

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to
the Sydney Bushwalker, the N.S.W. Nurses'
Association Rooms "Northcote Building," Reiby
Place, Sydney.
Box No. 4476, G.P.O. Sydney. 'Phone 843985.

Editor - Bob Duncan, C.S.I.R.O. Camden.
Camden - 69251.

Business Manager - Alex. Colley.

360

DECEMBER, 1964

Price 1/-

C O N T E N T S .

	<u>Page.</u>
November (Extraordinary)	
General Meeting - J. Brown	2
Badgery's to Bungonia Trip - Kerry Hore	5
Paddy's Ad.	7
Lord! Howe! - Puffing Billy	8
Extract of letter from Jack Debert	15
L'il Sweetie Nuggetheart.	15
Editorial	16
Social Notes	16
Mountain Equipment Ad.	17
Klimpton Ad.	18

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Business Manager - Alex. Colley.

Price 1/-

Page.

November (Extraordinary)	
General Meeting - J. Brown	2
Badgery's to Bungonia Trip -	
Kerry Hore	5
Paddy's Ad.	7
Lord! Howe! - Puffing Billy	8
Extract of letter from Jack Debert	15
L'il Sweetie Nuggetheart.	15
Editorial	16
Social Notes	16
Mountain Equipment Ad.	17
Klimpton Ad.	18

AT THE NOVEMBER (EXTRAORDINARY) GENERAL MEETING.

- Jim Brown.

The notice said it would be an Extraordinary Meeting, and in fact it was, because even the most garrulous withheld other chatter to allow the maximum time to be given to discussion of the Bendethera project. So soon as the meeting was opened the President gave due notice that a suspension of standing orders would be sought before normal "general business" was dealt with.

We saw that Grace Wagg had taken up her portfolio as Assistant Secretary, and once new member Kerry Hore had been welcomed, we plunged into Minutes and then reports with a fine flourish. The hint had been taken and there was no business arising; even when the Treasurer disclosed current funds were up again to £220 no one tried to provoke him into a forecast of his views on subscription.

Walks Report indicated that 78 members and 20 prospectives had joined official trips during October, including about 20 S.B.W. at the Search and Rescue demonstration weekend. Eddie Stretton's Social Forecast showed only 15 definite takers for the Christmas Party, though catering arrangements for 60 were in train.

Federation Report mentioned the drafting of the National Parks Act, and the hope that it would come before the House shortly. In response to an enquiry from the Tracks and Access Committee, proposing a walking trail from Megalong to Glenbrook, our club's committee had expressed disapproval of the first stage, which would involve enlarging the old mining shaft through Narrow Neck Peninsula. Safety considerations were the main reasons.

Parks and Playgrounds report covered moves to have 200 acres near Bundeena added to the Royal National Park and the expressed view of the Movement that restricted entry into Water Catchment Areas should be granted.

Slightly out of sequence - but perhaps deliberately to tie it in with the main business of the evening - came correspondence, including recent exchanges with Mr. Rankin, owner of the Deua River properties, who had in mind offering the land for sale by public auction at Braidwood towards the end of November. An invitation to become an Honorary Club Member had gone to Mr. Tony Carlon of Barallier. Jenny Grace, leaving for New Zealand, had been granted non-active membership, and we had written to National Park Trust, expressing satisfaction with the establishment of primitive areas within the Park.

Came the main argument of the evening and the time only 8.35 p.m. The President summarised the history of investigation at Bendethera and negotiations with Mr. Rankin. Mick Elfick then formally moved that the Club purchase the land in the vicinity of Bendethera Homestead, using as a nucleus the Era funds. He produced aerial photographs and maps showing the areas and pointed out that Forestry areas covered the land to the east, and most of the other adjoining territory was uncommitted Crown lands. It was suggested that, in order to separate the Bendethera area from other holdings down river, an approach should be made to Mr. Rankin before the auction.

Jack Gentle asked the position regarding rates and Mick Elfick replied that, on a valuation of £800 this would be about £30 per annum. There did not appear to be any pest plants that would need to be controlled or eradicated. In answer to Greg Grennan he said there was an old slab hut - no other buildings and to Alan Round he said there were no adjoining properties, and so no fencing problems.

The question of finance was raised and Gordon Redmond mentioned the Club's £400 of special bonds which could be realised on fairly easily and Malcolm McGregor reported that donations amounting to about £250 had already been promised.

Frank Ashdown said he opposed the scheme because of its remoteness. Era had been easy to reach but the Deua was accessible only to people with cars. Bob Duncan said a closer area would be preferable, but prices were prohibitive, and Alex Colley gave an example - a block near Woods Creek, rather rough and stony - official valuation about £500 - the amount wanted by its owner somewhere near £6000. He also mentioned that Myles Dunphy felt we could not exercise much control over a property on the Deua.

