

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 JUNE GENERAL MEETING.

J. Brown.

It was quite a small gathering at the beginning of June's General Meeting, and the cosy intimate atmosphere was heightened by the welcome of two "family" groups of new members - sisters Mary and Joan Ward - husband and wife team of Linda and Ian Campbell, with Don Wood providing the only genuine homespun article. Is there an English take-over of the Club pending?

Nothing out of minutes, so right on to Correspondence, containing notification of the S. & R. practice in Megalong Valley on July 15 - 17, a request from the Nurse's Association to change our July 6 meeting to enable them to hold an Annual Conference: we had obliged by holding our meeting on Tuesday 5th. And from Brian Harvey a dire warning that some guest speaker may trip over the projector table, impale his skull on a pair of hobnailed boots and sue us - he offered a policy protecting our officers against the consequences -- \$100,000 for \$5 p.a. (What - is there "no claim bonus"?). More of this later.

Gordon Redmond told us incoming funds exceeded outgoings and we had closed May with \$210 in the current operating account. There were, however, many subscriptions outstanding: was it possible we would some day see a Treasurer's Utopia with all paid up by the September meeting? (Your reporter, who is financial, but has sampled the roles of Treasurer and Secretary in long past years says flatly There ain't No Utopia).

Don Finch presented the Walks Report showing a fairly good roll-up for May jaunts. Barbara Evans had a part of 17 to Blue Gum, and Jim Calloway 8 starters on a day walk in National Park. On the same weekend Gladys Roberts' Middle Harbour Creek trip brought out six. Ron Knightley's school holiday camp at Carlon's attracted 7 adults and 9 youngsters, and John White's Instructional at Murphy's Glen was officially recorded as 20, including 12 prospectives - actually the numbers were somewhat higher. On May 14-15 Geoff Whitby's Grose River trip had 4 prospectives and an unspecified number of members, and Jack Perry in National Park for the Sunday also mentioned prospectives only (2 of 'em).

Michael Short's Nattai River canter had 7, but Jack Gentle's scheduled walk failed for starters. John Holley counted 16 on his St. Helena day walk, while they really rolled up on the last weekend. Don Finch's trip counted (did we hear aright?) 30, and Dave Ingram's day walk on Woronora River 23.

So early in the night we came to General Business, and a motion by Jack Gentle that we should nominate a S.B.W. member for Federation Presidency this year. It is some years since SBW representatives have sought this office, and the motion was carried to be followed by the nomination of Alan Rigby as our selected and endorsed candidate.

We were told that Paddy Pallin was willing to speak briefly to the Club one evening on the subject of the "Orienteering" weekend being arranged by Federation. It was arranged that the President would consult with Paddy on time and date, and David Ingram commended the week-end to those weak on map reading.

A question was now asked about Brian Harvey's proposed "public risk" policy. Would such cover be provided by the lessors of the Hall? Gordon Redmond felt it could be our own responsibility, whereupon Dot Butler enquired if it would apply to "architectural climbers abseiling out of windows". (Jack Gentle said these would rate as "social climbers"). Laurie Raynor suggested we should first see what kind of insurance Nurses' Association had, and after the Treasurer agreed, it was resolved that the motion be adjourned until we had more information.

By this time Frank Ashdown had the bit between his teeth. He wanted to know if the recent British Law suit mentioned by Brian Harvey meant that Committee Members, individually and collectively, were responsible for the safe custody of visitors, and shouldn't the Club's Hon. Solicitor keep us posted of such things. Someone said regretfully there was no chance now of getting Frank on Committee, and he replied that he lived not far from Long Bay and would find it easy to visit Committee Members who may allow a visitor to be injured.

The President pointed out that the Hon. Solicitor was for us to consult, not as a tick-tack man to tell us every legal development that may affect a Club. We had agreed to take the hazard for an additional month to find out just where we stood.

Alan Rigby called attention to a School being held by the Conservation Council, and moved we should send a representative, and pay for his overnight accommodation at Gosford where the conference was to be held. Laurie Rayner felt our delegate should consider the honour sufficient reward and should pay his own way, but Frank Ashdown and Gordon Redmond were for the generous line. The motion was carried, and on a motion by Jack Gentle we nominated the President himself. John was a little concerned as he was billed to lead an Instructional Walk but his nominator hustled him on his way but volunteering to take the walk, and belatedly asked where it was - Answer Macarthur's Flat.

As delegates to the Annual Conservation Council Conference in October we elected Mick Elfick and Alex. Colley (assuming they were prepared to attend) and John White reported briefly that a meeting with the Minister for Lands had taken place - a fuller statement to be furnished by the Sub-Committee involved. He felt the Club's public relations had been well-served by the interview.

