



THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to
the Sydney Bushwalker, The N.S.W. Nurses'
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Box No. 4476, G.P.O. Sydney.

'Phone 843985.

Editor - Bill Gillam, Old Bush Rd, Engadine.
5208423.

Business Manager - Bill Burke, Coral Tree Rd,
West Pennant Hills.

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AT OUR JULY MEETING.

A. Colley.

The meeting commenced with apologies from Gordon Redmond (working) and Ron Knightley (back from the U.S., but worn out). New members Judith Simpson, Owen Marsh and Enzo Tarlao were welcomed by the President and equipped with badges, constitutions and annual reports to help them hold their own with the old members in debate.

The Treasurer's report, read by the President, showed an increase in our bank balance from £265/15/6 to £273/5/6. Margaret Child's Parks and Playground Movement report described nibbling at, and misuse of, park lands; but some brighter developments too. The Sutherland Shire Council did not reply to a letter re the release Hacking River shorelines for housing development, nor had it made any decision on the use of sand dredged from Gunna matta Bay, or the erection of a sand storage depot at Darook Park. A cement company is busy dredging the Hacking River near Audley. Parramatta Council has granted a liquor license, and is considering giving more parkland, to a golf club in Parramatta Park. Gosford Shire Council, however, has done the right thing by refusing an R.S.L. Club application for park land at Wamberal - the land is to be left in its natural state for the use of the public. The State Government has proclaimed most of the land between Boat Harbour and Kurnell as parkland.

Members were sorry to hear the bad news that Win Duncombe, one of the most active walkers in the Club's pioneering days, who has kept in close touch with her many S.B.W. friends, had suffered a serious road accident near Canberra in the previous week-end. "Dunk" sustained a broken collar bone, broken ribs and further bone injuries in one arm and one leg. She is expected to be in Canberra hospital for up to four months, and the President suggested that some members might have, or make, the opportunity to visit her there when visitors are allowed.

Dave Brown gave us a resume of the activities of the "Beaches" sub-committee. Mr. Cousins of Durras Mountain has offered us a strip of coast at the foot of the mountain 1 mile long and $\frac{1}{4}$ mile wide (160 acres). Dave and Mick Elphick made inquiries about the land from the Lands Department and found that the Department intended to resume it. However, there is no news yet of resumption, and the decision might have been changed. It was considered to await developments for another couple of months. The land, which contained two small beaches, was very attractive - something like Era. The President, using his authority to act for the Club on conservation matters, approved the extension of the sub-committee's zone of inquiry to include another area of interest south of Batemen's Bay.

John White reported that he had met Alan Rankin, owner of Bendethera some weeks previously. Mr. Rankin had told him that settlement had not been made for the Bendethera auction purchase, and, if this was not affected within a fortnight, the land would be re-submitted for sale. He promised to let John know if this happened, but, as no word had been received, it could be assumed that the deal was not completed.

Alan Rigby said that he had asked Reg Watts, owner of a 200 acre property called "Alpine", some 10 miles below Bendethera, who was selling his 15,000 acre property, whether he would be willing to make a separate sale of this 200 acre portion. However, this didn't suit Mr. Watts, because the land was used by the owners of the larger area for camping purposes.

Next committees to organise our two main social events - the Re-union (September 18) and the Christmas Party, were appointed. The President split the re-union organisation into six separate tasks and invited nominations or volunteers for each. A little pressurising by the President and hey presto! we had a re-union committee consisting of the following:

Transport (from Richmond to Woods Creek, for those without cars):

John White.

Supper: Dot Butler and Kerry Hor with Don Finch looking after the supper fire.

Timber and Camp Fire Building: Brian Matterson, Terry Cutting and Jeff Boxsell.

Entertainment: Edna Stretton.

Preparation and clearing up of camp site: Ern and Betty Farquhar, Jack Wren and Audrey Kenway.

All the above have power to co-opt.

The Committee appointed to organise the Christmas Party consisted of Dot Butler (Convenor), John White, John Scott and Kerry Hor.

After this the President announced, on behalf of the Committee, that the Club regards very seriously the failure of a leader to conduct his walk. Leaders unable to lead walks were expected to try to get someone else to take them. It was also important that any program alterations be reported to the Committee, so that it would be able to assess the difficulty of walks claimed as test walks.

In general business Frank Ashdown asked when we might have the pleasure of hearing of the Heard Island Expedition, and was told that although Colin Putt was away at present, he would be along with slides one night during the currency of the next programme. We were also told that club

members had given an illustrated lecture on bushwalking to the Dutch Youth Organisation, and that the audience had seemed very interested.

