

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER.

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bush Walkers,
The N.S.W. Nurses' Association Rooms, "Northcote Building",
Reiby Place, Sydney. Box No. 4476 G.P.O., Sydney.
'Phone JW1462.

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Editor: Don Matthews, 33 Pomona Street,
Pennant Hills. WJ3514.
Business Manager: Brian Harvey

Reproduction: Denise Hull
Sales & Subs.: Eileen Taylor
Typed by Jean Harvey.

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THE BOTTOM OF THE BARREL.

The long weekend was wet - mostly wet, anyhow, and although he suffered because of it, the Editor was comforted by the thought that suffering on long weekends usually brings in a crop of contributions from those who wish to share their misfortunes. But this time, not a word, not a whisper; which means either that S.B.W's are getting tougher (which is unlikely) or less literary (which we would have thought impossible).

Why is it that we are so backward when we live in a world of words, words and more words. Natural reaction, maybe?

The modern trend in paper pulp
Would make an ancient writer gulp
With horror, at the magnitude
Of flapper weeklies, mostly rude,
Which flaunt before us other's sins
And flood our shelves and rubbish bins.

2.

And do we help to swell the tide;
Hell, no, we've talents which we hide
From public gaze, from public purse,
And never put our thoughts to verse.
And as we haughtily refrain,
Our Mag. goes slowly down the drain.

(Note: The last line, (which should be read slowly for effect) is poetic license. We've burst into print monthly without a miss for about 25 years, and somehow we'll manage to keep on.)

SOCIAL EVENTS.

TO COME :

JULY 19TH Mr. Chaffer will talk about Birds, illustrated with slides and accompanied by recordings of Bird Calls.

JULY 26TH MEMBERS SLIDE NIGHT. A chance to show Club members your photographic genius. Limit 20 slides per person.

COMING ON AUGUST 16TH :

Bill Beatty - "Believe it or not in Australia".

PAST :

ON JUNE 21ST Lyn Baber showed slides of the Overseas Landrover Trip of 1959, and confirmed, in colour, the vivid word pictures she had given us in accounts published in this Magazine during 1959. (John Bookluck, who was to have given the Talk, has disappeared into the Outback.)

ON JUNE 28TH Kevin Ardill kept his audience chuckling with his story of "Sailing to Tahiti". Despite his request to projectionist Frank Ashdown to speed the slides up, quite a few slowed the action down and even caused the projector to go backwards.

CONGRATULATIONS to Neil and Patricia Monteith - married on 10th June.

. . .

Last month we stated that parts of Jenolan Caves were to be scrubbed with soap and water. Latest news from the weeklies is that they are being "steam cleaned".

. . .

AT OUR JUNE MEETING.

- Alex Colley.

The meeting commenced with a welcome to three new members, Lynette White, Gordon Redmond and Brian Hardy.

In correspondence was a message from Charlie Pryde telling us what a wonderful day June 6th, his eightieth birthday, had been. Something like 100 guests had visited him, including "two carloads of girls" and a great number of members had 'phoned him.

The Walks Secretary's report chronicled a variety of exertions in May. Caving at Bungonia, an instructional walk led by Bob Godfrey, and attended by 23 members and prospectives, the three peaks trip on which three started and two weakened after two peaks, and a trip from Mount Irvine which involved two crossings of the impassable Bowen's Creek gorge. All the trips were well patronised.

A report was presented from a special committee gathered together for the purpose of discussing the investment of the Era Fund. The committee recommended that we use the fund for the purpose for which it was subscribed - conservation - by the purchase of an area suitable for reservation. Bluegum and Era had been preserved by this means and there were probably other suitable areas if we looked for them. There was land for sale at Yabboro Creek and areas such as Yeola or Budderoo might be investigated. The committee would be pleased to have any suggestions for its next meeting on August 8th. Investment other than in land would be restricted to trustee investments - Bonds and Government guaranteed loans. The balance of the fund was £528.14. 0. A three-quarter's majority at an extraordinary meeting was necessary to decide on the use of the money. The committee which made the report comprised Bill Rodgers, Wal Roots (Club Trustee), Maurie Berry (Club Trustee), Malcolm McGregor, Tom Moppett, David Ingram, Jack Gentle, John White, Brian Harvey and Alex Colley.

The President drew our attention to the deposition of cigarette ash on the Club room despite the provision of an abundance of ashtrays (a week later a complaint re ash was made by the cleaners).

Jim Brown told us that the mystery of the Club song books had been solved, and they were in the Club, together with our opera books, and available for sale.

At the conclusion of the meeting Frank Ashdown appealed to borrowers of camping equipment to return it by the following Wednesday, so that it could be spread round amongst those wanting it.