Malcolm McGregor said the Deua was accessible to people without their own cars - it was a fascinating area, and the Bendethera block could well be the hub of a National Park - but not if it came into the wrong hands. In the control of a conservation minded group it was unlikely that any undesirable "improvements" would take place in the rest of the valley. If the block were later resumed and included in a Park, we may get enough money to buy a block at Castlecrag.

The gag was moved and after Mick Elfick, in his reply, said he believed fairly frequent visits by walkers would give sufficient "policing" of the area, his motion was carried 74 to 2.

Several motions regarding the mechanics of purchase followed. Malcolm McGregor pointed out that donors to a Bendethera fund should know some concrete conditions and proposed that any contributions should be on the understanding that administration would be in the hands of S.B.W. If

at a later date the land was resumed, the donors may receive back their contributions and the remainder should be held for future conservation purposes, as was done with the Era funds. If the Bendethera project did not succeed then the donor's money be returned and the Era funds held against later possible purchases.

Discussion followed on the amount that our envoys should be authorised to offer Mr. Rankin. Wilf Hilder raised some questions which he had not been able to put forward on the main motion earlier because of the closure - he understood rates might be as high as £100 per annum and the total price in the order of £1,500 to £2,000. Mick Elfick said that may be true of all Mr. Rankin's Deua property, but our aim was the 800 acres at Bendethera only and in 1956. £650 was the price for that portion.

Gordon Redmond suggested there was no immediate need to assemble funds. If our offer was taken up the legal processes would give time to collect promised donations. He felt sure the Club could meet the annual changes at about £30 p.a. The proposals put forward by Malcolm McGregor were

We came back to the amount of the offer. Alex Colley moved that it be the amount subscribed in the Bendethera Fund (including the nucleus Era moneys) plus £200. Malcolm McGregor suggested an absolute "ceiling" offer be specified, but others held that it may tie our hands for want of a very few pounds and the amendment was lost, and Alex's original proposal carried.

Now came the question of who would make the approach to Mr. Rankin, and it became a question of who was best fitted, who was able to go, and who should be vested with the Club's authority. Some favoured sending the Trustees, some wanted the original sub-committee, reinforced by Trustee/s. Finally on Bill Burke's suggestion, it was left to the Sub-Committee (plus the ex-officio Club officers) to arrange to best advantage, while Maurice Berry was added to the Sub-Committee as representative of the Trustees.

Ron Knightley proposed that donations to the Bendethera fund be accepted only "unconditionally". No outside body or individual should be able to sway the control vested in the Club. This principle was also accepted, and, the hour being advanced, the General Business was confined to election of Room Stewards and the customary announcements - and that was it - at 10.20 p.m.

BADGERY'S TO BUNGONIA TRIP.

Kerry Hore.

Friday night, as usual, was wet, though spirits were high enough as we rolled up to Reiby Place, wet through: spirits named Geoff Boxsell, John Worrell, Terry Norris, myself and last but not least, our leader Ron Knightley. Ailsa Moore arrived 10 minutes after we left. It was an eventful trip down, one person sick and four people asleep before Marulan; driver only dozed occasionally.

In Marulan, we met the remainder of our party (Don Finch and Allan Pike), and Stuart Brook's party. The plan was to meet them on Saturday night and swap car keys.

We spent the night at Badgery's, out in the wilderness, complete with fences and telephone wires. The rain had stopped by this time but for those who had to sleep in tents it wouldn't have been such a comfortable night. Four people were lucky that night, as Ron's van sleeps four.

No one knows how or why, but we were keen and moved off soon after 7.30 next morning. After a nice easy run down to the Shoalhaven and a nicer rest at the bottom, we began the long trek up the other side. Why is it that what goes down must go up? What a drag! Ron, as always, seemed to take the climb easily enough, but complained anyhow; the boys, if they did feel it would never have admitted it, but I was almost a physical wreck 20 yards from the bottom.

Fully expecting Don to have a billy boiled we pressed on to the top only to be disappointed: no water, or near enough to none, but we found a waterhole in a rock, fully an inch and a half deep and a foot in diameter. I noticed that those who laughed, didn't knock any back.

"Moving off," he roared only too soon. Still, it was only morning tea. Who ever heard of walking to a schedule anyhow? Too bad we had to muck it up by getting lost - pardon me, misled. Much to the leader's delight we hit the clearing and worked our way across to Tryer's Creek, where we had lunch. John decided on another victim and Allan was it. John talked commandoes the whole time we were stopped for lunch, while we others relaxed and enjoyed the view. Come to think of it, there was no view. Still, we rested our tongues for a while.

