

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the
Sydney Bushwalker, The N.S.W. Nurses' Assoc-
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THE MAY GENERAL MEETING.

Jim Brown.

There has been in recent months a resurgence of the "Noises Off Club" and, when at the opening of the May General Meeting, Frank Ashdown called attention to the hub-bub, the President asked if he would "establish order." The approach was evidently successful, some joined the meeting and others moved away from the door, and soon the President was audible when he summoned three new members to receive badges and what-have-you. There were Margaret Dogtram and Barry Wallace and Cliff Noremon and in his original notes your reporter established a record by setting down each surname incorrectly - rendering even Wallace as Wallis. Ah, well, just as well there are minutes to refer to, and we had them next.

So on to Correspondence which contained quite a spate of enquiries re membership and walks. If all the enquirers actually appear, the Membership team should do good business. The Lands Department advised it had no knowledge of the Prison-Farm-on-Newnes-Plateau proposal. Federation had written to the Metropolitan Surveyor concerning walkers' right of way on Black Jerry's. The "Orienteering week-end" was set down for September 3-4. The associated Sports Clubs had submitted to City Council its project for re-development of the Hotel Sydney site. The Mountain Equipment Co. has a new address. Jack Perry's efforts at the Reunion had been recognised in writing.

Some discussion followed on the Sports Club, its project and whether it was necessary to join. Out of a deal of information it appeared desirable to retain contact in view of the fact that the Circular Quay redevelopment may presently deprive us of a Club Room and the facilities that the new organisation was seeking may be of advantage. There seemed some conflict as to whether we should have to obtain affiliation or not, but at this stage we elected to hold a watching brief and to write supporting in principle that construction of a building devoted to sporting organisations.

The Treasurer's statement showed a final balance of only \$131 in the uncommitted funds, but the month's outgoings included the \$400 in special bonds, and as subscriptions are still rolling in the position was quite sound.

Unfortunately the Walks Report was totally unheard, but it sounded as though quite a few people had been about during April.

Federation Report has been presented in the May Magazine and the only item that provoked debate was the errant traffic sign on The Castle. It was reported to be "No Standing" (but this does allow you to halt for the purpose of taking up or setting down people). Ron Knightley moved that we advise Federation that the sign was erected by the joint efforts of S.B.W. and C.M.W. members, but we did not think C.M.W. should be censured for their part. With a righteous glow at having shouldered all the blame (if not the responsibility) we carried this - although Dave Ingram voiced the cautionary thought that the Police Department may take a poor view of the filching of traffic signs.

It was reported that Parks and Playgrounds at a meeting on April 14 decided to protest against legislation enabling Councils to alienate parkland: also to question the claim that construction of a car park under Hyde Park would not disturb the park. Moves were to be made for the preservation as a reserve of the whole of Kurraba Point, and Commonwealth Land released at La Perouse was proposed for reservation as parkland.

Under the Conservation Report heading Alex Colley advised that the special sub-committee which would present our views to the Minister for Lands had met twice and agreed to present a case practically in line with our previous statement on parkland reserves. The Minister would advise when it was convenient to receive our deputation. One plank in our policy that was not clear was our attitude to fees payable in National Parks. State finance was stretched by other commitments and it may be felt desirable to have national parks contribute to their upkeep (payment of rangers, fire-fighting) and also to build up a fund for the acquisition of other parks. He moved that we favoured reasonable charges for Park use.

Ron Knightley put up an amendment "that such funds should not be used for road construction." The mover accepted this, and after brief debate it was carried.

Thus to General Business, the first matter being the election of Joanna Hallman to the vacancy for Lady Committee Member. The President called attention to a stock of pamphlets supplied by Paul Barnes and describing the Heathcote Primitive Area and invited all present to please take one.

Mick Elfick now had a proposition to put. We all knew of the spread of fire fighters' roads in our walking territory. The Water Board alone had built 600 miles of 'em and proposed to construct more at the rate of 100 miles in each of the next four years. One route was planned for the Gingr Range from Kanangra to link up with the Cedar Road on the Kowmung. However contact had been made with the Chief Forester who had indicated he thought that particular trail could be left undone if there were a volunteer fire brigade amongst Bushwalkers who would be willing to suppress fires in the areas. He moved that Federation be advised, and that S.B.W. indicate its support. In answer to a question Mick said if successful the proposal may save construction of other trails in the region - say along the Gangerang.

Frank Ashdown foresaw difficulties of transport and obtaining leave from work. Someone observed that the State Government services in N.S.W. appeared willing to grant leave for fire fighting if not for orthodox S & R activity. The President explained that there were kinds of forest fires where a small self-contained group could be more effective than bigger parties who would only operate from a road line, and he was convinced that the work given such an organisation would be suitable to its character. Ron Knightley indicated he was willing to support both the fire fighting and transport needs and after the motion was carried a show of hands indicated that there should be no problem in mustering the requisite strength from Federated Clubs.

Alan Rigby asked for organisers for the "Orienteering" contest and the President let it be known that the first "free" supper night would coincide with a lecture on finding one's way by the stars - date July 27. On which agreeable thought the meeting ended at about 9.20 p.m.

ONE MORE MONTH.

By Observer.

Latest News from Europe Department: Bill Ketas, recovered more or less from injuries received in his unfortunate car accident in Yugoslavia, has arrived in London. He and Snow (with extended leave) were reported about to tour Britain and Scandinavia. After all this, let's hope they keep off the North face of the Eiger.

