

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bush Walkers, C/- Ingersoll Hall, 256 Crown St., Sydney. Box No.4476, G.P.O., Sydney. 'Phone JW1462.

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AT OUR JANUARY MEETING

- Alex Colley

The first meeting of the new year opened with the President in the chair and about 37 members present.

After confirming of the minutes Frank Ashdown moved that "Although we had instructed our Federation delegates to vote against the admission of the Eureka Youth League Walking Club to Federation, the Club should accept applications from a member of any organisation or religion." Although the motion was queried on form, practicability and constitutionality, it was passed.

Tom Moppett informed us that the timber miller who built an unauthorised road along the ridge between the Paterson and Allyn Rivers had explained to the Forestry Department that his action had been taken in order to facilitate the enjoyment by older people of the existing beauties of Barrington Tops, which had previously been denied to them. So public spirited was he in this matter that he pressed on with the road for a further quarter of a mile after being told not to go further. A telegram had been sent by the Department

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to one of its local officers and it was hoped this would be effective.

Tom said that a letter had been written to the Mines Department pointing out that the Colong mining lease was in a reserve for the preservation of caves. It was hoped this area would become part of the Greater Blue Mountains National Park. Bungonia was an object lesson in the effects of quarrying on scenery, and, if the damage could not be restored, would the Department reconsider its attitude?

The inaugural meeting of the National Parks Association would be held on the afternoon of Saturday, 16th February, 1957.

The President informed us that Nadgee, a coastal area near a high range just over the Victorian border, an area not unlike Era, and with plentiful lagoons and bird life, had been declared a fauna reserve.

The Secretary asked for notification of changes of address to be supplied within the next month, also notice of any Constitutional alterations.

Woods Creek was fixed as the site of our Re-Union on March 16th and 17th, with Long Angle Gully as an alternative if required. Peter Stitt, Colin Putt, Brian Anderson and Bill Henley were appointed as the Re-Union Committee with power to co-opt.

The ski hut Committee was not in a position to give a detailed report because it had been able to do very little, as a Committee, over the holidays. However, two of its members were able to supply information. Alex Colley, after a number of inquiries about the Alpine Hut, found that paid transport could not be relied on to any point nearer than 18 miles from the hut. Private transport could get to between 18 and 6 miles of the hut, depending on type of vehicle and snow conditions. Only horses and walkers could traverse the last six miles and as horses with drivers were unobtainable there was no means of getting provisions or building materials into it. Therefore the hut, which badly needed repairs, could not be repaired, and he was not prepared to suggest that we acquire it.

Frank Duncan had spent several days at Kosciusko, looking at huts and talking to Mr. Ainsworth, Manager of the Park Trust. The Snowy Authority hut that we had considered had been sold, and was half pulled down when Frank saw it. He said that some difficulty was being experienced in dismantling it, as the walls rested on the floor boards. Jemmies and crow-bars had been necessary and some of the fabric had been broken, allowing the shavings used as packing to escape. Mr. Ainsworth had told him that fast work and good weather were necessary if the hut were to be re-erected before it warped.

Mr. Ainsworth thought the Perisher area the best for huts, as it was near the Main Range. Frank pointed out that, if we went to Friday flat, on the Thredbo, we were dependant on a chair lift to get to the snow, and this in turn depended on the erection of a hotel worth £500,000 or more.

The Guthega and Blue Cow Creek area was windy, and there was a possibility the road might not be kept open in winter Beyond Island Bend.

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The site suggested by Mr. Ainsworth was on a knoll about 200 yards North of the Kosciusko Road. It was near the University and Warragang Huts, though separated from the road by a small Creek. Water was available behind it. The Snowy Mountains Authority was now very strict about the building of roads. No new roads might be allowed, and it was doubtful whether the roads serving the huts in the Perisher area would be opened up again.

Frank said that his impression was that, with the exception of the Snow Revellers, Telemark and Sydney huts, the remainder were unfinished. Most needed repairs to doors and windows. The gable end of the C.S.I.R.O. hut had been pressed in a foot or more by snow. Frank suggested that, as we could not acquire a hut for the coming season, we might approach some of the other huts for a block booking. This would enable members to see the area, possible sites, and the huts, and see how they liked running a hut. It would also indicate the number who might use a Club hut.

Frank Ashdown said that he had spoken to one of the organisers of the Warragang hut. They had set out to raise £2,000 in £20 shares, but the cost to date had been £5,000. Expenses had included 500 yards of piping and a £600 stove. It was necessary to make the hut comfortable.

Peter Stitt said that this was one of the worst examples. They had spent money freely on such items as a big entertainment room and picture windows.

Allan Hardie suggested that the spot for a hut was the Wilkinson Valley. A hut there would be very convenient for summer walks.

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Colin Putt said that if we tried to copy other Clubs we would not be going the way bush walkers should be going. We didn't want excessive comfort. A room for shelter and a stove were all that were really necessary. Many had used the Red Hut as a base.

Neil Schaffer said that the C.S.I.R.O. hut site had been selected during a bad winter. They had kept within their money all the time. The hut had been pre-fabricated in Sydney and put up during an Easter. The stone work had cost £700, and was essential. It was difficult enough at times to get to the Perisher area, especially for beginners, and even harder to get to a hut further on.

On a motion by Jess Martin the Committee was asked to prepare an estimate of the cost of a hut which would fulfil the minimum requirements of the Park Trust.

Frank Duncan moved that the hut committee be asked to report on the possibility of getting a block booking in one of the other huts and the motion was carried.

The meeting closed at 10.0 p.m.

A REST ON THE KOWMUNG

- Betty Holdsworth.

Xmas holidays 1956 were to be a rest cure for five work-weary souls, and a slow jaunt along the Kowmung River was deemed suitable, walking gently along its banks from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; two hours for lunch and an occasional rest day thrown in for good measure.

Plans for a food cache at the half way mark were made and taken out in advance, thus ensuring light packs.