We didn't appreciate the climb straight after lunch but it had to be done. I think that's what shut us up. At the top Knightley took so long over his pipe that we lost 5 minutes more. By this time, nobody but the leader cared anyhow.

After misleading us some more the leader finally led us onto Gillette Ridge. John wasn't sold on the idea of Gillette Ridge so he headed straight for the camp site. He missed the most fantastic parts of the area.

At about 6 on Saturday evening we had to cross the Shoalhaven in the rain. Wet to the waists and damp up top, we had to keep on walking. Its alright for the hardened bushies but morale was getting low. Anyhow we couldn't find Stu Brooks or the other two of our party, and after going most of the way across the selection, Geoff decided to put his foot in a rabbit or wombat hole or something--one invalid. We found a campsite of sorts near Barber's Creek and tried to get comfortable but without success. No one felt like eating or singing much so after some of Ron's brew we hit the sack. We were hardly tired enough to sleep, only 12 hours on the move.

The remains of Geoff's glasses were found next morning. He'd been jumping around on one foot the night before and apparently jumped on them. I could think of better places to put glasses than on the ground under a ground sheet.

Apart from that one incident, Sunday found us our merry selves again. Our appetites were colossal and we were rearing to be on our way again. Ron and Allan had to go find Stuart to swap keys. David Carver and Lee Brooks came over to visit and to accompany Geoff up King Pin.

After a quick dip in Lake Louise, the remainder of the party set out for Bungonia Creek and Gorge. I didn't like the look of the boulders but as there was only a few it wasn't so bad.

Most of Don's lunch time was spent on top of a pinnacle for the benefit of the photographers. Poor Don, I'll bet he won't volunteer for that anymore.

The climb up to the lockdown wasn't the best either. Most of us had to stop every 10 yards or so. But despite all the complaints, grumbles and groans, it was a mighty trip and I'll be in it again.

STOP PRESS..

An addition has arrived to the Matthews' family. A girl. It is rumoured it will be called Kanagarina.

The S.B.W. were out-bid at the Bendethera Auction, but there is still some hope of negotiation.



PADDY MADE

7.

TO ALL WHO LOVE THE BUSH

and the wide, adventurous out of doors.
To those whose great pleasure comes
from a sing song round a campfire
with good companions, the feel of wind
and rain in your face, climbing a difficult
peak, the challenge of the great
outdoors away from the softening comforts of
civilisation, the people of the little tents.

PADDY PALLIN & His Staff wish
you a Merry Christmas with Happy

Walking and Camping in the New Year,
FOR ALL YOUR WALKING CAMPING AND SKIING GEAR

PADDY PALLIN PTY. LIMITED

109A Bathurst Street,

SYDNEY. 26-2685.

PADDY PALLIN Pty.
Lightweight Camp Gear Ltd.



LORD! HOWE!

by Puffing Billy.

Perhaps it will never go down in the annals as one of the epics of bushwalking exploration; but the 1964 expedition to Lord Howe Island is at least a memorable insight into the intestinal capacities of a guest-house full of S.B.W.'s presented with kitchen-cooked delicacies instead of the more familiar carbonated goo.

After years and years of earbashing Brian and Jean (been there 35 times for 35,000 kodochromes, it seems) we decided we had to go in self-defence, to get our own stories of this much vaunted paradise of awesome precipices, lofty crags, impenetrable jungle, wild animals, breathtaking vistas, fruit salad and cream. The whole thing was organised by Brian; but he "unfortunately" was prevented from going, in the end, by "business pressure."

Let me explain the island. Seven miles long, it consists of two massifs of volcanic rock joined by an arcuate sandspit, with a live-coral reef about a mile offshore forming a turquoise lagoon. The rock at the northern end is reputed to be the remains of a huge crater rim. About one mile by a half mile, its most interesting viewpoint is a rocky knoll of 400 feet, facetiously named "Mount" Eliza. The rock at the southern end is somewhat more substantial. About three miles long and over a mile wide, it is graced by two basalt hillocks named Gower and Lidgbird. It is rumoured that the 2,800 foot sheerdowns on the western end of Gower are unclimbable, even by the loudly-heralded Strawberry Jones: while the climb to a cave called The Goat House is spoken of with the hushed reverence that one would accord to a virgin alpine traverse.

The map of the island (four inches to the mile - anything else and the map would be too small to be saleable) is sprinkled with a wierd assortment of names like Transit Hill, Sylph's Hole, George's Rock and other cut-lunch-Charley stuff; not a single Folly Point, Putto's Downfall or Brooks' Mistake.