Malcolm McGregor has a message for husbands: "Don't crack a joke at the tea table." He did just that, and Elsa laughed so hard that a pea went down the wrong way and lodged in her lung. A rush trip to the doctor - hospital - operating table - bronchoscopes galore. For a while Elsa looked like becoming the original "Wun Bung Lung".

Had a good look at the new Winter Walks Programme? For sheer activity and variety, it must just about take the cake. In 13 week-ends, there are no fewer than 43 "activities" to be led by at least 30 different people! And what a choice! The range is from ski tours and ski instructionals, through walks in every conceivable part of the country to a mystery called "Talaterang - there and back". Nice to know the "and back" bit is included.

After the celebrated bicycle trip from Mittagong to Katoomba, several of the bods and their heaps had gathered at Snow Brown's parents' home in Katoomba. Quoth Mr. Brown Sen., "I wouldn't give you ten bob for the lot of them." Now, the interesting point is, to what was he referring, the bods or the bikes?

It seems that this adventurous trip started out with twelve mounted and one on foot. Now the dogged foot-slogger, John Scott, was the first to finish the course. For a bushwalker in this mechanised age, it's somehow gratifying to reflect that a pair of sturdy legs can still outstrip the wheel - the triumph of man over machine at last!

For sustained, superb photography, you couldn't go past Henry Gold's colour slides of "Scenic California". Every one was a gem. One part of Henry's success formula is patience - waiting for THE right moment. Would you be prepared to wait indefinitely for a flower to stop moving in the breeze, for just the right sky effects to come, for the odd-ball wave that will send up a spectacular plume of spray? No? That's one reason there are not many Henry Golds around.

JULY COMMITTEE MEETING - CHANGE OF DATE.

To enable the N.S.W. Nurses Association to prepare the auditorium for their annual conference the Committee has agreed to met on Tuesday July 5, 1966 instead of Wednesday, 6th. This means that the free night will take place on 5th July and the Club Rooms will not be open on Wednesday 6th.

A VISIT TO THE CAVES -- by Elizabeth Stanford-Thomas.

("A Visit to the Caves" was a talk broadcast by the Australian Broadcasting Commission in 1965. Some will remember Taro's entertaining rendition of it at the recent Reunion. Now, by kind permission of the A.B.C. we are able to publish this most interesting account. Ed.)

A little while ago I popped in for a chat with my cousin in Epping and found her head down in a box of books and papers which had been her father's. With her grey hair tousled, she lifted a flushed and triumphant face. "Look what I've found!" she cried, "You'll love it!" And she pushed me down into a chair and put on my lap a most unique manuscript. Sixty pages of spidery copper-plate writing, liberally interspersed with drawings and age-dimmed photographs, and bound in black leather. On the front - gilt adornment, and the words "A Memorable Trip." Lift the heavy cover, and read with me the title page, full of curleycued capitals and red ink underlining:

"A Correct and Faithful Account of a Journey to the Fish River Caves,
by the Pickwick Corresponding Club.... Published by permission
of the Club, March, 1886."

My cousin told me the Club was formed of people who delighted in the writings of Charles Dickens, and when a party of seven members (including her grandfather, an uncle and aunt) reached the solemn decision to make this journey, they assumed names from Pickwick Papers. It was only after much consideration that three women were included in the party, and they made history. They were the first women ever to reach Jenolan Caves (or Fish River Caves as they were called then) from Katoomba in the Blue Mountains of N.S.W. It was a three day tramp to the caves, a mile and a half along the Western Road as far as the Explorers' Tree, then twenty-two miles through the bush, over unmade tracks and blazed trails. They had a day at the Caves and then the return journey - a week in all, yet it took a year to prepare for it.

Turn the page with me, and let's look into the preparations that were made and the 19th Century approach to the inclusion of women. You will recognise the Club members' Pickwickian names as I read from this 1886 manuscript:

"At the time called Easter in the year 1885, Mr. Nathaniel Winkle and Mr. Samuel Weller made a journey to the world-famed "Binda" or "Fish River Caves." They were so impressed with the trip that on their return, they consulted with Mr. Pickwick as to the desirability of again visiting that famous spot in company with the whole of the Pickwick Corresponding Club. The idea of taking ladies on such a journey was rather much for Pickwick's keen sense of what Weller would call 'propriety'; but, after several days' weighty consideration the President fell in with Winkle and Weller's recommendation.

"The day appointed for the start was the 19th March, 1886. Long before the start day came round, all sorts of rumours were afloat about the ill-formed and crude ideas of the Club regarding the length, breadth, and dangers of the unmade track from Katoomba to the Binda Mountain. The Club's friends implored Pickwick to have members of the Club tested closely by Dr. Edwards. Pressure was brought to bear upon him from all quarters, and he was seriously warned off the great responsibilities resting on his shoulders. Mrs. Barjokim said

it was anything but proper that three unprotected young women should for one moment be permitted to attempt such a journey without their parents to accompany them. Sir Simeon Baker implored Mr. Pickwick, if only to avoid the appearance of wrong, to get the Rev. Timothy Pecksniff to form one of the party. Others assured the good President that all manner of difficulties would occur on the way, in the shape of thunderstorms, rivers too high to ford, snakes, kangaroos, snowstorms, want of water, tight boots, teeth aching, cold, heat, wild dogs, bull-dog ants, spiders, no tracks, blackfellows, crows, want of food, milk, butter etc. However, Pickwick was proof against all the objectionists, for he had confidence in Mr. Nathaniel Winkle and Mr. Samuel Weller."