The last business of the evening was the auction of the old Club typewriter. The typewriter was completed with an inventory and quotation of cost of repairs (from Business Equipment Ltd). Cost of repairs was £26/15/- (a dollar sign too for another £3/10/-). Fast talking by the President, in which he emphasised the machine's trade in value (£5) its depreciation value for tax deductions, and the valuable scrap metal it contained, enticed bids ranging from 2½d. to 12/6. Jenny Madden obtained it for the use of a boy Scout's group (which contains a typewriter mechanic), for the latter figure.

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JOHN WHITE'S BARREN GROUNDS INSTRUCTIONAL

Johanna Hallmann.

"Book early," John cautioned. "We'll hire a bus."

He didn't foresee to add, "Avoid the rush."

Thirty starters on Wednesday for the weekend.

Been raining all week. There's a drought on -
should be fine for the weekend. And the cloud
was clearing on the way down to the Barren Grounds.

The bus took us to the foot of a steep,
change down, $3\frac{1}{2}$ mile winding climb. The jeep
wasn't there so we walked. John had tea with a saucer.

Heavy pack, hill climbing pose -
nose to the ground, inspired Ken to track tyres.
"Hark! A three-year-old Dunlop!" He joyfully cried.

At the top we lunched, set up camp and explored
the fauna reserve. Magnificent views
of the mist. And the drizzle set in as forecast.

The night was instructional. No instructors
could make it, but a nurse and an ex-nurse
gave expert opinion and we'd fill the gaps later.

Valerie and Ron led the songs until ten
till it poured. Fifty points fell that night -
at least, that's what it was in my groundsheet.

"We're leaving at nine!" Little black book,
black marks, black looks, backed by bull roaring
kept the campers in line. We left at nine.

We squelched over the plateau
from tussock to pothole through the cold
driving rain, Owen nonchalant with brolly.

We observed the stinging tree and slid
down the creek to the saddle at the back
of Saddleback Mountain.

We sunned! and supped on the side of the saddle
Saw drystone fences, the valley and rainforest.
Then up the cold, steep saddle to the top.

Smoko for some, but the rest went on
for the early train. Met Geoff and his car
Raced down the hill for refreshment and home.

WATSON'S CRAGS - a 360 degrees Traverse

- Dot Butler

Party; Ross Wyborn Dot Butler John Worrall
 Bob Duncan Gerry Sinzig

As this is an historic "first" I had better recount all the details. The story begins last June when Ross and I, on a ski tour that took in Kosciusko, Townsend, Lee and Carruthers, found ourselves at the top of Watson's Crags looking down its western face with its steep couloirs, deeply plastered with snow, hurtling down at breakneck speed to the tree-line thousands of feet below. A green grassy strip marked the Geehi river flats, nearly 6,000 ft. below, where a tiny ribbon of road could be seen curling through the trees, and we vowed we must come back again, and soon, to climb from the bottom to the top.

My love's the mountain range (as the poem says); Rosso loves mountains too; it's a pleasure to exchange echoes with him. Back in Sydney we dreamed of returning to the white magic of the hills. Adverse weather reports delayed our plans but now, some six weeks later, here we were at last in the exact middle of our dream.

Ross, John Worrall and I had left Strathfield at 10 to 5 on Friday night and reached Camden about an hour later to find Gerry already there but Bob had disappeared down town to get his climbing boots to lend to Gerry whose own boots, according to R.A.D., were inefficient. We helped ourselves to a meal from the Duncan refrigerator and were just finishing the last mouthful of leg of lamb when Robert returned and put on a typical Duncan performance - we had eaten all the food he intended to take on the trip and now we would have to feed him from our provisions. All right, all right, but let's get on our way.

A decision must now be made: whose car should we travel in? Gerry was not happy about taking his good car into that rough country - "think of all that mud on my carpets" - and Rosso's bomb was too likely to collapse without warning in a shuddering heap so we all piled into the long-suffering Duncan's chariot and were away about 7.30. By the time we got to Joe's Cafe the boys' innards were clamoring for food. A glance through the windows, however, revealed Joe's crammed to the gunwales with diners, so we sped on to Charley's at Mittagong, where we put away a second evening meal. Then, fortified for the long 8-hours' drive ahead, we sped on - Ross at the wheel, past Goulbourn with its lights, the pale gleam of Lake George, Canberra and the new lake, Cooma, over the bridge on the Snowy River, take the left hand fork, climb the mountain road, through Threadbo Village, on round the Alpine Highway till at length we stopped at a small clearing which was the Geehi Airstrip. Duncan was asleep in the back seat and stayed there; the rest of us pulled out our sleeping bags and in less than five minutes were unconscious on the concrete floor of the small waiting shed.