By this time it was 9.20 there were no other matters to thrash out, and the gong sounded the end of another meeting.

ON BUSHWALKING

OR

PRACTICAL THOUGHTS ARISING FROM KANANGRA WALK AS OUTLINED

BY A DEMENTED SURVIVOR

Russell Derbidge

Tea leaves in tea present a problem and straining them a bigger one still. It is generally agreed that carrying a tea-strainer is carrying things a bit too far. Nevertheless several walkers have choked to death with tea leaves in the gullet so it is a problem of no small account. To make floating leaves sink Laurie uses the centrifugal method. The billy is swung wildly around the head and the tea leaves find their way to the bottom. This method is not always reliable for the leaves seldom drown but usually hang suspended with the result that yet another walker chokes to death. Margaret recommends the use of bracken, brush and fern or any other hairy vegetation. Some object to this because they can't bear to see flora destroyed. Others object to sharing their tea with moths, midges and heaven knows what else frequenting bracken, brush and fern.

Out of this arises the need to store every little facet of information in the brain. We realise that for some this may be difficult, perhaps impossible so it may be as well to note the information down on paper. One facet of information which was seemingly worthless at first later proved highly practical. This was how and where to find a *Cestromiades* fly-infested leave. This leaf is bored with millions of little holes which the cess fly drills for the benefit of all walkers. There could never be a more ideal tea-strainer than a *Cestromiades* fly-infested leaf. Forget about the use of bracken and centrifugal methods and find a *Cestromiades* fly-infested leaf.

We will now take the topic of food more generally into consideration. Many practical thoughts arise here for food presents countless problems on a walk. Many walkers will derive comfort from the practical suggestions as regards food contained herein. They may also derive amoebic dysentery and other such disintegrating diseases. In this respect dates are invaluable for they have great food value and always give you a good run for your money. Believe it or not Energy chocolate is a lifesaver. Never be without it. Along the most exhausting stretches you may suddenly collapse out of control. Reach for your block of Energy chocolate for it is so readily digestible and one little nibble gives you great strength to scoff the rest of it. Make sure that this collapse occurs well out of sight of other people otherwise you may have to share the goodies. Many people find the early stages of the walk exhausting and this is why you rarely see chocolate after the first couple of hours. Some have actually felt exhausted even before the start of the walk and been grateful for their Energy chocolate.

Eggs are loaded with vitamins. They are as good as pills but perhaps not so reliable. An egg is so vitamin packed because it is really a healthy chick in another form and most poultry-farmers simply stuff their birds with pills to keep them in good shape. The main thing to avoid is stacking boiled eggs with unboiled eggs because it is very hard to tell

which is which. A simple scientific test to find out if the egg is boiled or unboiled is to crack the egg open. Sometimes this happens when some lousy twit sits on your pack without asking. Firstly, scrape the egg from the walls of your pack. Don't eat it even if the sight of it makes your mouth water. Don't throw it away either for all the great film stars use egg as a facial conditioner. In just what sort of condition it leaves the face we are not sure.

However, Marlene Dietrich uses it along with plastic surgery. Jane Powell also uses it except on T.V. where she uses Lux in the International wrapper to keep her face intact.

Water is a worry on most walks but it is definitely no problem round Kanangra. In fact you spend all your time sloshing up and down creek beds. Those with webbed feet have a distinct advantage. If you're not walking in water then you're sleeping in it. Despite this, one or two people had enough bottles of soft drink to last them the three days. This was good for it made it unnecessary to carry heavy tea leaves and tea strainers around. Taking bottles of lolly water showed initiative and forethought. However, this provision proved unnecessary for there were several coca-cola dispensing machines along the way. It is understandable that walkers do not want to carry heavy flasks of tasteless creek water in their packs nor do they wish to spend their money on expensive bottles of coco-cola. If you're one of this type then the best way to conserve your precious water is to drink somebody else's. You'll have plenty of chances to drink your own little light-weight flask of water later on.

Let's now consider the question of physical fitness. For walks like that to Kanangra through snow and sleet and rain it is best to prepare yourself physically beforehand. On such a walk you sweat like a pig, whilst moving and freeze up completely when you stop. The only known place where this hot and cold process can be simulated is at your local Sauna Room. This Sauna preparation is required not so much for the walk itself but for the three incapacitated days after it. If you're not careful you may also become permanently locked in the bushwalker's stoop. It is also vital to be physically prepared when the walk is led by a New Zealander. Never let these Kiwis into your party. It's a matter of life and death but I'd lay odds heavily in favour of the latter. Ever since Hillary, their illustrious identifying figure, went to the top they're all trying to go one better than him. Land speed records are more important to these Kiwis than loss of life. They consider themselves Stirling Moss of the Jungle and charge forth like Rhino's in reckless abandon. The party soon becomes divided and the rest of the walk is spent trying to locate each other. One reliable way to locate lost comrades which was illustrated by Laurie is to roll boulders in the general direction and listen for any screams below.

