

## THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the  
Sydney Bushwalker, The N.S.W. Nurses' Association  
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AT THE OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING.

J. Brown.

After the protracted and argumentative Half Yearly meeting one might have expected a brief and subdued gathering in October, but it was otherwise. Obviously the Club is once again growing vocal and vociferous, and it seems likely that we're going through another phase of animated debates.

Affairs got going at 8.15 with a welcome to three girl members - just to help redress the balance with all the young male members who have been admitted recently. Roslyn Perry, Wilma Bartlett and Christine Richards had taken the oath under sections 5 (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) (ee), (eee), (eeee), and what-have-you of the Constitution.

First we elected as Assistant Secretary Grace Wagg, and then after a minor correction at Ron Knightley's instigation, the minutes were signed, without any business deriving from them.

From Correspondence we learned that the Club's policy on parklands had been distributed to various authorities, most of whom had simply acknowledged the document. However the leader of the State Opposition said it had been referred to the joint Policy Committee of the Liberal Party, and there was a lengthy answer from National Park Trust, which specified all the pursuits that may be carried on under the charter of the Royal National Park. In spite of all these diverse activities, about 80% of the park had been preserved in an undeveloped state and consideration was being given to the designation of six places as primitive areas.

In a letter David Ingram had something to say of the discourtesy of members of walking parties who broke away from the party without a by-your-leave to the harassed leader. He suggested that he may have to give up leading day walks or bar certain troublesome people from his trips. In subsequent discussion Frank Ashdown said prospectives should not be condemned for getting astray, especially when in company of a member, until their version had been heard. The President and Ron Knightley both pointed out that no one was being condemned and this was not a witch hunt. All the Club was trying to do in bringing it under notice was to save the sanity of leaders and avoid unpleasant mishaps on trips.

Brian Harvey indicated that he wished to stand down as official telephone contact for the Club and we were told that Shirley Dean would take his place. There was also word of a souvenir postcard to be signed by the members of the Heard Island expedition and specially franked for postage at a cost of 5/-.

The Treasurer said we had established a record - for the first time in his tenure of office our ready cash stood at more than £200 - £215/11/- to be precise. He refused to be drawn into a forecast of his attitude towards subscriptions at the next Annual Meeting.

From the Walks Secretary we learned that September had been a fairly active month; a party of six led by Michael Short found Blatch's Pass from the Nattai to be elusive and finally came out via Starlight's Pass quite late on the Sunday. The same weekend misty conditions caused some difficulty to Bill Leach's party on Goolara Peak. In trying out some wild country near Mount Cameron, Dave Balmer and party thought "Deep Pass" too deep for a night walk and returned on Monday. David Ingram had a Sunday party of 24 through fine wildflowers around the back of Woy Woy.

The joint Instructional weekend on the Nattai brought out a total of 24 including 16 prospectives. Alan Round, doing a Grose River trip with 6 people found an uncooperative farmer in the Yarramundi area who objected to the party's use of a local road - enquiries are being made whether it is in fact a public road - and Betty Farquhar had 14 people in the Lake Eckersley area, where a Coal Board drilling rig seems to menace some of the bushland reserves.

Margaret Child, reporting a Parks & Playgrounds meeting, stated that most matters related to urban parklands, but there had been a reported comment by a councillor of Sutherland Shire that inroads would be made into National Park, and the movement had opposed the construction of more roads in the bushland near Warragamba.

Eddie Stretton told us the Christmas Party on 27th November would have an Oriental keynote and the President reminded us that we should be on the qui vive for alternative Reunion sites. Kath Brown suggested that such sites should not be too distant, nor too difficult of access for family groups - in fact Woods Creek still had a lot to commend it if we were content with a smaller fire. Jack Wren reported that the firewood situation there was growing very unsatisfactory and fewer people took part in hauling the logs each year.

The President advised that, following the Constitutional amendments made at the September meeting, Committee had resolved on the following procedural principles - (i) that on Instructional weekend walks instruction should be given in first aid, map reading, bushcraft and the general policy on conservation, and (ii) if prospective members missed the map reading or first aid lectures at such weekends, and could not satisfactorily answer the questions on these topics, they may find it necessary to attend another Instructional walk.

Frank Ashdown now presented the subject that contributed most to the night's argument: he said that too many prospectives, and indeed members, were not buying their own gear, but were relying on hiring the Club gear, and furthermore some failed to return it promptly. He therefore proposed a double-barellled motion - that no more big packs be bought and when replacement packs were needed, only day walk types be obtained: that a surcharge of 5/- be imposed on people who retained Club equipment beyond the time of hiring.

Gordon Redmond wanted to amend this to the effect that the Hirings Officer should have sole and undisputed right to issue the gear and could refuse hirings to any unsatisfactory hirer or anyone whom he considered should not need to hire. The President ruled this out of order and we settled down to debate the original. Phyllis Ratcliffe asked if the Club was out of pocket over the hirings and on finding we were not, asked why we wanted to change the procedure. Bob Godfrey opposed the motion - it was important to the membership people to be able to get gear for newcomers when needed. Although he sympathised with this attitude, Jack Wren supported the motion because he felt the Club should not supply gear to people for an indefinite time.

Bill Burke also proposed an amendment - that hirings be made to people during the first three months of their prospective membership, but this too, was held as being outside the proper ambit of the original motion. The motion was put and lost.

Gordon Redmond now presented his earlier amendment as a full-blown motion, but it was argued that this placed too heavy a responsibility on the Hiring Officer and might expose him to accusations of victimisation. So it, too, went down.

