

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER.

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bush Walkers,
The N.S.W. Nurses' Association Rooms, "Northcote Building",
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If you were present at the recent Debate you'll remember a certain play-on-words which poses the question -

"IS THE EDITOR VERACIOUS OR VORACIOUS".

It sometimes pays to be Veracious when wringing a contribution from an unwilling victim. One faithful supporter (recently injured) responded to a few home truths sent out via the grape vine, and replied:

"A rumour reached me that a damaged ankle should not extend as far as the wrist. To prove your point...."

Whilst in the veracious mood, may we claim that 95% of members must have suffered some sort of damage which does extend to the wrist.
So, gripping your pen firmly in Teeth or Toes, get to work!

"Oh, but I can't write", do I hear you say? by which you mean you can't construe, and this is probably horribly true but doesn't matter a great deal because most readers are more interested in what you write rather than how you write it.

2.

Anyhow, the best type of contributor is always very modest and begs the Editor to alter his work if necessary to conform with the standards of the Journal, or even to consign it to the w.p.b. This never happens, but the deference shown boosts the Ed's. ego to the point where he thinks he'll probably last out until the Annual General after all.

As for Voracious; twenty pages mightn't seem a great deal, but nine or ten contributors are needed to get it together, i.e. 15% of our average Clubroom attendance or 5% of our active members.

So, when a character with a lean and hungry Editorial look asks you politely for a few pages, be kind to him, won't you?

Remember, next year, it might be you!

SOCIAL PROGRAM.

Edna Garrad.

OCTOBER 21ST Scenic Colour Slide Competition. We hope to have some interesting entries and a good audience on this night. All slides will have been collected by 30th September,

OCTOBER 28TH Prospective Members' Night. First aid lecture 7.15 p.m.

NOVEMBER 18TH Snow Brown and party - slides of their Tasmanian trip. Most of us are familiar with the more dramatic details of this trip and will be looking forward to seeing the slides.

DECEMBER 10TH Christmas Party at the North Sydney Council Chambers. We bring this to your notice so that no one will have the excuse of a prior engagement. A good band has been engaged and we expect to have lots of fun. Let's have a good roll up!

AT OUR SEPTEMBER HALF-YEARLY MEETING.

Alex Colley.

There were no new members and it was not long before the minutes had been confirmed and correspondence was before us. In it we learned that the owner of the car, from which issued a bullet that nearly hit the President, had been interviewed by the police and told not to shoot near roadways or other places where people might be. Also that the vacancy on the Bouddi Trust had been filled by Fred Hursey, field officer of the Fauna Protection Panel.

The two Constitutional amendments were passed without demur, thus freeing the Auditor and Treasurer of any responsibility for a half-yearly audit, and enabling the Treasurer to simplify his books by charging members admitted in the second half of the financial year only half fees (instead of charging full fees and carrying half of them on to next year).

We learned with regret that our energetic Assistant Walks Secretary, John Logan, had had to resign because of his transfer to Canberra, but the Walks Secretary was pleased to tell us that Frank Young had immediately offered to take on the job, and landed it.

A message from Roy Bennett invited members to meet him one weekend for a walk around the Cattai area, which he thought of considerable interest to us.

A new system of room stewards - that of recruiting a number so that they wouldn't all have to be in on any one night - resulted in no less than five volunteers (Frank Barlow, Alan Wilson, Jack Wren, Len Young, Alex Colley).

Bill Rodgers told us in his Walks Report that, although six of the programmed walks for the previous month had not gone because of lack of sufficient notice by starters, or just lack of starters, the remaining six attracted 34 members, 24 prospectives and three visitors.

Len Fall reported favourably on the management of the Warrumbungles National Park. Graded tracks were being made and camping facilities installed. Upwards of 70 people had been camped there recently. He suggested we write to Allen Strom congratulating him and, at the same time, wishing him a quick recovery from his accident. Allen is at present laid up with a broken shoulder as a result of a fall from a horse during a tour of the Macquarie Marshes.

Geof Wagg told us that the National Parks Association is producing a Christmas card. It featured a very attractive bushwalking scene of Bluegum Forest. It would appear about the end of the month and would retail at about 1/3d. Personal inscriptions could be arranged.

Jack Wren then moved that prospectives should be advised by letter, instead of verbally in the Club Room, of Committee's decision on their admission to the Club. It was generally agreed that if this procedure were adopted only the Committee and the prospective need know the decision and, if it were made a strict rule, embarrassment could be avoided. The motion was carried. A second motion moved by Jack - that members be not asked to sign forms in the presence of prospectives, was defeated. Most of the discussion centred on whether or not it was necessary that such a rule should appear on our books.

The President then thanked Jack for a notice he had prepared, mounted on a stand, drawing attention to magazine sales.

At the conclusion of the meeting Brian Harvey told us that as Brian and Dawn Anderson were unable to carry on with the duplication of the magazine, volunteers were required for the job. It would occupy about two evenings a month.

CONGRATULATIONS TO -

Elsie and Roy Bruggy - a daughter, Sandra Joy,
on August 12th.

and to Mary and Bob Abernethy - a daughter.

We've heard from "Binnsie" and hope to print news from her next month. She's recently spent ten days walking the Lakes District, has joined the Y.H.A. and is getting around as much as possible.

IN DEBATABLE LAND.

Kath McKay.

On Wednesday, September 23rd, the evening at the Club was given over to an important debate. Subject: "The Older Members are of Greater Benefit to the Club".

The President, Jack Gentle, was in the chair, and three members, Messrs. Ardill, Hallstrom and McGregor, represented the Government (Older Members) and three, Miss Pridham and Masters Knightley and Wagg the Opposition (Younger Members).

Kevin Ardill, clothed in white robes with an angelic halo nodding atop his head (which garb suggested that he was already defunct) opened the debate on a sober note, marred slightly by frequent libations of a golden fluid in a bottle marked: "Bell's".

