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A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bushwalkers, Northcote Building, Reiby Place, Circular Quay, Sydney. Postal Address: Box 4476, G.P.O. Sydney, 2001.

## THE ALLUM RIVER AND WANGANDERRY CREEK.

के । वर्षः विकास कृष्टकास्त्रकृतः स्थानः सूच्यावरः । अर

Pat Harrison

The Club Walk on the weekend of August 31 - September 1. began and ended at Malcolm's (now Sampon's) Farm at Wanganderry. Friday night was clear with a cold wind blowing and Saturday morning was also very clear when we got well away to time at 8.15 a.m. and headed north-east from the woolshed to skirt the southern side of the prominent grassy hill before dropping into the Allum River soon afterwards by way of a side creek. The Allum River may be entered further downstream, but the longer you stay on the ridge the less you enjoy it because the further you go out along the tops the more pestiferous becomes the scrub.

Our side creek was good easy going and by 9.40 a.m. we were sampling the waters of the Allum. The river thereafter was not hard going but care was necessary all the time to avoid trouble on the slippery rocks and logs.

Near the woolshed there was a grove of large, handsome Gum Trees which nobody at the time was able to identify but which later research showed to be Eucalyptus Smithii. These are interesting trees because the bark on the trunks (the upper limbs are clean and smooth) is furrowed to such an extent that they resemble Ironbarks: hence the various common names these trees bear such as Ironbark Peppermint, Blackbutt Peppermint, and Gully Ash.

The slopes above the river were a garden of Sydney Boronia in all its gradations of colour.

The upper part of the Allum had a lot of Tree Fern and bracken, but towards the lower part there were sections of flat shelving rock and also one very pretty waterfall about 20 feet high. As we got lower down, the valley widened and high golden cliffs replaced the broken rocks of the upper part.

Camp was made on the soft bedding under the She Oaks at the Nattai junction, with wood, water, and scenic views all to hand. There is a very large flat here with the remains of an old hut. The whole area around the Nattai would be hard to beat as it is check-full of good campsites, graceful tall trees, and a backdrop of golden cliffs on both sides of the river. There ought to be more walks into this area. It was very lovely when we were there.

The party was away at 7.10 a.m. on Sunday morning and reached the mouth of Wanganderry Crock at 9.45 a.m, having enjoyed on the way several miles of the best river walking there is, to say nothing of the wattle trees in golden bloom along the river. Surveyor's Crag presented a challenging aspect and it was generally agreed that it would be well worth a visit as soon as a walk could be programmed after the summer months have passed by.

Wanganderry Creek was good fast going over the cobblestones as far as the main junction at GR320613. The southern branch here carries the greater volume of water but the northern branch bears the name of Wanganderry Creek. The spit of land between the two creeks has a low crumbly-looking cliff at the bottom of the spur.

We took the northern branch and gained height rapidly by continually scrambling over and around a jumbled mass of large boulders until the ground began to level out at the next junction at GR302619. All the way to this point from the Nattai the cliffs lining the creek were very severe indeed and it seemed to us that any attempt to pass them would have been futile; hence we had long ago decided that we would stick to the creek as long as possible.

We again followed the northern branch from our last junction, up through patches of rain forest and miniature canyons, good going all the way, and finally got up on the plateau on the southern side and headed north-west to the grassy hill near the woolshed. There was some moderate scrub hereabouts, but the wonderful Boronia in full flower more than made up for that.

## THE ALLUM RIVER AND WANGANDERRY CREEK - VERSION 2.

Marion Lloyd.

Charlies at Mittagong was our rendezvous where we stoked up on lellies, tea and toast. Our convoy then headed for our campsite about 14 miles from Mittagong. Pat was in the middle of telling us a gruesome story about Wanganderry Creek when a wombat toddled in front of the car and on into the night.

The site was Malcolm's cow yards, but Pat told us of a shearing shed not far off so the four of us went over to inspect it. When we were completely satisfied that there were no bats, rats or wild cats we went to bed not worrying about The Tempest or straying cows.

