert and critical eye, and I found five sets of walkers, in each case a man and a girl, and one tent with a campfire.

Reading west to east, the first pair of walkers, both in long pants, are heading towards Katoomba from Cox's River, boradly in the right position to be on the Six-Foot Track (or maybe Black Jerry's Ridge). There is a billy hanging from the man's pack, so obviously he at least is a tyro, but since they must fetch up with Megalong if they continue the way they're facing, we needn't worry about them.

The next pair is well to the north, and although both are wearing shorts, the chap is again dangling a billy from his pack. There's something a little screwy here because they're east of the Perry's Lookdown track yet headed towards the gulf of Govett's Leap Creek. Maybe they're going to take the cliff track back to Blackheath.

Just across the gorge, and almost certainly heading into Leura from Lochley's Pylon is the third pair. Both wearing longs, but no dangling billy. That's better. Even if they are heading east we all know that the Lochley's-Mount Hay track turns and twists, so we presume they know their business.

Some way south of them, another slacks-wearing duo is descending off Mount Solitary into Kedumba. No billy. Direction fair enough. No comment.

But Heavens! What's this? Plunging into the Labyrinth somewhere east of Woodford is the last party. The billy is swinging low and the packs are bigger than the others. In fact, the girl is definitely leaning forward and bending at the knees. Good thing they've got their longs on because they're going into mighty scratchy country. Maybe they're headed for St. Helena by the back door, but if so, I think they're already on the wrong ridge. Search and Rescue job, probably.

But this tent and fire - it really worries me. It's depicted south-east from Mt. Hay on a range almost overlooking Wentworth Crk. Now I've been there, in fact I camped almost at the very spot shown,

12.

about three miles away from Horrible Hay on the wrong side. And I'm really worried about those people. What's more, there's a fire blazing and no one in sight, and I'll bet that country is ready to burn like tinder.

If I go on like this I'll really get all worked up - let me have a look instead at the "Blue Pool" - placed very near Euroka Clearing - Oh yes, and the Explorers' Tree (shown complete with foliage). Ah, that's better. I must try to forget those poor people on that awful ridge. After all, they got themselves into that spot - let 'em get out again. Anyone who goes there deserves what he gets.

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### RAIN ON MY SUNGLASSES

- Ross Laird.

"How about a game of circlos," sez she.  
"Right" sez I, "just a minute till I get my sunglasses".  
"Oh! you won't need them, it's a bit dull up top", sez she.  
"But it'll be glarey", sez I.

Half an hour later on the games deck of the S.S. ORONSAY -  
"A mighty game", sez I, "This next game should show the winner of the set. "I hope we can finish it before the rain comes, but gosh we'll have to hurry," sez she.  
"Come on then and let's get moving", sez I. "Too late, here it comes now, but never mind lets try anf finish this point! Blast-missed it."  
"My point and set", sez she, "told you I'd beat you."  
"Unfair advantage", sez I, "I couldn't see a thing - I've got "Rain on my Sunglasses". - And thats how it all started.

We (i.e. 7 of us) left Netherhall Gardens, Hampstead, where Don and I are living, on Friday 6th October on a cycling trip through the south west of England, hoping to be away till the end of the month. We took a train from Paddington Steam Station London to Oxford, 60 odd miles in a slightly north of west direction from the big smoke. The weather was perfect, blue skies with large white clouds floating round and a gentle breeze blowing. The afternoon was spent cycling around ancient old Oxford with all her colleges and universities, her Norman towers and quaint old shops, needless to say, burning Kodachrome at a fabulous rate. At 5 o'clock we were lined up at the entrance to the Youth Hostel in Jack Straws Lane, approx.  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the centre of the town.

The hostel, as were all the others we were to stay in on this trip, was a big old home converted into a hostel, sleeping about 70 people. At this time of year the average English person, a more serious type, has settled down for the long winter and it was with some slight joy that we learnt we could expect practically empty hostels right through, because believe me, put the seven "Waltzing Matildas" into a 70 bed hostel and it was crowded and noisy, put them into a beautiful winding country lane on their seven temperamental bikes and they completely filled it from the privet hedge on one side to the Cottoneaster or Hawthorn bank on the other, - usually in two rows advancing drunkenly like a small unruly army and usually (if it

was flat and down hill) singing bushwalking songs at the tops of their voices. Put them on a main A class highway and it was enough to make the most hardened long distance truck drivers blanch with terror. So we pedalled and pushed, pushed and swore our way to Hanwell, a small village 3 miles north of Banbury (of "Ride a Cock Horse" fame) which in turn is 25 north of Oxford.