Three or four hours later dawn streaked the eastern sky. We awoke to the sound of currawongs scattering their wild wasted loveliness of song

over the white ground. It was a glorious morning. To breath the mountain air was a sheer delight - cold air sweet with the scent of frost. We lit a big fire and cooked our breakfast. Suddenly we realised that someone was missing. Where, pray, is Duncan? Snug in the fugh of the car, of course. We peered through the inch-wide opening at the top of the window and saw our lad, sunk in a deep sleep like an old hull in the depth of the sea where there are no storms. He must have had a guilty conscience though, for he opened one eye, a hand stole forth from the warmth of the sleeping bag and rapidly pushed down all the window catches, Duncan fumbled and produced his car key for our inspection - then he snuggled up for more sleep. Our indignant battering on the car's sides eventually got him up, he swallowed a perfunctory breakfast, and we were away.

"You can drive, Gerry," said Ross. "You can hit as many rocks and ruts as you like and be happy to know that you can't do your car any damage."

"Hey," says Duncan, "It's my car you're driving, don't forget."

"I know," said Rosso.

Our road now wound through magnificent alpine forest where immensely tall mountain ash stretched their arms to the sky. As we rose higher, past Olsen's Lookout, snow was everywhere; it blanketed the snow gums; round cottony balls of it were enmeshed in the twiggy bushes; every side creek and gully was an elfin wilderness of tree ferns; each one bearing a white parasol of snow. A swift red streak darted across the road - a fox gliding from his secret snow-muffled den into the multitudinous green shadows of the forest on some secret quest of his own.

Soon a notice on a tree informed us we were at the Snowy Construction Camp of Belle Vista. We wondered if we would be denied access on any of the roads but No, everyone was delightfully free and easy and co-operative. A friendly and likable lad at the office, ~~Max~~ Hutchinson, gave us exact details how to reach the highest construction camp, the Tunnel Camp, right at the foot of Watson's Crags. He wished he could come with us but couldn't leave his job. However he will be with us when we return for our N.Z.A.C. Instruction Course on the holiday week-end in October. max

Leaving the little encampment of tin huts we took a steep road going downhill (the right hand fork) past Verandah Camp where the work gangs eat and sleep, and so on till we reached the end of the road where the tunnelling gang was at work. We had a talk with some of the men, parked our car about a hundred yards back down the road out of the way of heavy construction vehicles, then away for the big climb!

This is the sort of trip I like best - Freeman of the Hills, living by easy approximations - no watch, no map, no compass, no nonsense. We could see what we wanted to climb and climbed it. The sun smiled on the sundial of ridges and by it we counted the happy hours. A couple of hours after sun-up we started off up the steep tumbling creek-bed above the camp. The

day was windless and silent, bright with all the beauty of a winter sun. The Craggs soared above us, their upward-reaching ridges making incredibly lovely gestures towards the sky.

With what piercing shouts of joy does the story unfold. We were undoubtedly the first among Time's millions to set prints on this virgin snow. Rosso led the way, clad in khaki military pants and dirty red sweater, but wearing his youth and strength like a proud cloak from his shoulders. The lower, scrub-choked valley, muffled in snow, looked deceitfully smooth, but as it was only a light covering on bent-down bushes, our bodies crashed through at every step. Ross bumbled happily away, wrapped in his own dream of delight. He plugged great deep wallows of steps which Duncan and John and I found it not too difficult to walk in but poor Gerry's 14½ stone was a severe disadvantage.

"You don't really enjoy this, do you?" asked Gerry pulling his large body out of a snowdrift, only to sink in again up to the waist. Ross looked sheepish as though, after all, he was being a bit selfish, but it wasn't long before his native exuberance took over and he was off again, gambolling though the deep drifts in all the pep of puppyhood, and we perforce must follow. A desperate sortie into the trees at the side had this in its favour, that trunks and branches could be used to haul ourselves up by, but it was, without question, a collossally energetic climb.

After about a thousand feet the snow cover became firmer and it was then just a case of plugging upward, digging in our ice axes every two steps, getting more and more enthusiastic as the going improved. In a steep couloir, its sides plastered with lacy feathers of wind-blown snow, Duncan had us stop while he climbed about 20 ft. above us to take a photo of us advancing. "Now just stay there for a few more minutes - I have a surprise for you," he said. So we dutifully stayed put and a few seconds later Duncan's voice came floating down, "Right, you can come up now." So up we came - to find him perched on the summit trig.