CLEAN UP AT ERA.

On 17-18th June, the Working Bee organised by Jack Wren cleaned up camper's rubbish and dug new rubbish pits. There were 18 in the main party with others arriving during the weekend. An enjoyable campfire plus entertainment was led by Malcolm McGregor.

SKWEES.

(Based on a story told me by Dot Butler).

O all ye cavemen brave (or spelios)
 Ye ones who shun the sun (or helios)
 Who in the inky depths of earth
 Attest your prowess and your worth
 Now in a referee's capacity
 Give guarantee of my veracity.
 Lately was added to your crew
 A fair and youthful damsel who,
 Poor innocent, was not aware
 What horrors waited in their lair.
 "Hist!" said the spelios "Hist and hark!
 For lurking somewhere in the dark
 There well may dwell, in caves like these,
 Those dire monstrosities the Skwees."
 With caution due they prowled all day
 But met with nothing on the way.
 Then quoth the maid: "Now tell me, Troggy,
 Maybe I am a trifle foggy,
 A wanderer in the middle mist,
 But do the Skwees in fact exist?"
 "My oath! Too right! Indeed they do!"
 Said one who graced that barefaced crew.
 "You see that nest below my legs?
 Well, those small objects are Skwee's eggs
 (Though some would have it that by rights
 Their proper name is obolites)
 And just up there, upon my soul,
 That opening is a Skwee's hole!"

- Kath McKay.

NEWS FROM COLIN PUTT - N.Z.A.C. NEW GUINEA EXPEDITION.

Ilaga 18/6/61.

"Arrived after a very tough but interesting trip from Tiome. Had to use the gun once but we're now in safe and friendly country and will be beyond the limit of population tomorrow. We will be in the Mountains within a week. The route in looks quite easy from here, and all should be well from now on. We are taking in carriers with lots of native food just in case of trouble with airdrops. The Missionaries here are wonderful people and are helping us a lot . . . "

FROM THE LETTERS OF ROBERT A. DUNCAN., High Altitude Observatory, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado

"I have lifted myself out of Class 2 American citizenship by buying a car, a 1953 Ford Customline with 60,000 miles on the clock, for \$395. It seems to go quite well though only time will tell if it's a bomb or not I suppose. Boulder is not really large enough to warrant a car but it is very difficult to do any shopping in America without one. Banking, for instance, is done by driving up to a slot in a wall from which a mechanical arm emerges, enters the car window, grabs the cheque or what have you in your hand, disappears with it into it's slot again and then shortly afterwards reappears and drops whatever its computer thinks is a fair exchange for what it took, on the car seat. The same system applies to buying hamburgers and all other necessities of life, and jump up and down on the plate outside these slots as I did, I used to get nothing because a pedestrian just doesn't weigh enough to activate the mechanism.

"You will be interested in one effect of the cold, dry climate here. The air is such a good insulator that everything becomes charged with static electricity. If a peanut carelessly slides over the car seat as he gets out a great spark leaps from his nose to the door handle and makes him turn a back flip. I brought a plastic raincoat with me and found it handy to keep out the rain and the snow but soon found out why nobody wears them here. I used to look like a walking thunderstorm and I received a near fatal shock everytime I touched any metal object. I am thinking of trailing one of those earthing strips you see on cars, behind me.

"(While in Washington.) The first weekend I was dragged around to see all the sights; where George Washington slept, where George Washington once had a bath, where his bones are now stored and so on. Some of these things were interesting but I found the dawdling and gawking and crowds very tiring. Once when everyone joined a queue to walk through G.W.'s kitchen I said I would wait outside, and sneaked over for forty winks in the sun on the lawn; barely had I closed my eyes than I was woken by a policeman and told it was irreverent to sleep on G.W.'s lawn . . .

"The most popular pets in Boulder seem to be French Poodles, and some very elaborate topiary is practised on them. Often when I go into a barber's shop there are more poodles waiting for a haircut than men and as people are given no precedence in the queue it means a long wait. I noticed the same thing in

Washington last week; evidently it is an America wide phenomenon.

"I was in Washington on the Atlantic Coast last week. When I look back at it now it wasn't a bad trip but I was a bit grumpy about it at the time. One thing that irked me was that the nobs I was stuck with insisted on going to expensive French restaurants for every meal. It would make my ticker bleed to have to hand over fabulous sums of money for cocktails, fried turkeys giblets, pickled frogs livers and suchlike rubbish. I was glad to get back and start living on milk and fruit again. . . .