Glasses were provided for the Government and the President, and it was quite a ceremony pouring the required amount of liquor - sorry, liquid, into a tumbler, adding two carefully-measured spoonfuls of ice crystals from a thermos kept by Mr. McGregor and filling up with water. After each swig the saintly Ardill wiped his mouth on his robes, and also (let it be whispered) blew his nose on the same handy garment.

The Opposition too had glasses and a huge red bottle-opener at least eight inches long; but their tipple was innocuous Pepsi Cola.

Mr. Ardill stressed the importance of experience, of long acquaintance with the bush, of the knowledge of map-reading and bushcraft practised as a matter of course by all Older Members. The Club simply could not function without them.

Master Knightley who had been diligently taking notes ("The younger generation are learning to write" muttered a Government member) replied in erudite style, quoting the Oxford Dictionary at some length to support his definition of old - fallen into decay, Old Nick, etc. He was dressed schoolboy fashion in a small grey flannel cap and striped blazer above grey longs, and struck many telling blows for the Opposition.

The second Government speaker was Mr., or rather Mrs. Hallstrom, tastefully arrayed in a green frock with chapeau to match (more or less), trimmed with mauve flowers. Ear rings and a wedding ring were prominent features of her costume. She dwelt chiefly on the dangers besetting the younger generation in the informal atmosphere of camp. It had been estimated that the interest of bushwalkers in sex amounted to only 5%: but ah, that 5%! Older Members (she spoke with two daughters to her credit) were concerned with less transient things. They were more stable. (As Master Wagg subsequently pointed out, she began by apologising for being a little hoarse.) They appreciated the beauties of the bush (non-human), of the flowers, of the birds and the bees (cheers); they adjured the Younger Members to beware of the love-bite.

Miss Pridham, looking charming in a youthful and revealing playsuit with a childish straw hat set well back on her bright locks, spoke in exotic Canadian accents - no less charming, and unfolded a seemingly endless scroll of notes to bolster the points she made for the Opposition. On the Government side, one, at least, felt the impact of her personality, and as Mr. McGregor rose next to speak, his aside of "Howdy, honey." to Miss Pridham was heard by all.

He wore a judicial wig of cottonwool ("this Cloudmaker effect" as one speaker described it) and his matter was as weighty as his manner. "They speak of Old

Buffers" he said. "What are buffers? According to Webster's Dictionary - ("No longer an authority" interjected the Opposition. "Well, it was in my young day" rejoined Mr. McGregor imperturbably) - "buffers are simply cushions to absorb the shock. No train on earth can run without buffers: similarly the Younger Members should be shielded and guided by those who know better. What do they mean by Older Members?" he asked. "A woman is as old as she looks; a man is old if he doesn't". Food had been mentioned, he continued, and the Opposition had said that, unlike gluttonous Older Members, they travelled light on dried apricots and a handful of Terry's Meal. All he could say (with a glance at Miss Pridham's slimness) was that they were underfed.

Master Geof Wagg (Opposition) was the last to speak, and dazzled us with statistics. It had been proved, he said, that Younger Members walked some 5,000 miles, including nautical miles, while the Old Buffers tottered only 300. He quoted figures till our heads reeled and his arguments were unanswerable.

Saint Kevin Ardill, halo still nodding, summed up for the Government, and Master Knightley did the same for the Opposition. "It is better" he said, with a look of disgust at the Government "to be underfed than to be over-drunk".

The President put the matter to the vote and - well, the Older Members made more noise.

The debate was over. Mr. McGregor hastened round, bottle in hand, to the Opposition's side of the stage, and lovingly escorted Miss Pridham to the inner sanctum of the club kitchen. Indeed his whole bearing was reminiscent of the learned Judge in Trial by Jury, who made off with the youthful plaintiff.

Mr. Ardill, gathering up his robes, gave his arm to "Mrs." Hallstrom, who flounced out swaying her green skirts and clutching an umbrella.

The Social Secretary (Edna Garrad) proposed a vote of thanks to those who had so ably entertained us, and another happy evening ended.

LONDON LETTERS.

From Lyn Baber :

"Really life and work and everything over here is so much the same as it is in Sydney that I really feel quite at home. I'm working for a magazine, similar to Woman's Day, in a street just off the famous Fleet Street with the Old Baily just around the corner and St. Paul's Cathedral just up the hill. It is quite commonplace to wander along the Strand or meet someone at Piccadilly Circus or Charing Cross, but I do still get a thrill walking back over Waterloo Bridge with the chimes of Big Ben almost deafening you, after a Sunday Evening Concert at the Royal Festival Hall or the Old Vic.

Because of the printing strike I got an unexpected week's holiday so up with my rucksack and off! Cornwall was my destination - beaches, the sea, the open air, and the road. It was a combination bus, walking and hitching holiday - mostly hitching when I was confident enough. People were so marvellously kind and helpful that I felt I could tackle anything. I came back all burnt brown again, but it is gradually peeling off.

6.

All the pals I travelled over here with are scattered far and wide - on the Continent, Scotland, India and Teheran, and Bookie has acquired a bicycle and at the moment is "somewhere in England". I am the only one still slaving in London, but I have one consolation - I have just acquired a Lambretta - my pride and joy. I decided to have a practise drive the other day and when turning around mounted the footpath and nearly went through someone's fence, so I hurriedly put it away before I caused any major damage. But I'll conquer it yet.

I've no plans for coming home yet but it would be fun to see all the old gang again."

From Eric Pegram:

"The main topic of conversation seems to be the weather but actually it's not too bad. We have only had one wet day and one really bad fog. In the fog 20 people were killed in road accidents and 18 girls were attacked. So I guess the moral is there is more chance of being killed in a fog than attacked - so why buy a car??

The other main topic of conversation seems to be cricket so as soon as it's discovered I'm Australian I invent an urgent appointment elsewhere.