And so with high spirits we set forth on Boxing Day for twelve days of bliss, but, the best laid plans of mice and men!! Ah me. Our taxi left us at Ginkin and we slowly (this is a leisurely trip) made our way to the Tuglow River and our first camp. Here a minor tragedy occurred - our tin opener, to be used for the last time before reaching the luxuries of the cache, being slightly rusty, blended so well with the landscape and was never seen again.

Thursday dawns, a pleasant day and we see our beloved Kowmung River for the first time. Gym boots were the order of the day and we sprang lightly from rock to rock until the walls grew steeper and we were ordered to wrap up our packs in ground sheets; from now we would float them, Phydeaux, Towzah, Rover, Geraldine and Fitzwilliam, each drawn by loving hands through the Kowmung Waters behaved beautifully. The day proceeds and peace reigns, dragon flies flit to and fro and lizards dart in and out amongst the rocks. What joy! If only there were not so many bloody flies. A hasty lunch, progress is too slow; shall never get anywhere at this pace. Banks grow steeper and more rocky; couldn't camp here even if we wished; no space for five bodies. Finally reach Tuglow Holes Creek and so to rest amongst and around the rocks. Better have an early start in the morning; don't just know what the river will have in store for us.

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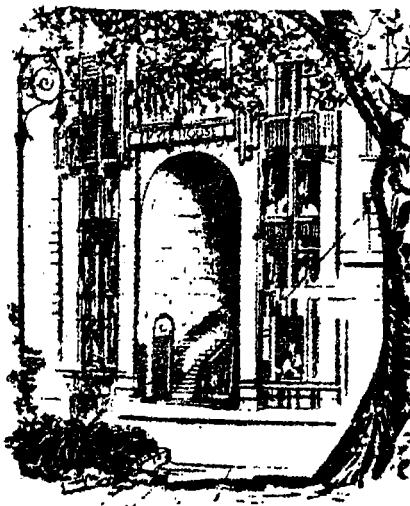
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Dawn breaks, temperature decidedly cool, river has a treat we swim immediately, wish the sun were a little higher, goose pimples like eggs. Sheila has to take Geraldine as well as Fitzwilliam, Betty is no swimmer. Gorge is negotiated; our leaders announce progress as 100 yards per hour and tell us that we shall never get anywhere if we continue to dither at every pool and every rock. We try to impress upon them that they must use Patience and Tolerance with us if we are to cope with such obstacles which seem to rise at every turn of the river. We are informed of the ten foot waterfall downstream which must be negotiated, and of a luckless soul whose nerve failed and had to be helped over by a slight push from behind. We tremble at the thought and press on, arrive at Morong Falls where John White's party was joining us for a few days. Note is left for John together with a piece of Jack's lap lap. N.B. Lap laps are excellent prevention for chafe on swimming excursions, but can be a source of embarrassment when they rise with the waters.

We proceed, Phydeaux, Towzah, Rover, Geraldine and Fitzwilliam well wrapped in ground sheets, cameras in plastic bags well inside. We want to take a photograph - off with the ground sheet, open up pack, dig deep, out with plastic bag. Shot taken, into plastic bag,

into pack well down, tie up pack, wrap in ground sheet, shoulder pack, only half an hour gone, we proceed. This party is far too slow, we must make up some time. We dutifully put our best foot forward, but ahead is a waterfall, no way around it. Bill scales the cliff and another hour passes taking up Phydeaux, Geraldine, Rover, Towzah, Fitzwilliam, Sheila, Molly, Betty and Jack. During this little interlude a cooee is heard and the White party descends from the hills. Great joy we are all met; we breathlessly tell them of the twenty foot waterfall ahead.

We gather courage in both hands and press on. A little intrepid climbing and we reach another gorge, not the twenty foot fall but we need the rope and over we go, no hand holds, no toe holds, we dangle in mid air with water below. John has his water wings at the ready but the breeze takes them along and they float ahead of us. Sheila and Henry minister to the not so intrepid swimmers and we all make it, only to find sheer cliffs along which we follow Molly who seems to be fitted with suction pads to her feet. Can't let the side down, if she can do it so can we. We hold our breath, this is surely it, but no, our time has not come, we've made it.

A hurried lunch - no time to rest yet, we must press on today so that we can rest tomorrow. But our leaders say 7.15 a.m. start and so we brave the Bloody Kowmung once again. John decided that swimming is too intrepid for him and lures Sheila to the hills. Party waits one hour for them to descend to the river again. Jack whiles away the time by spinning stones across the waters, patience and tolerance at work. Some of the P.W.F.'s. try their hand and almost decapitate Henry who exclaims "You never know how you die." Ah, here they come, must make up some time, but alack the waters of the Kowmung are ahead of us again.

This time Bill and Betty take to the hills followed by John and Frank. Up and up they go, can't get down, cliffs ahead. Patience and tolerance working full blast down below, whilst the swimming party cool their heels. We are reminded of the waterfall ahead, Betty and John pale visibly; they are promised that those doing the pushing will perform gently should their courage fail, and so with these happy thoughts we continue to spring less lightly from rock to rock, trying not to dither; our leaders have spoken.

At last we find a less rocky spot and are allowed to camp, and once again we rest our weary bones amongst the stones. Henry finds convex holes beneath his sleeping bag. Mary suggests he reverse them but he finds the edges too sharp. Poor Henry, he needed rest, he said he had eaten so much that his profile had become vastly extended. Indeed it was said that he looked as though he were about to produce the Kowmung Kid.

We sleep, we dream of waterfalls 40 feet high; must go to Era next Xmas. 4.45 a.m. finds the party called to heel for another 7 a.m. start. Rest must be around the corner, but not today. Jim struggles with his gym boots - "My feet have gone to size 10 or these boots are only nines". A voice asks is there a spare pair of legs. Says John "No one, but no one would have these." We toil on, our camera man Hooper takes a spill. He was going the way he was looking instead of looking the way he was going. Rather think it was the

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effect of certain nylons with certain wear marks (rear vision) upon them. Up and over and around the rocks we toil. Jim declares he has sixteen gears but is rolling into camp on bottom. And so we reach Lanigans to learn once more we start at 7.15 a.m.