"You piker," roared Ross. "I kill myself plugging steps all the way up and you race ahead and bag the summit." Duncan looked mortified, as though his joke had miscarried.

We padded around among the little wind-formed sastrugi on the tops taking photos, then decided from the position of the sun it must be 3.20 or 3.30 (or even 3.38; Who could dispute it without a watch?) and we must descend. Looking back over our tracks it looked incredibly steep but the snow was soft and a fall could be easily checked so down we strode, getting more confidence as we descended till eventually we were sliding on the seats of our pants and hang the consequences. Laughing and exhilarated we at length plunged into the construction camp where we had to wait about an hour for John to join us. We spent the time in the gang's tin shed warming up by the fire and drinking their tea and at last our loiterer arrived complaining that his leg muscles had developed cramps which slowed him up. We shot off immediately as the men had told us if we were

back at Verandah Camp by 6 p.m. we could have a meal there. This was good news, especially to Bob who was minus meat. Arriving at the cookhouse we consulted with the hecook, who consulted with the Boss, who ushered us into an inner room where we were served soup, then a great slab of steak as big as a blacksmith's apron camouflaged with stew and vegetables to match, followed by apple pie and coffee or milk. All this we despatched rapidly down the feedchute. We hoped to get permission to camp in one of the sheds, as thick mud and slush covered the place everywhere, but apparently this is against the regulations so we hied us off to see what was offering at Belle Vista. It could not have been later than 8 p.m. when we got there. A ragged patchwork quilt of snow was thrown over the chilly bones of the construction camp and all was in darkness. Peeped at by a tiny golden streak of a new moon we wandered the icy roads to see if anyone was awake. We drew a blank, so returned back down the road to where we had seen a collection of huge concrete pipes by the roadside. Choosing the most horizontal of these the party bedded down, one to a pipe and a couple in the car. The day's activity seeped out of our muscles into the concrete. The whole set up was, though you may doubt it, extremely comfortable.....except, perhaps, for Duncan, who had given up his back seat in the car for John Worrall's Li-lo. Of the 20-minute variety, this soon subsided and our Robert was left to eke out a cold night on the hard concrete. This was all the more galling as he had already given his spare sleeping-bag and blanket to Ross.

Next day we were off again at dawn to Tunnel Camp. Here permission was readily obtained from the "Big Boss" (an Italian who did not speak much English) to go through the $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of tunnel to the other side of Watson's Crags. He even got one of the men to rev up the little engine for us, and standing on the narrow metal running board, hanging on to a handrail and keeping our rear-ends tucked in so we wouldn't hit things projecting from the side walls, we chugged through the half flooded tunnel its random roof-lights looking like soaring albatrosses or flying saucers, eerily reflected in the bottomless pools of darkness below.

We emerged at the far end into deep quiet in the heart of the mountains. Just over the way was the lower end of Lady Northcote's Canyon, melt-water from which will eventually be channelled through the tunnel. Again our way up was via a steep creek-bed similar to that of yesterday but even more deeply blanketed in snow, and, if anything, softer than that of the previous day. Here discretion proved the better part of valor and young Johnny, who had been declaiming that he didn't mind how much suffering there was so long as there was honour and glory at the end, decided that he had better go back (to look for a lost balaclava) and he would see us back at the construction camp fire, if we managed to get back that afternoon.

After our preliminary hard struggle up the soft snow, we stopped for lunch half way up, then made a tentative attempt to complete the climb up a rock ridge. This got steeper and steeper till eventually it was plastered with verglas and frozen waterfalls. Although we were enjoying the spicy insecurity we had to call it off and return to the couloir again. We roped

up for the final ~~couple of~~ thousand feet. Our joy curved upward with the slope - it was as intrepid as New Zealand mountaineering. Ross took the last of his 35 colour transparencies, and Bob and Gerry were not far behind with theirs.

Fairly late in the afternoon we at last stepped onto the summit, but there was to be no leisurely luxuriating on the tops; the sun was rapidly approaching the western horizon and we still had several thousand feet of descent. We ate a bit of chocolate and commenced the downward slide. The snow was much harder than yesterday, and for a thousand thrilling feet we slid lying with our backs against our packs, doing nothing but watch the clouds glide by as we rapidly lost height. It was great seeing the leaders suddenly disappear through the snow into the hidden creek. One pulled up in time just to avoid a similar fate.