The need for an all round improve in Nature Study was apparent on the Kanangra walk. For instance on one occasion a skeleton was found littered around and doubt about its identity arose. Russ Derbidge, whose best friend

was an ethnologist named them emu bones and astounded his audience with his knowledge and his scientific approach. However, this conclusion was questioned by Laurie who pointed out that emus don't have fur on their legs and generally try to live and die in the Western Division and not in the Blue Mountains. When it was suggested that the emu had probably got killed at a fancy-dress ball in Bourke and had been dragged from there into the mountains by some rapacious dingo everyone was in a quandry. Whilst we're on this topic of nature it is worthwhile knowing how to distinguish between the male and female Raintree. Raintrees literally blanket the Blue Mountains in profusion because they like it there. They like cold blistering winds and the babble of freezing streams. Invariably you will camp under Raintrees but be sure to set camp under a male one. In the morning you usually make a lot of noise shaking the moisture off your ground sheet. It's rather puzzling where this moisture comes from. The Raintrees react turbulently to this noise and shower those below with water. The female tree, like all females is unpredictable. Sometimes they do it, sometimes they don't. The male tree on the other hand does it all the time even at the drop of a hat. Especially if you drop it noisily.

The participants of the Kanangra walk came from a variety of occupations. It is this variety that adds strength and vitality to the club. Everyone considered the walk rewarding in some way or another and so that others may experience such joy many offers of assistance for future walks have been received. Margaret has offered to be depth guage on the next walk again. If you're not sure of the depth of a stream then holler for a margaret. She manages to fall into every deep water hole. In fact she is a professional depth guager and we are greatly indebted to her.

Don loves to sing. His enthusiasm for song is boundless. When others are frozen stiff you'll still get a gurgle from Don. Your morale soon falls when you get lost and on the next walk should such a situation arise Don has promised to sing his old favourite: "Climb every mountain, search high and low". When you're hopelessly lost the chilling notes of this ballad tingle the spine and boost the morale. It enables you to die in a cheerful mood.

Brian, who is an electrical engineer focused all his mental energies to produce a machine that will be indispensable on future walks. He came up with an electrical pogo stick which is simply ideal for vaulting streams. Ken works as a chemist for a coffee company and has offered to provide coffee for everyone on the next walk. After so many years of Nescafe the thought of coffee sickens all of us.

There were lashings of teachers on the walk. Like all teachers they wandered round in an academic cloud and it was very difficult to get anything of a practical nature out of them. They know how to paint blackboards black and how to cut cane into suitable lengths but when it comes to hard practical facts of walking they're pretty hopeless. It didn't surprise

us when these teachers offered to pool their resources for an Instructional Weekend in Hyde Park on the advantages of city life.

Laurie is an architect of no mean quality. He has designed tents and supervised the construction of several fire places. He is disturbed with the acoustics of the Opera House and feels that the true quality of great singers like Don and Jean will never be heard in such a shambles of a place. He has offered to design a better Opera House to be built in the Wild Dog Mountains where acoustic problems never arise and where Don and Jean can sing to their heart's content.

The Kangra walk is lousy with logs and all of them are difficult to get over and just as difficult to get around. Jean doesn't like to be thought of as a great singer. She likes people to think of her in her better role of champion log dodger. She has compiled maps and detour charts which avoid these immovable objects. For future walks she has offered to lecture on the finer arts of log dodging. This is very kind of her for if you crawl over too many logs toes start to develop on your kneecaps. For women toes on the kneecaps are most unsightly especially with the latest trends in dresses.

Jean, as already stated, is a great singer and a great log dodger. She spends most of her time wrecking songs, dodging logs and bypassing boulders and just naturally brings up the rear. Fortunately she has a loud, pleasantly-sounding, raucous voice and she can sing with gusto and with Don that well known song: "I'm falling behind you on your walking day. Look over that boulder, I'm falling behind."

As a final thought we turn again to food. At breakfast everyone wants to fry eggs and boil porridge at the same time. With two dozen people cluttered round a teeny-weeny fire anything can happen. Usually something falls out of the frying pan into the fire or worse still into the porridge. Then, of course, arguments arise about ownership with the result that more porridge and eggs are lost. To avoid this dilemma a general rule has been established. This rule states that any food that falls from one pan into another is to be regarded as natural increment.