Describing the island is kid's stuff; but describing the S.B.W. party isn't so easy. I can visualise an "I told you so" look on Freud's face, or Charles Darwin writing a book. The Descent of Man in the flesh, from Neanderthalin' right arm down to homo sapiens. Note the courtesy with which I list Frank Ashdown first and me last.

As we assemble at Rose Bay this early morning, there are four males and seven females, ranging from Bill with his fishing rod, snorkel, mask and flippers, to Dorothy carrying a large beach-bag with four feet of umbrella poking out each end (one light-weight double-extension beach job and one anti-rain job - how's that for backing it both ways?) There

is also a tall, soignee, dead-ash blonde type being introduced by Jean as "My friend, Rhoda." This causes Grace, Jess and Edna to gnash their teeth, Frank Bashdown to give a low growl; and Bill - with Molly watching him - to assume a sudden interest in the cloudless sky.

Eager to start the photographic story right, I put on honeyed tones and purr, "Now if you creeps'd line up by the rail here, with flying boat behind, I'll get your pies." So I line them up as best you can line up bushwalking shapes, and I'm just about to take the shot when I click behind me and a smooth voice says, "Thanks, mate - got you in the act."

The loudspeaker system grinds out something unintelligible and the flood surges forward like bushwalkers through the door of the Royal George. And here's where we see the virtue of the double-extension umbrella; Dorothy is an easy first to a window seat.

Now, if ever I've seen an air hostess earn her keep, it is this lass who tries to observe ICAO regs. in two compartments full of S.B.W's. Fasten lap straps? Ridiculous! how can you take wide-angle shots from an aisle seat with a fastened lap-strap? Too much gear in the aisle? But how can you stow beach bags, umbrellas, fishing rods, tripods and snorkels under a seat? Too much milling about? Fair go, love - how would you like to sit beside Frank Crashdown for the whole flight?

Well, the hostess finally gets her head above water and has the courage to ask whether we'd like a drink. Can you imagine them even bothering to ask at the Royal George? Whisky, brandy, ginger ale, soda water, and who says you can't drink gin at 8 a.m.? Bill? - don't mind Bill; he always drinks his lemon squash neat.

To continue the kodachrome story, I compose a group in the forward compartment - Grace, Jack, Jess, Jean and Edna with Frank Cashdown recumbent on the floor between. "Shut your mouth, Frank; they'll think it's the Goat House." Click! and a smooth voice behind me says, "Thank's, mate - got you in the act."

The hostess appears with a tray and begins to pour the drinks. To round out the story, I line her up for a photo - wide-lens, low-angle job - emphasizes the legs and curves. Click! and the smooth voice behind me has done it again. I begin to wonder who is this paraphrenic Charley with such an interest in my backside.

Now, what's that queue up front? All this grog, and a puny one-holer between the lot of us. Jean begins to get excited. "There in front - Lord Howe Island. Can't you see it?" Cameras flash out anew, and necks crane at every window. "Can't see a thing but clouds." "That's it," says Jean. "The hills are always covered in cloud at this time of year." Mutterings of "!!!! the leader," and "Was there a money-back guarantee?"

The flying boat roars down on the high-tide lagoon and Bill disappears along a dark corridor up front with the hostess. "Going to take a photo of the buoy." How dumb does he think we are? The trap-door is opened and we pour out into the launch that awaits us; the launch pulls in by the jetty and a character assists the ladies ashore, muttering dejectedly, "Welcome t'Lord Howe Id.... Welcome t'Lord Howe Id...."

We arrived.

The population contrast is amazing. The indigenous humanity is there in force - at least a dozen of them - weather-beaten, bare-footed, bare-chested, and nearly naked except for gold-braided caps like Rear Admirals. The "old-timer" tourists are there - bronzed, languid, rotund, and dressed in shifts, shorts and sandals. And, by contrast, us - pink-faced, shiny, high heels, nylons, frocks, suits, beach hats, fishing rods, snorkels, flippers, umbrellas, beach bags ... you name it, we've got it.

Arrived at the Banyan Lodge, mine host Bill Thornton calls, "I want a married couple." Dorothy and I step forward and are allotted the only double bed in the guest house. Not that it's much use to us - very thin walls in the Banyan! Next, he calls, "Can I have two single men?" Frank Ashcan and Jack step forward. "They're not single," says Jess. Spoilsport! With bedding positions sorted out, we settle down for our three weeks of nirvana.

The setup is idyllic. Two hundred yards from the Banyan is a crescent bay of coral sand, brilliant sun, waving palms, lazy wavelets, azure water and encircling coral reefs. Its name might be Tropicana, Paradise Inlet or somesuch, but an unromantic character named it "Ned's Beach" and the name stuck. It matters not that the ground between Ned's and the Banyan consists of a fifty-foot sand-cliff, backed by a treacherous network of evil-smelling mutton-bird's holes.