It's a funny arrangement getting a job here. You ring up - he says to call on such and such a date a week or so later - you go in and see him - he writes in a few days to say you've got the job, rate of pay and to R.S.V.P. - you write back and accept the job and rate of pay - he writes back to say when to start - what a lot of boloney. You've almost got to swear you are staying in England for good. I feel like making them swear they'll keep me on for a year.

I saw a funny incident last week that really tickled me. I went for a walk around the suburbs to the Zoo and Primrose Hill and further on to Hampstead Heath. I got lost a few times getting there but it reminded me something of Norton's Basin on the Warragamba. Soon I came upon a pond on a crest of a hill and as the breeze was pretty stiff there were quite a few model yacht racing events. Well - I hear this revving up of a small motor and there I see a young bloke with a sparkling new boat with a propeller, sort of aeroplane style, at the back. It keeps spluttering and burping till he finally got it right and lowered it into the water very gently. The boat took off with a whishshshsh and he started running with his eyes glued to the boat. I could see he wouldn't make it and started laughing. On he ran and fell in the icy water - I laughed louder. The boat crashed into the other side and sank. I almost split myself. While others were giving me dirty looks and being sympathetic to the bloke I was wiping the tears from my eyes. It looked so much like something Charlie Chaplin would do.

"Where I'm working I'm the only one who can fit, turn, weld and mill and the "Gov'nor" thinks I'm "smashing". He hasn't asked just what I'm smashing.

Did you hear about the ageing secretary who felt she was on her last lap?

When applying for a job I was asked my address.

I said : Acton

He asked: Acton Common ??

I said: Only occasionally."

Sanitarium

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WHATEVER THE WEATHER ! !

13 HUNTER ST. SYDNEY. BW1725.

BUSH ARTISTS.

Clarice Morris.

During these spring wildflower walks when one usually has time to pause and admire our native flowers in almost garden profusion, it is not unusual in the Sydney Hawkesbury sandstone area to come upon fine examples of aboriginal rock art.

Whatever you may think of the abilities of the aboriginal in his natural state it is impossible to deny him certain human talents similar to our own. He, like us, expresses his desires and experience through art. He also dances, sings, carves and paints, but the type of art with which we are most familiar, is the rock carvings we see scattered on those mostly high, flat rock surfaces.

The subjects vary in different regions, whether we speak of our local district, or of the whole of the Continent. For instance, marine subjects are much more common near the coast; some tribes depicted them, others did not. Again, though some inland tribes ate river fish, they never presented them in their art. Strangely enough though such animals as the platypus, koala, wombat, possum, birds, are not often seen, the spiny ant-eater is not uncommon, while the wallaby and the kangaroo are hot favourites. Flowers and shellfish are among the rarest objects depicted in rock art, because they were considered to belong to the realm of women, and believe it or not, there was nothing effeminate about being an aboriginal artist. That was a man's work. Something like being a monumental mason, I guess. As so much of the aboriginal art had to do with native laws, ritual, fertility, and hunting for bigger game, perhaps the reason for the division of labour is easy to understand.

There are exceptions, particularly in the Kimberleys, where Dr. Phyllis Kaberry, a girl I went to school with, discovered that the wife of a clan headman, goes along with her husband when he does a repaint job on a crocodile figure in a cave, to increase crocodile numbers. As in the Kimberley paintings and the Sydney-Hawkesbury rock engravings, the dominating forms are human and huge spirit beings. I remember going on a walk beginning at Mt. Kuring-gai and discovering not far from the railway line a huge spirit being. Leading away from this rock carving, in a northerly direction, I counted 32 footprints carved in the rock in a distance of about a quarter of a mile. I saw another large spirit being, some way off the track near Kariong, out of Gosford. This could have been almost thirty feet long.

The manner of their presentation is also very interesting. If you recall seeing any of these larger-than-life human figures, you will have noticed that they are always shown from the front. Mostly with arms outspread or above the head. The legs are usually apart. The fingers and toes, if present, look like forks, the hair like that of a model who had just received an electric shock. Sometimes the figures had phallic symbols and were used for instruction of the young, as is seen in the carvings (off the beaten track to visitors) at Muogamarra sanctuary, not far from the Hawkesbury River.

Animals are usually shown in profile. Whales and sharks usually have one (sometimes two) eyes showing, with a line for the mouth, and sometimes only one pair of limbs or fins, shown. Mammals such as the kangaroo were drawn in profile, but lizards, snakes, turtles, were depicted from above. It seems as though the rock artists depicted their subjects from the angle at which they most commonly saw them; they would see kangaroos hopping, emus running, but they would look down on a tortoise or a snake.

In many respects aboriginal surface rock art in our district seems childlike, because no effort has been made to suggest body contours, feathers, fur, scales, or tones of body coverings. Still in other parts of Australia, the aboriginal artist did some very original work, with the MIMI stick people and the X-Ray fish, kangaroos and birds.

These MIMI stick figures of the north are in striking contrast to the huge figures on the Hawkesbury sandstone. Perhaps the fact that even adjacent tribes often had a distinctly different artistic history, accounts for this pattern of contrast. But no matter what part of Australia you travel and search for aboriginal paintings or carvings, you will find an all-over talent for telling a pictorial story. It may be the story of spearing kangaroos in Duffy's Forest, of a whale feast in Muogamarra Sanctuary, or the trail of an Emu hunt in the big gallery in the red cave at Mootwingee, in far western N.S.W.

We are particularly lucky to be doing so much of our bush walking in the Sydney-Hawkesbury district, because anthropologists believe that in the heavily dissected plateau where one finds numerous fairly flat rock surfaces, there are more engravings, more carved outlines than in any other part of the world. They believe there are close on 4,000 figures, a wonderful record of the aboriginals long occupation of the area and an enduring museum of his culture -- if vandals don't discover their whereabouts, or water erosion leach them away for ever.

NATURE LOVERS : Watch for the "Nature Conservation" Photographic Exhibition at Kodak's

NOVEMBER 11TH - 21ST.