Well this brings to an end the account of a walk fraught with trials and tribulations. One just can't help thinking.

NSW FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBSSEARCH AND RESCUE SECTIONPRACTICE WEEKENDJULY 15th - 16th

Each year the Search and Rescue Section of the NSW Federation of Bushwalking Clubs holds a practice search designed to give its members training experience in searching for lost parties, in rescuing and treating those injured in the bush or on rock, and in using our radio, rock rescue and stretcher gear.

All members of Federation are invited to come on this weekend, to join in the activities and see for themselves what happens on a search.

The search area this year will be the Wild Dog and Cox River area of the Blue Mountains.

Rallying point and Friday night camp site will be in the Megalong Valley at the Camping Ground near the Megalong Creek crossing. To get there by car, cross the railway line at Blackheath and follow the Megalong Valley road for about 9 miles to the causeway across the Megalong Creek. Yellow FBW signs will be placed along the road to assist you.

Parties will be briefed and given further information about the search at 7.30 a.m. on Saturday morning.

As this practice will be a simulation of a single search operation in the Blue Mountains area, search parties should carry full overnight camping gear with them and be prepared to spend Saturday night on the search.

Don't miss this weekend. Come along to the Megalong campsite on Friday night the 15th July and join in the fun.

Heather Joyce,
Secretary,
Search and Rescue Section.

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PADDY MADE

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Bushwalkers have always required specialised gear. The equipment they require is only novel or unusual to the uninitiated.

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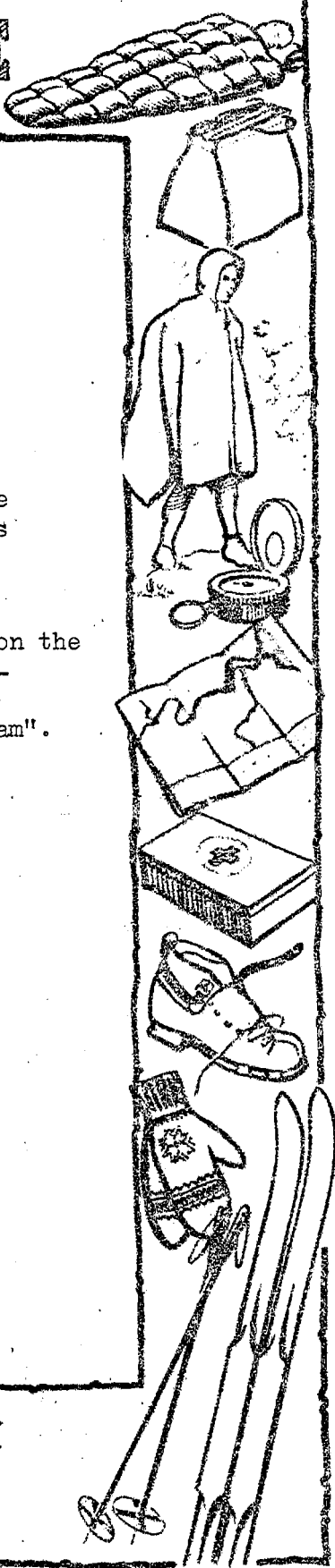
The latest piece of improved gear is the "Bogong" model sleeping bag. An improvement on the "Hotham" model - it is built on the box quilting principle, of breathing nylon. It weighs 10 ozs less and is even warmer than the "Hotham". Just the bag for extra cold places where only the best is good enough.

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WALKING IN GREAT BRITAIN - PART II.

Sandra Butt.

Most walkers prefer to spend the night under a proper roof, be it that of a Youth Hostel, hut, Bed and Breakfast place or hotel. In the wilds of Scotland, in the height of summer, camping is quite popular, but not for extended periods. Thus, a pack of much more than 20 lbs is unnecessary, as food is either provided (though one soon tires of bangers, beans and mash) or easily obtainable. We found it very hard to break the home-grown habit of carrying with us enough food to last two to three days. Our large H-frames were the objects of many astonished stares and amazed remarks: "How do you manage to carry ALL THAT?" - a mere 35 lbs. In the midst of such civilisation memories of the warmth and conviviality of camp fires induced a feeling of nostalgia; the substitute of singing around a temperamental kerosene heater somehow lacked something.

The interests of walkers are looked after principally by the Ramblers' association which is a legally constituted company. It has regional branches, again sub-divided into local areas, each of which conducts meetings and runs a walks programme often featuring combined walks with a club from a neighbouring group. The Ramblers Association makes its profits by organising walking and other recreational type holidays in Europe during the summer months, and by running two walking centres in Great Britain.