Later in the day, as twilight settles over Paradise, we become aware of weird sounds from the ladies' quarters. Grace is singing "Wacko-o-o" in a high, cracked voice; Jess chants, "Do it age-e-en;" Edna contributes "Me too-oo-oo;" and Jean cries, "Merci-i-i." We ponder on the nature of the stimulus producing this ecstasy and are disappointed to learn that they are merely trying to imitate the sounds of the mutton birds that are returning to roost in their thousands and squabble, haggle, make love or whatever it is they do so noisily all night long. Later in the holiday, I spend an evening trying to get flashlight photos of their frolics, but I give up when one of them snuggles erotically against my foot.

The days pass by, and we settle down to a solid routine. Ned's Beach for that exhilarating before breakfast swim. Breakfast, with Sarah first in, and incredulous remarks from the waitress, "We're just not used to people having a plate of paw-paw and a plate of cereal before their

chops and eggs." After breakfast, snore off on Ned's Beach. Ten-thirty, munch munch, gurgle gurgle at morning tea. Spine-bash on Ned's Beach. Twelve-thirty and more munch munch, Sarah first in. After lunch, a variety of occupations like push-bike to the general store (quarter of a smile - too far to walk), a leisurely stroll on the reef, a game of scrabble, or sunbake on Ned's Beach. Three-thirty: more munch munch at afternoon tea. Three-thirtyfive: Frank Burpdown for a second afternoon tea. Thereafter - laze on Ned's Beach.

Four-thirty sees choir practice at the Bowling Club for those that like it cold; more Ned's for those that don't. Five-thirty, and choir practice continues, on the Banyan verandah. Six p.m.: dinner, guess who is first in.

After dinner, the night is our own. Bill is perhaps reading the light literature he brought along, "The Care And Maintenance of Automatic Screw Machines." Molly is probably learning to play bridge, coached by Jess ("Haven't played for 20 years: pardon me while I trump that ace".) The girls are probably discussing the island's water and the way it's making their clothes shrink. No derisive laughter, please.

Eight-thirty, more tucker. Clothes still shrinking.

Occasionally, this routine is broken by someone getting all energetic and organising something, like a beach picnic at Blinky's, a sortie to Mt. Eliza, or a trip in a glass-bottomed boat. There is a time, for example, when I fight my way through the cloying jungle to the Mutton Bird Point gannet rookery for some pics. Now, gannets aren't pikers and they don't build their nests on feather beds. I'm just inching my way along an eighty-degree overhang on rock that is so crumbly that anything less than an armfull is too brittle to form a hand-hold, when a voice behind me screams, "Hold it!" I freeze like I'm scared the whole cliff is coming on top of me, and then I hear a click and that para-schizo voice again.

Then, too, there's the time when Jean cajoles us into going to "The Clear Place." She is convincing, I'll give her that. "Just a five-minute walk, down the end of the road. Just enough to give an appetite for dinner." She is careful not to say how big an appetite. By the time we arrive back at the Banyan for a belated sprint into dinner, we have taken in the Palm Road, the main mutton-bird rookery, the Palm Jungle, two vantage points for Lidgbird and Gower, more vantage points for the Admiralty Islets, the cliff track down to Middle Beach, the cliff track up from Middle Beach, another mutton-bird rookery, the meteorological station, a slight detour which Jean swears is scheduled (but why her puzzled frown?), the Oleander Drive and one or two roads that don't run according to the map. After 20 years' walking, I'm still learning the

rule printed on the walks programme about "Take map, compass and torch"

And, of course, we can't miss the Goat House. This proves to be a distinct lolly, despite the build-up. Eighteen hundred feet of an easy track up Lidgbird to the foot of the encircling cliffs and we are there - to feast on grilled chops and cream cakes, accompanied by the nauseating and all-pervading smell of billy-goats in season. I find myself wondering how Nature could possibly have conjured up so diabolical an odour as a mating stimulus; but then I don't normally think like a nanny goat. Jean, meanwhile is exhorting everyone to press on around the cliffs to the other side of Lidgbird, to view the rugged south facings of the island; but Jess, Edna, Dorothy and some of the others elect to stroll slowly down the pathway home. When we again catch up with them, they are esconced at "Aunt Ruby's" amid iced drinks, fruit salad and cream. Clothes still shrinking; local shops almost sold out of shifts.

Aunt Ruby calls Frank Ramdown and Jean into the kitchen and it not long before the rest of us are let in on a secret. An exalted Archbishop is on the island and has been invited to Aunt Ruby's for dinner on Saturday; would Jean and Frank care to be among the guests? Would they! Even the sheerdowns of Gower wouldn't stop them.