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	JENOLAN STATE FOREST	20/-	"	" " " "
	CARLON'S FARM	10/-	"	" " " "

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

IT TASTES BETTER SMOKED BY OTHERS.

Puffing Billy Bunter.

It was with the utmost dyspepsia that I read the articles on food in the last rag. Mr. Putt's terrific calorific analysis made me feel quite heated, while Mr. Hallstrom's thesis obviously came from the very kernel of the nuts.

Food is not a science - it's a satisfaction. Personally, I've always taken a greater interest in other people's food lists than in my own. There is really just one good food law that we should teach our prospectives and that is this: the amount of food you need on a trip varies in inverse proportion to the number of people accompanying you.

Have you ever tried sitting by someone's fire and watching them enjoy their food, hungrily passing your tongue over your lips from time to time and making remarks about your flinthearted landlady who sent you out into the wilds unfed? Have you seen how they grow fidgety; how the gourmet gleam seems to fade from their eyes until, with brimming tears they say "There's really too much for me here. Could you finish it off?"

And it tastes so much better when it's tainted by the smoke of someone else's fire.

I remember the time when I led a walk on which my sole companions were three very eligible lady walkers. By some strange mischance, my only food for the weekend

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was a bottle of rum - but even so, I found it hard to suppress a burp after every meal.

No, if you want to eat well on walks, don't carry four thousand calories or a cucumber skin with you - just study what the others are eating; there's always someone with too much.

CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR BUSHIES.

The National Parks Association has produced a high quality Christmas Card featuring a scene in Blue Gum Forest. Give your friends a treat (and help publicise the N.P.A.) by using these cards this Christmas.

Price 1/3d. each.

For sample: See Club Notice Board.

For supplies: Contact Tom Moppett - JA8873.

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KOSCIUSKO CROCKS.

Stuart Brookes (old member) - injured eye.

Ron Knightley - broken shoulder - 5° slope, easy snow,
using his wife's skis.

Bill Bourke - broken tibia.

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INSTRUCTIONAL ON THE COLO.

A well attended, well organised informal affair. Swimming, a canoe, and a rubber dinghy plus some climbing added interest. (So did the presence of two representatives of a woman's magazine.) Supper was provided by the leader.

Good on yer, Snow!

.....

WALKING TRIAL (12 hours).

Eight parties entered and interesting routes were taken, e.g. Kanangra - cross Kowmung, Scott's Main Range - Cookem - Black Dog; Jenolan - Harry's River - Breakfast Creek.

It all ended in a campfire at Carlon's on Saturday night, followed by a spinebash on Sunday.

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THE LONG WEEKEND.

On the Wollondilly 18 members (plus 13 kids) - some showers, but not enough to dampen spirits.

Jack Perry had 7 in his Ti Willa party (mist again, swam the Cox again; you'd almost think it was Easter).

Other parties to the Tinderry's (fine on Monday, Alpine vistas), Wee Jasper (no details), Newnes (N.P.A.), Mangrove Mountain area (very wet), Kosciusko (snow).

"THE RATES WERE DELICIOUS"

or

"DING DONG YOUR DINNER"

Written by J.W. for Eileen,
Snow, George and Yarmak.

It was all Snow's fault. But then it always is. He suggested White's River Hut and as I had had two goes at getting there, I said whacko!!

Yarmak and I went down to Cooma on the Midnight Horror (alias the Kosci Snow Express) and met Snow, George and Eileen at the Hotel site early Saturday morning; well, it was 11 o'clock anyway, we loaded the food and gear into the cars and set off to Mungah Power Station.

While we were off-loading the food and sorting out how much light stuff we could each get into our respective packs and how much heavy stuff we could push off on to someone else, we were nearly run over by a large tourist bus which descended on us, belching black smoke and disgorging hundreds of tourists. They eyed us curiously, and our great pile of food incredulously. But there were five of us to eat it!

"We've got a steep climb up the Penstock but after that it's flat all the way, so we'll be there for tea" says Snow. We groaned and tried to get above horizontal under our packs and skis and dutifully trotted after him up the zigzag road. At 3.32 p.m. the following day we arrived at White's River Hut.

"There might be Rats here" says Snow. So when it was time for bed we did our packs up tight, pulled our heads in and went to sleep on the mattresses on the floor. About 12 o'clock there was a bit of a rumpus among the Dillies and things on the table. I sat up and looked around, but couldn't see a thing except a tin, which had obviously fallen off the table and was rocking slowly back and forth on the floor. "Mmm" I thought "Rats". I struggled up and hopped over to the table to investigate, but didn't look in the pack which was on the table in case a rat jumped out on top of me. Not a thing moved, not a sound anywhere, so abandoning the search, I went back to the crack beside George in which I had been wedged. Once on your side and you couldn't move an inch.

I had no sooner got comfortable when one of the plates fell onto the floor with a crash and we all jumped upright, even Snow; but the Rat was gone, and after hanging up the packs and plugging up one of the more obvious holes we all went back to bed. George had blocked up the hole with a tine and a large stone on top. For half an hour after the poor rat strained and grunted with exertion trying to get that rock off his hole and for spite came over and chewed Yarmak's flying helmet, which Yarmak happened to be wearing at the time.

The following day was mighty, with clear blue sky and marvellous snow. The boys went up to Dickey Cooper, Bogong, and gloated over the view and the fantastic rundown, while Eileen and I made a great job of messing up the slopes around the hut. That night was rather quiet with only one exchange between Snow and the Rat, with Snow relatively victorious.

Tuesday saw us up fairly early and away to Tate. With skins on our skis the climb up to the tops was maggies meat. From the tops (where we ate Loganberry Snow) we could see The Grey Mare Range, Twynam and then over the Murray Valley to Bogong in Victoria.