The main one is in the Lakes District at Buttermere, one of the lesser visited areas where I spent a week. It was an extremely luxurious establishment for one who has inhabited the shack at Konangaroo or a plastic tent in the rain in the course of various walks. A beautiful white, two-storied semi-circular building, it accommodated 25 people and resident staff. There was deep carpet in the bedrooms, gallons of scalding hot water in the baths (showers are a peculiar Antipodean habit according to the average Englishman) and huge 3 course breakfasts and 4 course dinners were provided. A resident leader planned our daily walks to cater for the interests and capabilities of the average guest whose age would have been on the other side of 30. The organised walks were quite gentle, actual walking time being up to 7 hours, with a stop wherever possible at a pub for a beer, or at a cottage for afternoon tea and scones. It happened that there was a full house the week I was there and the assembly for our first day's stroll was an interesting spectacle. All the men were in long trousers, boots and many with the addition of collar and tie. Feminine attire ranged from skirts through a range of long trousers to one individual in shorts and sandshoes. Many fears were expressed for the safety of her feet and she was assailed by constant inquiries about their condition during the day. Despite typical Lakeland weather - $2\frac{1}{2}$ fine days in a week - I was able to see a good slice of the area, including the summit of Scafell, at 3210 feet, the highest hill in England. This ascent was regarded with awe-

9 hours walking and no pub on the way. The scenery is best described as "pretty". The hills are low and rolling (only three over 3000 feet) mostly crowned with a field of grey boulders. There are however many fine cliffs and faces that test the aces among England's rock climbers. There is no scrub at all, the only vegetation being small areas of pine forest. There are also some scenic waterfalls and short narrow gorges, always in full spate with the high annual rainfall. The less tourist infested lakes are lovely - but icy cold. The Lakes District is the most popular walking area in England - it would be a rare day not to meet at least two or three other people on the track.

The other Ramblers centre is in the Scottish county of Argyllshire, about three hours drive from Glasgow, and almost under the shadow of the mighty Ben Nevis. Conditions here were much more suited to a walker and the walking itself more strenuous. Within the scope of a day's walk from the centre were 60 peaks over 3000 feet. Often one finds three or four as bumps on a long ridge, but the ascents were always steep and the tracks often difficult to follow. Due to the rugged nature of the country, it is much less visited and it was unusual to see other walkers out and about. We made an ascent of Ben Nevis, its 4406 feet making it the highest peak in Great Britain. There is a virtual highway all the way up; in fact 20 years ago someone drove a T model Ford to the summit. There are many difficult routes involving varying amounts of skilled rock climbing. During the Winter it becomes a real mountaineering trip and the Ben has taken its toll of lives. A survival hut was erected on the bare, exposed summit after the fierce winter of 1962 when too many climbers died from exposure. The view is only to be had on 30 days of the year and of course we went up on one of the other 335. It is reputed that one can see the coast of Ireland on a clear day, and the Cuillin hills on the Isle of Sky are clearly visible. There was an almost continuous stream of bods on the "road", some quite elderly and obviously unfit for 4000 feet of climbing, not to mention the girl in high heels and handbag, nor the couple complete with umbrellas. Again all the mountains are bare of vegetation. Scotland's forests were badly ravaged in the last century, and reafforestation is slow work even though there is a great deal of unemployment. In season though the purple heather makes a beautiful carpet over the rolling hills. One hazard walkers have to cope with, especially in the Cairngorm Mountains in eastern Scotland, is the grouse shooting season. This starts on 14th August accompanied by an ancient ritual and thereafter only certain well-defined paths can be used. Anyone not using these paths across the hills where grouse is seriously endangering his continued existence. We met a walker who, as a further precaution during the season, used to bedeck himself in a brilliant jumper and cap. The Cairngorm Mountains are the other main walking region in Scotland. They are more accessible, Inverness being no more than two hours drive away. Walking tracks are well worn and signposts prolific with the Youth Hostels spaced a good day's walk apart. Skiing is a thriving winter industry, the season lasting well into April. Many Britons now ski here instead of on the exorbitantly expensive Swiss slopes.