This does, however, present some problems, like "Eh! what would you call a bloke like that?" asks Frank. "Why, you refer to him as Your Grace," explains Jess. "Grace?" queries Frank. "She's not coming; is she?" "No, no - that's just his title," says Jess with patience. "Yes," murmurs someone else, "and when it comes to addressing him, don't put on too much of that Cockney accent of yours. Don't say things like: 'ere; 'ave a bi' of bu'er, 'Ugh, Say: Would you care for some butter, Your Grace?"

"Don't let them bluff you," chimes in another. "He's probably a democratic sort of chap, really. So, when you're first introduced to him, say: My name's Frank; 'ow about 'Ugh?"

After all this grilling, is it any wonder that, as he proceeds from the Banyan to Aunt Ruby's on the evening - question, our redoubtable Frank Piltdown is smitten with an embarrassing malaise of the alimentary tract?

The apex of the trip comes when we sally forth to climb "The Mountain." We've long since decided it's a mere stroll compared with the west face of The Castle, and we suspect that the head-in-the clouds act is merely Gower hiding in shame because it knows we've done Gillette Ridge. However, local regs. decree that one must hire a "guide", so we noise it abroad that we are no Strawberries and would be pleased to follow in the footsteps of a local Terray.

This produces a character who's game to take us on, so at the appointed time of 7.30 we appear at his front gate. To our surprise, there are others there - males in sportive attire, with a female arrayed in flatties, Bermuda slacks, silken blouse and broad-brimmed hat. When she hears that we're bushwalkers, she says, "Thought you looked a bit professional. Still, we'll give you a run for your money." Later in the day, as we are coming down, I find myself thinking, "Never heard a woman whimper like this before." She is game, though; I'll give her that. I doff my hat and murmur, "Only another thousand feet, love."

It is really a day to remember, even though Joan and Frank and others have elected to spend it on Ned's Beach instead. Grace, Edna, Molly, Bill, Jack and me - the only six in the party with enough energy to lift our increasing avoirdupois up the highest hill on the island. In the early morning sunshine, we depart from the "guide's" house and head for the southern beaches of the lagoon. We wander over sand and grass, through palm jungle and over boulders on the water's edge, until we are well beyond the limits of the coral reef. Our guide then turns steeply upward from the shore, on to the steep talus slope of Lidgbird; and after a half-hour of scrambling over jumbled boulders and palm roots we emerge on a quarter-mile shaly, unstable, forty-five-degree "ledge", satirically labelled "The Lower Road." A genuine DMR job - only someone botched the levels and someone else left it out in the weather for a few thousand years. We begin to understand the expression, "the exhilaration of height," as we step gingerly from one airy pot-hole to the next, gazing down between our feet at the heaving waters of the blue Pacific, 400 feet below them.

As the sun climbs higher in the morning sky, so we climb behind the end of the "road", around the craggy corner of Lidgbird, and into Erskine Valley between Lidgbird and Gower. The sub-tropical jungle is sprinkled with groves of pandanus with their tent-like aerial root systems, but such obstacles are no barrier to us. A well-marked track winds between them. Thank goodness we've got a guide!

Grace is humming little catchy tunes as we steadily rise, obviously enjoying her climb in the muted sunlight of the forest. We breast the saddle between Lidgbird and Gower, and begin to claw our way up the knife-edge ridge of Gower itself. It gets steeper by the minute, until we reach a spot called "The Getting Up Place," where we hang on with eyebrows and all as we scramble up about twenty feet or so of vertical rock, with awesome cliffs dropping away on either side. Grace has changed to hymns.

The fifty-degree ridge eventually eases off, the summit of Lidgbird at last drops below the horizon, and as the sun nears the zenith we are on top of Gower. A tropical rain forest - lush, green and festooned with shrouds of moss - is all around us as we boil the billy and settle down for lunch on a grassy shoulder. Lidgbird and the rest of the island lie below us: jewelled lagoon, creaming breakers on the reef, bosun birds flashing white against the blue Pacific rollers, emerald glasslands and tree-clad hills, and all around us the silence of the forest.

But even paradise has limits, and all too soon we must go down again. We romp down the upper part of the ridge, slow up somewhat on the fifty degree part, and even more than somewhat at "The Getting Up Place". It is aptly named. Definitely a place for getting up; not a place for getting down when your eyes, looking downwards for the next foothold, are only too conscious of the crags below.

There is a fixed wire to give moral support to the immoral, but it wobbles and it is slippery, and Edna's eyes glaze over a little as she ventures to the edge. The gallantry bred of years of married life takes charge of me and I immediately precede her down, murmuring encouraging comments as my feet and hands grope downwards while my eyes are turned upwards watching her progress. Jack, meanwhile, cranes over the edge to add instructions from above. "Left with your foot a bit ... right hand down, now there, that's fine."