At 8 a.m. after Joan had called the roll twenty one people set off. After about half an hour's walking we dropped down into the upper reach of the Allum River, which at that stage was only a dribble. How beattiful we thought this darling little river was, the steep banks covered with lush ferns and grasses and towering gums on either side, dipping now and again under rocks that jutted out over it. It gave me the impression of wading through a dripping cavern lined with the softest green velvet then extending into a tunnel which stretched till past 6 o'clock that evening. It had many tricks up its sleeve and many surprises in store for us. On and on we waded, how it obtained the name of river is hard to fathom,

About 11 a.m. to relieve the monotony and in order for the party to assemble again we took time off for a cuppa. I started off ahead of the others and missed

the drama that followed. About 10 minutes after morning tea Sheila climbed onto a log, she slipped, then losing her balance fell heavily, her pack saving her from serious injury. It was decided that Sheila, Marion, Frank and Joan Rigby would go back before the going became too difficult.

In the meantime, David and Bronwyn were ahead, Ros.Painter and myself some distance behind decided to stop and wait for the others to catch up. We waited for over an hour and in that time read "Walkabout" from cover to cover and had something to eat. We were getting worried when Laurie, Roger, then Pat turned up. As the rest of the party was still a fair way behind us we continued on soon to be over taken by Ken Ellis who like the others was soon out of sight.

On and on that wretched creek went, though the country in itself was spectacular in its rugged beauty. There was no way out of the creek, always there was a towering cliff line on either side, the scrub like a thorny barrier extended right to the river banks. We never left the river which bended, stretched, writhed like a rattle sanke, although it was me that had the rattles.

Our party was increased to three when we caught up with David. The sun was gradually shifting to the west and as we reckoned the map was a little out we started guessing how far we would have to stumble on.

Just as the sun was setting, I noticed a flat piece of ground on the left bank covered with bracken. Along this was easy going, I hadn't gone more than 100 yards when I found a track, the three of us polted down it as it was becoming quite dark. About  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile down the træk I saw what looked to be an old slab shed, then from the direction of the creek heard someone bellowing to us. It was Pat. We had reached the junction. The Nattai was about 100 yards further on. Browyn, Ken, Pat and Roger arrived about 5 p.m, us three about 5.30 and the rest of the party were still coming in bunches until 8 pm.

As we knew that the Wanganderry Creek was going to be difficult and slow going, there were now two alternatives. The drivers and others willing would go up Wanganderry Creek or take the easiest way along the Nattai and then to Hilltop, there wait for the cars.

I chose the first as I hate waiting for anything, as it turned out it was quite a long wait for the others. So itwas early to bed for the Wanganderry Creek crowd. Ten of us were up at 6.15 a.m. and off by 7 a.m.

The Nattai is beautiful and perfect in the Summer (that's if you were plonked there by helicopter) the banks covered in spongy grass with towering gums and wattle groves which were devoid of that horrible thick scrub. We made good progress and reached the junction of the Creek and Nattai River about 9.45 a.m. The creek itself was wider and contained more water than the Allum River. We walked up this creek until ll a.m. where we came to a fork. After much debating we decided to take the right arm and follow it all the way up or at least until we could find a way out of the creek.

From this point it was slow going, the creek became gradually steeper, the boulders became bigger and bigger, some the size of huts, and packed together. Several times I nearly lost hope because shorty me didn't have arms and legs quite as long as the male folk. Pat's warning of this creek was certainly justified, a rock climber would have been at home amongst these monstrous pebbles. We tried going along the bank, but the slopes were either too steep or the scrub too prickly and dense to bash our way through. After many attempts, we kept to the creek, always climbing, slipping, cursing our way over the boulders. About midday we had lunch, Bronwyn, David and Ken went on ahead.

We hadn't go very far after lunch when we heard a shout cchoing down the creek. It was Joan. Just a bit further up, Frank had a billy on, so it was more cups of tea. At this point we left Wanganderry Creek and went up a smaller one which branched off to the right. This creek rose quite steeply and like the one we had just left, full of boulders, but covered in moss making the going slippery. I guess we were following it for about half an hour, before we decided to leave it.

We changed into our long pants, the scrub bashing was on. We finally reached the ridge and stumbled on an old jeep track which Frank and Joan had come down that morning. We still had to bash our way through for another mile or so where it finished abruptly, we had nearly achieved a complete circle. In front of us were the soft green undulating hills we had left on Saturday morning. It was an exhilerating feeling to let those cramped legs move freely, but to my sorrow, stiffness was setting in and I think the others were feeling it in varying degrees. So we just strolled back to the cars revelling in the beauty of this small piece of God's handiwork with the western sky and the deepening glow of the sunset as a magnificent backdrop.

We reached the cars about 5 p.m. Sheila and Marion hal a billy on ready for our homecoming. Fortunately our car load was together (Laurie, David, Pat and me) set off back to the big lights while the others went to pick up the rest of the party at Hill Top.