Now Ron Knightley came up with another variant, one which by-passed the salient features of Frank's original proposal (small packs only and sur-charge for keeping equipment overtime) and went straight to the point that people who should have their own gear were subsisting on hirings. He proposed that each new prospective be allowed six uses of the hiring service (irrespective of how many different items were hired on each occasion) and thereafter his name be deleted from the eligible list. In this form, and after some suggestions that it imposed rather a lot of extra recording on the part of the Hirings Officer, the motion was carried.

Little remained to be done: Frank Ashdown had one more comment - leaders sometimes criticized prospectives for coming on trips with the wrong type of clothing, footwear or equipment, but he considered it was the leader's function to advise beginners on this instead of complaining afterwards. Then the Room Stewards, who had been obliged to carry on for two months, were relieved, and the new guard set about closing windows even as the meeting ended at 9.55 p.m.

#### SNOWFIELDS TRANSPORT.

In a recent editorial we criticized the Kosciusko Park Trust for its inadequate snow-ploughing of the road to Smiggins. We have been told that this ploughing is entirely the responsibility of the Department of Main Roads. Our criticism was therefore misguided and we are sorry about this. Also, later in the season, with milder weather, the Snowfields Transport worked smoothly, so that our allegation of indifference on the part of Ansett Industries should be withdrawn. Our suggestion of panic and bungling during the heavy snowfall probably stands; it is armchair criticism, but other countries with longer roads and heavier snowfall don't seem to suffer a complete breakdown of transport.

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WATSON'S CRAGS - The Reconnaissance  
and the Big Climb.

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Ross Wyborn.

Since Putto's trip to Watson's Crags last Six Hour Weekend (1963) a bit of interest has been shown in the area by "would-be mountaineers". On Putto's trip, we approached the Crags from Guthega Dam and camped on the slopes of Tynam. This base camp proved to be too far from the Crags for any real climbing, so this year we decided to approach the Crags from the other side. Not knowing much of the western approach we decided to make a reconnaissance. Two weekends before the long weekend Rona Butler Michael White and I (members of the New Zealand Alpine Club) set out for the crags.

As we drove along "The Alpine Way" we caught our first glimpses of the Crags through the trees near Geehi. They looked very impressive, nearly 5000' feet above the valley and capped with a white mantle of snow. We crossed the Geehi River, had breakfast, and then drove on to the Bella Vista road to Olsen's Lookout taking in some of the finest mountain views in Australia. We piled out of the car at Olsen's and looked down into the Geehi River which we had to cross. From Olsen's Lookout (3300') we had a good view of what was in store for us. The trip to our planned base camp looked easy - it wasn't.

By 10.00 we were sauntering down the old road; we turned off at a trig and followed a zig-zag track to the river. Here we started across the raging river on a flying fox and then saw a suspension bridge further downstream. All back and across the bridge and up the long winding track to Watson's Camp (a surveyors camp). From here on we thought it would be easy but in actual fact the track wound about under and over granite outcrops and waterfalls and in and out of gullies. At 4.00 we arrived at Strzelecki Creek, where we intended to put base camp. We left our packs in the creek and Rona went up to have a look at the hut, while Mike and I decided to have a look at the snow.

We followed the creek up to about 4000' where we found the creek bed, - actually a small canyon - filled with snow. This, in a small way, resembled the snout of a glacier with broken hard snow. In places there were deep holes and cracks in the hard snow like crevasses. These were caused by the creek flowing underneath. The snow was fairly hard and we had to cut steps to round some waterfalls. In one place we got up a waterfall by means of a snow bridge. After kicking steps to 4,800 feet we returned to camp. Rona informed us that there was a good view from the hut, but we decided to camp in the valley so that we could get an early start next morning.

Next morning we meant to get up early but slept on till 6.15. At 6.45 Mike and I set off up the creek and up the line of steps we kicked the previous night. The narrow gully kept on going up and up. The higher we climbed the more we saw of Victoria until at 9.05 we walked over the crest of the broad top. We did not know where we were, but got our bearings by

Tynam Trig which was the next hill over. We had climbed the first bump on Watson's Crags and the altimeter read 7050'. The views were terrific but the wind was bitterly cold and forced us into our parkas and mitts. During the ascent we kept our eye open for other routes, and places for practice climbs. One of the best climbs looked to be up the Sentinel via the col behind it and a narrow corniced summit ridge. This was to be one of our objectives for the "Big Trip". We made a quick descent, sliding down on our behinds, our backs and our stomachs. When we reached base camp at 10.15 we found Rona still in her sleeping bag. We quickly gathered our goods and chattles and raced back along the track to the cars which we reached at 2. p.m.

The reconnaissance had been a success - so now to plan for the big trip. Throughout the following week the telephone rang madly. The list of starters steadily grew as Ken Horne, the other organiser, gave me more names. In all, the list totalled 32 starters some of which were skiing in from Guthega. Trying to fit them into cars was a hard job especially when people like Dave Balmer say "Yes, I'm going for sure and can take 3 others" then rings later and says "No, I can't come", then rings back later and says "I'm coming". In the end though we ended up with transport to spare.

In organising the transport, however, I made a large bungle - I put myself in Dave Balmer's car. Dave was leaving early, so I arranged to meet him outside Paddy's, and sure enough right on time the Balmer-mobile came bounding up the road. We were to pick up Don Wilcox (K.B.C.) at Central, and that's where the trouble started. Once the Balmermobile stops it doesn't want to go again. Pull off the carbi and fiddle around - and we're off - one hour later.

The trip down was uneventful (compared with the trip back that is) and we reached the Geehi River at about 2 a.m. Saturday morning. Here we had some sleep and got up at 6 a.m. We couldn't see the mountains which were covered by heavy cloud. We decided to drive the last 10 miles to Olsen's Lookout before breakfast. Away went the Balmermobile charging up the hill - then the accelerator cut out - roll back down and charge again - again we fail to get up - off with the carbi pull the fuel pump to bits, burble down the fuel line and have another go - then roll to the bottom again. Finally John Powell drove up with a spanner and some knowledge. After some time temporarily permanent repairs were made and we drove to Olsen's Lookout where it had stopped raining and was snowing.