Slowly, her rear end follows me down; that rear end that's been fed so long on trifle, cakes and Aunt Ruby's fruit salad and cream. I feel like I'm about to be sat on by the rear end of a rhinoceros.

The scent of home is now in our nostrils and it is getting towards choir practice time. The flatties, Bermuda slacks and broad-brimmed hat are far behind us as we gingerly tread The Lower Road, skitter down the scree to the ocean and plunge into the sea at the first beach we come to. The perspiration washed away, we are soon on our bicycles and peddling off to the Bowling Club for the most highly merited beers we've yet had on the island.

"Well, we've conquered Gower," says Jack as he drains another glass. But I feel like Gower's conquered me.

And so a holiday comes to an end. In a couple of days more, we assemble at the terminal and see the flying boat arrive, with the scent of hibiscus and oleanders in our nostrils, from the leis about our necks. Here are the incoming tourists - pink faced, shiny, high heels, nylons, snorkels, umbrellas, etc; you name it, they've got it. And, by contrast us - bronzed, languid, rotund and dressed in shifts, shorts and sandals!

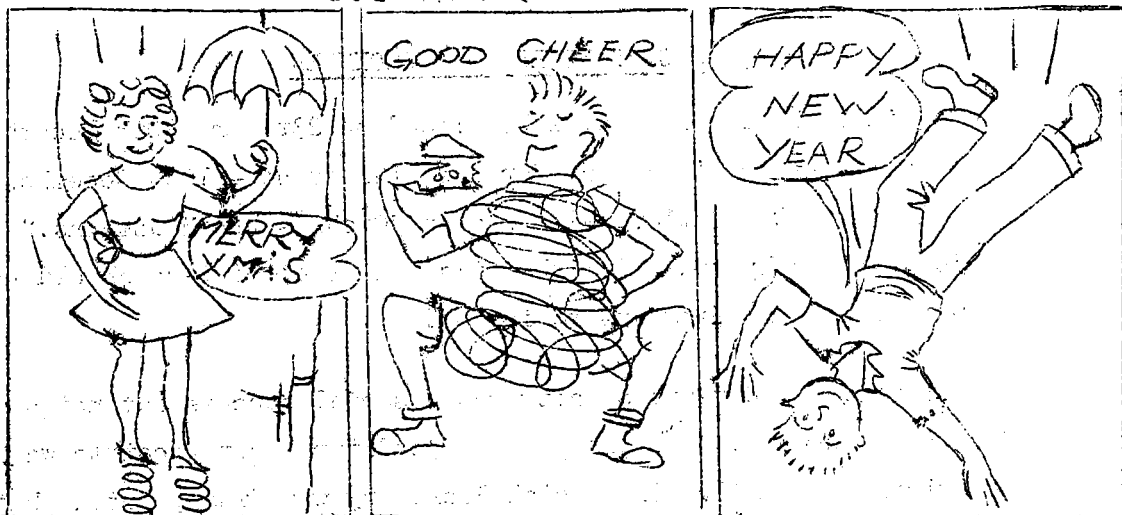
The flying boat thunders over the lagoon, the island gem drops away beneath the wingtips; and as we look down to the pier we can see that our leis, cast on the water at the moment of departure, are slowly drifting landwards. The symbol that we shall be back again.

Extract of letter from Foundation Member - Jack Debert (Forster)

Doubt very much if anyone in a walking club does any more walking, or should I say ambling around, with a pack on his back each week than I do. Am still as keen as ever on the great outdoors and spend a lot of time with pack on my back birdwatching.

Still surf daily, winter and summer. Climb all the hills around this wonderful part of the world. Naturally know it, for miles around, far better than the locals and am frequently called on to give information. My birdwatching often starts at 4 a.m. Creep silently out of the Tropicana Flats without disturbing a soul. Dates with my favourite girl friend Dawn. Lovely early morning meals of farm fresh eggs, honey, billy tea etc. in the most pleasant surroundings. Sure I enjoy every minute of the long days that are all too short.

Apart from running the flats we now run the local paper. Am also on all sorts of committees and have far too much to do in my "retirement." But soon must retire again. Another interest I write bird and nature notes for the Taree paper once or twice a week and get quite a fan mail.

LIL SWEETIE NUGGETHEART

CONTINUED

EDITORIAL.

The promised National Parks Bill has not been introduced to Parliament this year; many bushwalkers self consciously feel that only a minority are interested in this topic. This is not so; Conservation has a broad base of support; Australian political parties have spontaneously adopted resolutions calling for the establishment of more National Parks; the U.S. Congress has recently passed a sweeping primitive areas Bill. With a little more effort the tide could be turned. The Sydney Bushwalker joins with the National Parks Association in urging its readers to write to their member of parliament asking for an early introduction of the National Parks Bill.