It was about 6p.m. and we seven along with two other chaps also staying at the hostel, were all sitting in the common room, writing letters and bringing diaries up to date when the door opened. The most natural thing to do in such circumstances is to look up and see who the newcomer happens to be. In walked Ken Meadows. Much was the talking, the laughing, the introductions and the general swapping of stories that went on through dinner and the washing up. Ken had been to Hanwell before and knew the whereabouts of the local and as we hadn't up to this stage been into a genuine English 'pub', it was soon decided where we would spend our evening.

What an experience to walk down a dark winding laneway till you come across an old, old building, whitewashed and vine covered with a swinging sign over the doorway which states in bold lettering, along with a symbolic painting of a large pair of antlers "The White Deer" "Genuine Cotswold Ale". You push open the door and march into a very crowded bar room which at first glance appears to be full of stale smoke filled air and lots of old silent people, silent because all conversation has ceased as soon as it is noticed that eight peculiarly dressed strangers have dared to come into their pub. In the quickest possible time we were shown into an adjoining room in which sat a dozen or so Teddy Boys and their girlfriends and so the evening passes with strange "rock 'n roll songs".

Back to the hostel before 10 o'clock (closing time) we tear. Lights out at 10.30, so it wasn't long before comparative peace reigned through the Hanwell hostel.

The next day, Sunday Ken headed back towards Bath where he was then working and we in the opposite direction to Stow-on-the-Wold in the Cotswold Hills. This by the way was my birthday. What a difference between last year's party and this year's push and pedal episode. Thirty two weary uphill miles later we arrived at Stow-on-the-Wold. A quaint little village built mainly of the famous and beautiful golden Cotswold sandstone, it stands at the north of the Cotswolds.

The weather had by late afternoon turned dull and next morning it was drizzling slightly so there were no photographs taken at Stow. From there we pushed on to Duntisbourne Abbots through places like Lower Slaughter and Bourton-on-the-Water. At the latter place we went to a Witchcraft exhibition. There before us many weird and terrifying rituals were unravelled - how to curse your wife's lover or turn yourself into a toadstool etc. The most amazing thing about the exhibition was the fact that approximately 90% of the gear on show had been borrowed from groups of odd bods who are actually still practicing these rites. Somewhere after Bourton we took a wrong turning and instead of doing the expected 20 miles that day we finished up doing 33. That would have been alright in itself if the 33 miles hadn't included Birdlip Hill. What! you've never heard of Birdlip Hill? Just come over here to England and talk to hostellers and see if you hear about it.

The mists rolled in and the rains drizzled down, a chilly wind blew up from nowhere. We pushed our machines along and so we became further and further apart - and then we came to Birdlip Hill. Up and up we went, round a bend and up and up - forever upwards into the eternal mist. A gang of roadworkers stared in amazement as one by one, at long intervals, cyclists pushed past them with glazed and stoney expressions, until at last out of the mists came three girls, dead beat. This was too much even for the workmen. "Where you going" sez they. "Don't know", sez the girls. "Well where are you going to sleep", sez they. "Don't know", sez the girls, "we've lost the rest of the crowd". "Oh!" sez they, "the leader is about an hour and a half ahead of you". "Blast them," sez the girls, sinking down onto the edge of the roadway, "if they're that far ahead we may as well have a rest." "Well have a cuppa tea," sez they, And so they did. "Tell us," sez they, "why do you all wear sunglasses?" "To keep out the glare and the wind whenever we do happen to go down hill," sez the girls. "But how can you see," sez they, "when you've got Rain on your Sunglasses."

It was well after six and pitch dark when we arrived at Duntisbourne Abbots that night, cold, tired, dirty and oh so hungry. There we were welcomed like Royalty. We were shown our respective dormitories and then fed in the warden's own kitchen on home cured meat and home made bread and butter.