Some of the other cars were there, and we all had opinions about the weather. At about 11.30 the column of blokes moved out as Duncan arrived in his car (another car was already lost). After we reached Watson's camp it began snowing heavily and the track was quickly covered. Some turned back to Watson's camp, while many grumbled, but all in all, it was something different to walk through the snowed-up forest. When we reached the hut at

canyon camp, we found two blokes there who had come earlier, and did not expect us to show up as they said you would have to be made to come up in this weather. The hut had three bunks so we cramped in 12 people and put 4 in the laundry. That night most of us lay awake listening to the rats eating our food - two to a bunk is bad enough but three is absolute hell especially when Duncan is one of them.

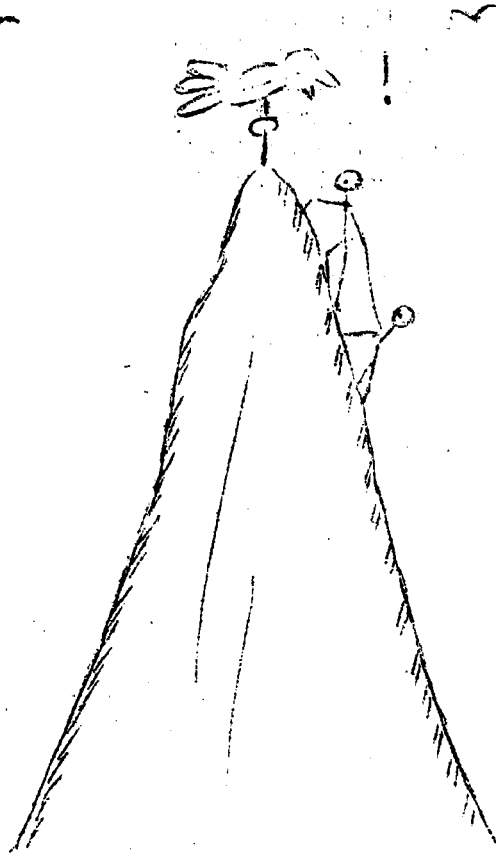
Sunday was the day of the Big Climb so we woke at 6.00, saw that the weather was bad and climbed back into bed. There was some good news however, the rats had only eaten Duncan's food and not touched anybody elses. This was the big day so I will give a graphic description:-

- 7.00 - Duncan sleeping on right side.
- 8.00 - Jim Jellybean snoring soundly.
- 9.00 - Duncan changed to left side.
- 10.00 - Dave Lambert starts reading an exciting book.
- 11.00 - Duncan is up! Duncan is up - he has to go outside.
- 12.00 - Duncan is back in bed and some people start out for the other hut.
- 1.00 - Duncan has his boots and parka on and is about to start out for the other hut. Meanwhile a couple of rays of sun provoke a snowball fight between the others. ~
- 2.00 - Duncan returns to the hut with Ron and Jack Pedigrew - they are enthusiastic and coach some of the others into climbing up as far as they can go.

A group of the keener ones then headed up the creek we had climbed two weeks earlier. It had changed considerably in those two weeks, and was harder to climb as we had to take to the sides to get around the waterfalls. The snow bridge by which we climbed the biggest waterfall was gone leaving a hole some 20 or 30 feet deep. Here it could be seen that the snow was about 20 ft. thick. This time it was a hairy climb up the side. Higher up the gully we ran into dry powder snow on which we could make no fast progress so we decided to call it a day. (The clouds still hid the tops). We then slid down head first on our backs using our feet to push.

Back at the hut the others were still in bed. That night the numbers in the hut had eased and we had an entertaining evening. First off, Duncan performed some magic tricks - he finally got one to work after 5 goes. Jack Pedigrew gave us one of his magic tricks and then we had a few songs and Peter Ryman led us on a rat hunt with ice axes. He missed on the only good shot we had.

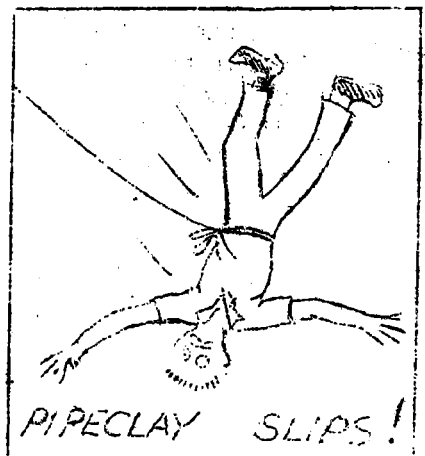
Next morning people left in dribs and drabs and made their own way back to the cars, leaving two, who were staying for the week, behind. The trip had ended for most people but not for us, we had to travel home in the Balmermobile - "How to become a mechanic in three 'easy' trips". How many times it broke down I wouldn't like to say, but after about 14 hours we arrived in Sydney.



WHAT! YOU AGAIN.

L'L SWEETIE NUGGETHEART.

MEANWHILE, ON THE NOTORIOUS SOUTH -  
EAST FACE OF BANKS, IT IS OWL  
PIPECLAY'S TURN TO CLIMB WHILE  
PEEWEE CARROTNOGGIN BELAYS



PIPECLAY SLIPS!