Why do we put up with such tyranny. We patch our feet; never has so much plaster been used by so few. We sigh, we groan, we draw on our gym boots two sizes too small and slowly proceed. We make Yerranderie at 4 p.m. and wistfully say farewell to our fellow travellers who are to return to feather beds whilst we shall return to continue our leisurely journey with Patience and Tolerance along the Kowmung River.

P.S. Never found the 60 foot waterfall.

A new, but not insurmountable obstacle has appeared at the city end of the lower Eastern arch of the bridge. It consists of a rising sun of $\frac{3}{4}$ " diameter steel rods, bent outward at the tips and sharpened to a point too fine to see with the naked eye. Nature lovers and unorthodox climbers should protest, or look to their hack-saws.

FEDERATION REPORT, DECEMBER.

- Allen A. Strom.

The Eureka Youth League Bushwalking Club has asked for an interview with the Secretary of the Federation regarding Constitution, Code of Ethics and Organisation of Club Procedures desired by the Federation.

The Publicity Officers of Federation are to arrange for a public lecture to be given by Mr. Jerg Marmet, a member of the Swiss Everest-Lhotse Expedition during the period February 8th to 23rd, 57. The lecture will show details of the Expedition in coloured slides.

The Publicity Officers are also arranging publicity through the Information Bureau, the Broadcasting Stations, the newspapers and Paddy Pallin's Notice Board at Town Hall Station. An advertisement in a Saturday issue of "The Sydney Morning Herald" will also be tried.

The Federation will call a meeting of interested persons from the Conservation Bodies to establish a National Parks Association of New South Wales. This will be held on Saturday, February 16th in W.E.A. Rooms, 171 Phillip Street at 2.0 p.m. The Chief Guardian of Fauna, Mr. F.J. Griffiths will chair the meeting. Members of the Sydney Bushwalkers are requested to be present.

A road along the Williams Range, (between the Allyn and Williams Rivers, Barrington Tops Area) has been cut illegally by local timber getters. We are combining with Newcastle Conservation Bodies in an effort to have the Forestry Commission prevent further activity.

We are pleased to report that the Minister for Lands has approved of the establishment of a Nadgee Faunal Reserve over 28,000 acres in the South Eastern corner of New South Wales. In accordance with all Faunal Reserves, the area will be reserved in perpetuity after formal approval by the Executive Council.

Investigation of the proposed mining of limestone in the Colong-Church Creek Caves Area is proceeding. An effort is being made to determine the true nature of the situation before attempting to persuade the Department of Mines to refuse further operations.

Two calls have been made for volunteers to assist with Bushfire Fighting in the Royal National Park. Response to these calls has been fourteen and nine. It is desired that more names should be placed on the Volunteer List. Please see Tom Moppett or Secretary of the Club.

Junior Walks: A walk was held on December 1st/2nd down Heathcote Creek. Four boys attended, the low numbers being due to a hitch in the organisation of the activity. The next walk will be held in February.

A report was to hand that land near National Park Station was to be provided for a Museum of Old Trains and Trams. Federation agreed to take no action.

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THE NANDEWARS

- Tom Moppett.

The Nandewar Range offshoots from the Great Divide south of Armidale into the North West. It ends near Narrabri with two peaks of about 5,000 feet.

There is an area, roughly 20 miles by 5 miles, thickly clothed with eucalypt forests, with high points from which can be obtained excellent views of the surrounding ridges and valleys and, on the western side of the limitless and fascinating plains beyond. With the use of some imagination, Bourke can be seen, on a good day, some 200 miles due west. To the south west the Warrumbungles definitely can be seen on the skyline, only 80 miles away.

Like the Warrumbungles, the Nandewars is a onetime volcanic area. Rocks and vegetation are similar, but the Nandewars lack spectacular plugs and dykes like Belougerie Spire, Crater Bluff and the Breadknife. The area is dominated by two peaks, Grattai 4,800 feet in the north and Kaputar 5,000 feet in the southern part.

We visited the area last May on a Caloola coach trip, the party including Allen Strom, Frank Barlow and John Bookluck. On that occasion we arrived at Coryah Gap (3,900 feet and only about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles

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from the top of Kaputar) for lunch. Coryah Gap is the end of a good gravel road from Narrabri (about 30 miles). A rough road does go further on to the south of Kaputar, but we have not investigated it. A track on the southern side of the Gap leads down to a spring, understood not to be permanent.

The plan was for the party to camp that night at Dawsons's Spring, where there is permanent water in a valley just to the south of the top of Kaputar, then spend two days walking along the range north to Killarney Gap where we were to be met by the coach. That afternoon, walking along to Dawson's Spring (there is a track) we had excellent views both north and south. Looking down onto Bullawa Creek with its maze of tree covered ridges is somewhat reminiscent of the view from Point Lookout in the New England National Park.

The next morning was dim and things became dimmer as the day grew older. By 2.30 we could see such a short way through the cloud that we camped.

The next morning the cloud, high wind and icy cold rain, through which we were trying to find the right ridge, proved to be just too thick, some retreated to the Boomi Valley on the eastern side of the range.

Thanks to the generous assistance of two station owners we were able to reach Killarney Gap in ease and comfort only 24 hours overdue. The first, Laurie Goldman of Trevallyn, lent us his shearers quarters, with beds, and a big fire, for the night, provided a hunk of beef to assist our shortish rations, arranged with a friend to collect us in the next valley the following day, and the next morning personally guided us across a low range to the head of the valley.

We then walked down the valley, having lunch on the way, until met by Laurie Goldman's friend, Charlie Quelch of Paleroo, in his Land Rover. His property is near Killarney Gap, and he had come out to meet us and then took us right to our camp at the Gap.