"I have heard rumours of an oil strike in Queensland. Is this just another false alarm or something more substantial? Last weekend I saw a big oil field in a desert valley about 300 miles west of here. It was a weird sight. The valley floor was dotted with big black pumps chuffing slowly up and down, and all around were clay mountains as bare as those in Queenstown, Tasmania, only this was a native desert.

"Last Tuesday was a holiday here - Memorial Day, when they put flags and flowers on graves, a form of ancestor worship - so three other peanuts and I took Monday off too, made it a long weekend and went for a long drive through the west of the State and into Utah, the land of the Mormons and Brigham Young. I was extremely impressed; the country varies spectacularly from the most arid desert to forest and snow covered mountains, depending on the altitude. We visited Dinosaur National Park (where Dinosaur bones are as common as fleas on a monkey; the rocks in the hillsides are studded with them and some people say that live ones still lurk in the remote valleys and snatch the occasional tourist) and then Arches Park a sandy desert Ayers Rock kind of place with the difference that many of the rocks have eroded into arches. The car stood up to the 1300-mile trip fairly well, except for a defunct differential bearing which cost me \$12 as the party shared the cost. I am sorry to say however that my passengers were not true outdoor types, they shaved every day and even got me into a hotel one night.

"Nothing escapes me here. I have heard that Hillary had a mild stroke in the Himalayas. This is bad news. I suppose it was partly due to the high altitude as this would put up the red cell count and hence the viscosity of the blood. Altitude is certainly an extra load to carry. The University hiking club here stage an expedition to the 18,000' Mexican volcano Popocatepetin each summer and I am told that on each trip someone has gone down with pneumonia. I get a bit stiff around the ribs after high altitude trips but on the whole I am getting used to altitude fairly well and I will be making the Mexican trip if it goes this year . . . "

THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

"Tough tireless types went out to the several primitive huts on the Main Range where they pigged it, sleeping in their clothes with egg stains on their sweaters and stubble on their chins". . . (from a recently published survey on how to have a skiing holiday . . .).

From what we hear of Perisher Valley at the Long Weekend, you can't get away from loudspoken music, and the thing they call Visual Isolation is fast disappearing.

'CROSS THE COLO.
(Concluded)

- Jim Brown.

The provocative weather was improving now, with a magnificent sky of washed-out blue, stained with black and yellow clouds, framed in the wide gap between Mt. Gundangeroo and the ranges across the Capertee: the wind from south west was biting cold.

Sufficient of Glen Davis survives to allow me to buy a few stores, send a couple of telegrams, and to hear that the weather forecast was for better things. By this time the day was well advanced so I planned to camp just downstream. First I had to pass through the ruins of the shale treatment plant; a pitiful place with blackberries moving in on the big buildings that once housed the retorts and equipment. Beyond the works the Capertee is a most gracious valley and I had no trouble in finding a campsite beside (in fact, half within) an overhang which protected me and my fire for cooking.

It rained lightly several times in the night, but the stars were out just before dawn. With the morning, unfortunately the clouds came again, not the pall of the previous day but enough overcast to take most of the beauty out of a valley that must be as lovely as Burragorang before the flood. On a well formed trail, following the southern bank, sometimes well above the river, I made good time and in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours - just after 8.0 a.m. - realised I was on my exit point. In fact, I almost overshot it.

Some four or five miles down from Running Stream Creek (hence about 6-7 miles from Glen Davis) a basalt spur, misleadingly called Grassy Hill, intrudes into the sandstone cliff formation on the north side of the river, and offers an easy escape route. I was almost past it before I noticed the brown scree spills high on the slopes and realised it could be only Grassy Hill.

The combination of loose stones, the moist, slippery soil, the richer vegetation made the climb out an energetic performance, punctuated by some back-sliding, and it was not until 10.30 that I drove my aching calf and thigh muscles to haul me up the final sandstone layer at the top.

Now my way lay north to the grassy dome of Mt. Uraterer, which I had approached twice before - once from the east and once from north west. It was about eight miles distant this time via a flat, wide ridge which I had been told was well grown up with mountain holly, prickly moses and other unpleasant vegetation. Most of the time one couldn't descry where the ridge top was in that uniform landscape and it seemed easiest to walk into the sun - generally north.

Over another dry ridge-top lunch I noted with dismay that the canvas fabric of my sandshoes was deteriorating badly and threatening to part company just behind the rubber toecaps. Perhaps if I could rely on track all the way from Uraterer they would see it out - I hoped.

About 1.0 p.m., in thickening overcast, I realised I had veered round and was walking almost east. Alarm, panic, consternation! In this flat terrain how could one ever be sure where I had left the ridge - or for that matter whether I would be able to locate it again. I spent a very wretched five minutes or so - and then came the only bona fide bit of luck on the trip - through a gap in the forest

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APPLICATION.