Then a doleful Mr. Winkle went to see Pickwick - "Did I tell you," he said, "Mr. Greyship called on to inquire if reports were true, and warned me against the venture, feared the Club ladies would never do the distance, and half a dozen others doubt the results? Now, Pickwick, the whole matter rests with you: I see it all before me if I can rest on your honour." The President rose from his chair, took Winkle's hand, and gave him his assurance of loyalty. From this time, operations fairly commenced."

The manuscript tells how over the months of preparation, Mr. Weller took the ladies on walking tours to Bondi, in training for the journey to Jenolan Caves, and in the meantime Mr. Winkle made all practical arrangements, including engaging a pack horse at Katoomba where they were to stay the night, having grip pegs put in the ladies' boots and giving full and clear instructions as to the clothing to be worn. And a dim old photograph shows the party in camp; the men have waistcoats, knickerbockers and leggings, and of course collars and ties; and the women - can you imagine it? - in three or four visible layers of skirts to their feet, bustles, cameo brooches, high boned lace collars, shawls and large cauliflower hats of the 1880's.

How different it is today, when women climb into boiler suits or slacks grab a picnic basket and are off at a moment's notice to join with the men in speleological pursuits!

Well, the first day's tramp for the Pickwick Club began from Katoomba Hotel at six o'clock on the morning of Saturday, 20th March, 1886, and the manuscript records: "The butcher's shop was passed while the meat-vendor stood at the door and wondered to see such an exodus. Dogs barked, and miners turned back as they passed."

Can't you just see them? In single file, led by Winkle who was head and shoulders above the rest, with Weller leading Punch, the packhorse, at the rear - equipped for a rugged mountain scramble in sweeping skirts, shawls and cameos; in gentlemanly suits and leggings; betopped with modish hats!

After turning into the bush at the Explorers' Tree, they descended the Katoomba Range, and here "first experienced the wisdom of Mr. Winkle's suggestion about the spikes on the boots." In the descent of the Megalong Cleft "it must be recorded to Pickwick's credit that he taught the ladies the use of the sticks, that is to say, he cut sticks for them, or walking-rods, suitable for snake-killing etc."

It seems astonishing that the Pickwick Club's careful planning for this journey did not include carrying their own water. I'm told that caving parties today carry two gallons per person as a first essential. As the day wore on the Pickwickians suffered from thirst and it is recorded:

"Then the lamentations came that the company had not provided cisterns that would hold water. The day was excessively hot, and water was not to be had in any of the creeks. Mrs. Bardell was thoughtful and occasionally cast an anxious glance down to the dry and glistening granite bed of the creek. Pickwick made all manner of resolutions for the return journey: 'A little flask, and something in it to wet the lips,' he said, would be a wise provision.

However during the afternoon a halt was made at Cox's River where "a little water was found in a pool which had been well patronised by the wild cattle from the mountains." They camped that night at Little River where they found plenty of water, but before retiring to rest, Pickwick says, a spot was selected as safe for the ladies as a bath!

Next day they climbed to the top of the Black Range and had a scaring adventure when Arabella's red shawl attracted the unwelcome attentions of a bull and other wild cattle and the manuscript records the "honourable devotion" and "generosity" of the gentlemen in taking the ladies in their arms. "They spared no pains and denied themselves much to help the weary." And it was a very weary and thirsty band who by the light of their lantern began the descent of the final mountain at the bottom of which were Jenolan Caves. "But the moon came to the rescue," the manuscript continues, "and while the company were arranging the order of march, the great silver orb shone over the caps of a distant range and peered into the great valley below. Soon the lights of the keeper's house were visible, like stars shining in a brook, down, down, a long way down."

The Caves Keeper was amazed at their arrival and assured the ladies they were the first of their sex who had ever made the journey on foot -- and complimented them on their spirit and strength.

According to the President of the Speleological Society in Orange this journey of twenty-three miles in three days, continuously up and down mountains, following unmade tracks and blazed trails, would have been a good effort under today's conditions. "But of course," he added, "I don't know how our girls would get on with all those skirts round their feet!"

The manuscript has little to say in description of the Jenolan Caves as they were then, in defence of which the author says:

"Now it is not the author's intention to attempt to describe these great natural wonders. Photography is utterly at fault in every representation it has ever made; a photograph of the sun, or of a jewel in the Queen's crown could not more unfairly misrepresent these than the interior of the Fish River Caves have been by the very best pictures taken, and, as yet, exhibited. No artist, pencil or photographer, should attempt to produce pictures of these remarkable natural wonders. Everything put on paper or canvas should be treated as a crime against the human vision; they must be seen."

Photography has made such strides since 1886 that perhaps the author would qualify his ruling now. Nevertheless, an interesting question arises. Who would appreciate such natural wonders more? The 1965 party who travels by car, is luxuriously catered for, and sees the caves illuminated by modern techniques under a tutorial guide.... or the 1886 group whose goal was achieved through personal physical effort and hardship? They would see less and learn less of the caves, but mightn't the impact be far greater? It is the same old question - which means more to us today? - that which is handed to us on a platter, or that which we have striven for?