It was almost dark when we were finally reunited with John back at the construction camp fire. We hastily donned dry clothes, checked the chains on the car wheels, and then away.

And though the ten hour car trip home was long and wearying we will forget all that. We will remember only the golden days, the glittering diamonds on the hills, the sense of freedom in the breathless air, and the astonishing intensity of delight as we overcame all hazards to stand at length on the summit of our dreams.

NOTE. In case the title of this is not self-explanatory - to tunnel through the base of a mountain, climb up one side and down the other to the beginning of the tunnel again, is to have passed through 360 degrees.

COMING EVENTS.

On the holiday week-end in October a Snow Instructional Course will be held at Watson's Crag when all aspects of snow climbing will be taught. Starters should beg, borrow, make or obtain (even buy) an ice axe for the occasion. One rope between two is also necessary, also a karabiner.

Two enthusiastic camera men, Warwick Deacock (of Heard Island fame) and Dr. Toni Balthasar, (of the Scouts Balls Pyramid picture) hope to make a movie instructional film of Snow techniques.

Phone

LEADER: Ross Wyborn (575218 B. or 57.5218 Home)



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A CLIMBER IN THE FRENCH ALPS

- Ron Cox

Grenoble. June

Dear Everybody,

Have been having a fairly hectic life lately, nothing but working and climbing. I've been working long hours at the Nuclear Centre, mostly at night. In order to get at a particular spectrometer, kept running hot by a lab. full of chemists in the day, I have to work nights.

A couple of weeks ago I judged the time ripe to let it leak out at work that I had a vague interest in doing a bit of climbing. Soon after, the bloke in the room next door to me at the Nuclear Centre, who is president of the local Groupe Universitaire Montagne-Ski (GUMS), invited me on a weekend club trip. We left Grenoble in several cars after lunch on Saturday and drove some 80 km into the massif of the Oisans. The Oisans, as I may have mentioned, are, after Mont Blanc, the second highest range of France and include peaks of order 4,000 metres, such as the Meije. We, however, were only going for the smaller stuff.

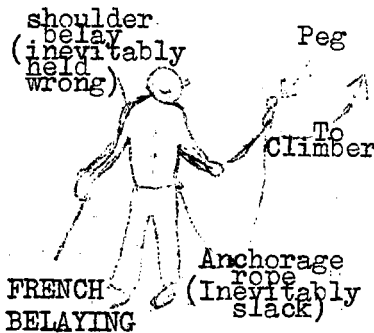
From where we parked the cars we took just over two hours to climb 3,500 feet to the Refuge Soreiller. Such climbing rates are possible without undue fatigue because the tracks are so beautifully graded and are fairly smooth. The "Refuge" was hardly a hut, in the Australian or Kiwi sense. It was a new, three-storied stone palace with laminex topped tables in the dining room, etc. and capacity 60 people. Everyone in the hut went to bed before 9 p.m., just like N.Z. No one thought of staying up to swap stories around the campfire. There was no campfire.

Our party rose at 5 a.m. I got up a little earlier to prepare my porridge imported from Scotland at formidable expense. The rest of the party, being French, went out for their day's climbing with nothing in the stomach more substantial than a cup of tea. I could only get through half the big billy of porridge I made, but it was impossible to give the rest away. The only thing more un-French than breakfast is porridge for breakfast! Needless to say, everyone winged all day how hungry they felt, but the idea of eating in the morning is completely alien.

I led one of two ropes of two on the Aiguille Dibona, a sharp granite crag some 1,000 feet high. I was a little worried, first because it was my first climb in France and I didn't know how my standard would compare, and secondly because it was only one day after the expiry of the period during which the doctor said I mustn't do anything violent with my ski-accident injured knee. We started off up snow, then moved together on easy rock to the start of the real climb. The Oisans granite is somewhat different in texture and quality from Chamonix, so they say - certainly nothing to rave about, but in general it was solid. The first two pitches went alright, but in the third I got into strife on wet, rather holdless rock and screamed for a top-rope from the other GUMS rope above. This was rather cowardly but my moral backing was not too good; my second was young and female and could hardly be expected to hold a falling leader on the inadequate, French style belay she was using. The top rope duly came down and I surmounted the difficulties, but my morale was not greatly

improved by being informed that the pitch had only been of Grade III. However I had no serious trouble on the rest of the climb, including the hardest pitch which was of IV. The entire climb was graded as AD, i.e. ("assez difficile"), literally "rather difficult". The grading scheme goes PD (peu difficile), AD, D, TD (Tres difficile) and ED (extremement difficile).