After lunch which we ate on Tate's west ridge Eileen and I started back, as a storm was brewing, leaving Snow and George to complete the climb. The trip back in the gathering storm was very impressive. The mist gathered around us, enclosing us in a world of silence, lifting only once to give us a magnificent view of Jagungal, lit with gold from the late sun, to a backdrop of angry blue black storm clouds. Yarmak greeted us back at the hut and very soon after Snow and George arrived, beating the darkness by about half an hour.

Now Tuesday night was a crucial point in our stay at White's River. Till then we and the Rats were just about even. One all. But that night we were soundly beaten. After taking the usual precautions of hanging up packs and putting any good away in the meat safe, we retired to bed, equipped with the usual accoutrements. Yarmak (who was sleeping on the floor) with a large axe handle, George, who was sleeping opposite him, with an old pair of boots, a large lump of wood and a torch. We all lay trying to be asleep when Snow, who had plugged up a Rathole near the head of his bed, whispered "My God, he's here chewing the paper". We still don't know if the Rat had run up the bedpost and was chewing it from Snow's side or not, but it upset Snow. On went the torch and two Rats ran for home, with Yarmak hastening their passage with a few shattering blows with the axe handle. We lay back to see what they would do next, and it wasn't long before out they came again. Whack, whack, in the wood pile. Whack in between the two beds. Bang, bang, bang. "Surely we got one that time, but no. Lay out some more bait.

George sprinkled the floor and Yarmak liberally, but the Rat didn't even wait till we put the torch off. He raced out of a hole and gobbled some, so it was whack, whack, whack again. "That's a rude trick to play on a Dad" says Yarmak. "These Rates are beyond everything", says George, "we'll have to make a trap. Now if we use one of those four gallon drums and suspend it from the ceiling and have a trigger mechanism, so that when the Rat chews through it, down comes the drum". Snigg-gg-er. We were all listening to George, and so was the Rat, but he had the hide to laugh.

Meanwhile out in the main room the rest of the Rat family were having a glorious time sliding off the top of the meat safe and sharpening up their teeth on the gauze sides, preparatory to coming in and having a chew at us. For the rest of the night I slept soundly, but in the morning George informed us that they had used his bunk for a race track and even had the hide to chew at his hair.

The following day was a rest day, when we gathered strength, and collected amo to battle with the Rats. The trap was duly contrived, much to the horror of five Y.M.C.A. bods from Guthega, who were visiting at White's. They were so upset at our Rat tales that they slept in the hut next door. After tea the traps were set amidst great hilarity. It was absolutely impossible to get from the bunks to the outside door without getting your legs knocked from under you or your skull bashed in.

We retired to bed and waited. Suddenly one of the traps crashed down and everyone jumped out of their sleeping bags and rushed into the other room. Festering; it was a false alarm. So it was back to bed, and I think everyone went to sleep very soon after.

In the morning when we awoke no one bothered to look at the traps, having heard no more crashes during the night. Snow was the first one to go into the main room, and pick his way between the traps towards the main door. Suddenly he yelled "We've got one". No one paid much attention to him as we thought it was a new way of getting us out of bed. We still ignored him when he reappeared into view looking most triumphant; but George's curiosity overcame him and he also went to look.

PADDY MAIDE

WET TRIPS !

ASK

FOR

OUR

NEW

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14.

Exclamations of amazement finally brought us into the room and there was a Rat in our trap and funnily enough it was the very trap that the Rat had laughed at the night before.

Thursday morning was memorable because not only did we catch a Rat but we also climbed Gungarten and visited Tin Hut and were home for afternoon tea. The view from the top of Gungarten was well worth the climb up: the range was clear and glistening in the early sun and the air was as pure and cold as crystal. The run down was fun especially over the small waves of ice on the saddle. Tin Hut was nearly buried and as the snow had come in on one side we didn't linger long over lunch.

Friday morning we all departed from White's River with light packs and heavy hearts. The sun shone brilliantly and the snow crackled under our boots as we walked up to the tops for the last time. Just before the run down to Guthega (where we were fed coffee and bun loaf at the Y.M.C.A. Hut) we stopped for a brief rest and a final look.

BLOSSOMS AND BULLJOES.

Puffing Billy.

On Everest, they say, it's not the number of steps between breaths that counts, but the number of breaths per step; and so it was on Len Fall's wild-flower walk down Engadine Creek last month. "Combined outing with N.P.A." said the announcement innocently - but it didn't say that the S.B.W. contingent of 11 members, 4 bunyips would be mixed up with 70 N.P.A. types, making a total of over 90, including kids and canines!!!

You know the traffic jams that occur at The Cross, when you wait interminable minutes with the traffic at a standstill and then proceed at the merest crawl? Ditto on the wild-flower walk. But have you experienced the sensation of standing still in the bush for five minutes and then discovering that you were in the midst of a colony of red bulljoes which have meanwhile migrated up your legs, underneath your long slacks? Under such circumstances, do you know how many fearsome bites can be delivered in ten seconds? Do you know how loud the average human being can yell? Do you know how high the average human being can jump? Don't ask the Olympians - ask us.

Frank Ashdown covered dozens of miles, dashing thither and yon with a bottle of antivenene. We noticed that he never removed the cork as he dabbed it on alleged bites. Was this Ashdown thrift or psychotherapy? When an N.P.A. victim commented on his foresight in bringing his antibite, Frank's only reply was "Actually, there's lots of ants in our club".

The wildflowers were good - Gompholobium, Breckia, Leguminosae, Philotheca, Boronia Serrulata - we know that those were the names, 'cos Phyllis Ratcliffe wrote them in a book as the man recited them. There were also waratahs, which we identified unaided. And we finally discovered that Edna Stretton wasn't saying "Hell, it's mighty". She was saying "Thelymitra".

RECOMMENDED TEST WALKS FOR OCTOBER.

OCTOBER 16-17-18 Picton - Car to Nattai Pass (Sheehy's Creek). Camp on Nattai. Pleasant medium river walking along Nattai, camp on river Saturday night. Easy grades out to Hilltop via Starlight's Track.