I saw the unmistakable grassy curve of Uraterer - bearing 20° . I hadn't seen it before - I didn't see it for over an hour afterwards - what time I stuck resolutely to a compass bearing of 20° magnetic - and somewhere got back on to my spur.

There was a track over the last mile or so, speeding my progress and bringing me to the top of the mountain at 3.30 p.m.

Uraterer commands a majestic view - not a photographer's landscape, but a huge cyclorama of wild country, with all the basalt caps of the Northern Blue Mountains - from Yengo around through Monundilla, Coriaday, Bronbourwa, Tyan Pic and down to my old friends Cameron and Tambo - and surely that was Mount King George away over. They all stood, grey and forbidding, against a stormy afternoon sky of saffron. Over the lower ground towards the coast veils of raincloud were streaking the pale sky.

It was too cold to stay longer than half an hour so, I dropped down to the creek on the northern flank of the mountain, scouted around and found the track leading out towards Putty, and settled for the night at 4.30. It ranked as an early camp and I resolved to have a big fire, and a laze before it after dinner. Then it rained again, not much, but enough to dampen my enthusiasm and discourage me from making an expansive evening of it. Instead I turned in and lay a while in the sleeping bag smoking a final pipe and pondering if (aided by a track) I could be right out to the road on Wednesday, this sixth day, and by chancing on

10.

a hitch, even be back that night. That would get me back to my original estimate of a six-day trip which went haywire when I couldn't get out of the Colo 'way back on the first day (it felt about two months earlier instead of four days !).

On Wednesday I was astir early, moving off five minutes before sunrise time at 6.20. The track bore the prints of a small herd of cattle, one horseman and a couple of dogs - they must have gone through only a day or so before, or the periodical showers would have masked the prints. I followed up on the first spur, lost contact with the track, and in the now misty morning light saw what I was positive was my ridge over to the north. Simply a matter of heading a little gully - well, maybe another - why there's another - devil of a way around here. Now, this ought to be it - yes, I'm sure - no I'm not - it's turning too far north - ah, I was on a side spur, this is it - no it isn't, it's bearing away south west . . .

This went on for perhaps an hour until in high dudgeon at my own stupidity for being unable to stay with a firm ridge going about east, I decided to beat back towards Uraterer, which beckoned all the time out to the south, and describe a wide circuit around it towards the east. That should surely intersect the mislaid track, which, in turn should put me on the ridge heading steadily east instead of weaving all over the place. The track was there, all right, I knew, because I had been over it twice before - but years earlier - 1947 and 1953 to be exact.

On my circuit I started to drop into a small gully with a flowing creek. It looked right and I was too eager to see how mossy the rock was under my feet until I was sitting down with a large lump of skin hanging stupidly from my left hand which was the first point of contact with the rock. Volubly expressing my opinion of the Northern Blue Mountains in general and the creeks and ridges north of Uraterer in particular, I dropped to the creek to wash and bandage the hand. There was a clean, convenient strip of white sand to set down my pack - and along it went some cattle hoof marks, some horse shoe prints and dog-paw impressions.

The lost $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours put any thought of getting through that day quite out of reasonable reckoning, but once on the track I clung tenaciously to it, passing at 10.0 o'clock the side spur to Mt. Wirraba and Wollerie Creek I had travelled before (after all, I had wanted for years to see where the track got to).

Yes, I clung to that track, which continued reasonably strong and clear on to the ridge south of, and parallel to, the Wirraba Range: then swung more to the south, once descended obligingly to the head of a creek, climbed again on to the ridge and to my amazement - plunged right down into the bed of a creek flowing south east and began to chase it downstream. I know now that it was here I lost contact with the map. I believed I was on an unnamed stream which flows into the Wollerie about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles below the junction of Putty Creek: instead it could only be Gobo Creek, which takes a much more southerly course and ultimately joins the Wollerie opposite the northern side of the Culoul Range.

The track remained alongside the creek for over a hour, until about 3.0 o'clock when I was smugly expecting to come to Wollerie any time, it turned away UP a side stream entering from the north. Hereabouts the canvas of the left sandshoe ripped right across: at least, watching its slow disintegration had given me time to think out a possible repair. I removed the lace from the two bottom eyelets, used my tin opener to bore holes in the still sound rubber of the toe cap and strung a piece of tent cord like two reins from the cap back to the eyelets. It worked, and in ten

minutes I was mobile again, pursuing the track up through a little swamp on to a ridge. Then it dived down into the next valley to the north, which I assessed (wrong) as Dumbell Creek.