At all events, today's cave enthusiasts must envy the Pickwickians who chose to camp out rather than sleep in the Keeper's house, and raised their tent in the archway beneath the Caves. The manuscript describes the camp at night -

"It was like what has been described as The Smugglers' Den. The tent, the fire, the deep darkness, the bats, and the gurgling of the brook, the dark walls, and the hollow echo sound of the voices rendered the place awful and strange." But man had aided nature in 1886, too. I quote: "One of the most remarkable sights in the Lucas Cave was a bridge constructed of iron, over a dark and ugly chasm, at the bottom of which a clear river of pure water noiselessly ran its course." That evening," the manuscript continues, "the Caves Keeper had arranged for a grand display of what he termed 'The Devil's Coach House'. After tea the assembled members went with him to this gigantic causeway. The night was pitch dark and the stars were like spots of electric light. The whole company was seated on rock boulders beneath a tremendous dome which made the head giddy to scan its awful height. Far away and up on the shelving peaks, the Caves Keeper had men placed at the four points of the compass who looked like toy men that children play with in soldier boxes. On each of those jutting peaks blue fire was simultaneously lit and this tremendous natural cathedral at once had the appearance of the home of departed spirits as described by Dante. The visitors looked, from the heights above, more like ants than men and women, and when the men above lighted the red lights the appearance of that terrible archway was like a world of fire. That was the grand night of sight-seeing for the Pickwick Corresponding Club and one no member of the Club can ever forget."

The tramp back to Katoomba started early next morning, and was in no way an anticlimax, and when at last they reached the Katoomba Hotel late on the third night, it was with a sense of worthwhile achievement. How fine it would be if every picnicker and excursionist today could declare with the Pickwick Club:

"Now it must be stated to the honour of the Pickwick Corresponding Club that they destroyed nothing in the Caves, as many visitors do, and abstained from disfiguring the rocks and walls adjacent by writing - as too many have done - their names thereon; and not one of the company carried away even the smallest portion of stalactite. Thus terminated a week of uninterrupted pleasure which was not in the least marred by word or look. The outing has left reflections worth preserving the balance of life, however extended it may be."

"Now some of the lessons to be learned from what has been written may be easily summed up," concludes the account of this Memorable Trip in 1886, "It is possible to have uninterrupted pleasure in this life so long as the pleasure sought is in keeping with the laws of health. The class of pleasure the wise will seek is such as will elevate the mind, strengthen the body, and give in after days reflections in which to delight.

Another lesson: It is possible for a party of seven to perform a trying and laborious journey, occupying a week, and not to hear one single murmur or complaint, and not see a cross countenance or a discontented spirit."

WALKING IN GREAT BRITAIN - PART I.

Sandra Butt.

A large proportion of Englishmen live in areas of high density population, it is not surprising that many shoulder a rucksack at the weekend and head for the wide open spaces. Rambling, as it is called, is very popular throughout Great Britain and its devotees are less likely to be regarded as mentally defective as bushwalkers tend to be in Australia.

There are approximately a dozen National Parks in England and Wales, providing many different types of walking country, ranging from the bare rugged mountains in the Snowdonia National Park in North Wales to the narrow coastal cliff paths overhanging sheer cliffs in Pembroke in South Wales, or the wild, lonely and wind swept moors of North Yorkshire.

These Parks are very different from our concept of a National Park. They are areas of particular scenic beauty which cater for specialised interests such as walking, climbing or any one of the branches of natural science, within the limits of which no building or development may take place without, virtually, a Royal Commission to establish a valid reason for such an intrusion. Civilisation is still a part of the Park scene however, in the shape of busy arterial roads, small villages (with every trap set for the tourist) and farms, whose trap takes the form of a "Bed and Breakfast" sign swinging in the breeze. One almost comes to the conclusion that Bed and Breakfast is really Great Britain's most profitable and enduring industry. The intense farming that has taken place over the centuries perhaps accounts for the most noticeable feature of all Parks to a Blue Mountains-gearred walker - the lack of trees of extensive tracts of dense undergrowth. There are of course specially planted forests and very beautiful groves of trees, especially beeches which make a very colourful splash in the autumn, but there is never the joy of doing battle with impenetrable scrub or of acrobatics through a sally gum forest, and of course, the view from the top is never obscured by trees, the weather usually does an ever better job.

Most Parks have a permanent resident Warden and a varying number of voluntary assistants. Their job is to patrol the Park on the lookout for vandals or to search for lost parties, and also to provide information to visitors. This information is plentiful and helpful, in the form of maps and

booklets giving full details of all grades of walks in the Park and details of local accommodation. There are well appointed camping and caravan sites, though you may put your tent in a slightly less crowded area. This may be difficult to find however, as everywhere else is someone else's or on the side of a steep hill. These sites provide all the amenities of civilization - just like home, except that the walls are canvas and the bed is not quite as soft.

Footpaths and tracks are well trodden, though by our standards, highway would be a better description. Close to civilisation, a footpath will be indicated by a green post bearing a board such as "Public Footpath to Castleton - 3 miles". In Wales the signs are bi-lingual, in Scotland scarce and in Ireland non-existent. Should you come to a junction, if you are lucky, there are usually adequate signs to ensure you make the right turning. The National Trust use blue signs indicating the location of ancient monuments and buildings of historical interest. In "high" country there are tracks, usually well cairned, and often white highways are worn over boulder fields by millions of tramping boots. In farming country, well used sheep tracks are very confusing until one grows accustomed to the sheeplike tendency to shun climbing and merely follow the contours. Cairns on summits are almost universal, but Visitors' Books, say of the Splendour Rock size, would have to be replaced every month on the most popular peaks.