We had intended to spend a day going north from Killarney Gap to Grattai but had already used the day, so Allen and I decided to return soon for a further look. We managed this in the last week of August, the party consisting of Teddy Grey, Geoff Douglas, Louie French, Allen and the Moppett family.

First we made an overnight visit to Kaputar, then went round through Narrabri to Killarney Gap and camped there.

There is a small area of snow gums and snow grass on Kaputar, and the previous week they had had snow. We found a still frozen waterfall about twenty feet high, (the flow of water would have only been a trickle) and special Kaputar tea was brewed right on the top of the mountain. Necessary ingredients are ice, the remains of a snow fall, liberally laced with snow grass which may be skimmed off before drinking if preferred.

From Killarney Gap we did two day walks. The first was to Mt. Grattai. We climbed over the hill behind the camp then paralleled the main ridge, in the valley on its western side, until we reached the point where the Ginns joins the main ridge.

It was pleasant walking under the gums with little scratchy undergrowth. Most creeks we crossed were dry, but we met one soak, and one creek was running well, from a spring I understand.

The Ginns is a high bluff just south of Grattai, the name coming from the columns of volcanic rock standing on its top. As we approached Grattai along the main ridge, fairly low at this point, the climb up onto the mountain looked difficult because of cliffs. It was decided that Louie and I press on to make sure someone reached the top to have a good look about. Actually by going just round the corner, at the south eastern corner of the mountain we walked up quite easily.

The top of Grattai is a delightful spot. It appears triangular in shape, is covered with snow grass and on the highest and most exposed side, the south, are snow gums. The rest of the top slopes gently to the north and is covered by a rough barked 'snow gum'. There is no undergrowth. There are wonderful views in all directions, including some most interesting looking "Stanley Chasm" gorges. Dozens of eagles sweep about all the time - we almost had to share our tin of fruit with them. There is no water on top.

Returning to camp we followed our outward route, except that from the Ginns we kept on the top of the main ridge, which from there to just behind our campsite is high and cliff edged. To reach the top we climbed up the northern end, round a huge hunk of rock which may be a volcanic plug, along the top where the going was pleasant and easy, then down a steep track at the southern end.

Our second walk was to Devil's Hole Valley, between Grattai and Castle Mountain. We doubt if we reached the genuine Devil's Hole, but we were somewhere on the right creek. There is a ridge connecting Castle Mountain to the Ginns and most of the way along its southern side is a cliff, up to say, thirty feet high, but there was a way through where we hit it. In this area are creeks in quite deep rough gorges. Most of the day we met thick undergrowth which had not been there on Allen's previous visit about ten years ago.

Looking down from Grattai we had seen an area which appeared to be covered with low scrub. We found it to be an area of rock, a lava flow, cracked in the usual pattern, on which flowers were growing in pockets of soil, mainly small wattles, pervading the area with a delicious perfume.

The previous day near the Ginns we had seen several mountain goats on the rocks above us. We were told there are a lot of them about. On the way home we were very pleased to use a track of theirs instead of pushing our way through the undergrowth. At one point, on a creek bend, where one bank was high, we found a bed of grey volcanic ash, and another beside a long ridge of reddish rock glowing in the afternoon sun, we were sure there should be aboriginal drawings, but could see none.

After crossing the Castle-Ginns watershed on the way home, we dropped down into a dry creek bed and followed it into a larger deeper but equally dry creek which eventually dropped rather steeply to join the main creek, which was flowing, at the edge of the cleared land.

We crossed open grazing country to the Narrabri Road, up which we pressed to Killarney Gap and camp.

It had been quite a long day due to the thick undergrowth and it was now dark. Soon a car stopped to assist us on our way. Who else but our old friend Charlie Quelch, rescuing us again. The campsite is beside the road right on top of the Gap. Water can be found in a small creek not far behind the campsite.

On the ridge south of Killarney Gap is Mt. Lowe, a small peak with a rocky face. Parties walking north to Killarney Gap should take care at this point to take the correct ridge, otherwise they are most likely to take one leading too far to the west.

Parties can be transported from Narrabri to Killarney Gap or Kaputar by taxi, at a cost to either place of about £3 per taxi. The taxi rank telephone number is 552.

This area would be of interest to any bushwalker, but remember in normal times water is not plentiful. Even after this year's heavy rains, most creeks not fed by springs are dry.

It is hoped, after further investigations, to put forward proposals for a National Park in the Nandewars.

SOME THOUGHTS IN PROSPECT.....

A.Ed.

At first glance there appear to be two very unusual and exciting features on the current Walks Programme. - Firstly there is a social item tantalisingly entitled "The Flora and Fauna of Sydney Beaches" on the night of January 30th. The flora would seem to be a trifle scarce but there is definitely no dearth of interesting fauna, if this refers to what we think and hope it might!!

The second is the curious combination of two still more curious walks led by the Putts' and scheduled for Feb. 1-2-3. The routes selected for these two exclusive escapades would appear to be something more than a coincidence and we can't help wondering just how much fraternisation is going to take place between the opposing factions. Any contact between the parties should prove extremely interesting.

By the time this has gone to press, both of these promises should have been brought to fulfilment. Let's hope that our thoughts in retrospect are as equally intriguing; and somewhat more enlightened.

"Those Wedding Bells are Breaking up that Old Gang of Mine."

You never can tell what lies around the corner - or across the seven seas..... We are happy to report the engagement of Ken Meadows (at present in England) to Hermine Haslinger, of Wels, Austria. The wedding is to take place on February 16th and the couple expect to depart for Australia about March 15th. All best wishes for the future to Ken and Hermine from everyone at S.B.W.

Ed's. Note: Club bachelors desirous of losing their freedom and entering that 'certain state of bliss', take heed - forget our unrewarding bush tracks for a while and take a stroll down the Lanes of England.

BARRALLIER'S ATTEMPT TO CROSS THE BLUE MTS. IN 1802

(An account from early Australian History, obtainable at the Mitchell Library, which will be of particular interest to Bushwalkers as it concerns the earliest trip into some of our popular walking country. - Dot Butler)

.....