From there we went via Cirencester, the town where King Arthur celebrated his coronation about the year dot, on to Inglesham.. The least said about this, our first Wiltshire hostel the better. The only good thing about it was that the weather had cleared up again and was really lovely. From Inglesham to Ashton Keynes, a beautiful old farm house where my duty was to chop down an old apple tree in the orchard. The bike shed here was also used as a roosting shed by the fowls. We spent a very interesting afternoon at the Criklade (a small town about 4 miles from Ashton Keynes) Pottery where a young couple are turning out some wonderfully artistic pottery.

Next stop was Marlborough. Here we ran into the last night of the National Wardens' Conference of the British Y.H.A. What a wonderful welcome they gave us, and how we sang till the early hours of the morning. The next day enroute to the ancient Roman city of Bath we called in at Avebury. It is here that the earliest traces of mankind in the British Isles is to be found. We wandered down avenues lined on either side with huge monoliths, saw the outlines of their temples and how they kept the good spirits in and the bad ones out by surrounding the whole area with a water filled moat.

Bath - a beautiful old city built in a natural amphitheatre of hills. It is here that the Romans had a flourishing city, much of which has been excavated and is now on show to whoever is interested. We spent a very full weekend roaming round Bath, exploring its little winding back streets and by attending a full choral service in the Old Bath Abbey. From here we visited the famous Wells Cathedral.

Onto our machines again and off round the Mendip Hills to Cheddar, famous for its cheeses and its gorge. We visited the caves which aren't to be compared with our Jenolan and explored the gorge, ate Cheddar cheeses and went to the pictures on a special late pass to see

"Richard III". From Cheddar to Street where the hostel is an old converted wooden Quaker rest house. Street is 2 miles past the town of Glastonbury where Christianity was first preached by St. Joseph of Arimathea. Here we visited the ruins of the Cathedral that was built in his honour. It fell into ruins after Oliver Cromwell on Henry VIII orders took the lead from the roof to use in his battle against the churches. It is also here that the staff of St. Joseph when placed in the ground took root and grew into the famous Glastonbury Thorn tree that blossoms every Christmas despite the snow and cold of winter, as well as in Spring.

The next day we pushed on to Minehead on the west coast of Somerset - from here we could look over onto the coast of Wales. It was our longest day, nearly 42 miles, but it was worth it as it gave us a spare day to explore the lanes and hamlets of this fascinating area. Once again the weather had turned dirty on us, and so we decided to get back home to London as soon as possible as some of us had shocking colds.

So it was that as we headed for the railway station at Minehead that Saturday morning in October just 320 miles and 15 days after leaving Oxford and one week ahead of our expected arrival back in London, that we overheard this snippet of conversation between two elderly ladies. ".....to keep the rain off their faces," sez the first. "But my dear," sez the second, "how can they see when they've got Rain on their Sunglasses".

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Also from Rosso..... "Listen my so called friends, as yet I haven't heard one scrap of news from anybody in S.B.W. That I can assure you is a bit tough after 3 months. S.O.S. to all S.B.W's - my permanent address is - Flat 6 - 67 Netherhall Gardens, Hampstead. N.W.3.

Editor's Comment: Well, the Rosso wanted a long letter and he sure is going to get it - and how! That 100ft. length of toilet paper (conjured up by a score of S.B.W. characters) now winging its way to the Old Dart should silence even him for many moons.

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#### CHRISTMAS HOP OF '56.

- Jim Brown.

If you wanted a sound factual report of the American Civil War you may not approach a Confederate General - but you certainly wouldn't seek it from a conscientious objector; and in this wise I feel that the Deputy Editor does you an unkindness in getting me to record the doings at a DANCE!

Well there were 78 present - not 73, or 88 or 89 as variously stated during the evening, and that makes it numerically a small "hop" for Sydney Bush Walkers. At the same time it was a pleasantly cosy sort of evening, all very amiable and informal - I can't recall seeing any "ties and tails" on the men, and precious few elaborate ball gowns on the ladies. A few of the troops wore shorts, including John Noble and Ron Knightley, as well as Alex Colley who gets his

fifth or sixth "bar" to the initial decoration for such valour.