Merry Christmas,

The Editor.

SOCIAL NOTES - DECEMBER

Since the clubroom will be closed on 23rd and 30th December, it leaves just one Wednesday for a social event - 16th December. On that night Dot Butler will present "Orchids and Mountains." Ira's photography coupled with Dot's bright commentary should provide us with some absorbing entertainment.

The S.B.W. Christmas party was a social success but not a financial success. The excess of expenditure over receipts was in the vicinity of £13. The Social Secretary was disappointed that more people did not attend. Altogether forty nine enjoyed the festivities - a very poor number considering the membership of the club. Members will need to consider if the Christmas Party is to continue as an annual event. Suggestions will be welcome particularly those which may help in the reduction in the price of the tickets.

The Sydney Bushwalker

MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT COMPANY

12 Ortona Road, Lindfield, New South Wales.

JML440.

MAMMUT - EVEREST CLIMBING ROPES.

Made of Nylon 66, heat-stabilized and light-resistant, braided sheath construction, high tensile strength.

Technical Data:

ϕ mm.	ϕ in.	Tensile strength (lbs).	Wt. per meter (ozs)
$6\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	2097	19/20
8	5/16	3091	1-1/2
9	$\frac{3}{8}$	3979	1-19/20
10	13/32	4967	2-2/5
11	7/16	6071	2-9/10

<u>Price per hank of</u>	<u>90 feet</u>	<u>120 feet</u>	<u>150 feet</u>
--------------------------	----------------	-----------------	-----------------

ϕ mm.			
$6\frac{1}{2}$	£5.6.0	£7.6.0	£8.14.0
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.

$6\frac{1}{2}$ mm ϕ yellow with blue check threads, above $6\frac{1}{2}$ mm. ϕ orange with black check threads.

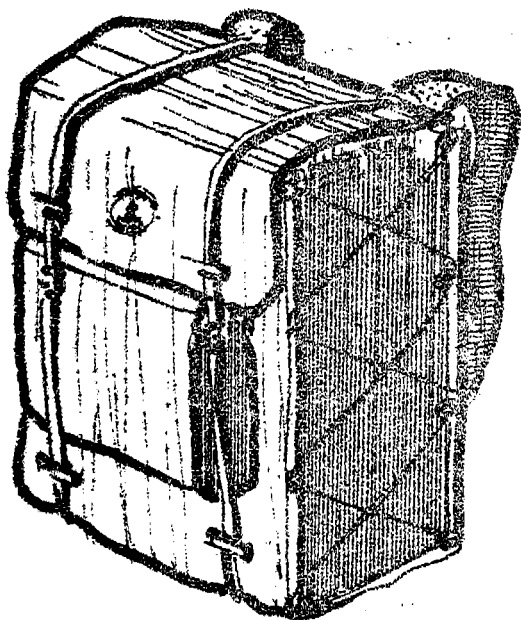
KIMPTON'S

NOW MAKE AND SELL UNDER LICENSE

THE ORIGINAL MULE

AS USED BY SIR EDMUND HILLARY
ON HIS MT EVEREST EXPEDITIONS

PLUS THE NEW TERYLENE RIPSTOP CANVAS, TAN OR GREEN
STANDARD TANKER MODEL £14/17/6. POST FREE.



KIMPTON'S

"EIDERLITE" SLEEPING BAGS
ARE MADE IN 3 POPULAR MODELS

ARCTIC: FOR SUB-ZERO TEMPERATURES. Cellular type with interior walls - this ensures a complete unbroken cell of Superdown around the sleeper. It is 6'6" x 30" and is filled with 2½ lb. of Superdown. The price, post free, is £13/13/0.

SNOW: Tailored hood - 36" nickel zipp up chest. Circular insert for the feet. Cut 6' x 30" plus hood filled with 1½ lbs. Superdown. £10/7/- or £9/9/6 feather down filled. Post free.

COMBINATION QUILT - SLEEPING BAG. Can be used 365 days each year as an eiderdown quilt, and if required for a sleeping bag it is folded in half and zipped across the bottom and up the side to make a bag. Two of these zipped together make a double. Superdown filled £11/8/6. Featherdown £9/9/6. Post free

SLEEPING BAG KITS: Make it yourself - all components cut to size. SAVE £1 on each of the above models by sewing and filling your own bags. Enquiries welcome.

Kimpton's Feather Mills

JA 3964
41 3964

PTY. LTD. 5 Budd St., Collingwood, VIC.