Francis Barrallier was a trained surveyor and engineer who as a civilian had been brought out by Governor King and who, on arrival had been appointed to a vacancy in the N.S.W. Corps. He planned an expedition from Parramatta to attempt a crossing of the Blue Mountains. Owing to some military order that soldiers were not to be taken off regimental duty, Gov. King was "obliged to effect a ruse" - he dispensed with Barrallier's services in the N.S.W. Corps but claimed him as his aide-de-camp and sent him on an embassy to the King of the Mountains so that he might carry out his explorations. Accordingly, on 6th November 1802, Barrallier (aged 29) set out with four soldiers, five prisoners and a native, Gogy, who was afterwards joined by others. Barrallier, according to his journal, travelled 147 miles into the mountains beyond the Nepean (this distance is an overstatement), over rough and almost inaccessible country, but his difficulties proved so great and his equipment was so meagre he failed to reach the Great Divide.

On 6th November the party crossed the Nepean a few miles above the present town of Camden at a ford called by the natives Binheny. The surrounding country was known as the Cow Pastures owing to the fact that there was at the time a herd of several hundred wild cattle there, apparently confined to the valley of the Nepean, offspring of five cows and two bulls which strayed from Sydney in 1788, and were not discovered till many years later.

On 7th November he passed a swamp called by the natives Manhangle (now Menangle), thence past the present town of Picton, and just north of where Thirlmere now stands he turned west then north-west towards the Nattai River, arriving at a spot on the high land overlooking Shea's Creek, a tributary of the Nattai. This spot was near the terminal point of a previous expedition of Barrallier, and here his goods had been brought by bullock waggon and a depot formed.

It is likely that Barrallier was guided by natives, and unfriendly relations between neighbouring tribes probably prevented his getting information which would have led him across the Great Divide. Some of the natives had never seen a white man. Sight of the two bullocks being yoked to the waggon caused such fright to one native called Wallara that he fled but was induced back by the others, and they all followed the moving waggon making all sorts of grimaces and speaking with great velocity displaying their astonishment. Barrallier mentions that two natives attracted the attention of a third in the distance by shouting the word "coo-ee" with all their strength.

On Nov. 10th three men were sent back with the waggon for

provisions. The others proceeded west on foot following a creek (probably Shea's) down a precipitous gorge to the Nattai River, about 6 miles above its junction with the Wollondilly.

(Cambage, the historian, in speaking of the first road which by 1833 had been constructed into the Burragorang, describes a wild scene; "The inaccessible appearance of the rocky cliffs and the sublime depths of the valleys they enclose present a striking contrast to the flatness of the higher country by which the road approaches Burragorang. The descent by road into the tremendous ravines of the Nattai and Wollondilly is tedious and very difficult. An old man, Larry Tanny, lives below and subsists on what he earns by helping passengers up or down. The country first reached on descending is the bed of the Nattai, which joins the Wollondilly 6 miles further down. Pasturage is good and water abundant, and by 1833 there were many stations.") But let us continue Barrallier's journey, 30 years earlier, into this virgin country.

Barrallier reports that he found a slate mine at the end of Shea's Creek, very soft slate which broke under the slightest pressure, in which were embedded fossil impressions of ferns and tree leaves. (These soft slate deposits are Permo-Carboniferous shale beds and coal measures containing fossils. Iron is also present.) He describes the surrounding mountains as being "generally accessible up to a certain height, but at an altitude of a quarter of a mile they are perpendicular and their summit forms a kind of leaden wall." (The accessible portion would be sloping decomposed Permo-Carboniferous shales. The leaden wall would be the Hawkesbury sandstone cliffs.)

On Nov. 11th Barrallier followed the left bank of the Nattai to the Wollondilly junction. He refers to pieces of granite in its bed. (These are brought down from a region a few miles higher up above the junction where the Wollondilly flows through an extensive area of granitic and porphyritic rocks, fragments of which are distributed along the river bed for many miles. A wall of sandstone forms a majestic barrier along the east side of the Wollondilly, while the western side comprises a large area of fairly good soil clothed with open forest of Apple Gum, Forest Red Gum and Ironbark.)

Barrallier was impressed by the fertility of the Burragorang Valley: "It would be suitable for 300 settlers. Such wild animals as the warring (rock wallaby), kangaroo, opossum, wombat, etc, would afford to the colonists a great variety of food, without mentioning all the varieties of fish swarming in the river."

On Nov. 12th the party left the Wollondilly soon after passing the junction of Tonalli Creek. Speaking of the country just traversed Barrallier says "the soil was very rich. The hills were covered with kangaroos which resembled a flock of goats grazing peaceably and offered to the eye a pleasing pastoral picture."

In order to reconnoitre he decided to ascend a very high mountain which, however, looked easy of access. This is South Peak, two or three miles south of Yerranderie silver mines. South Peak is an outlier at the extreme southern end of a small chain of cliffs called

The Peaks. Through the gap formed, horsemen may ride. Barrallier was probably led through by natives.

(In 1910 Cabbage wrote, "This is the passage through which the whole of the stock traffic between Burragorang and Oberon is conducted at the present day, and the greater part of the road between this gap and Mt. Werong (about 25 miles) is still a bridle track.)

Barrallier and his party climbed three quarters of the way up South Peak, where "immense overhanging rocks which seemed to be attached to nothing offered an appalling scene." The men rested and gazed at the plain from that great height with a feeling of admiration mingled with awe. The country was alive with rock wallabies; one was shot by a soldier who had gone to look for a way up the eastern face of the mountain. The party then turned back. They had hardly left South Peak when natives unfriendly to one Gogy in Barrallier's party caused the whole expedition to return to the depot at Nattai.