North Wales offers an interesting variety of walking and climbing and thousands flock there in the summer. The mountains are contained in

the Snowdonia National Park, with Snowdon the highest at 3360 feet and thirteen others over 3000 feet. Snowdon itself is a fascinating mountain. Four main ridges converge on the summit and along each is at least one well used walking route, some more challenging than others, plus numerous climbing routes, some of which were only put up in the last 15 years. The summit view is extensive, taking in the coast on the one hand with the rest of the Snowdonia massif and the lesser green rolling foothills on the other. For the less energetically inclined, there is a railway to the summit, so that as one crawls up the last steep slope one is greeted by a seething mass of tourists in their shiny shoes and overcoats. Tryfan, another interesting peak, is a wedge shaped hunk of rock and rubble tilting out over a placid lake and is the only mountain in Great Britain in which the use of handholds is essential in the climb to the top. It is almost impossible to get that "away from it all" feeling in Snowdonia, as the main arterial road from North Wales to London runs through the Park.

Yorkshire, England's largest country, has much to interest the outdoor enthusiast. In the limestone belt, spelios are active and here is found Gaping Gill, the largest hole in Great Britain, over 400 feet deep. In the height of summer, enterprising students from nearby Leeds Uni. have erected a gadget over the hole to lower tourists into and up again out of the hole at 10/- per head. The vegetation in this area is incredibly green and the white limestone outcrops and the low limestone walls across the fields make a very photogenic landscape. In the north of Yorkshire are the wild and lonely moors, least visited of any area in the whole country.

The Peaks District in Derbyshire, the picnic ground of the citizens of Manchester, is perhaps misleadingly named, containing no other over 25000 feet. The Kinder Scout Plateau, best known feature of the District, is deeply intersected by channels through its peat bogs, which constitute a challenge to the best of navigators. They are flat and featureless and the channels often trick one into thinking one is on a track; many experienced walkers speak with horror of the bogs in Derbyshire.

There are several other interesting walking areas through the island so that the British Isles offer something for every class of walker and the fresh air fanatic not too far from his front door. Everywhere there is a scene to delight the connoisseur of art in nature.

However, in my experience, there is nowhere like the Australian bush for its rugged beauty, variety of scenery and that priceless feeling so often lacking elsewhere - freedom.

THE RIDGE - JIM BROWN

There is a ridge that runs out from the Budawang Range just this side of Currockbilly. It is really rather charitable to call it a ridge: rather it's a series of mountains indifferently stuck together by a spine of quartzite. Between the Budawang Range and this Ridge the Yadbora Creek is spawned, and runs north for a few miles before it turns eastward below Wog Wog Mountain.

If you look across to the south-west from Mt. Renwick, or better still to the south from Admiration Point just below Corang Trig, you will see the Ridge, but you will get a quite erroneous impression of it. Apart from the final plunge into Yadbora Creek it appears quite a reasonable example of the ridge-maker's art, complete with a few humps and saddles, rather spectacular, but not especially formidable.

The proper angle for viewing is from the Budawang Range itself, a mile or so north from Currockbilly. From that angle you can see how the Ridge reaches out from the main north-south massif, first high, rocky and treeless. About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles east it plummets down 800 feet into a timbered saddle, then sweeps up 600 or 700 feet to a square forested top.

Two big spurs drop away from the northern face of this bluff. One - the nearer - the westerly - The Ridge - falls quickly at first, then flattens out (flattens! - that's a lie!) and continues to undulate along beyond the upper end of Yadbora Creek. After a couple of miles that look tolerably flat it falls into another saddle, goes up 300-400 ft on to hump-backed Sugarloaf, drops 300 ft and promptly rises 500 ft to another square block of mountain. At this point the elevation is about 2600 ft, something over 1000 ft below Currockbilly and 2000 ft above Yadbora. Several ridges plunge off into the creek which has now changed to an easterly course.

When I traversed the Ridge - or rather, traversed part of it - early in April, I was in a good position to make comparisons, as it was only a few weeks earlier that I had followed the Gangerang Range out from Kanangra to Mount Moorilla and back - and that's another ridge designed somewhat on the Big Dipper principle. The main difference lies in the repeated rise and fall of The Ridge while Gangerang is content with one really good saddle - Gabes Gap.

There is another important distinction. Gangerang has been trodden by many feet, so that even in the unrelievedly rocky spots you can follow the scraps of many boots - in fact I found Gangerang easier than ever before, the track more obvious, if the gradients unimproved. On The Ridge there had been others before me, but their numbers must have been small, there was little evidence of their passage so picking the way was a "do-it-yourself" job.

Before tackling The Ridge, of course, it was necessary to get to the vicinity of Currockbilly. You may assault it from the rear, coming in off a timber cutter's track about six miles north of Mongarlowe: or you can

sneak up on it from the north, using another timber trail that leaves the Mongarlowe Road near a property called Willoween and following along the crest of Budawang Range. The latter is slightly longer, but gives you a scenic preview of the Ridge and a big sweep of country to east and north.