At Picton we bought fish and chips for tea, whilst eating it in the car we pondered over this, eventful and unforgetable weekend, wendering how the others were faring at Hill Top. But that is another story.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

FRANK ASHDOWN must not be phoned on the number of the membership list.

The correct number is now. 269-7104.

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## THE AUGUST GENERAL MEETING.

Jim Brown.

was, in the recent tradition, quite an extended one, although it began crisply enough with a welcome to new member Clive Potter, a reading of minutes, an announcement that Kath MacKay had been elected to Honorary Membership and election of Marian Sheppart as lady Committee Member.

The feet began to drag in Correspondence, which contained details of the resolutions carried at the special meeting of bodies interested in resisting mining near Colong; advice of a regular crop of proposed Constitutional amendments for the September meeting; and a lengthy letter in which Brian Harvey tendered his resignation as Auditor and Substitute Federation Delegate, and went on to say that he considered the Club's social programmes were inadequate, especially for the older members, and that a new Club, called the Dungalla Club had been formed to organise activities for older and ex-members of SBW.

In discussion on correspondence Frank Ashdown asked what would be said in reply to Brian's letter, as he felt older members who did not attend the Elub could not properly complain that social events were not to their liking. Alex Colley took the theme further moving that it was not a function of the present Club members to organise entertainments for people who did not take part in its normal activities. The motion was generally supported and carried, Ron Knightley making the point that a similar organisation had been formed by ex-YMCA Ramblers, and the parent body and its off-shoot lived in amity. On his motion it was agreed to express the Club's benediction on the Dungalla Club's welfare. In answer to a question, the President point out Brian was advocating that present members of SBW retain membership.

The financial statement showed a fairly healthy month, current funds going from \$482 to \$749. Proceeds from sale of the library produced \$83 of the total income of \$411. No doubt late subscriptions accounted for much of the rest, but about 100 members were still unfinancial.

From the Walks Report we learned that the petrol carriers stoppage had caused cancellation of one trip. This brought a merited cry of "What - is there no public transport?" David Ingram's day walk from Waterfall took out 25 people, including 9 prospectives, and Laurie Rayner's exploit to Mt. Yengo was reported to have had 11 people - there was a rumour of the party being out on the hillsides in the dark. Ivy Painter's day walk from Cowan to Brooklyn had 15 starters, and on the last weekend in July there were 11 on Sam Hinde's trip up from Spencer on Hawkesbury River. Over the Bank Holiday weekend high winds led to the Ski Tour party operating from a base at Thredbow, and Frank Rigby's party of eight carried out the programmed Megalong Valley trip. The July Snow Instructional was successful "no broken legs" said the report, while Ros. Painter's day walk of August 4, out from Glenbrook, was amended slightly to follow up Euroka Creek and attended by 17.

While a Federation Report was being sought, Frank Ashdown thanked Ivy Painter for support at the Library Anction.

Barry Wallace reporting the normal monthly and Annual Federation Meetings, passed on a warning of possible polluation of Upper Woodford Creek, and said Federation had agreed to become a full member body of the Nature Conservation Council. Several SBW held office in Federation's new organisation. Gordon Redmond referred to the absence (again) of certain basic reports to Federation and suggested our delegates voice a protest.

Now we had to consider whether we, in turn, should retain affiliation with the Nature Conservation Council, or allow Federation to be our voice. The President explained that the Council had existed for some years on a shoestring budget, with nominal fees for member bodies. Now it was proposed to become more active and to base its levies on a capitation footing. As a full member or associate body the fee for SBW would be very similar, about \$17.50 p.a. Alternatively we could be a corresponding body at a lower rate, but without delegates or voting power. Gordon Redmond moved we leave it to Federation, and lengthy discussion followed, with Joan Rigby making the point that if the Council were to be effective, it needed support in its early stages of its new programme. The motion was lost and we remain a full member body.

Alex Colley reported on the marathon walk from Kanangra to protest against limestone quarrying. Quite a few SBW took part, and it was unfortunate that the petition could not be handed to the Minister for Mines. The Colong Committee was seeking funds to obtain the services of engineering consultants and geologists to advise on the effects of damming the Kowmung and the availability of other limestone supplies. He moved that the Club donate \$50, which was raised on amendment by Ron Knightley to \$100, and it was so agreed.