Here, at last, I mislaid the trail, which must go up and over yet another ridge, possibly over two, before coming to Wollerie Creek somewhere near Putty Creek. I can't say I regretted losing the trail. By this time I was heartily sick of its intransigence. Surely Putty stockmen must have spent years seeking the most roundabout course between Wollerie Creek and Uraterer. I went on down "Dumbell Creek" - (actually the unnamed stream which I fancied I'd been on before!) and found the going fair, but with piles of slippery rocks in places. At 5.25 having given myself another 10 minutes before sitting down to camp, I walked out on to a sandbar overlooking Wollemi Creek and, as I hastily made camp in the failing light, marvelled at the wild nature of the valley thereabouts. (Of course I thought I was only a mile below Putty Creek and civilisation, insread of something like three miles.)

I had never proposed to go out via Putty Valley. That would entail walking 10 miles almost north before getting out on to the Singleton Road and would place me probably 25 miles north from the car back at Culoul. My plan was to strike generally east, allow a bit of a curve north to get around a deep part of Long Wheeny Creek, then firmly east to intersect the road.

This was still my plot on Thursday morning, which was very misty with visibility down to 100 yards or less. Worse, the mist rose as I went up the eastern wall of Wollerie Creek on a steady grade. I kept trying to detour to the north east, each time finding the ground falling away and finally, with no view of the landscape, decided to keep going with the rise of the ground.

It kept going on up - far more than the 500' or 600' I expected to gain - and the higher ground bore steadily to the south east. I knew I was not where I had believed the previous night but it was a "good" direction for me and presently two hours from the Wollemi, the haze cleared away, I could look back to Wirraba and work out where I was. Then the second sandshoe packed up and as I worked at it on a lofty shelf of rock I felt a lift of spirits. Well, I had been wrong about my location the previous night but now I was poised almost on top of a range between the Wollemi and Molong Swamp.

If I dropped over east into Molong Swamp I should have easy going four miles north and east and come out on to the Singleton Road near Stoney Waterhole, only eleven miles north from Culoul. With the seat ripped out of both my longs and shorts, scratched and dirty, I would be lucky to get a lift, but at least I should be able to walk . . .

I reached Molong Swamp at 10.0

I reached Singleton Putty Road at 11.20

I lunched and shaved at Howes Waterhole from 11.50 to 1.10.

At 3.50, ex-S.B.W. member David King stopped his utility and offered me a lift (he is now on the land at Uralla and was travelling with his wife to Sydney)

At 3.50 $\frac{1}{2}$ I declined because I was almost back to the car

At 3.55 I resumed and David drove on

At 3.59 I reached the car . . .

And yes, after a week across the Colo, the roast pork and the couple of middies at Windsor tasted very good.

DAY WALKS.

- JULY 16 Palm Beach - ferry to The Basin - West Head Road - Cottage Rock - Yeoman's Bay - The Basin. 12 miles.
A 600' climb out of, and later, back into the Basin.
Excellent views out over Pittwater and the Lower Hawkesbury River.
8.12 a.m. bus from Wynyard Square to Palm Beach (Goddards Wharf).
10.0 a.m. ferry Goddard's Wharf to The Basin.
Fares: 8/2d. return bus to Palm Beach, plus 4/- return by ferry.
Maps: Broken Bay Military or Hawkesbury River Tourist.
Leader: Stuart Brooks.
- JULY 23 Hornsby - bus to Crossland's Road - Knight Trig. - Charlton's Creek - Birrilee.
Don't let the short distance fool you. Interesting country to find one's way through, but gaiters or slacks recommended. NOT SUITABLE as a first walk.
Train: 8.40 a.m. Central Electric Station to Hornsby via Bridge.
Tickets: Hornsby Return via Bridge at 5/3d. plus about 6/- bus fares.
Maps: Broken Bay Military or Hawkesbury River Tourist.
Leader: David Ingram.
- JULY 30 Wondabyne - Kariong - Koolewong. 10 miles.
A bit early for the wildflowers which abound in this area, but the surroundings will make up for that. An excellent view from Kariong Trig. Well worth the extra rail fare.
Train: 8.15 a.m. Gosford train from Central Steam Station.
Tickets: Koolewong Return at 15/6d.
Maps: Gosford Military or Hawkesbury River Tourist.
Leader: Reg Meakins.
- AUGUST 6 Pymble - bus to St. Ives (Douglas Street) Bungaroo - Middle Harbour Creek - Lindfield. 11 miles.
This used to be a favourite walk, but hasn't been programmed for years. A scramble along the upper reaches of Middle Harbour Creek, then mainly track. Lindfield Park is an attractive setting for tea.
Train: 8.10 a.m. Central Electric Station to Pymble.
Tickets: Pymble Return at 4/3d. plus 1/- bus fare.
Maps: Sydney Military or any good suburban street Directory.
Leader: Molly Rodgers.
- AUGUST 13 Leumeah - Bushwalkers' Basin - Kalibucca Pool - Freer's Crossing - Minto. Bushwalkers' Basin is a splendid pool and Punchbowl Creek, leading to Kalibucca Pool, is largely unspoilt. There could be some attractive colour shots of the wattle in flower at this time of the year.
Train: 8.25 a.m. Goulburn train from Central Steam Station.
Tickets: Leumeah Return at 7/-.
Map: Camden Military.
Leader: Jack Gentle.