The whole of Great Britain is covered by 1"/mile contoured maps published by the Ordnance Survey Commission. They come in a special cardboard folder either on paper or cloth. There are larger and smaller scale maps but they are rarely used by the average walker. There is an excellent series of maps put out by Bartholomew's of Edinburgh, either $\frac{1}{2}$ " or $\frac{1}{4}$ "/mile which are ideal for cycling but not of sufficient detail for the walker. British Railways publish two very useful books describing 50 day walks in the Home Counties, escaping from London by one or other of their excellent systems of transport. These books contain reproduction from Ordnance Survey maps and pictures and are minutely detailed. The average length of a day's walk would be 15 miles - much further and you could walk out of the Park into civilisation. Unless one added the handicap of a 60 lb pack, there did not seem to be many walks which would exceed our grading of "Hard". Basically one climbs up onto a ridge, bashed along its undulating length and then descends. Creek walking is rare, either because there are farms all along the way or perhaps a road. Canyoneering or cascading would necessitate the wearing of a super insulated rubber suit to ensure survival. Road bashes are almost unavoidable in a walk of any distance - quite fun on the narrow winding lanes of Wales with high walls or hedges on either side..

Marathon walks are quite popular and are given considerable newspaper publicity. One of the best known is the "Welsh 3000" which involves the scaling of the 14 peaks over 3000' in Snowdonia National Park. Most of these peaks are bumps on a ridge, but it ends up being a 19 mile stroll with 12,000' of climbing. The record stands at about 9 hours - but remember, there are cheer squads along the route to boost morale and you don't even have to carry your lunch.

TO BE CONTINUED.



PADDY MADE

11.

It is a pleasure to study the thoroughbred camper at his pastime.

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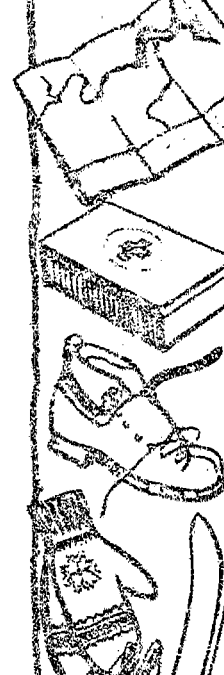
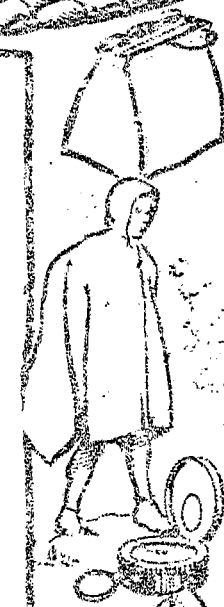
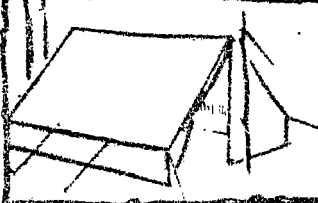
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ON WALKING AND MEMORIES.

By Taro.

Here is a tale of a time when the manliness of men was measured by their walking ability; not vulgar show off competitive stuff - but walking - to get from here to there without any fuss.

It comes from a book by Geo. Borrow, "Wales" his six months wander there in 1854.

He covered all Wales by foot power - 30 mile a day - just a trifle - he carried no swag - BUT - an umbrella - always a pub at days end, with a big fire waiting, however soaked was he. Imagine it. Night - strange country - rain - torchless, but no complaint, he always reached his mark.

So - here is a glimpse at one of many such happy meetings =

"A little beyond town, a man came out of a cottage and walked beside me - he had a basket in his hand. I quickened my pace, but he was a tremendous walker, and kept up with me. On we went, side by side for more than a mile without speaking a word.

At length, putting out my legs in genuine Barclay fashion, I got before him about 10 yards, then turning round, laughed and spoke in English. He too, laughed and spoke - in Welsh. Now we went on like brothers - conversing - but always walking at great speed. I learned from him that he was a market gardener - living at Bangor, and that Bangor was 3 miles away. On the stars coming out, we began to talk about them.

A mile to go - and 10 minutes. I shook hands with the kind six-mile-an-hour market gardener, and went in."

This has special interest for me, for 73 years ago that was precisely a game of mine. Every morning, near Christ Church corner, a big well set-up city man would come striding along, and I always tacked on to him, ahead or behind, for the 10 minute spin to the G.P.O. 1 mile exactly. 30 years never spoke to 14 years, but half a century later, I chanced on him in George St., and again tacked on to try his style - O dear! I reminded him I was the puppy that used to get under his feet in the long, long ago.

A notable man was Mr. Colyer, an accountant in town, a fine singer, no Messiah without him.

Sydney lost a worthy citizen when he dropped out of the great race. To day - any accountant found walking, would have chartered transport forced on him.

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A WELL-BUNGLED TRIP - By Ross Wyborn.

(Or "How to Ride a Brike from Mittagong to Katoomba
in a Weekend.")

As I am writing this I am sitting in the AB cafe after putting away a large meal. The rest of the party has not arrived yet and it is already well after dark on Sunday night. What's happened to them?

It all started a few weeks before our planned Mittagong-Katoomba bike trip. People were combing the dumps looking for old bikes and overhauling others. Also people were practicing for the big event. Margaret pulled a ligament in her knee on a practice run, Dave Rostron sprained an ankle when he had 15 punctures and the back wheel fell off. By the time of the trip the number had dropped from about 30 to a mere dozen keen bods. Another dropped out when he was riding his bike to Central to catch the train and got bowled by a car.