The sight of French belaying is something to write home about. It's extraordinarily sloppy. The belayer hitches to the anchor peg and hitches the rope to the climber to the same peg. The rope is usually held in a shoulder belay. It's good if the peg holds. Many of the pegs, which are usually in place, look very unsafe, but no one ever bothers to give them a tap to tighten them up. Any sort of peg is regarded as a point of complete security. By contrast, rock spikes are instinctively distrusted and running belay slings are almost unknown. The French and British attitudes to belaying are completely different. For example, Gaston Rebuffat's text book "Roc et Neige" gives only about half a page to techniques of belaying.



We were, for various reasons, a rather slow party, and halfway up people started to catch us up from behind. It became quite crowded and the "Excuse me, would you mind not stepping on my foothold" conditions were sometimes annoying but more often quite amusing. After talking in my stilted French for some time to the leader of one rope behind, we both discovered we were British. This later proved useful when I was well above my second and she couldn't understand my shouted, badly pronounced instructions. So I would shout down in English (somewhat more intelligible over a distance) to this Englishman who was near my second -

"Please tell the young lady to untie and come on up", etc., and he would translate into French.

When we finally gained the summit, after 5 hours climbing, it likewise was crowded. Fortunately it had been snowing off and on early in the morning which had frightened many people, particularly the CAF, back into the hut. The GUMS looks down on the Club Alpin Francais (CAF) in much the same way as the University of Queensland Bushwalking Club and Tasmanian Uni. look down on the Brisbane Bushies and Hobart Walking Club respectively. The similarity is quite striking, the CAF is mostly composed of old men, teenagers and babes in arms and is rather unventuresome. But this is not surprising considering its huge membership (40,000 odd)

The air was wqrm and cloud hung low overhead, threatening a thunderstorm, so as soon as possible we started down towards a col on the opposite side of the mountain. One abseiled two lengths from the summit. Again we were rather slow and this caused some ill-feeling. A party behind on the summit, waiting to descend, suddenly started abusing us, screaming at us to get off the rope because they reckoned they could hear electrical discharge buzzing around their ears. We ptoh-pooed them as there was no thunder or lightning about, but we hurried down and they came down the abseil like madmen, quite panicked. I was

quite relieved when they got down as, with the speed they abseiled, I greatly feared for their safety. You see, everyone here abseiled off a nylon line sling, about 5/8th inch circumference! That's France!

From the col we descended easily to the snow and trudged down to the refuge, sinking only occasionally to the waist. Then home to Grenoble. The trip was quite good even if the summit gained was only 3,200 metres. However since I'd found an "assez difficile" climb rather more than "rather difficult" I developed some fears about my ability to do major climbs. Since then, I've done three other climbs, all harder but all on lower mountains, but less entertaining. I've led a couple of pitches of V and gained some confidence. Much of my difficulty on the Aiguille Dibona was simple "start of season stiffness", a mala dy everyone here is complaining about.

A young English chap, a student of University of Grenoble, was killed in a fall of snow on the Grand Pic de Belledune last week. This is the highest peak visible from Grenoble, 12½ miles from town. He was 18 years old. At least the local newspaper had the decency to write him a rather tender epitaph, in striking contrast to the sort of write-up that say a Christchurch paper would give the death of a foreigner. (I hope I'll never have need of a tender epitaph)

Did news reach Australia of the Eiffel Tower climb? This was broadcast here to 80 million viewers. The party was Guido Magnone (leader), Rene Desmaisons (a fairly big name these days, has the "R.D." climbing shoes named after him), Robert Paragon and Ian MacNaught Dains. The latter is presumably a hairy man from north of the Tweed. It was interesting to read a strong criticism of the climb in the Grenoble newspaper. In an editorial article, the paper grumbled it was alien to the spirit of alpinism, it was sensation and publicity hunting and if this sort of thing kept up we would hear next of Walter Bonatti doing the west (overhanging) face of the Pisa Tower, etc. Such a commentary in the Grenoble newspaper shows how mountaineering-minded the newspaper presumes its readers to be.

Lionel Terray is in Alaska to try a new route on Mt. McKinley. He has taken along 60 kilogrammes of French sausage, which is apparently essential to keep Frenchmen going.

I suppose one of these days I must try to describe life in a French laboratory. It's something quite entertaining. However, for me at the moment it's rather hard work, to which I am not accustomed.

Ah well, must go off for my evening run around the block, training for the Grepon next weekend.

See you,

RON.

A WEEK IN THE VALLEYS OF KATHMANDU (Contd) Dot Butler.