CONTINUED



# PADDY MADE

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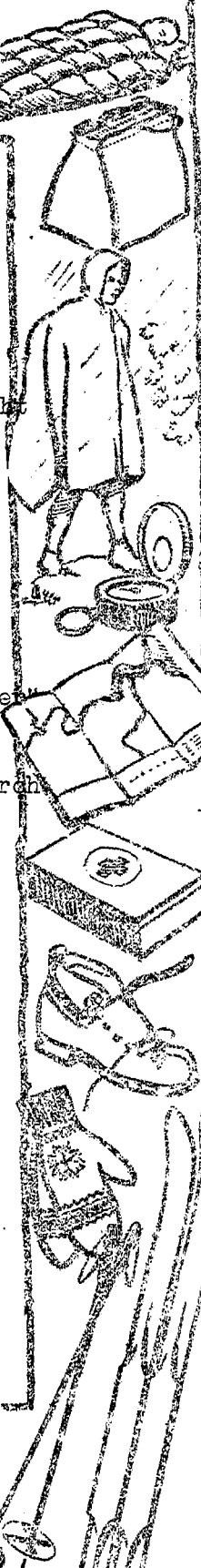
Rightly or wrongly there is no doubt that many of today's walkers are prepared to carry more weight than the walker of yesteryear.

The popular and practical way to carry this weight without any apparent extra effort is with the "square" or "H" framed pack.

Our "mountaineer" model and "pathfinder" model have both proved themselves, in the tradition of Paddy made gear, to be rugged, well-made and practical.

It is a fact that there have been twenty improvements made between the present "mountaineer" and the first model. These are the results of our own thoughts and the helpful suggestions made by experienced walkers. This sort of research and willingness to co-operate with walkers in producing the gear they want is why most walkers find Paddy made gear is best.

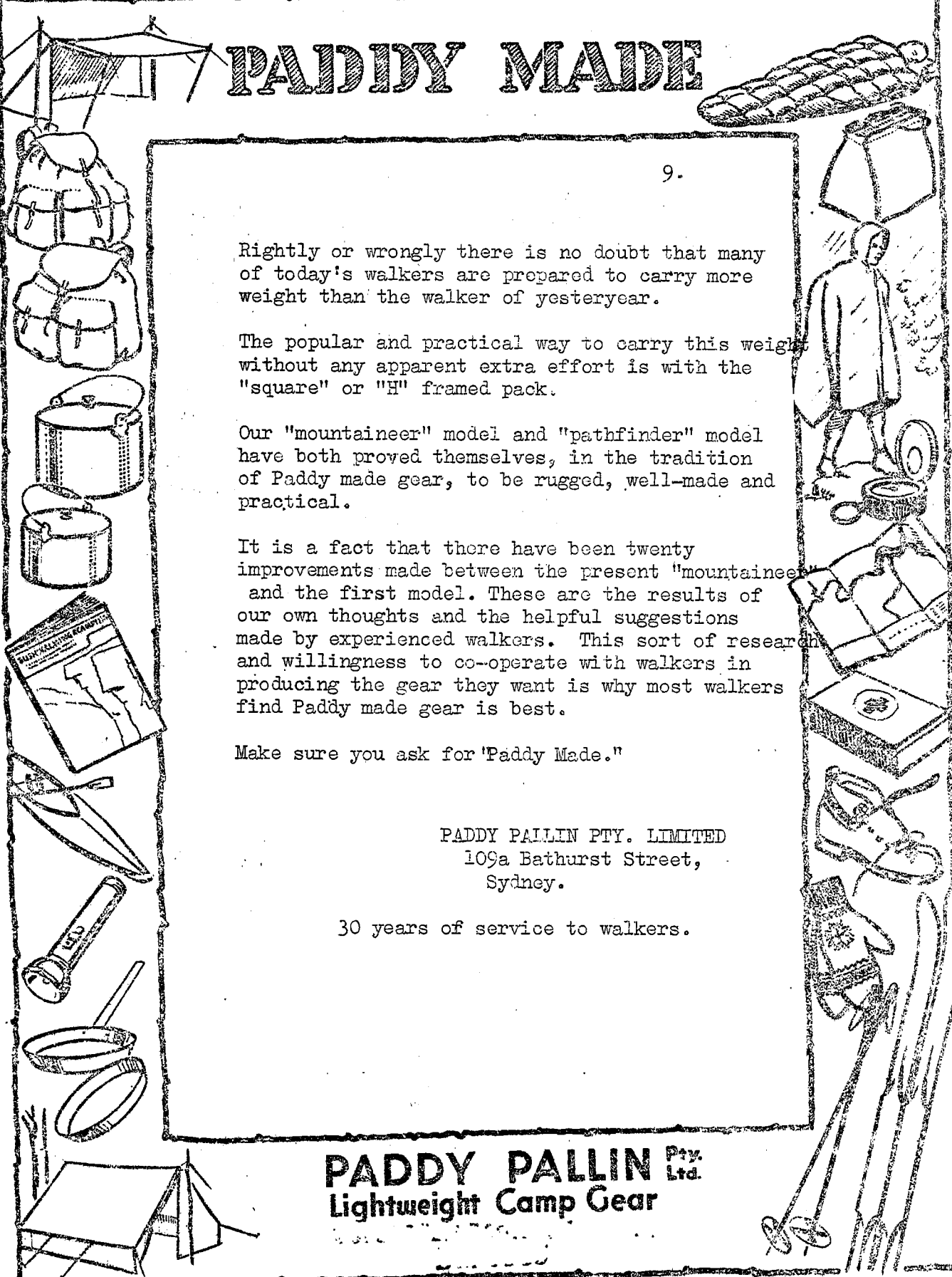
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9.

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Lightweight Camp Gear

TRAVERSE OF THE AIGUILLE DU GREPON (11,424 ft)

Dot Butler.