The President told us that Committee had considered a list of unfinancial members, and would advise all concerned with a request that the subscription be forwarded before the half yearly meeting. Committee also gave its blessing to a proposal by Ross Wyborn that the Club produce another song book, for which about 140 songs had been selected. Gordon Redmond moved we proceed and print about 500 copies. Several speakers were agin it, and felt we should invest in printed booklets available at Paddy's, but it was argued that it would be difficulty to get uniformity of ownership, and the motion was carried.

The Membership Secretary having been dispatched overseas for about three months by his employers, we were told E arry Wallace was deputising, assisted by Ros. Painter.

Under the heading of announcements Wilf Hilder mentioned a report that the Main Roads Dept. would build a footbridge over the Expressway near Cowan Station; that the Broken Bay Military Map scemed to have some glaring inaccuracies; and that one—time SBW member John Manson, who had originally discovered some of the paves on Church Creek had died recently. With that, and David Ingram's advice that a senior member had donated a draught board (presumably to replace the dominoes mentioned in an old ballad about Committee meetings), we closed down.

#### ANNUAL REPORT OF NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF N.S.V.

At the August General Meeting, the Club decided to become a Full Member Body of the Nature Conservation Council under the terms of the Council's new Constitution.

A copy of the N.C.C.'s Annual Report for 1967-68 had since been received by the Club. This is a lengthy document and it is not possible to reproduce it here in full. Summarising briefly, it can be said that the Report shows that the Council has actively engaged in a wide range of conservation matters during the past year. Here are some extracts from the Report which will be of particular interest to bushwalkers:

## "Colong Caves.

The activity in opposing the granting of limestone mining leases in the Colong Caves Reserve was a major topic in the Council's activities. Following various conferences with the Council's homestary solicitor, the Council sought to put its case before a Mining Warden's Court. However, the Minister for Mines refused to permit such a hearing and the Council is most critical of this refusal in the face of strong requests from community bodies.

"The Council actively supported formation of the Colong Committee. An active brief is kept on the Colong issue, by means of the four Executive members of the N.C.S. who are on the Colong Committee, viz., Mrs. Stead, Messrs. Dunphy, Kijirina and Wyatt.

"Despite the Minister's repeated assurances that Caves in the Reserve were safeguarded, the Sydney Speliological Society very recently discovered three new cave systems at Church Creek, which will be affected by the leases. One of these systems contains a cave of over 1200 feet long. The S.S.S. believes these systems are comparable in interest with the caves in the southern end of the Reserve.

The N.C.C. recommends that all societies continue to press the Government for the rescission of these leases."

## "POLICY ON MINING IN NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES.

The N.C.C., together with the National Parks Association and the National Trust have agreed on a policy towards Mining in National Parks. This policy reaffirms the already expressed decisions of the Council to oppose all attempts to exploit the resources in Parks for commercial gain, and emphasises that the preservation of the Park resource is of paramount importance."

#### "NATURAL AREAS SEMINAR.

The N.C.C. organised a Seminar on this topic at the Australian Museum on August 10, 1968 and five papers were presented by Mr. A. Strom, Dr. G. Moseley, Dr. F. Talbot, Mr. J. Martin and Professor R. Johnston. A wide field was

covered in both the papers and the discussion by 85 people participating.

At a later date the papers will be published and also a list of basic definitions is being compiled."

#### "MAIN ROADS.

Proposals by the Main Roads Department for an Expressway along the western side of Royal National Park involve the loss of some thousands of acres from the Park and considerable damage to the western half of the Park. An interview with the Department produced a promise to re-examine the proposed route.

The Council has also taken up the case of the proposed road through Dharing National Park."

#### "NEW PARKS.

The Minister for Lands has announced that he will bring down legislation in the current session of Parliament to establish three new parks - Kanangra/Boyd National Park, Barrington Tops National Park, Cocoparra National Park. Plans of the boundaries of these parks have not been made available to the Council and consequently it has not been possible to assess values."

## "CLYDE/BUDAWANG PROPOSAL.

It is understood that the Minister for Conservation has opposed the dedication of the Clyde/Budawang National Park for reasons including expansion of timber getting for the woodchip industry and needs of water storage. At the same time, however, the Minister for Lands has announced that he will shortly initiate the addition of 300,000 acres to the Morton National Park, from lands south of the Shoalhaven River."

#### "SIM COMMITTEE REPORT.

..... action to use Jerusalem Creek for agricultural purposes proceeds and the chances of securing a comprehensive and worthwhile Park at Myall Lakes, do not look promising."