The traveller returning from the East is always asked a few questions about HYGIENE. On first glance this appears to be non-existent in Nepal. There is manure everywhere, buffalo, cow (in the temple courtyards which these animals regard as their special stable), pig (in selected villages - pigs are bred only by Untouchables. Pig meat is not eaten by the locals, but is bred as food for foreigners). There are goat and sheep droppings on the roadside pastures, fowls strut among the red chillies and other vegetables laid out on the ground on mats to dry, and drop their droppings. There is human ditto on the sides of the roads and in gutters and behind bushes. However, except for very tiny children, such matters are conducted with modesty and secrecy. The country has a very necessary spring cleaning for 4 months of the year during the Wet (Monsoon). We arrived at the tail end of the Monsoon; the Dry would be very odourous indeed. Little children play with soft green cow manure as ours play with plasticine. Housewives smear it over the internal walls and ceilings to "purify" the dwelling. Perhaps we are too fussy. Maybe there is nothing really disease-bearing about manure, otherwise the whole population would be dead already.

The other side of the picture; a great deal of bathing and clothes washing goes on, in rivers and under village taps. The women comb and plait their long black hair and put flowers in it. Mostly it appears glossy and clean, but it is also not uncommon to see mothers searching through their children's heads for lice, and unkempt men scratch, scratch, scratching philosophically through their thick scalps. Most serious disease comes into the country via India - T.B., Smallpox, Polio, Dysentery, Typhoid, Leprosy and Cholera. There is also Malaria in the hills. The Sherpas, who have been isolated from much of this, go down like flies when they come in contact with it.

The people and their animals live in happy proximity. There are fowls everywhere. There are small reddish birds. They and their eggs are a staple article of food. As night approaches they and their chickens are incarcerated under a wicker-work basket on the earth outside the village houses. By day they peck around the street, and scatter madly whenever a vehicle toots. A deaf chook is a dead chook.

There are two breeds of dogs, all scavengers (can't waste food on dogs that people could eat), all diseased, probably scurvy. They lie in the middle of the road, too tired to move. They don't seem to have any ambition in life. The villagers keep them as watch-dogs; they bark at the approach of strangers. The valley dogs are smallish, and dingo-like; in the hills they are large and fierce and are called (as near as I can get to the pronunciation) gourou. They are kept as a protection against bears and tigers. Two dogs are a match for any tiger. At night, at the approach of an intruder, they will silently leap and fasten themselves on his throat and kill him. This is one good reason for never arriving unannounced in a village at night.

There are no cats; the Nepalese dislike cats.

Goats are the special care of the children. You see agile little kids scampering round the hills after the goats. The goats are graceful little creatures, black, brown and white. It is a common sight to see small flocks of a dozen or so being led into Kathmandu to the butcher. They are all tied together on different lengths of rope so they can walk one behind the other on the narrow tracks, a refinement that only people close to nature would think of.

There are birds, birds, birds - pigeons cooing in all the recesses of the temples and outside our bedroom window. There are white doves peeping out from among the carved figures in the temples as from a dove-cote - they think the temples were made specially for them, as perhaps they were. (PAINFUL INTERPOLATION: By way of contrast, in New York all the nude statues on the Central Railway facades sprout forests of sharpened steel knitting needles, erected on salient points such as foreheads, cheeks and bosoms, to let the pigeons know that Man is their enemy.)

As evening descends on the Nepalese villages, swifts come circling in great flocks through the streets and among the houses, little black arrows of delight, vivid against the green (green mountains in the background, green squares where the water buffaloes graze and wallow in mud puddles, vibrant green rice-fields.)

Up in the hills soar eagles and hawks. The eagle of the heights is the country's national emblem.

No snow-capped peaks are visible from Kathmandu itself - to see the Himalayan giants at close quarters one must fly to Pokara - a three quarters of an hour journey.

In the next issue I will tell you about Pokara.

"The Great Adventure" was not what Eddie feared it might be, a nudist film, but a movie of the fruit and ~~not~~ set, warning us that we may not last to become fathers at eighty if we eat the wrong things and smoke the wrong brands.

It was an interesting evening. At coffee someone conspicuously ordered tomato juice and Snow was heard to speak very softly.

DAY WALKS.