I am lying on my sleeping bag in the sun in a flower strewn meadow above the beautiful valley of Chamonix in the French Alps. Over the range lies Italy. Like tiny dolls' houses the chalets and church spires dot the valley floor. On either side dark green fir trees clothe the foothills. Above the tree line are the treeless high pastures, rock strewn and cut by clear cold streams which arise in the snowfields above. The high pastures give way to stark rugged peaks scarred with scree runnels, and above these rise the eternal snows of Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in Europe (15,781 ft.), Aiguille de Midi,, Aiguille Blatiere, Aiguille de Grepon and Grand Chamonix. They look so close you would think a half hour's walk would bring you to them. High up here within this magic circle of mountains, arched over by a crystal blue sky, my nose among the daisies and buttercups and ethereal blue gentians, with all the keen rich smell of the upland air mine, life is so glorious my hand loses its power to write and the pen drops from my fingers while I absorb its beauty in silence. Not a sound to be heard but the whispering rush of mountain torrents, the far away tinkle of a cowbell or goatbell, the distant bleat of a sheep, the occasional whirr of wings as a questing insect burrows in the heart of a flower. Two climbers have just topped the rise, silhouetted against the mountain backdrop, iceaxes sticking up out of their packs, point upward. They pass through my little green hollow. "Bonjour Messieurs," "Jour Madam," "Jour Madam," with that slight inclination of the head that makes the French so charming.

Three days ago I met up with Ron Cox, an Australian member of the New Zealand Alpine Club, who is now over here as a student of Physics at the University of Grenoble - only a couple of hours away by bus. He had at first suggested we do a grand traverse of the Aiguille du Midi and the Aiguille du Plan - a glorious snow ridge walk giving one views of the Mer de Glace and its surrounding peaks, but as I had no crampons with me this would not have been practicable so we decided on what is considered the most classic rock climb in the area - the Grepon, 11,424 ft. of rock, first climbed in 1881 by the famous mountaineer A.F. Mummery. In the Guide Book this is classified as D. meaning difficult, but not so difficult as an S (Severe) or B.I. (an Australian term denoting the highest degree of impossibility.)

We stayed the night at a little mountain refuge two miles from Chamonix at the foot of Mont Blanc whose snowy dome towered above us. A number of rabbits, white, brown, black and yellow nibbled the meadow grass tamely at our feet. The Alps are dotted with such refuges which give cheap accommodation to climbers in the form of a roof over their heads and a

bench on which to put their primuses and cook their food, and long community bunks with straw-filled mattresses and cylindrical pillows resembling duffel bags. In our downstairs bunkroom were two such bunks each accommodating 12 people, and the same again upstairs; so at the height of the season 50 to 80 people can be crammed into the one small hut. As "la saison" is now almost over we had the downstairs to ourselves, with another party of four above.

At 6 p.m. we ate our croissants and cream de volaille with a good billy of Australian tea to finish off with and by 8 o'clock were asleep in the straw with my watch between us, and a torch nearby, so we could be sure to wake by 1.30 and away by 2 a.m. I slept very lightly, but that didn't matter - I've been having too much sleep on this luxury tour. At 1.30 we got out of our sleeping bags and cooked a billy of partridge while we pulled on our boots, and soon after 2 we were away by moonlight along a faint track through the meadows and scree runs and moraine, till we came to the foot of the Nantillons Glacier about dawn. There was about 1,000 ft of this to ascend, and, as I didn't have crampons, it was slow going as Ron had to go ahead cutting steps for me in the steep parts. From the highest point of the glacier we crossed the rimaye (bergschrand) and got onto the rock at the foot of a couloir dividing Grand Chamonix from the Grepon, and as it was now 8 a.m. it looked to me as though a couple of hours would see us on the summit. However, there is something very deceptive about height when you are looking upwards and midday came and went with us still climbing up and up through lines of chimneys, over slaps, through openings like windows in the rock onto platforms, mere upward sloping cracks called rateaux de chevre (goat walks). The skyline shows as a notched ridge. We climbed the First Pinnacle and the Second (a square tower known as the Carree). The Third (Baton Wicks) is not normally climbed, so we skirted this and proceeded by a sideways traverse towards the Fourth Pinnacle. In lots of the steep, ravine-like chimneys one finds loops of cord attached to a fixed piton, indicating places where people climbing have given up and abseiled down. They are also useful for people traversing in the opposite direction.

The most difficult pitch on the whole 11,000 odd ft. or mountain is the Mummery Crack, almost vertical, very narrow so it is difficult to swing the ice axe to cut steps, filled with blue ice and verglas (thin layer of ice on rock, incredibly slippery), and for us lightly topped with powder snow from a fall the night before. The exposure is such that a fall from here would take you right down to the Nantillons Glacier. Ron surveyed it while I held him belayed to a rock on one side of the wall. He didn't like what he saw. "Let's call it off," said I, not wishing to egg any promising young man on to what might be his death. At that lonely height a pair of black choughs flew agitatedly up and down a nearby chute - we must have been near their nest. They looked like Japanese bird kites, planing on fullspread wings. We wryly watched the ease of their flight while we pondered the disappointing climax of our climb. Just then we

heard voices below us and two young French boys came into view looking very workmanlike in red and white crash helmets. We made way for them to have a try in the crack. Things didn't look promising. Eventually we hit upon the only possible means of surmounting the difficult: I belayed Ron over a chasm to the foot of the crack, and one of the French boys belayed his partner from a stance further up the chimney, till he was able to reach Ron. Then in this airy position Ron braced himself with his crampons in the icy crack while the French boy climbed onto his shoulders and was able to gain the extra four or five feet he needed to reach a handhold up the crack. We belayers watched with bated breath as he inched his way up the verglas, eventually he disappeared out of sight. At last a welcome shout came down to us. He had made it! He brought his partner up, then they let down their red rope to us and we fixed ours on and up went Ron. In the struggle he had dropped a glove. I could see it on a ledge about 15 ft below. One doesn't leave essential bits of one's equipment decorating the mountain side, so while Ron held the rope firmly up above I swung across the narrow gorge and was able to retrieve the glove. There was nowhere else to put it, so I put it between my teeth. Then by dint of herculean pulling and struggling at length I reached the boys. All my fingers went white and numb in the cold powder snow and it took a long time to thaw them out. Ron thought he was getting a frost bitten toe.