On Nov. 22nd Barrallier set out again with five of the strongest men and two young natives. At the junction of the Nattai and the Wollondilly he met the previously hostile natives, including Goondel the chief, but obtained no information from them. By noon of the third day the party was back at South Peak, then they continued into "a country of brushes, going over hills which stood in all directions." (These would be the deeply dissected talus slopes from the Permo-Carboniferous shale and sandstone mountains on the right. The present track follows his route.) The party rested by Alum Hill Creek or Green Creek, then passed over an area of rock described by Barrallier as granite, but actually it is felsite. This would indicate he passed to the south of Square Rock (Little Rick), but he does not mention it. Little Rick covers about 40 acres and is a remarkable remnant of the Permo-Carboniferous Age. Its base slopes slightly, its upper part presents four high perpendicular faces of sandstone absolutely inaccessible (to anyone but Bushwalkers, that is). Seen from the north its peculiar appearance is very striking, but it is not particularly noticeable from the south. Trees passed on the 24th were bluegums and ironbark of medium height. No further ironbarks were seen after the 24th, the high country being too cold for them.

By noon on Nov. 25th the party reached a large and rapid stream (Colong Creek) containing what Barrallier described as large red and blue granite stones (actually felsite). Wild duck were plentiful and there were many wombats. He saw three openings ahead, the central one half a mile wide with perpendicular sides, and through this he passed (now called Barrallier Pass). The one to the north is situated just south of Mt. Colong or Big Rick. Through the one to the south the Bindook track now passes.

The party camps at Bindook Swamp, Nov. 25th.

Immediately beyond Barrallier's Pass are the large Bindook Swamps which drain into Bindook Creek. Barrallier's men, out collecting stringy bark for their huts, viewed these and reported they had the appearance of a meadow, which led them to believe they had crossed the Great Divide, and they congratulated themselves that night on having accomplished the passage of the Blue Mountains without

accident. Next morning in high hope they climbed half way up a sandstone hill north of Bindook Swamp, and from there saw a vast plain as far as the eye could see. Greatly encouraged, Barrallier climbed to the summit, but now he realised that their congratulations had been premature, for they saw the eastern slope of the Great Divide, barely 20 miles away to the west. (He estimated it to be about 40 miles). He also saw another range to the north. (This would be part of the Boyd Range on the north of the Kowmung River and around the head of Christy's Creek - the summits are fairly flat and covered with a stunted growth of Eucalyptus (mallee).

On the summit, Barrallier says, "the west wind was blowing very hard and scarcely allowed me to stand on my feet. I heard a noise as of roaring waves breaking on a rocky shore. (This would be the wind on the top of Mt. Colong (3,436 ft.) The whole of this mountain from base to summit is composed of hard sandstone and large rocks are ready to roll down the precipice at the slightest effort."

Reaches Kowmung River, Nov. 26th.

Barrallier set out westward towards the Great Dividing Range, thinking the intervening country perfectly flat, but soon came upon a range of hills barring his passage. (These would be the hills on either side of Murrin or Gulf Creek). He continued on in various directions, seeking the shortest way to his goal, and eventually found himself to the north and on the spur which divides the waters of the Wollondilly from those of the Kowmung. This ridge runs west past Mt. Shivering (3,678 ft.) up to Mt. Werong (4,000 ft.) on the Great Divide. Had he followed this, by turning west his troubles would have been over and by nightfall he would have been on the plateau of the Great Divide at about 3,900 ft. above sea level ready to descend the western slopes in the morning. But instead he, perhaps unwittingly, got into a low saddle of Silurian slate formation through which he passed into a gully which led to Waterfall Creek or the left branch of Lannigans Creek (probably the former). He followed this to the Kowmung..

"The current of this river," says Barrallier, "is very rapid and flows between two chains of very high mountains 2,000 ft. above the bed of the stream, which give to only one part of its bank an accessible space. The widest parts passed were no more than 20 ft. Very often the mountain side came down sheer into the water and there was no passage at all and I was obliged to walk on the steep slopes at the risk of falling into the water from the precipices."

He followed the Kowmung north for two hours to the mouth of Christy's Creek and here he settled for the night. (The fall of the Kowmung is very steep over this section; according to aneroid measurements it is 20 ft. per mile.) After consideration he decided it would not be prudent to follow the Kowmung any further into the mountains as it now turned north-east, so he decided to follow up Christy's Creek to the west. While his men prepared camp Barrallier prospected and found sandstone containing fossil sea-shells and several other foreign matters. (The sea-shell described is a typical Devonian fossil found in quartzite or altered sandstone.)

On Nov. 27th he proceeded up Christy's Creek finding many fossils. This creek is so hemmed in at its source and contains so many waterfalls that it is unsuitable for cattle and to this day is rarely visited by man.

Barrallier then says, "I now seriously considered the situation, seeing no appearance of being able to procure any beasts for the subsistence of my troops except some snakes, which it was repugnant to eat. Provisions were nearly exhausted - only a small quantity of rice and flour left which did not allow of my continuing to advance in a country offering absolutely no resource. The courage of my men was entirely abated and nothing but orders for the return journey would suffice to dispel their melancholy. After cutting a cross of St. Andrew on a tree to indicate the terminus of my second journey I returned by the same route as I had come."

The terminal point reached, therefore, was towards the head of Christy's Creek, about 15 or 16 miles in a direct line south from Jenolan Caves, and 3 or 4 miles S.W. from the famous Kanangra Walls with their enormous depths, bold outline and rugged beauty. Unfortunately for the success of his venture, Barrallier had thus wandered into one of the very roughest and most inaccessible parts of the Blue Mountains.

Barrallier had no further opportunity to carry out his explorations. He returned to England in 1803 and was variously engaged in the War Office and on engineering works. (He erected the Nelson Monument at Trafalgar Square.)

He died on June 11th, 1853, aged 80 years.

THE AIRD-WAGG KOWMUNG TRIP CHRISTMAS '56.

- Dung Khan.