With a 3 a.m. departure from Sydney, and using back roads from Merulan via Bungonia and Dallen Ford, I de-bussed at 8.45 on the Saturday morning near Willoween. The dawn had been misty and clouds were still lifting off the Budawang Range as I crossed the paddocks to pick up the logging trail at the foot of the ascent. The day promised brightness, but more heat than I preferred.

It is not much of a climb to the top of Budawang Range at that point, and less than an hour from the car I breasted the ridge and was looking out to a hazy blue gulf with The Castle, Mt. Renwick and Pigeon House forming a jagged north-eastern skyline. The Ridge, much closer, looked quite imposing and when one ran an eye along its turbulent length and mentally worked out times and distances - well, just a bit disquieting.

For something like a mile and a half the timber road continued south along the crown of the range, ascending gradually. Then, just before the ridge narrowed and became rocky, the road ended, and it was a slow scramble through fairly dense undergrowth, down to a small saddle and up the other side.

At this point the vegetation on Budawang Range undergoes a change. The bigger trees disappear, the crest is a quartzite knife-edge, sally gum grown closely and there is a species of knee deep rush-like cutting grass. The range begins to rise steadily towards the south, and there are glimpses to the barren tops towards Currockbilly. On the right the fairly level farm land along the Mongarlowe Rd is about 1000 ft below: to the left the slash of Ysdbora Creek, then The Ridge, and the smoky blue of the Belowra Creek and Clude River valleys beyond.

Higher and near Currockbilly even the sally gum ends and there is a faintly Kosciusko-ish look about the rocky hills and their thin reedy grasses, and steep bare sides. The ground is too rocky and too littered with small growth to allow a good striding gait. You pick your way. Maybe $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour - less if you stop much.

By 11.30 the ravine of Ysdbora Creek had become a gentle-sloping treeless valley only a few hundred feet below with a small stream winking in the sunlight. On the opposite side the Ridge ran out. Time to go down and lunch.

I made it a quick meal. Counting up on my fingers I calculated at least six hours to do the ridge and finish up on Ysdbora Creek near the track that comes down from Jerricknorra Saddle. Sundown 5.45, last light 6.30.

When I started on the ridge at 12.25, there were an estimated 6 hours and five minutes of day left. I had calculated the ridge as $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles long - six hours should do it.

Within two hours I should have known it wouldn't, but those two hours were so spectacular that I didn't even think about it. Gangerang had nothing on this - the jumber of green ridges and blue valleys - far out the sea - the broken northern skyline towards Corang Trig and The Castle - Mt. Budawang and its attendant spurs rising out of the softly hazy south.

The going was painfully slow with uneven rocky footing and small burnt-off banksia cloying the legs. Incessant up and down hill stints. I was wearing long trousers or I wouldn't have survived a mile. My hands were bleeding from long raking cuts on the burnt shrubs. I had allowed $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours to the first big saddle. That took 2 hours 20 mins and the afternoon seemed to be growing hotter.

From that point there was less scenery - too many trees now in the way. Hence few stops and, despite the slugging climb to the first big top, slightly faster time than expected. Just after three p.m. and with a final photograph of Budawang, I started down to the "flat" section of The Ridge. With luck, I should be on The Sugarloaf at 5.30 - might capture Renwick and The Castle with late sunlight on their western cliffs - then a fast romp down to my rendezvous with Yadbora.

Soon after four p.m. it was pretty obvious that wouldn't be the way of it at all. The "flat" ridge was surprisingly uneven. Moreover, parts of it were spines of quartzite where one scrambled up, over, or around big uneven rocks. I was carrying a pint of water - only half a pint now - and the damned elusive Sugarloaf kept on being three or four crests away.

From time to time I had lovely look downs into the headwaters of Yadbora, but the rocky spine clung steadily to the west of The Ridge and there was never a clear view to the east. Once in a fissure in the rocks I saw a few fragments of tin-foil, which at least assured me there were other people silly enough to try The Ridge. However, I said aloud to myself, they probably took a whole day over it. Now that would be the way to do it. Really shouldn't try to get over it in half a day ----

Five o'clock, with the sun getting low over Budawang Range: an extensive flattish top for a change, with shaly soil, long grasses and fine Forest. But Sugarloaf still away across the saddle, then another saddle, then another big hill. I had not contemplated it before, but now I looked down the ridges into Upper Yadbora. If one could get down, there would be water, beaut. cool, dribbling, chuckling mossy water. Then next day it would be quite a short stage - if somewhat steep - straight up and over Budaway Range back to Willoween. Alternative a dry camp.