After the Crack Mummery nothing could be too difficult and soon we were over the Fourth Pinnacle and descended to a lodge about 3 ft. wide called the Vire aux Bicyclettes, or Cycle Track. By the time Ron and I reached this the two French boys had gone on and ascended the highest pinnacle; I could see one of them looking out over the Valley of Chamonix. When I looked up some ten minutes later he was still there in the same position, with his arms raised as in blessing over the distant village. "Soon we will be to La Sainte Vierge," said Ron. "What's that?" said I. "It's a statue of the Virgin, put there by mountaineers years ago. It's a light alloy - aluminium or stainless steel or some such."

So the mystery was solved; it was not our French companion I could see, but La Vierge. She is a beautifully wrought figure, larger than life size, standing in eternal benediction over her people in the valley below.

It was now 4 o'clock. It looked as though we would be in need of some sort of heavenly help if we were to get off our mountain before dark. 6 p.m. found us off the last Pinnacle. In the last gleam of daylight before the sun dipped behind the far hills we arrived at a sloping platform about 4 to 5 yards wide, and here at 11,000 ft. we decided to spend the night. We drove pitons into a convenient crack and tied ourselves on. We put on all the spare clothes we had, (one of the French boys had a sleeping bag; he must have expected a night out), ate what little food we had left - 2 biscuits, some chocolate peanuts and a drink of orange juice - and by 9 p.m. settled down to a cold and broken doze, with hips cradled in a coil of rope and feet

in our packs. The next seven hours passed thus, raising our hands from our stone pillow to admire the incredible brightness of the stars which diminished in brightness when the moon rose about 2 a.m. We consulted the watch every couple of hours - as if this would make the time pass quicker. We rubbed our arms and legs and hands and toes, making sure we could feel them, otherwise it would be a case of frostbite. About 4 a.m. I woke from a dead sleep to see the dawn signs in the eastern sky. The French boys broke into jubilant song. We put on our boots, ate our last square of chocolate, roped up and prepared to descend, having first tried out our legs to see how stiff and tottery they were.

Glancing down to the glacier a movement caught my eye. It was the extraordinary spectacle of a line of about 24 climbers, all evenly spaced, winding up the glacier in single file. Ron was worried. "It could be the French Alpine Rescue Squad. They are terribly conscientious. One mere hint from a relative that a climber has not returned and they are on the job. They go out plucking failed climbers off peaks with a helicopter and the failed climber pays all expenses whether he wants to be rescued or not."

However, as the first move is generally a helicopter reconnaissance Ron decided these were members of the Ecole National of Ski and Alpinism, based at Chamonix. When later they crossed our track, we found this to be so. They had a serious loss a few weeks ago when fourteen of them were wiped off all together by an avalanche of powder snow.

Movement restored function to our cold limbs, and about two hours saw us off the rocks and on to the top of the Glacier. A couple of hours down this, thawing out into life under the sun's welcome rays, and we reached a hummock of rock called the Rognonde Nautillons. Past this hummock flowed the great sweep of the glacier, overhung by great walls of ice now becoming precarious under the sun's heat. By going over the Rognonde instead of down the lower end of the glacier we avoided these impending ice falls. We had three or four 100 ft. abseils and eventually came out on the lower moraine. Then the long plod back to the Refuge. Ron hurried on ahead to let the Warden know all was well, and so nig any suggested search party in the bud.

Back at the Refuge we flaked out in the green meadow. Ah, what luxury! When we came to we ate some lunch, then Ron departed to catch his bus back to Grenoble and work. I spent another night at the Refuge, and after a glorious sleep and sunbake among the daisies this morning I went to Chamonix to catch the train back to Lyons. Tomorrow we go to Bordeaux and spend a week in the farming country, and then off to Paris. "You will find Paris most interesting," said a young American student who shared the hut with me last night. It is a sick city. There are more psychotics to the hectare than in any other city in Europe."

Ah, well, we will take the world as we find it, and thank our stars for this short stay in the clean vital glory of the hills.

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U.S. CONGRESS ADOPTS S.B.W. CONSERVATION POLICY.

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Critics of S.B.W. National Parks policy would do well to study recent U.S. legislation, which gives effect to all the principles we recently affirmed. In a recent issue "The Economist" reports:

"After years of relative disinterest, Congress has leapt enthusiastically to the call of the wild. Both houses have approved two Bills which, to the triumphant Secretary to the Interior, Mr. Udall, constitute the most important steps taken toward conserving America's natural resources in 25 years. In fact the House of Representatives, in providing for more than nine million acres of isolated terrain to be set aside as "permanent wilderness," was moved to unaccustomed poetry; the 54 specified areas will be those where "earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." This is a far cry from the usual fate of conservation Bills in the House; since 1949 such legislation has been doomed by the bitter opposition of mining, oil, grazing and lumber interests."

S.B.W. policy is that national parks should be kept primitive and that mining and commercial interests should be excluded. But although we think national parks should be kept in their natural state we believe also that provision should be made for those who want developed recreational facilities. This we say should be provide in special recreational areas, not in National Parks. The U.S. legislation appears to give effect to exactly this concept. "For those who prefer their wilderness modified by ski lifts, running water and an occasional hot-dog stand" a Land and Water Conservation Fund has been created, to buy scenic stretches for development as public recreation areas.