- AUG.15. Bowen Mt. - Burralow Crk. - Grose River - Bowen Mt. 8 miles. Burralow Crk. has the reputation of being rough going, but the area is very picturesque and well worth a visit. As private transport must be used to reach the area, advise Bill Burke (865617) early if you wish to go.
- Aug.22. Campbelltown - The Woolwash - Pheasant Crk. - O'Hare's Crk. - 12 miles. The large pool at the junction of Pheasant Crk. and O'Hare's Crk. alone is worth the trip. There could be a display of early wildflowers along the way.
Train: 8.25 a.m. Goulburn train from Central Steam Station to Campbelltown. Tickets: Campbelltown return @ 8/9.
Map: Camden Military. Leader: David Ingram.
- AUG.29. Glenbrook - Campfire Crk. - Red Hand Cave - Toby's Glen Crk. - Glenbrook - 12 miles. An interesting trip in the lower Blue Mountains. The Red Hand Cave was evidently the site of aboriginal ceremonial. Train: 8.20 a.m. Lithgow train from Central Steam Station to Glenbrook. Tickets: Glenbrook return @ 14/3.
Map: Liverpool Military. Leader: John Holly.
- SEPT.5. Church Pt. Ferry to Lovett Bay - Willunga Trig - Topham Trig. The Basin - Palm Beach. 8 miles.
This area is noted for the wildflower display which occurs about this time of the year. It has not been damaged by recent fires, possibly because the Kuringai Chase Trust has imposed a ban on all fires on the vicinity of the West Head Rd.
Transport: 8.30 a.m. ferry to Manly from Circular Quay.
9.10 a.m. bus from Manly Wharf to Church Point. Tickets: Total cost of bus and ferry fares about 14/-.
Map: Broken Bay Military or Hawkesbury River Tourist. Leader: David Ingram.
- SEPT.12. Waterfall - bus to Governor Game Lookout - Black Gin Range - South West Arm Crk. - Audley. 12 miles.
An interesting scramble through the middle of the Royal National Park. Should provide a full day's walking.
Train: 8.20 a.m. Cornulla train from Central Electric Stn. to SUTHERLAND. CHANGE THERE for rail motor to Waterfall 9.30 a.m. bus Waterfall to Govr. Game Lookout.
Tickets: Waterfall return @ 6/- plus 2/- bus fare. Map: Port Hacking Military or Port Hacking Tourist. Leader: Jim Calloway.

N.S.W. FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKER'S BALL. FRIDAY. 10th SEPTEMBER. PADDINGTON TOWN HALL. 8.30 a.m. - 2.00 a.m. TICKETS 22/6 each. AVAILABLE FROM ED. STRETTON.
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SOCIAL NOTES FOR AUGUST.

The year's coloured slide competition has created much interest and at the time of going to press the number of entries was most gratifying. This year, Mr. Wal Allen of Y.M.C.A. Camera Circle will be the judge releasing several of our members from this difficult task and at the same time allowing them to be competitors. There is no prize, just the honour and glory of winning the event. During the same week the Y.M.C.A. Camera Circle will hold its world-wide exhibition in basement of Sydney Town Hall. This is an excellent show.

There will be some films shown at the Club on August 25. These are by courtesy of the G.P.O. and although one film will naturally sing the praises of this most efficient department there will be others with a true bushwalker flavour.

FEDERATION REPORT - JULY.

Prospecting in the Colong and adjacent areas. The Department of Mines advised that a Committee had been instructed to inquire into all phases of the matter and that all exploratory and mining activity had been stopped pending the outcome of the committee's investigation.

Restrictions on Access to Barren Grounds. Representation has been made to the Fauna Protection Panel.

Search and Rescue Practice Weekend. Despite heavy snowfalls and curtailment of some activities a very successful demonstration was held on July 17-18.

Conservation Bureau. has made recommendations for a roadless area in the Kosciusko State Park.

Tracks and Access. S.R.C. has cleared and marked access routes in the vicinity of caves used by them at Dixon's Ladders, Narrow Neck. Florabella Track between Blaxland and Woodford has been cleared.

The Bushwalker Annual. A large number of copies are yet to be sold and all clubs were urged promote sales within their membership.

Warrumbungles. Official access to the Park is via Wombelong Creek. Access via the property of Mr. M. Gale (Guneethooroo" Tunderbrine Valley, via Tooraweenah) is available to bona fide bushwalkers belonging to established clubs, provided permission is sought. Mr. J.B. Buchanan of Mt. Terrace does not permit access through his property. The official entrance to the Park will shortly have direct access from Coonabarabran via Mopera Gap.

Elected Office bearers for Federation 1965-1966.

President - Mr. N. Melville. Secretary - to be filled. Assistant Sec. - Bob Lawrence. Minutes Sec. to be filled. Treasurer - Terry Thomas.