Thirst won. I went down for forty five minutes on a very abrupt spur - no cliffs, thank Heavens. In the greying evening I drank and drank and drank from the clean rocky-bedded stream. There was no where to put up a tent, but it wasn't going to rain. A bundle of bark on the edge of the stony creek side, a twigg fire, a swift, simple meal and into the sleeping bag with a mug of cocoa and a final pipe by seven-fifteen p.m. Lovely, lovely sleep while small errant gusts of a south west wind blew down the valley and stirred the trees against a moonlit sky.

The couch of bark on the rocks was so comfortable that I wasn't about until after six o'clock in the morning but then I didn't lose much time and at 6.45 tackled the ridge up to Budawang Range. Steep at first, the gradient improved, my wind and legs behaved better than I had reason to expect, and at 8.25 I had intersected the timber road up top about 200 yards north of the point where I had reached the range from the west the day before.

Although the day was lightly overcast, and the big hills to the north east were grey-blue silhouettes against a yellow hazy sky, I stopped for a couple of "record" photographs and a bite of chocolate. I looked back at the Sugarloaf and the northern end of The Ridge. Well, my estimate of six hours was well out. In over five hours I might have traversed two-thirds of the total length, with two of the main humps still ahead. I doubted whether I'd ever tackle it again.

Then I started down the hill towards Willoween and the car, noting the prints of my sandshoes from the previous morning. Going downhill had a good effect on morale: before I was back to Willoween I had worked out a way of doing only the northern end of the Ridge, and having time to look for a place to photograph The Castle and Renwick by westering sunlight. Not the whole Ridge, you know - just the unfinished business.

COLOUR SLIDE COMPETITION - AUGUST 31.

This year the competition will be divided into two sections :

AUSTRALIAN AND OVERSEAS.

Competitors are limited to a maximum of 12 entries. All slides must be spotted in the top right hand corner when in the projector.

Entries should be handed to Ruth Constable at least two weeks before the competition.

S O C I A L N O T E S.

On July 20th, Mr. E.F. Constable will tell us about the "Anecdotes and Reminiscences of a Botanical Collector." From the background of 25 years of collecting both native and cultivated plants in this State Mr. Constable should have plenty of interesting things to tell us, too.

Mr. Tom Petry will teach us about "Finding Your Way by the Stars" on July 27th. As we don't always seem to find our way by map and compass, this could be very useful. Supper will be provided on this night.

Coming up in August are the Auction, on the 17th, and the Colour Slide Competition on the 31st.

A REMINDER ABOUT THE FEDERATION BALL, PADDINGTON TOWN
HALL, SEPTEMBER 9th. TICKETS ARE \$2.50 single,
\$5.00 DOUBLE.

ONE MORE MONTH.

"Observer"

Having read so much lately about a character called "Why-wozziborn", who apparently dreams of mountains and goes on many trips, we wondered what he did with his "spare" time. On making discreet inquiries, we found that Rosso not only holds a responsible job, but is doing Fifth year of a B.Sc. Degree at the University of N.S.W. Best Wishes, Ross.

Eric Adcock (what, not walking these days, Eric?) and Jan Kaleski were recently engaged and plan to marry in October. Best Wishes from the Club.

David and Judy Balmer have a baby girl.

One night in an igloo: Dot Butler and two sons constructed a magnificent igloo from blocks of snow up the side of Twynam on June long weekend. They slept in it one night all through a near blizzard. Says Dot in the morning, "What blizzard?" I didn't even know there was an outside world!"

N.S.W. FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS.

PADDY PALLIN ORIENTEERING CONTEST.

An orienteering contest will be held on Saturday 3rd September, 1966. Competing teams will be given maps and map references and they will be required to complete a circuit visiting all marked check points in correct sequence. They may also be required to answer questions on map reading and compass. Points will be allotted for time of completing course and correct answers to questions.

Teams must consist of not less than two or not more than three persons.

There will be three routes suited to varying capabilities.

1. Open
2. Mixed
3. Ladies.

Contest is only open to members of affiliated clubs of Federation of Bushwalking Clubs.

Trophies will be presented to the winning teams in each grade.

All competitors who complete the course will be awarded cloth badges with special badges for members of winning team.

HE SAID -

HAVING SPOKEN OF

"The symphony of a gurgling brook."

"The myriad heavenly bodies combining in a natural cinemascope production entitled 'The Mystery of the Universe'".

"The soft velvet of a grassy bank."

"The tumultuous history of basalt rock -
Aeons of geological sculptures."

"The ballet of the leaping flames from a
blazing log fire."

"The Champagne of the Gods" - pure icy water of
a mountain spring.

SHE SAID -

"I'LL BRING THE TRANSISTOR."