Ranchers, prospectors and commercial enterprises already established will be allowed to remain in the wilderness areas for a limited time. Otherwise, there will be no roads, except the barest minimum and motorised equipment will be banned.

The Legislation also recognises that it is not enough to preserve for public recreation only those land remnants which are useless for anything else. Over the next 25 years a five billion dollar fund is to be accumulated from admission fees, charges for the use of camp sites etc. Forty per cent of this fund will be used to buy additions to the national park lands.

HISTORIC KIANDRA.

- Bill Gillam

"1872 - the place itself is fallen into decay since the comparative failure of the diggings, and is said to be a deserted looking spot now."

Kiandra has always been the poor relation of the snow fields. It is low, it thaws nearly every day, and none of the slopes are very steep. Sometimes, I am told, you can stand at the ski club and not see snow in any direction; other years they ski over the fences. In this year of grace and remarkable snow falls you could ski off the pub roof -- which seems a poor use for such a necessary structure. One advantage of the place is that it is on the Snowy Mountains Highway and a reasonable effort is made to keep the road open and the mails going through. Having been twice baulked at getting to the snow earlier in the year, the prospect of getting to booked accommodation with some measure of certainty was appealing even if it meant slumming. I was warned I might need chains just for the last bit up to the hut. This year perhaps for the last mile or two, say from Rocky Plains. At Cooma the SMA advised me not to go any further; the road was drifting faster than they could clear it. The sun was shining in Cooma. The girl in the Information Centre was a bit wet. My car was worn out so it wouldn't do it any harm to be stuck in a drift for a week or so. Onwards!

It was snowing at Adaminaby. At the Main Roads camp there was a blizzard, four tourist buses and a thousand school kids throwing snowballs. The snow plows hadn't turned up from its morning patrol and certainly there was enough snow to deter the bus drivers who, I learnt later, didn't know how to put on chains. I didn't either. An hour later and much colder and wetter my chains were on and I was following the plow. Onwards! The plow stopped twice. Once to pull back a car from a downhill swing begun with much confidence and then to pull down to the road a station wagon herring-boning into a drift with very little confidence. The driver of the wagon had turned to laugh at the plight of the first car. Oh fatal Vanity. His wheels were at least three feet above the bitumen, the chassis encased in ice.

At the halfway mark, from the Main Road camp to Kiandra say five miles MY plow turned back after assuring me that the road ahead had been cleared no more than half an hour previously. All I could see was about a foot of drift in an open cut of snow about eight or nine feet high. The road certainly was not to be seen; I drove in a white world with orange markers reputedly showing the edge of the bitumen. At Rocky Plains no rocks showed. My parka hood was full of snow, the wipers had frozen when the plow went back and coughed snow over the car and myself. When I could drive in second gear I knew I was in a valley. Kiandra is in a valley. Now where is the hut. I stopped and peered through the murk. Ah, a building and up the slope a red flag. We'll keep the red flag flying. Under the lee of the Youth Hostel there was a hole in the snow obviously vacated by a car. In first gear I charged the windrow of bull-dozer ice and stopped with the bonnet in a wall of snow ten feet high. At last I was in Kiandra,

close to the booked accommodation and off the road. There was a line of slalom flags going towards the hut, a stamped trail between the flags and deep, very deep holes for those who didn't believe in stamped trails. There was a tunnel down to the entrance. I burst, an abominating snow man, into the common room. Someone put a glass of claret into my hand to bring me to room temperature and someone else put a plate of steaks into the other hand to reduce the load on the refrigerator. When I could talk politely, that is with only one cheek full of food, I learnt:

- (1) It was the right hut.
- (2) The T bar was so snowed under it might be springtime before they found it.
- (3) Everyone was doing a cross country to the pub as soon as I was ready.

The blizzard blizzed for three of my four precious days. The morning of my fourth day the sun shone, the road was a ribbon of licorice laid on ice cream and the T bar was going to start in the afternoon. I skied across to the lift and watched the operator dig. The sky clouded over. I started to blizz. In the gloom I retraced my steps.

They were, at least parallel tracks.

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#### SOCIAL NOTES FOR NOVEMBER.

Many Bushwalkers will remember a visit to our Club by John Freeland about 3 years ago. By request he is returning on 18th November to tell us about "Bull Ants." Those who heard him previously will no doubt welcome his return visit while those who have not yet made his acquaintance are in for a treat.

It seems to be the thing each November to have a Kowmung Night. It is opportune at this time of the year to have such a night since so many walkers "do" the Kowmung in the heat of the Xmas-New Year holidays. A good night with brand new slides can be recommended and Frank Leyden's entertaining commentary is sure to please.

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#### 1964 S. B. W. CHRISTMAS PARTY.

WHEN? FRIDAY 27th November. WHERE? North Sydney Council Chambers.

TICKETS? £1/1/0 Each. DANCING - 8 p.m. - 1 a.m.

FANCY DRESS? - ORIENTAL.

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LITERARY SUPPLEMENT.MAWSON.

Bill Gillam.

When Sir Douglas Mawson died in 1958 the last of the three great English speaking Antarctic explorers departed from the scene. It is hard to realise that this man who lived so long after Scott and Shackleton had become immortalised was a member of Shackleton's 1907 expedition and with Professor Edgeworth David reached the South Magnetic Pole in the same year that Shackleton reached 88 degrees 7 minutes south. Mawson was then twenty five, yet his maturity, confidence and competence were already impressive. Indeed through all his journeys these qualities were the thin bulwark against total disaster. Edgeworth David was over fifty and Dr. Mackay tended to loose hope; Mawson assumed leadership. Their journey, of 1260 miles of which 740 miles was relay work was the longest unsupported sledge journey ever attempted.