Jack Pettigrew

When we reached Mittagong on Friday night we picked up our bikes which had been sent down on Wednesday night and then had a meal at Charlie's. When we came out of the cafe it was raining hard and the party was debating the merits of such a trip. Eventually we were mounted up and away down the highway. With water splashing up from the road the trail of flickering bike torches sped down the hill only to walk up the other side.

By the time we reached the Wombeyan Caves turnoff the rain had almost stopped (we were getting into the Warragamba Catchment Area). Good time was made along the Wombeyan Caves road and soon we came to the Wanganderry

turnoff. It just so happens that this turnoff is on the steepest down hill yet encountered on this road and when I yelled to stop there was a smell of burning sandshoes. Just then Bob Smith topped the rise and came hurtling down yelling "No brakes". There was a great crash and the next thing we saw was Bob hurtling 20 feet into the air. We picked him up from the gutter, dazed but not hurt. While we were fixing his bike the local farmer came along and we got talking to him. He suggested that we sleep in his wool shed. His idea was quickly accepted and we followed him up to the house. On the way from the gate to the house we seemed to have lost 2 bods. We went out to search and found 3 of them.

The farmer was very hospitable and we were invited in for a cup of tea. As we sat around the fire they served up with hot drinks, chips, biscuits and cake. We sat around talking until 2 a.m. How can a leader be expected to keep his party going with hospitality like this? We slept on bales of wool and hay in the shed and in the morning nobody wanted to get up. Eventually we got away at about 8 a.m., but no sooner had we gone more than 100 yards when Bob Smith got a puncture. In due time we arrived at Burnt Flat Creek where we had breakfast. We had to wheel our bikes down Burnt Flat Creek and at the bottom I got a puncture. By this time people were beginning to think that the trip was not possible as it was already about 11 a.m. and we had only come a couple of miles. At this stage Paul Hinkley brought out a little sign which read "KATOOMBA and/or BUST" and tied it onto the back of his bike. A little further on Bob Smith had more trouble with his bike and Fonny Dinck remained with him to help with repairs while the others pushed on. This is when Ganderpipe came out with his classic statement - "You can get spread out on a trip like this". Little did he realize what was to come.

We made good time across the "Dilly" and up the steep walk on the other side. The others caught us up at lunch in Byrnes Creek. We then pushed our bikes up the long drawn out hills to Yerranderie. Here there was rebellion in the party and most of them camped in the old Hotel while Roger, Rona, Doone and myself pushed on to Byrnes Gap.

Next morning we were up at first light and away an hour later. We had to go down and up a few valleys before we reached Scott's Main Range proper. When we were just about on top my bike broke down beyond repair. There was nothing else to do but leave it there. While we were taking the tubes out, Fonny, Bob Smith and Alan Pike caught up to us and took more parts. I started walking but was quickly over-taken by the riders as we were now on easy riding country. Not long afterwards Dot and the rest of the party also passed me. It looked like I would be back well behind the others as the cyclists were going much faster than me.

Just as I was getting very weary I stumbled into the Catholic Bushies hut for a drink. When I got nearer the hut I heard a rumpus coming from inside and saw a load of bikes parked outside. What I heard was actually old time dance music coming from a record player. Inside I found 5 cyclists making merry and stuffing themselves with food. They fed me with some soup and coffee and I was on my way again.

I had only gone a few miles when I heard a rattle of bikes behind me and the party came streaking by again. However I caught them up on top of Mt. Cookem where the road runs out. From the top of Cookem I gave a "Dayo" and received answers from all over the valley. I then headed down the track which looked like an elephant trail, the others wheeling their bikes down behind me. I had only gone a short distance when I met Brian Harding who had come up looking for us. He then told me his story. He had been out on a day walk and was sitting by the Cox's River waiting for us when a rock came rolling over a cliff on the opposite side of the river. Following the rock came a bicycle and following the bicycle came a bod. The first of the party had arrived at the Cox's River!

Brian and I then went down to the river and cut up to the White Dog Road on the other side. We could only see two sets of wheel tracks going up, but continued up to Brian's car at Medlow Gap. There was still no one in sight so we drove back to Katoomba. We have just finished our meal and being a good leader who always looks after his party I think we will go out to the end of Narrow Neck and see if anyone is coming in.

Postscript.

We did find some one coming in along Narrow Neck. First came my brother, Doone, who had pulled his bike up Taro's ladders on a piece of string and rode in along the Neck. He was closely followed by Roger who had thrown his bike away at Medlow Gap and walked along the Neck. Roger was closely followed by John Scott who had walked the whole distance from Mittagong to Katoomba. As there was no sign of anyone else we went home.

Next day at work I got a phone call from ~~Donny~~ Ponny Dinch to tell us that Bob Smith, Alan Pike, Rona Butler and himself had arrived hom at 5 a.m. that morning. Apparently they thought that since the leader wasn't there they could have three hours for lunch. This time they spent at the bottom of the White Dog Road and we had passed them by cutting up the ridge.

When they eventually dragged themselves away from the lunch spot they pushed their bikes up to Medlow Gap which they reached just on nightfall. Being a keen party they pushed on up Deberts Knob, then pulled their bikes up Taro's ladders in the dark. Dot and the rest of the party stayed at Medlow Gap for the night and came out next morning.