The floor, they tell me, was very sluggish, and that was probably true enough, but not heavy enough to discourage most of the light fantastic feet. Presently (about 9.30) some white goo was broadcast over the deck, and this coupled with the dew falling from heated foreheads produced a surface slippery enough to cause Binnsie's downfall (and one other - was it Stan Madden?)

It was a goodly and representative sort of gathering, with rather less of the Old Brigade than in other years, but a nice sprinkling of the newer crew, and enough of the middling group, so that there were no lonely and lost souls.

We remember, particularly, Peter Stitt putting aside his crutches and bobbing vigorously on the floor; a highly irregular competition with some Past (and the current) Presidents vying with potential Presidents to maintain the exultant cry of "Cheee-eee-eee-eee-eeers!" It seems certain that some of the Presidents to be will be audible all over the Meeting Room, but I'd give the award to the old and the bold at the Party. Better trained or better lubricated - or both.

I heard it said that we managed to beef out so much uproar, in spite of our meagre numbers - that the R.S.L. had a couple of stern-looking characters waiting in the foyer to remove the more sodden objectionables. Of course, as ever, we bewildered them by becoming, suddenly, respectable and peaceable citizens, going about our law abiding pursuits. Just for a little while a small portion of the City had held something of the temper of a Bush Reunion.

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#### THE ODD AUSTRALIAN.

- Bernard Peach  
Coast & Mountain Walkers.

In many an odd corner of France I had put up my small tent without comment, and late on one dark night, stretched out in my sleeping bag in a market garden mistaking it for open land.

Morning found me comfortably curled up in an onion bed, but the young French workers were more interested in the quality of my sleeping bag than in the dent I'd made in their onions.

I believe you could sleep on the cobbles of any French village square without arousing any curiosity beyond, "Oh, La, La," from the passers-by, who would give a friendly grin and leave you to doze off in peace.

It is different with the English. A traditional conservatism is still alive. The shelter of a barn would readily be given to a wanderer caught between town at nightfall and more kindness than that for the asking, but one who spends a night by the wayside in a sleeping



bag is regarded as an odd character. I had experience of this on my way to the English mountains.

Feeling tired, and knowing that the Stratford Hostel couldn't be reached by nightfall, I bedded down in deep grass by the roadway - thorn and wild rose hedge above me and the singing of nightingales making the twilight very pleasant as it settled in.

Then my first visitor strolled along and said, "I say, are you all right?" I assured him that I was quite comfortable until morning, when I would move on to Stratford.

With a shocked expression he came close (as if to study some peculiarity). "But you're not going to sleep in that bag thing, are you? It might rain." He went off scratching his head and, having found out that I was Australian, no doubt wondered at the odd types being produced in the Commonwealth.

The second visitor refused to be convinced that it was right or normal behaviour on my part and firmly and courteously he carried me off to be installed in the barn of a nearby farm.

This was an introduction to the English way of doing things.

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#### SONG OF THE BUSHWALKER (We hope!)

As free as air-bound anywhere .... along the lanes I stray;  
So keep your cars and handlebars - on foot I take my way;  
Beneath the trees - just as I please, I saunter in the sun,  
My humble pack upon my back .... that's my idea of fun.

No tax I pay for this highway - no licence I must buy -  
For I'm complete with two good feet(?) - why pedal, drive or fly?  
The pace is slow, but so I go, I see so many things -  
Sheep, rabbits, cows - and mills and ploughs - queer folk, and flowers  
and wings.

The woods are grand if you can stand and listen all alone;  
There's mystery round every tree, in every leaf and cone.  
It's good to stroll - with no set goal, just where your fancies lead,  
Away from all the rush and noise, the clamour and the speed.

The fields and brooks are open books - the mountains and the skies -  
And as I roam - from Nature's tome, I read .... and so grow wise.  
Such happiness as I possess demands no worldly wealth,  
For on I plod - just thanking God for life and strength and health.

- mostly Patience Strong.

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#### WHAT EVERY TROGO SHOULD KNOW!!

Holes that go six inches into the ground vertically are not necessarily limestone caves, neither are holes that go horizontally into a hillside and end in a wombat.

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# PADDY MADE

ONE NINE FIVE SEVEN

Paddy wishes Bushwalkers all good things for 1957. May we see the bush kept green and lovely - free from fires, droughts and despoilers.

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and good luck to the proposed ski hut!

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