PADDY MADE



ODE TO A RUCKSACK.

Purchased in '35

And still in use

Despite the bashing it got

Down many a mountain side.

You must design them well

More in them than meets the eye

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14.

LETTER FROM DOROTHY LAWRY IN NEW ZEALAND.

"95 St. Andrews Road,
Epsom,
AUCKLAND, S.E.3, N.Z.

. I noticed from the list of officers and the walks programme that several of the Old and Bold are still doing yeoman work for the Club. It is also good to see plenty of the newer members' names on these lists. That is the way the Club keeps up its strength.

By the way, I noticed that the Annual Meeting was told by our old friend, Brian Harvey, that the magazine had now come out regularly for 25 years. That takes it back to 1936, and that would be about the time it was turned into a monthly duplicated by our own members. You may be interested to know that it first started in 1932, in May I think it was, at a price of 1/- and appeared every other month. Marj Hill first suggested it and the Club was doubtful but gave permission for us to publish a journal as a trial. Marj Hill, Brenda White, Renee Brown, Myles Dunphy and I each put in 10/- and that was the capital on which "The Bush Walker" was started. After about six months the Club took the journal over officially, refunded us our ten bob and changed its name to "The Sydney Bushwalker". It went on quite happily for some time until there was a change of editor and the new sub-editor used a blue pencil heavily on one or two issues. That nearly killed the journal; they tried turning it into a quarterly but still no one would write for it, and most people said it was too expensive and would not buy it. Bill Mullins came to the rescue by taking over the editorship, turning it into a monthly and dropping the price to (I think) 6d. or 9d. by getting a working team of members and duplicating it on the Club's own machine instead of having it done by a professional duplicating firm. Since then, as Brian said, it has come out regularly for 25 years. I thought you might be interested in that bit of the Club's history.

Best wishes to your all,

Yours sincerely,

Dorothy Lawry."

THE LONG WEEKEND.

Roy Craggs' Cloudmaker - Tiwilla trip attracted about 18 starters.

.....

A Colley - Leyden party of seven did some scrub bashing in the Putty - Monundilla area. An S.B.W. party in 1953 took two days to traverse the extremely tricky south ridge between Kindarun and Monundilla. This can now be done in four hours walking along a Fire Trail. However, the above party spent a day and a half pushing along the less tricky but equally dry and scratchy North ridge system before they found the Trail which branches near Monundilla and reaches civilisation via Coricudgy or Martindale. Weather not the best - rain and mist.

.....

George Gray's party, bound for the Back-of-the-Castle area via the Vines, holed up in the cave near Castle Hill because of poor weather.

.....

BOWEN BASH (I'M ORRIGHT, JACK).

- Stuart Brooks.

We five arrived under the brow of Mt. Tootie on a dark Friday night, Greg Grennan, Reg Meakins, Paul Howard, Peter Price, Stuart Brooks.

Choosing a relatively grassy spot, obviously very popular in the near past with the Mt. Tootie bovine sorority, we took the usual precautions against snake bite and settled down for the night.

Saturday 8.30 a.m. saw us away, headed westwards towards Mt. Irvine along a ridge that grew rapidly steeper, ending in abrupt walls 300 feet above Bowen's Creek. We sidled around the bluff, across an adjacent gully and on to the next ridge, east of Tessellate Hill, which was equally steep as the one we had just abandoned, but more broken up so that it was possible to traverse it downstream, and eventually slide into Bowen's Creek directly under Tessellate Hill.

Price took the opportunity during the descent to conduct two experiments, the conclusions from which will be known as Price's postulate, namely (1) a falling rock gathers speed proportional to the distance it has traversed, but its motion may be arrested by interposing portion of the human frame in its path, preferably the lower part of the leg. (This experiment was repeated next day with a different subject, Greg, but the same result.) (2) The strength of Australian hardwood has been over estimated in the past, and even a six-inch log may not support the weight of a fully grown man (with pack). A corollary to this experiment was that the human body, suddenly dropped vertically five feet, is likely to suffer a strained ankle.