A certain character who runs a garage-cafe in walking country was telling us about the various groups who passed his way, and he was not joking.

"Yes, we've even had the Out of Bounds Movement." "Don't you mean the Outward Bound Movement", we said. "Yes, that's right, the Out of Bounds Movement."

Wonder what he calls the S.B.W?

PROFILE OF A BUSHWALKER - No. 1. - "TARRO".

By Alan Rigby.

"Who is Sylvia?" The oeping question of that beautiful song by Schubert could also be asked of "Tarro".

"Who is Tarro, whence came he?" There must be a great number of Sydney Bushwalkers, and other walkers too, who are vividly aware of that amazing person but have no idea of his background. To them he is a living legend. Those who have walked with him, camped with him, talked with him and listened to the music from his flute at the campfire remember him as an ever-refreshing and unforgettable character.

In mortal years "Tarro" is old but in spirit and manner he is eternally young. He saw twenty one years of the last century, all the boundless days of young manhood. He can recall an immense amount of facts about the Sydney of those far away days, of people, buildings, theatre, and so on, and his reminiscences are well worth listening to.

I have known him for over fifty years and have been in close contact through that time. When I first met him he was a black-haired, lean and vigorous young man in his early thirties. And now, an individualist, an original thinker with quite a formidable personality. By occupation a first rate painter and signwriter, a craftsman who loved his work. Just take a walk around the city with him and he will point out existing examples of that ancient craft done in his younger days. Born on 23rd of June, 1879, Tarro is one of a family of eight children, two girls and six boys. Of the eight one sister and three brothers (four all told) are still living. I remember his parents well, particularly his wonderful mother. She was over 90 when she died and I had the rare priviledge of writing a letter of congratulations to her on her 90th birthday.

Tarro's home is, as one would expect, quite different from any other home. It is full of gadgets, levers to open the front door of the seven foot fence that surrounds his grounds, a domed ceiling over a twenty foot square room, with a ten by ten room at each corner, but not divided off from the main room. Various alterations were made over the years and one is an upstairs lookout platform, partly covered. Here he sleeps, that is if one can imagine such a man sleeping. From this lookout there is a clear view to the mountains, and various points such as Clear Hill may be picked out. Indeed, on trips to Clear Hill it would be arranged with someone at his home to flash a mirror at a given hour and we would flash back.

The grounds are surrounded by a seven foot fence of fine corrugated iron, with entrance by a panelled door. This is secured by a Yale lock and one signals desire for entrance by pressing a bell button, whereon the door will swing silently open with never a soul in sight. It is all done with levers from any part of the house. Consequently he is never bothered by hawkers. The name of the house is "Voltaire", which indicated to soul-

saving parsons that their time would be wasted. (For further elucidation read Voltaire's "Candide" and other stories and essays.) In short Tarro valued his time and seclusion. In the grounds he maintained a well-equipped workshop and there were few tasks from expert tin-smithing to tent-making that he did not master. He is a first-class "gadgeteer" with a cunning sense of invention. Highly skilled in woodwork, he has made many exquisite pieces.

As both of us were keen cyclists, we did many rides together, and for many years he celebrated his birthday on the nearest Sunday by riding one hundred miles in the day and on a great number of "century" runs I was his partner. The usual run was Auburn to Bulli Lookout and back and then five miles to Parramatta and back to make the exact hundred miles. He still rides the same bicycle, a Canadian "Red-bird" that is as hard-wearing as himself.

In 1921 a change came to my life that was to have profound effect on Tarro's. In that year I met Myles J. Dunphy and as the result of a two weeks' bushwalk that Christmas (my first) I was invited to join the Mountain Trails Club of N.S.W. Following a number of walks to Era, Burning Palms, Garie, untouched paradise in those days, I invited Tarro and his son Ben to go with me to Clear Hill on the October holiday. It should be remembered that in those days there were no maps, no tracks, no walkers in general, and of course no Paddy Pallin and his lightweight walking gear. Tarro was an expert camper; he maintained a permanent camp at Clovelly for years (can you imagine that today?) but had done no bushwalking. The Tarrs' packs were, I think, ex army haversacks and mine was a swag type designed by Myles Dunphy and Bert Gallor and called the "Dungalla". We arrived at Katoomba by the early morning paper train. It is hard to believe it now, but we caused some amazement at that town and some fifty or more people followed us a long way toward Narrow Neck. They had never seen walkers before.

Thus was Tarr introduced to walking and when the S.B.W. came into being in 1927 he was in the first group of enthusiastic members. Here he made many friends and his personality developed and blossomed. I think that it is safe to say that this had a profound effect on him, as he met a very wide variety of people from many walks of life.

On the Clear Hill trip his gadgeteering mind set to work on packs. The rucksek was not here then. After many experiments his ultimate was a pack with a moulded plywood back to which the harness and bags were attached. This pack had many innovations and like it's owner, was unique. He made a pack for me to my own idea and used his cane frame idea on it. To test this pack he carried the original Tarro's Ladder, together with his camping gear to Clear Hill where he erected the ladder.

There is one word that is the key to Tarro's nature, that word is "Enthusiasm". Enthusiasm is the base of everything that he does, and of everything that he says. Behind it all he has a will of iron, his life is

disciplined and to some people, spartan. He will not waste time on things of little interest, but on the other hand he finds enormous interest in little things; to such an end he made his "Viewascope", a device with which to study the tiny, hidden beauty in the heart of a flower. His interests are very wide. He has an immense knowledge of music, a keen follower of ballet, opera, the stage, a fine sense of history and a keen and unusual reader. He is by far the fastest reader whom I know, and few can as quickly digest the contents of a book. Among the earlier interests was photography, especially stereoscopic photography.