Maps: For location - Tourist Map of Blue Mountains and Burragorang.
For Detail - Military sheet of Mittagong covers the southern part of the trip. Burragorang sheet not available.

Leader: Bill Rodgers.

OCTOBER 24-25 Katoomba, along Narrow Neck to camp at Glen Raphael (water, wood and westerlies). From Clear Hill, panoramas of the roughest country in the State. Descend spikes and drop from Medlow Gap to Glen Alan crossing. Track walking across upper Breakfast Creek and through the thickets to Carlon's farm at the head of Galong Creek. Road bash to Mitchell's Creek and graded track walk out in Devil's Hole to Katoomba.

Maps: For location - Tourist map of Blue Mountains and Burragorang.
For Detail - Myles Dunphy's map of the Gangerangs.

Leader: Jack Gentle.

WITH LYN BABER IN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN.

"In Pakistan we travelled through Lahore, Rawal Pindi, Peshawur, to Khyber. Lahore was a very big city, very clean, with lots of trees and wide streets. The older part of the city is just a jumble of narrow lanes and markets. Everywhere in Pakistan the women are completely veiled too. We called at the Castrol Agent and garage and there met a very nice Pakistani, who invited Lou and I to stay at his home. The Pakistanis really guard their women, so the boys were not even asked inside, told to sleep at the Y.M.C.A. Of course they didn't. They slept in the truck in a park and had quite a few adventures on their own, really discovered the night life of Lahore and we have had terrific fun trying to get the truth out of them. I doubt if we'll ever know. In Lahore I really did not feel safe by myself. The men stared so much at seeing a girl that it was horrible. Peshawur is another big city, quite near the Afghanistan border. We met two young lawyers there who helped us do our shopping etc. and then one of them asked us home to his village for the night. We readily accepted and set off with the two of them in the front seat. We certainly did not expect his village to be quite like it was. We found ourselves winding through narrow dark lanes with very high mud walls, some so narrow that Tess could hardly squeeze through, and other corners we had to back to negotiate at all. We pulled up at a dark narrow doorway and were told that this was it, and then very warily we walked inside, but inside, to our surprise, we found a big courtyard and house, with a verandah supported by high Grecian-like columns, carpets and lounges. This was the house for entertaining and also where the young men stayed. The women once more were away behind a high wall and even Lou and I did not meet them this time.

16.

We spent a very pleasant evening and had our dinner in real Pakistani style. A cloth spread on the floor, no chairs, no cutlery at all. There was one big dish of rice in the centre, small dishes of meat, vegetables, and fish, and some roti, which are round flat things, like a pancake only dry and not sweet. We ate everything, even the rice, with our fingers, and used the roti to eat some of the wetter things. That is the real Indian style too and is quite fun.

I always thought that Khyber Pass was in Afghanistan but it is in Pakistan. We left Peshawar in the morning, drove about 30 miles before we got to the beginning of the Pass and were through it and at the border by lunch time. Photographs were banned by the officials on the way through the Khyber Pass, I'm not sure why. We were told that if any of the tribesmen saw us taking photos they would take us straight back to Peshawur. The Pass was about 30 miles long and all little jagged mountains, with the road winding through. On every second mountain there seemed to be some type of fort or post and we saw dozens of guards on high points over the road, almost unnoticeable with the countryside, so there were probably dozens more than we did not see. Also all along the way there were cement plaques set in the cuttings along the road of lots of different Regiment's Crests.

GHAZNIA, 100 miles from Kabul, 25th January.

After Eric arrived back from Kabul with a brand new dynamo we drove on for awhile and it was actually snowing. It was difficult to even see the road and the snow was half way up the wheels in some places - four wheel drive most of the time to keep us from sliding off the road. When we eventually stopped to sleep in a deserted house the car slipped off the road into the snow, so we just slept. When we awoke the next morning it was still snowing, had been all night, and the road was just not there. The boys managed to dig the snow away and drive Tess back on to the road, and just then a bus and a Russian Jeep came by with a man walking ahead in the snow to find the road. They were going in the opposite direction, and just after they passed us they decided that they could go no further and turned around, or at least the jeep did. He got stuck trying to pass us and we had to pull him back on the road. The bus went off the road trying to turn. We spent ages trying to pull him out but just could not. The trouble was you could not see where the road was and where the ditches were, so all the people from the bus had to pile into our little house, and we set off for Ghaznia to get a tractor to help them. One man, the only one who could speak English, came with us. When we bought some petrol from the bus driver he wanted to charge us 50 Afghanis a gallon instead of 15. When we protested and said we had tried to help pull him out he said that he didn't want us to. Honestly, these Afghans wouldn't help you at all. They're so different from the Thais. It must be the cold climate and sense of self-preservation all the time. Anyway we floundered on through the snow with one of the boys walking in front to find the road. Halfway we found the Russian jeep right off the road again and spent about an hour pulling him out - snowing all the time. Eventually we reached Ghaznia in the dark and have stayed tonight at the hotel - very cheap - with a great big heater in our room. In Kabul there are more Russians than Americans and that really is saying something. There are lots of Russian landrovers and cars, all very high off the ground, Russian cigarettes and Russian petrol. The petrol smells awful. This hotel is funny, I wouldn't say it was the cleanest. Last night we slept in our inner sheets in the beds. There are electric light bulbs hanging from the roof, but we use lanterns for lighting. There are taps but no water comes from them. Outside everything is under snow. Men were up early shovelling snow from the roofs. The houses, all mudcovered bricks, seem to climb up the hill like steps. On the way here we travelled over a 9,000 foot pass and just everything was white, white and shapeless, as far as the eye could see.

KANDAHAR, 28th January.