On our descent, we had chosen a likely looking ridge on the opposite side of Bowen's Creek, and it did in fact prove quite feasible, though breathtaking.

We reached Tessellate Hill at 11.30 duly admired the tessellated rock, and headed north along the main ridge between the Wollangambe and Bowen Creeks. A fascinating ridge that twisted and turned, exposing at one moment spectacular views of the Wollangambe and Bungleboori gorges to the west, and the next, relatively speaking, the Bowen Creek gorge to the east. In between times, one would find the ridge suddenly ending in bluffs several hundred feet high which would have to be traversed and after crossing a low saddle, more bluffs to be climbed from where the ridge would carry on.

We made four miles along the ridge in this roller-coaster fashion before we found a soak on the side of some bluffs and decided on lunch.

After lunch, we followed the main ridge for two more miles and then took up a long spur ridge leading boomerang fashion down to Bowen's Creek. The ridge narrowed, on one side a narrow gorge 600 feet deep and on the other the 1200 feet deep Bowen's Creek gorge, which from any angle looked pretty sheer.

Our ridge behaved admirably until the last 300 feet when it dropped abruptly into Bowen's Creek. With daylight fading fast it began to look like a dry camp with the just audible gurgle of the fast flowing creek to lull us to sleep. However after some frantic scratching around, Reg found a niche in the ridge's defences and the last 300 feet were covered in the time honoured method of sitting and sliding.

16.

More scratching around in the creek bed unearthed a comfortable sand spit. As this was a place obviously infested with all kinds of snakes, precautionary methods were duly taken while dinner was being assembled (and after). Dinner was garnished with legal anecdotes from Paul, and some free legal advice to those of us unfortunate enough to have had brushes with the law. Pete and Reg gave valuable advice, inter alia, on the many chemical problems that beset one day by day. Contributions from Grenman and Brooks were more mundane.

After breakfast and the traditional dumping of surplus food and equipment (buried, of course) we took off straight up the eastern wall of the gorge. From the ridge on the previous night this had looked fairly formidable, but the rock walls were well broken up and it was possible to find negotiable routes without trouble. The ridge actually went up in two 600' leaps, separated by half-a-mile of level going. From the top a really magnificent scene unfolded. Price's technique of changing socks at this stage was quite unnecessary as the panorama really demanded a protracted viewing. Below, the deep, narrow Bowen Creek gorge led the eye 10 miles southwards to Mt. Irvine, and 3 miles northwards to the Wollangambe junction, beyond which, in gradually deepening blue, was row upon row of ridges of the Colo country. On either side of our airy perch were 600' deep gullies leading sharply down to Bowen's Creek.

Reluctantly we turned our backs on all this and headed along the now level ridge leading around to Big Hill.

Near midday we found with a little effort a spring about 100' below the top of the ridge just short of Big Hill, and had a pleasant lunch garnished with more legal anecdotes of Paul's.

Immediately after lunch, we came across a well worn bush road obviously coming from Mt. Tootie, but going where? Dropping our packs, we followed it for three miles along a ridge towards Blacksmith's Creek, where it ended at a timber-getter's camp. A bulldozer track plummeted onwards and downwards towards the creek but time prevented further investigation. The sole occupant of the camp, obviously a victim of snake fright, had dosed heavily on the recommended precautionary treatment and was snoring happily and loudly in a nearby bus-cum-caravan and was thus unavailable for comment as to the camp's activities. In this state of ignorance we re-traced our steps to Big Hill and bashed the five miles back to Mt. Tootie.

By careful timing we were just able to make Kurrajong before it was turned off.

Appendix.

The following prescription for prevention of snake bite is largely a result of research done by Gilroy, who does, however, admit some assistance from an Arunta witch-doctor. Many subsequent trials have proved, without doubt, its efficacy.

Take 1 fl.oz. aqua forte or aqua ignis (these are available from any pharmacy. A cheaper substitute, preferred by many with a thrifty trend, can be found in the form of whisky or (shudder) rum - if you can stand the taste.) Add 1 gm. citric acid (or 6 drops lemon juice at a pinch), stir in 5 grms. sucrose (or 1 teaspoon sugar, if handy), add 2 fl. oz. aqua pura at 140°F. (hot water might just do). Stir slowly. Sip slowly. If doubtful, repeat. (I'm orright Jack.)

WEEKEND WALKS.