Tarro made history in the Thirties, by becoming "lost" near the foot of Mt. Mouin. That did not matter so much, but he had all of our best girls with him and a large and anxious party searched all night around the gullies and gorges and the Glens of Guess looking for them. They turned up all right next morning and eventually a song was written to celebrate the happening.

He loved Clear Hill and in fact gave himself the title of "The Duke of Clear Hill", which stuck to him for many years.

Walkers come and go, but the true walkers retain their love of the bush, the memory of their companions and the campfires at night, the sight of sparks leaping to join the myriad stars in the velvet dark sky, of the murmuring stream and the soft sigh of the night breeze through the casuarina needles and whenever I sit by my campfire I just wish to hear again the haunting music of Tarro's flute.

FEDERATION REPORT - MAY.

Search and Rescue Section Practice Weekend: This excursion will be held on July 16/17. Details will be made available later. Colin Putt is acting as Field Officer.

Black Jerry's Ridge: The Department of Lands advised that the use of the road is legal as it was provided for in the original survey. A copy of the District Map is being obtained and the matter will be further investigated.

Colong Caves: It was advised that an iron gateway had been erected in the area known as "Kings Cross", but it was not known with whose authority. As the caves are in Crown Land further enquiries are being made.

Sydney University Rock-Climbing Club: This Club is desirous of affiliating with the Federation. A sub-committee was appointed to report back on its eligibility.

Federation Ball: This function will be held at Paddington Town Hall on September 9. Clubs are requested to keep the date before members by means of Club Magazines and general announcement. Tickets are \$2.50 single, \$5 double. A new band is to be engaged and prizes awarded for table decorations on a selected theme.

Power Line in Mt. Irvine Area: The Conservation Bureau announced that a move was on foot to erect a power line which would probably entail destruction of bushland. The purpose was to pump water from Wollangambe Creek.

Blue Mountains National Park: A move is afoot to have the whole area declared a Wild Life Refuge. The Trust announced that two fires had been started in the Park by fireworks. The Trust and the Federation is becoming increasingly concerned at the greater number of fireworks being exploded in bushland areas. The Park by-laws prohibit the use of fireworks. Club members are requested to police Blue Gum Forest Area for this menace.

Heathcote Primitive Area: Mr. Paul Barnes announced that a Trust Ranger had been attracted by the explosion of bungers. He found they were being exploded by four Scouts because they were lost on Heathcote Creek, and wished to attract attention.

Barrington Tops Area: It was learned that a forest of 16,000 pine seedling was about to be planted by the Forestry Commission, to which a letter has been addressed seeking information as to the location of the State Forest.

Otford: It is reported intense drives are being made for permission to establish a coal mine in this area, which may penetrate under Royal National Park, with ventilation shafts.

Natural Gas Pipeline. A warning was issued that the proposal to pipe gas from Victoria may encroach on existing reserves. Any new survey marks should be reported to the Federation for investigation, irrespective of location.

Orienteering Competition: Forms are available at Paddy Fallin's shop. This innovation should prove to be very enjoyable. Prizes are offered.

Radio Field Day: This function will be held at Mt. Kur-Ring-Gai on Sunday, June 5. 9.30 a.m. train from Hornsby. This is an important adjunct to S & R. operations.

Waratah Festival: An investigation is being made on the possibilities of a display on the 1967 Festival Parade.

HOW DO YOUR TRIPS SCORE?

Ross Wyborn.

Compare the trip you lead or go on by the table below.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. No. of People on Trip. | 1 point per person (females 2 points) |
| 2. No. of Days Overdue | 10 points per person per Day. |
| 3. People Lost on Trip | 5 points per person per day. |
| 4. Bungles in Map Reading | 5 points per bungle. |

5. No of Publicly Known Bludgers	2 points per Bludger.
6. No. of Lost Cars	10 points per Car.
7. Car Swap Trips	20 points
8. Lost Leader (i.e. separated from party.	10 points per day.
9. Impossible Route Selected	10 points.
10. Arrival Home on Monday Morning.	2 points per hour after midnight.
11. Trip Not completed Due to White Ants.	10 Points
12. Angle of Campsite	2 points for every degree over 45°.

Here is how it works: Example. Mittagong - Katoomba Bike Trip.

	<u>Points.</u>	<u>Fill in Your Score.</u>
No. of people - 11 men 2 women	15	.....
5 people overdue 1 day	50	.....
2 people lost $\frac{1}{2}$ day	5	.....
Map Reading Bungles	No Map Anyway.	.....
No. of lost cars	-	.....
Car Swap trip	-	.....
Lost Leader - 1 day	10	.....
Impossible Route Selected	10	.....
Those not overdue got home 5 a.m.	10	.....
Trip was completed	-	.....
	<hr/>	
Total	100	

CODE - SCORE

- 0 - 20 - May as well have stayed home.
 - 20 - 40 - Could have gone on a Kameruka trip.
 - 40 - 60 - Typical S.B.W. Trip.
 - 60 - 100 - A mighty trip (could only be a S.B.W. trip).
 - greater than 100 - still recovering (could only be a Wossiborn trip).
-