The five starters Grace, Geoff, Don and Tina Matthews and I arrived at Blackheath at 7.14 p.m. It was clear to me at the outset that the others had loaded themselves with too much junk. A chemist shop scales confirmed this judgement. Geoff Wagg's pack weighed no less than 42 lbs. and the others were all about the 30 mark whereas mine barely brought the needle around to 26. The same scales gave my body weight as 11 stone 7 lbs., giving me a power to weight ration of 6.2. Clearly I would have a decided advantage on this trip. A hire car took us to Whalan's clearing on the Kanangra road where we bedded down for the night.

Next morning (Wed.) found us fit and eager to be off. Geoff and Grace breakfasted on T-bone steak, onions and a few eggs followed by peaches and cream; Don and Tina consumed some sausages, chops and other titbits while I ate some Vita-Weets, a slice of salami and a piece of cheese. After this we were really ready to begin thinking about preparing to move off. The map was spread out before us and our leader laid her index finger on the cartological representation of our immediate destination, Morong Falls. We tittered as we

recollected the ludicrous performance put up by Dot Butler and party in trying to reach these falls from this spot three weeks earlier. However we weren't morons, we certainly shouldn't have any difficulty in following down the stream on which we were camped until we came to the falls about six miles distant.

In fact we could afford to take chances so we set off on a compass bearing to cut off a large loop of the creek. We met the creek again at the appointed spot and began to follow it down walking a little up the side of the valley. Presently we came to a deep side valley; "Hell" we thought as we crossed it "it won't be much fun crossing these things all the time, let's get a little higher up; keeping the creek in sight all the time of course". Due to visibility in the thick stands of saplings being limited to six feet it was not possible to comply with this last resolution but good progress was made and we walked steadily onwards over gully after gully, clearly we could regain Morong Creek at any time by following one of these gullies down.

As the day wore on, and we were still crossing gullies, a strange feeling came over the party. We should have been at Morong Falls hours ago. Just where the hell were we? These gullies could be running into Morong, or directly into the Kowmung or anywhere. After a study of the map it was unanimously agreed that we should be marching West not South so we all orientated ourselves westward and Don led off at a fast pace, however after about ten paces he began to veer southwards again like a guided missile, "Hey" we shouted, "where are you going", but he did not hear us he was southbound, all we could do was follow. At last we trapped him on the side of a sizeable fast moving stream. Fearing that this top trotting could go on for ever the rest of the party moved strongly that we should follow it down. The creek became steeper and steeper as we followed it, culminating in some formidable falls. After a scramble we succeeded in sidling around to a spur which led down to the Kowmung. We had a swim and made camp. As Grace peeled a pineapple and a couple of pawpaws Geoff sat in deep thought before his map. "Where are we", I at length ventured to ask between munches of my Vita-Weet. "Somewhere on the Kowmung", he replied.

Next day (Thurs.) we set off down the river, making rather fast progress. Maybe we had come in too far downstream or maybe the river was abnormally low but at any rate, in view of the reputation of the Kowmung, the going seemed very easy; although we came to a bit of a narrow about mid-morning which most of us swum. Some folk thought this to be Rudders Rift, others the Lower Kowmung Canyon, and this debate into which were thrown a dozen other hypotheses provided conversation throughout the day. In the afternoon we came to a real box gorge. Even old Dry-Foot Matthews had to swim this one. This was more like I had imagined the whole Kowmung to be, a swift current rushing between vertical walls of granite and shooting over little 2 to 3 foot falls, but alas it lasted for only about half a mile. We made camp very early, at about 4 o'clock in fact, and that evening the first plausible theory of our whereabouts was put forward by Geoff Wagg. "That gorge we came through this afternoon must have been Rudders Rift" he said "and that creek we crossed just before camping must have been Waterfall Creek which means the creek before

that must have been Wongledang Creek and the next one we will come to tomorrow will be Lannigans Creek." This argument seemed unanswerable and meant we had come into the Kowmung only about a mile below Morong Falls.

Friday proved the theory correct, the going became even easier and we were at Church Creek by 11 a.m. We took a couple of hours off for a swim and lunch and then walked on and entered the Bulga-Denis Canyon. Once more we took to the water. This was perhaps the best part of the trip, it was a hot day and it was wonderful drifting along with the river between the magnificent towering orange bluffs; another two knots on the river would have made it really intrepid.

On Saturday morning I left the others as I had to be back at work on the Monday. We were not quite out of the Canyon and, dreading the thought of a swim so early in the morning, I climbed up over a saddle which cut off the last loop of the gorge. It was very pleasant walking along the river early in the morning, when it was swarming with kangaroos having their last drink but soon I was to have a nerve shattering experience.

As I walked along a track on a narrow part of the river I was suddenly confronted by a small mob of wild cattle coming upstream. On seeing me the cattle stopped and the leader, an enormous ferocious bull with razor sharp horns orientated in a most business-like manner, worked his way to the front. At any minute it seemed he would start pawing the earth and charge, but suddenly, seeming to realise that he was no match for me, he turned and fled, followed by his harem and offspring. "Hell", I thought "this sort of thing means nothing to me, but what would happen if people whose nerves were not made of steel were to meet a bull like that? What would happen if Geoff Wagg were to meet it tomorrow for instance? An animal can detect the slightest suggestion of fear in a person and it would almost certainly charge straight at him and rip him to shreds, not turn and flee as it had in my case."

With such thoughts I walked on. I had planned to have lunch at Gingra Creek, but Gingra seemed never to come.

Shortly before noon I came across a couple of stockmen. "You've walked from Gingkin have you?" they said. "No" I said, "from ---" "Ah, from Gingkin eh" they replied. "Well actually only fr---" "Yes I know Gingkin well" went on one of them. It was no use, I had to admit it, I had come from Gingkin, but no sooner had I done so than they eyed me suspiciously and observed slyly "You've done mighty well to get down here in three and a half days." You can't win.