- JULY 21-22-23 Combined walk with Y.H.A.C.C.
 Blackheath* - Cox Turnoff - Cox's River - Billy Healy Hill -
 Black Jerry's - Devil's Hole - Katoomba.
 Varied river scenery. See the rugged granites of the Billy
 Healy - Gibraltar Creek area.
 Steep track walk up Black Jerry's ridge, pleasant ramble through
 Megalong, and final steep track through the Devil's Hole.
 Maps: Blue Mountains and Burratorang Tourist
 Katoomba Military.
 Leader: Frank Young.
- JULY 28-29-30 Blackheath - Car to Cox's River via Little Hartley - Cox's River -
 Megalong Creek - Devil's Hole - Katoomba.
 This trip follows Cox's River (beautiful river scenery) to the
 Megalong Creek junction. Medium walking until the Billy Healy
 bend where rock hopping and scrambling.
 Then scramble up through the Megalong Creek gorge (spectacular
 cascades over granites) to Megalong Valley. Steep climb out
 via Devil's Hole.
 Maps: Blue Mountains and Burratorang Tourist.
 Katoomba Military.
 Leader: Greg Grennan.
- AUGUST 4-5-6 Bell - Grose River - Victoria Falls - Mt. Victoria.
 (This will be a two-day walk, not 3-day as shown on the programme.)
 Rugged creek bash down the Grose from Bell to the Victoria Falls
 Creek, then easier going to the Falls, and climb out from the
 valley. Gaiters recommended.
 Map: Katoomba Military.
 Leader: Wilf Hilder.
- AUGUST 11-12-13 Wolgan Valley - Annie Rowan's Creek - Geetah Creek - Old Coach
 Road - Wolgan Valley.
 (Private Transport - fair dirt road into the Valley through
 the spectacular Wolgan Gap.)
 Explore the old shale mining town of Newnes. Pleasant track walk
 down the Wolgan to Annie Rowan's Clearing, roughish climb out on
 to the tops and return to Newnes via the Old Coach Road.
 (Note: Interesting alternative return route would be the old
 railway formation, with its cuttings, embankments and tunnels.)
 Leader: David Brown.

Katoomba Council is reported to favour the erection of a Snowless Ski Run
 at Katoomba. There'll be a few skinless ski runners around too, we should think.

FIRE TRAILS.

(Reported from various recent walks.)

The construction of fire trails has been noted in the following areas:-

ST. IVES from the end of Warrimoo Road through Kuringai Chase in a northerly direction to a point near the head of salt water in Cowan Creek.

KURINGAI CHASE from a point above the junction of Kuringai and Cowan (fresh water section) Creeks to the Mona Vale Road at Terrey Hills running close to Ryland Trig.

MEGALONG VALLEY branching off the road to Carlon's Farm just near the top of the hill up from Megalong Creek. The sign reads "Fire Trail to Medlow Gap". The road continues around the cliff line, over Galong Creek, past Carlon's Head, where the direction signs to Carlon's Head and to Carlon's Farm have already been damaged by vandals. It then crosses "Sliprail" and Breakfast (known to us as Glen Alan) Creeks, and continues up into Medlow Gap. At that point a notice proclaims a helicopter landing area and signposts direct to Kedumba, Kowmung, Black Dog, White Dog and Cox's River. The trail continues up over the shoulder to Mt. Mouin, but, as our party was bound for Splendour Rock, we branched off on to the track to Mt. Warrigal etc. The grades and curves on this road are a hazard for two wheel drive vehicles. In fact the grade up Mt. Mouin is marked "Four Wheel Drive Vehicles only" and, in wet weather, parts of the road become boggy enough to be difficult for even this type of transport".

ON THE BONNY BANKS OF THE GROSE.

During a chance conversation the other day the Conservation Secretary learned that there was land for sale at Grose Wold, on the banks of the Grose River. Just what we wanted to buy with the Era Fund. 139 acres, with a 1958 V.G. of £500! So off went Brian Harvey, Alex Colley and John White on Sunday, 2nd July, complete with cut lunches and thermos flasks. They soon found the block, which proved to have a very fine stand of re-growth trees at the top end, just alongside the last farm before going down the rough track towards Woods Creek Camp. As the block went down a gully developed, merging into a beautiful valley at the foot with wattles and green grass, reminiscent of the wattle groves at Euroka Clearing. Enough for a re-union mob of 200, with tons of firewood up the hill. There was an ancient house on a rocky shelf, very much the worse for vandalism and white ants. The old slab walls would provide a good camp fire. Round the house jonquils were coming into blossom - fragrant flowers at the tent door, just like home. The creek in the gully was dry - probably only runs after rain. What more could one ask? It was just what we've been waiting for for years. After lunch, the party had a yarn with the farming bod up at the top. Yes, the land was up for sale all right, and now in the hands of a local estate agent. He had heard, and this has now been confirmed, that an offer of £6,000 had been made.

The party cooled off in a violent thunderstorm on the way home.