Mawson's widow Lady Pacquita Mawson, has added substantially to the literature on the man with her biography, amply illustrated by Frank Hurley photographs. There are great dangers in writing of a person so closely related yet Lady Mawson seems to have avoided such pitfalls. The publication of letters adds to our knowledge of Mawson and reinforces the universal regard in which he was held. From one such letter, Mawson to Captain Scott, we see him declining to go on Scott's last voyage, his actual trip to the pole, on the grounds that the Commonwealth Government had refused funds for the expedition. Mawson refused even to begin to raise funds until Scott was well on his way, and then deliberately chose to explore an area now known to be of appalling difficulty, so he would embarrass neither Scott nor Amundsen. So by kindness his tracks were led to the heroic Eastern Journey which cost the lives of his two companions.

Mawson was engaged to be married before he left and the letters he wrote to his fiancée in the years 1911-14 reveal the doubts and fears he suffered during the long winters. They were married on his return, spending a honeymoon in England where he went to report to the Royal Geographic Society, to receive its medals, to be knighted by the King, and to offer condolences to the relatives of those who died on his, and Scott's expeditions. The triumph of the Mawsons in England was stopped by the outbreak of war.

The war years were strenuously occupied by Mawson's attempts to pay for the cost of the expedition, while pursuing the life of a geological professor exploring South Australia. The subsequent BANZARE voyages, the Mawson Laboratories and the School of Economic Geology occupied him for a further forty years.

Lady Mawson brings to her pages a notable collection of Australians. Her father, G.D. Delprat was for many years the genius behind the rise of B.H.P. Dr. John Hunter, one of our early skiers and for many years Federal Secretary of the BMA was on the 1911-14 expedition. Cecil Madigan famous for his explorations of Central Australia was a Rhodes Scholar. Charles Laserson, Frank Hurley, T. Harvay Johnstone all achieved prominence in their own fields. Mawson of the Antarctic is published by Longmans, London. It suffers from inadequate proof reading.

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DAY WALKS.

- NOV.22. Helensburgh - Burgh Track - Stockyard Crk - Era Beach - Burgh Ridge - Otford.- 12 miles.  
Plenty of ups and downs on this walk. Now that the Burgh Track has been re-cut between the Hacking River Crossing and Mainard's Farm, the going is easier, but Stockyard Creek is a scramble, even if picturesque.  
Train: 8.42 a.m. Wollongong train from Central Steam Station to Helensburgh. Tickets: Otford return @ 8/-. Map: Pt.Hacking Tourist.  
Leader: Jack Gentle.
- NOV. 29. Sutherland - Woronora River - Engadine. 6 miles.  
An easy stroll along the Woronora River including a visit to the historic Sabagul Crossing of the Woronora used by the road to Wollongong constructed by Major Mitchell in 1842 - 1844.  
Train: 8.50 a.m. Cronulla train from Central Electric Station to Sutherland. Tickets: Engadine return @ 5/6. Map: Port Hacking Tourist. Leader: Dick Child.

The December - February Walks Programme has not been completed at the time of going to press, but the proposed outings are:

- Dec. 6 - Children's Christmas Outing.  
Dec. 13. Rudolph Cup Boating Rac.

For further details, see the Walks Secretary about the middle of November or watch for your New Alks Programme.

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FEDERATION REPORT.

Search and Rescue Demonstration on October 17-18. At one stage during the organisation of this function, consideration was given to abandoning it owing to lack of interest. However, about 200 turned up at the spot on the Grose River including representatives of Canberra Clubs and the Police Rescue Squad. The Federation President commented that, instead of a general exodus by car from the camp spot as the last item finished, he would have appreciated some assistance in cleaning up the camp site. This important duty will need attention at any future Demonstration.

Annual Ball. Faddington Town Hall has been booked tentatively for the 1965 Bushwalkers' Ball, but in view of the unsatisfactory public address system and the lack of cleanliness in portion of the Hall this year, other locations will be considered.

Secretary. Graham Mitchell, the Federation Secretary, has resigned as he has been transferred to Auckland, New Zealand. Nominations for a new Secretary are requested from Club's for the December Meeting.

Belmore Policy Boys' Club has requested Federation to provide a leader for a walk in the Royal National Park during early January 1965. Arrangements are being made to provide the leader.

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October, 1964

The Sydney Bushwalker

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9	¾	3979	1-19/20
10	13/32	4967	2-2/5
11	7/16	6071	2-9/10

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8	£7.19.0	£10.10.0	£13.2.0
9	£8.15.0	£11.11.0	£14.13.0
10	£10.7.0	£13.14.0	£16.19.0
11	£12.2.0	£15.18.0	£20.2.0

Colours.

6½ mm Ø yellow with blue check threads, above 6½ mm. Ø orange with black check threads.

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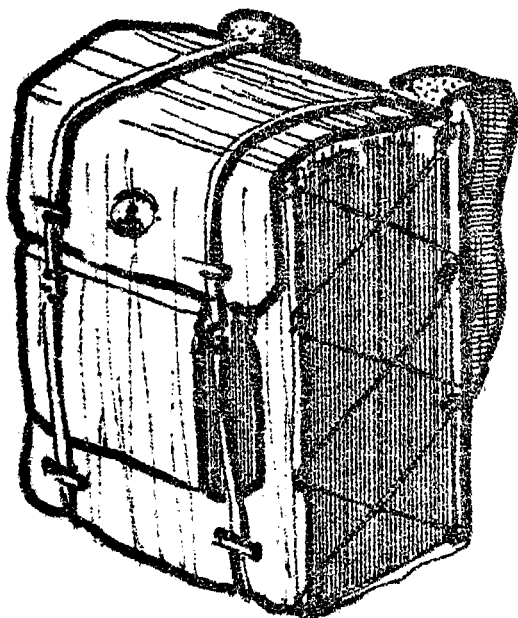
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