Soon afterwards I passed a wide valley coming in from the left. "This must be Gingra" I thought, but no it carried no stream not even a dry pebble bed, it must be quite a short stream despite its appearance. Later however the river began to close up and I knew I must be entering the Lower Kowmung Canyon. That spot where I saw the stockmen must have been Gingra after all. Knowing now that I was making good progress I stopped and had lunch. I followed this by a swim and pressed on. It was very hot now but I could dunk myself in the river every twenty minutes or so and this made walking very pleasant. However, soon I was to have my second nerve shattering

experience; ahead was heavy smoke, it was clear that I would have to walk through a fire. "Hell" I thought once more, "this is not so bad while I'm on the Kowmung, I can throw myself into the river if I am about to be engulfed by searing flames, but what will happen if I am overtaken by fire on White Dog or Narrow Neck?" Then "Hell" I thought again "even on the Kowmung I'm not so safe, that smoke must be thick, the sun looks like a blood red ball, suppose I should suffocate. Then again, suppose a five foot fire maddened goanna should climb onto my head to escape the flames, or a wombat try to climb inside my bathers for protection?" Undeterred by the danger ahead I walked onwards until I could hear the crackle of the flames. At this stage I put on a few clothes for protection and then plunged on again. I found that the fire was very extensive the whole right of the canyon being alight; nevertheless it was not as hot or smoky as I had anticipated being mostly a grass and rubbish fire. Danger came from an entirely unsuspected quarter. Broken rocks, their binding of vegetation destroyed, hailed down continuously from the steep right wall of the canyon. Once more I spared a thought for the other walkers who would have to pass through this canyon, walkers whose reflexes perhaps were not quite perfect and who could not neatly side-step to avoid a half-ton boulder which was thundering down upon them, with that agility, speed and delicacy of style which came so naturally to me. The nervy too, they would suffer terribly on this trip.

My one thought for the last hour or so had been "When am I going to get to the Cox" but when it came, it sneaked up on me, I suddenly found myself standing on its banks. I had intended camping here but there was still about $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours of daylight left and the horde of flies I had collected drove me mad when I stopped; besides which I did not find myself very good company, so I decided to press on. Next water would not be for some time so I lined the pockets of my pack with polythene food bags and filled them from the Kowmung. These two gallons felt like twenty as I climbed White Dog but by sunset I was at the foot of Mouin and here the track petered out so I decided to eat my last three Vita-Weets and get into my bag.

I arose on Sunday, consumed a slice of salami and a hunk of cheese and then set out across country to Debert's Knob. What happens to all the tracks in this region? After crossing four gullies I found myself climbing up the western side of Debert's through some really horrible prickly wild passion vines. I must have wasted a couple of hours on this performance. Once on top however my troubles were over and in a trice I was on Narrow Neck and taking my first look at Katoomba. It had been pleasant swimming down the Kowmung yesterday but I had been dreading this walk along Narrow Neck, however there was a westerly blowing across the tops and in actual fact it was very pleasant.

I reached Katoomba railway station at 1.30 p.m. Outside was a scales. This was my chance to disprove this theory about needing 21lbs of food a day. I weighed my pack 21 lbs., only 5lbs. down! That proved it. Then I weighed myself, 11 stone; 7lbs. down; maybe there's something in the theory after all!

There was no train till 4 o'clock, so I set out along the

highway. Presently an oldish buckboard came along, with driver, wife and kids crowded into the front. Ah, he looked a bighearted chap. I made a gesture (horizontally), "I'm going to Parramatta mate" he shouted. I climbed aboard. I was off.

ATTENTION ---- SWIMMING CARNIVAL

It's on again! Here's a watery, lazy, communal weekend for everyone. Laze away at a pleasant, easy camp, take part in those typically S.B.W. aquatic events, maybe win a trophy - who knows? Leader, Bill Henley will be there again to start 'em off and bring 'em in too, if necessary. You can go on the Saturday or the Sunday. Where? At Lake Eckersly, of course. When? February 16th & 17th. Which trains? 16th - 1.14 p.m. Electric from Central.
17th - 8.44 a.m. " " "
Tickets to? Heathcote.

..... INSTRUCTIONAL WEEK-END.

Prospectives, Members Young and Old.

Follow up the Swimming Carnival with the Instructional Weekend at Moorabinda on Feb. 23-24, led by Brian Harvey (Phone JW1462).

All prospectives should try their very best to attend, and members, instructionals can be a ton of fun and enjoyment if enough of you roll up - try it and see.
Electric train leaves Central at 1.14 p.m. on 23rd Feb.
Tickets to Waterfall.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR FEBRUARY.

Calling ALL Very Active Members --- Folks, this is what you've been waiting for. Start saving your energy, and polish up that technique for the big Table Tennis night on Feb. 20th. Outright professionals and true-blue amateurs alike are all welcome.

So roll up and we'll wake up the old Ingersoll Hall with a few pings and pongs that it's never heard before.

AND if you can recover in time after this episode, don't forget to come along on Feb. 27th to see the Northern Territory Walkabout slides being shown by those two adventurous lasses, Bev Price and Joan Walker. Bev and Joan had themselves quite a time in the Territory last year and covered a lot of very interesting ground. You can share their experiences simply by turning up to have a bo-peep at this very excellent set of slides.

PADDY MADE

ON THE DOT

(or how this advert. gets here)

The deadline for this advertisement is 15th of the month and of course if Paddy were a methodical self respecting sort of business man it would be in the printers hands on the dot but instead of being on the Dot, the Dot (Dot Butler) is generally on Paddy ringing furiously for the copy. Now when she chuffs off to N.Z. Dot (Butler) hands over to Dot Barr and when the ad is not in on the Dot, Dot puts Paddy on the Spot, so here's Paddy sweating blood trying to think of something bright and witty, scintillating with whatsit and youknowwhat.

There goes the Phone again!!

What has Paddy got new?

"Terylene" Poly-ester fibre filled sleeping bags 6'2" standard type Alpine Bags
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More about this modern development next month.

Screw top aluminium jars 3" diameter
5" high. They are cheap at 2/6d. each.

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