We've just arrived here today - $5\frac{1}{2}$ days to do 318 miles. The road has been shocking - really awful, and this Russian petrol is putrid, makes poor old Tess work twice as hard. The nights have been just so cold that the whole motor freezes up and takes a couple of hours to thaw out in the morning. We heat the water, we heat the pipes, we do everything, but it still takes a long time to get it to go. When we left Ghaznia, after all our troubles in the snow, one of our friends from the Russian Landrover, actually a Russian, farewelled us with Vodka - vile stuff. Was it funny? We all ended up singing Grand Old English Songs to him and he sang us Russian ones, and I'm sure all of that will stop any possible war between us and Russia. Great friends. Gosh, it's been cold. This afternoon when we arrived we met two V.W's travelling in the opposite direction, and containing 2 German boys and the other two Aussie boys (one Katoomba and one Sydney) bound for home. One of them knows Snow Brown from S.B.W. well. What a coincidence, so you can imagine all the "tale swapping". We are staying in the hotel and they are all in our room now - real Aussies. In Afghanistan there is all right-hand driving and on our way to Kabul we hit a taxi - very minor damage - we just could not make up our minds which side of the road to drive on.

TEHERAN, 11th February.

Arrived here last night. From Kandahar we travelled north again to Herat along the edge of a desert on one side and really rugged mountains on the other side. We actually had a couple of wonderful camps here, something we had not had for quite some time. Honestly the mountains in Afghanistan are breathtaking. We saw quite a few wolves and one night Bruce was off looking for firewood when we heard the cry "Eric, the gun, quick". I think my heart stopped still. There was a great scramble for torches and guns and a rush towards the voice. Actually Bruce was standing facing two wolves and when one of them began to circle Eric fired a shot which sent them both scurrying. At other times we would see a grey form slinking across the snow. From Herat we crossed the border into Iran. In the strip of no-man's land between the two countries there were stacks of wild geese. The boys took a few pot shots at them and I could actually see myself carving a beautiful, steaming hot, roast goose - but no luck. At the Iran border town we stayed in the Customs Office. In Iran we just could not discover which side of the road the traffic usually travelled on because it seemed to come from both sides. When we asked some American soldiers in the next town they just said it all depends upon who had the biggest car. Actually it is all left hand drive. We met these soldiers when the local bank would not change our Traveller's cheques. They rescued us and also invited us to lunch. From there we rushed into Meshed because Eric was sick. We took him to an American Missionary hospital. It turned out he had Malaria. Meshed itself is a very holy city to the Moslems and we were warned not to go anywhere near the Mosque, which the whole city is built around. From Meshed we travelled on to Teheran. The journey took us four days through rather tedious country and over really shocking roads. We thought Australian roads were bad enough, but if we had only known. Iran has been a real surprise to us. I knew that it would be winter but did not expect to be travelling in icy temperatures with snow swirling about. The mountains are very spectacular, all snow-clad rugged peaks. We have seen very little vegetation either, but we are only travelling in the north. Probably the south has not got so many mountains. Once again the women very rarely show their faces. A lot of the people speak French and several times we have been asked "parley vous Francais". Lou can manage to understand quite a bit but all the rest of us can say is "oui, oui". Bruce is leaving us here in Teheran. I'd love to work here but have decided to go on. We've met lots of young people here who are working their

way round the world and they are mostly teaching English in Teheran. This is really quite a Western city. It has very little Persian flavour, except when you go to the "Big Market" (a real Persian Market). Seeing that I lost my rug earlier I decided that I had better buy another, so Bruce and I went down there to see what we could find. The whole place is just a maze of alley-ways with covered roofs and they must sell just about everything ever manufactured. Of course to actually buy the blanket we had to bargain like fury for every penny and go from stall to stall. When we were in Afghanistan in the snow we read a Teheran travel folder and rejoiced when we saw that the temperature in Teheran never drops below 41 degrees, but the truth is that it has snowed almost continuously since we have been here. Yesterday morning when we awoke we found that there had been a terrific snow storm during the night and all the roads were just ice. The usual chaotic traffic just crawled along at a snail's pace. 40% of the cars had chains, even right in the city. Just walking across the road you had to be very careful that you did not land on your seat. People were shovelling snow off the roofs and just tossing it down on the footpaths, so you had to be very careful to dodge it all, and also an avalanche broke the water supply, but by lunch time the sun was out and the roads were safe again. Today is beautiful and we are setting off in glorious sunshine.

KASVIN, 17th February.

Just this afternoon we left Teheran after being there for over a week. We had such a lot of repairs to be done. At the moment we are in a very comfortable hotel room, heater and all, at the expense of the local police. We went to the police and said that we had no money and this is what they arranged. Actually we are very short of Iranian currency and have just enough to see us out of the country. I think I forgot to tell you about our overnight stay at a Construction camp in Afghanistan. It was just the day before we reached Herat and our third last night in Afghanistan. Eric was bad with his Malaria, in fact was almost unconscious and we knew there was an American Construction firm in the town of Shandover so we called on them. We also wanted some welding done, which was completely impossible to get in any Afghan town. We were just lucky that it happened to be lunch time and they invited us in. There was one American and four Filipino boys there, supervising the building of a bridge. Were they well set up. They had huge caravans and a truly magnificent kitchen and dining room, all on wheels. So we sat down to a lunch of cold chicken and ham. They had absolutely everything, all imported from the States. Gee, food means a lot to us, especially even the smallest luxury. Anyway they asked us to stay the night, in the guest trailer, so we put Eric to bed and proceeded to take full advantage of our stay by using the electric washing machine - their laundryman even did it all for us, while I just supervised (ha ha) and helped him to hang the things on the line. That night you can just imagine our faces when the cook carried in a huge roast turkey.

We certainly have extremes, first it's Jungle Foot, then Malaria and now Chilblains. Gosh, it's cold at times. Tonight for example I drove into this town and my hands and feet were just freezing. When we stopped I was shivering, but by a heater it's very easy to warm up. Nearly every room in any decent building has an oil heater.

INTERESTED IN TASMANIA ?

Available from Paddy this month - "Tasmanian Tramp" 1959. (Journal of Hobart Walking Club.)

JIM BROWN'S WALK.

"The Gent in the Tent".

DATE: 8-9th August, 1959.ROUTE: Colo Vale - Mt. Flora - Nattai River - Starlight's Trail - Hill Top.
22 miles or so.CAST:MEMBERS.Pam Baker
Phil Hall
Kevin Ardill
Alan RoundPROSPECTIVE MEMBERS.Roy Craggs
Wal Moore
Geoff Ley.

I have often heard articles about various walks criticised because vital statistics about the excursion are not included in the story. Personally, I can't see that it matters much, especially if the account is well written. However, for the benefit of the curious, and those members who promised Jim that they would come and didn't turn up, the information is published above.

Now to the story. As I was packing on the Friday night prior to the walk a knock came to the door. The time was about 8.45 p.m. Rather late for social visiting, but in these modern times, one has to be prepared for any eventuality. Open the door and Jim Brown stands revealed! Kath is ill and he would not be able to take the walk tomorrow. Would I do the honours? Of course, especially as he produced a Mittagong map marked with his intended route. I hadn't been on the Upper Nattai River before. That is why I had 'phoned Jim during the week and announced my intention of going. I also knew (hoped?) that Kevin Ardill would be going, and felt that surely the two of us could put up some sort of a show at map reading and not disappoint the ten starters who had notified Jim that they'd be attending.

Saturday morning was dull and drizzly, which probably accounted for the roll call of only eight for the 9.30 a.m. Goulburn train, including the deputy-leader and Alan Round, whose name was not on the "official" list.

After an accordion recital of chiefly Gaelic airs by fellow passengers in highland dress, we changed to the rail motor at Picton. The recital was a pleasant change from music emitted by transistor radios so frequently inflicted upon helpless train travellers, whether they wish to listen to it or not. The train crew were quite interested in our proposed excursion. I promised to see them at Hill Top tomorrow night with rather forced joviality.

A cold westerly wind was blowing when we set out from Colo Vale, and it wasn't very long before the clouds came over with a promise of snow. However, all we got was a shower of sleet, and by the time we emerged from bush country at Colo settlement near Mr. Flora, it was bright and sunny. The country opens out very suddenly near Blatch Trig., giving fine views over the Nattai Valley, of Mt. Jellore, the high country around Wanganderry and Bullio, the Southern Blue Mountains and back towards Sydney. The leader had suggested a possible route West of Mt. Flora, then down a fairly clear ridge into the Nattai Valley. As the afternoon was cool and clear, and we were not pressed for time, I decided to try and get down Blatch's Pass, in spite of previous adverse comments on this route to the Nattai.

Keeping West from Blatch Trig., we soon found ourselves swinging round to the South on a bridle track until Mt. Jellore was almost ahead of us, instead of being on our left. Maps were hastily consulted and opinions aired, but the ridges didn't

look promising. The time began to fly, as it so often does in these situations. Kevin took off in a Westerly direction to see what lay ahead, while the remainder did a "recce" of our present position. After more than half an hour, Kevin returned, rather puffed as he had just measured his length on the ground by tripping over a fallen fence, and reported a negotiable route by crag and creek into the Nattai.

Away we went to come out on the edge of a cliff face in less than a mile. By descending into a creek nearby, we were able to sidle along a wallaby track under the cliff line to the point of a very steep ridge between two small creeks running into the Nattai about 200 yards above Jellore Creek. The seemingly excellent camp site ahead proved upon examination to be badly washed out by recent floods. Soon after passing Jellore Creek, a suitable spot was located on the right bank. For various reasons, most of the party were tired after their hectic week in the city, so, instead of campfire entertainment, by mutual agreement, most were in their sleeping bags soon after 8 p.m.

We were all up fairly early next morning and got away before 9 a.m., after a very definite request that the party stay together to obviate the need for a search of large areas of the Valley by myself and my advisor, K.A. The Nattai Valley is very beautiful, in spite of evidence of heavy flooding about two weeks previously. The river bubbles and gurgles over the water worn rocks with occasional outcrops of pink granite. Then the water seems to lie in long green pools, reflecting the surrounding rocky outcrops and trees, flanked in parts by stretches of sand. It was necessary to cross several times when the bank became too steep on one side, and this led to some competition as to who could keep dry feet the longest. We traversed a couple of extensive bracken-covered flats before reaching a really good camp site at Rocky Waterholes Creek soon after 10 a.m. All these flats were covered with holes leading to wombat warrens, and should be treated with caution, as a misplaced foot in one of these holes can cause serious sprain or worse (shades of Peggy Bransdon!) and its a long way back to transport.

I could now afford to relax a bit as the map showed that we should reach McArthur's Flat by noon. This was accomplished without difficulty, but the lovely river flat here has been severely mauled by a bushfire, and is only now recovering. Naturally, we had lunch here, in bright sunshine.

The track up the point of the ridge from McArthur's Flat (Starlight's Trail) has been considerably washed out following denudation of the ridge by a bushfire. We spent some time looking for it in various steep gullies, until Kevin finally located it up toward the cliff line. We then made full use of it to finish the climb, even though it is not too clear in a couple of places and is overgrown by Hardenbergia vines ready to trip the unwary. Near the top, there are blazes on various strategic trees, made by the Coates boys we later found out, which are of considerable assistance in locating the route.

Mr. Coates and two of the boys were doing some car repairs when we reached the top and stopped for a chat with them. Mr. Coates told us of the bushfire which burnt right up from the Nattai River on 4th November, 1957 destroying most of the bush in its progress. He also mentioned the adventures of a couple of overdue parties in the area. We set out from the farm at 3.45 p.m. so as to be sure of catching the only train from Hill Top on Sunday night. We arrived at the station in good time to cook a couple of packaged soups and to have our ears bashed by a local while we "swipped" (the soup, of course). Train time came, we escaped from the basher for a quick trip back to the city.