### "GENERAL.

..... It has been an extremely busy year for the Council and it is expected that activity will continue at least at this level as the Council grows. It is imperative that in increase in office facilities and active workers must take place."

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## COLONG - THE BASIC FACTS

The Colong Caves Reserve, in the Southern Blue Mountains, was first gazetted in 1899 for the preservation of caves; was proclaimed a bird and animal sanctuary in 1928, and rededicated for public recreation and preservation animal sanctuary in 1939. It lies, 62 miles W.S.W. of Sydney, at the heart of a of caves in 1939. It lies, 62 miles W.S.W. of Sydney area and wildlife refuge. particularly beautiful and interesting wilderness area and wildlife refuge.

The Government's proposals for the Kanangra-Boyd National Park (a major conservation project under consideration since 132) have always included the whole of the Colong Reserve, and did so as recently as January 1967. The whole of the Colong Reserve, and did so as recently altered so as to exclude Since then the proposed boundary has been arbitrarily altered so as to exclude some 5000 acres, and with them about two thirds of the Colong Ressrve (but not the Colong Caves themselves) in order to allow Commonwealth Portland not the Colong Caves themselves) in order to allow Commonwealth Portland coment Company to use the limestone from within the Reserve for cement Company to use the limestone from within the Reserve for cement manufacture. The limestone is to be quarried, crushed on the site and transported by pipe in the form of slurry to the cement works at Maldon 42 miles away.

Though the mining area may be relatively small when compared with the whole Park, it will involve the removal of a complete mountain (Mount Armour), the erection of a crushing plant on the site and of a 100 million gallon capacity dam nearby on the Kowmung River - the only unpolluted major tributary of the dam nearby on the disposal of everburden and cleared timber, the slurry warragamba Dam - the disposal of everburden and cleared timber, the slurry pipe, pylons carrying power lines, a network of service roads, workmen's pipe, pylons carrying power lines, a network of service roads, workmen's quarters, all of which must cause erosion, siltation and pollution; the quarters, all of which must cause erosion, siltation and pollution; the reverberation of blasting and perpetual all-pervading dust cloud which will hang over the area. This industrial intrusion, visible or audible (or both) from its farthest confines, will ruin the wilderness character of the Park.

Applications to mine in the Reserve were refused by the Government of the day in 1939, and again in 1958, not because it was in a reserve (our out-of-date Mining Act gives the Government legal power to ignore this type of reserve), but because it was held to be "inimical to the public interest". Yet the present Government granted this consent in July 1967, arguing that yet the present Government granted this consent in July 1967, arguing that "this was in the best interests of the State", and refused, in spite of all "this was in the best interests of the State", and refused, in spite of all protests, to reconsider it or allow it to be contested before a Mining Warden's Court.

From the Company's point of view this high quality limestone will be cheap to mine and to transport to its existing works at Maldon, and the cement produced there is exempt from the Road Tax payable by its less centralised competitors. It would therefore be highly profitable, particularly as the price of cement in Sydney would not be affected.

New South Wales is particularly rich in limestone deposits, and suitable sources exist in  $_{\rm max}$  ny areas which can be mined at a reasonable profit. The

Government can still, without undue cost or hardship, revoke the Colong leases and substitute others in such places, where the scenic and wilderness value is much lower.

A meeting of representatives of fifty conservation and allied organisation was held at Sydney University on 29th May, 1968, which unanimously passed a number of resolutions deploring the Government's action, rejecting its arguments and calling upon Government and Parliament to review the Cabinet's decision, and asking for a full public enquiry.

It also sot up a Colong Committee of eight noted conservationists under the chairmanship of Professor R.N. Johnson, B.Arch, ARIBA, FRAIA, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at Sydney University, to direct and coordinate a campaign for the mobilisation of public opinion in order to bring pressure on the Government to change its mind, to revoke the mining leases it has issued in the area, and to re-include that part of the Kanangra-Boyd National Park which has been excluded.

The Committee believes that, important as the Colong issue is, much more is involved. If mining on this destructive scale is allowed here it will be the green light for the State Governments and mining companies of all kinds, everywhere, to go ahead regardless of any consideration but that of immediate profitability.

For further information apply to: - Mr. M.F.A. Keen, OBE, Secretary, Colong Committe, Scotland Island via Church Point, 2105. who will also gladly receive donations to the Fighting Fund.

#### NIGHT-TIME PATROLS IN THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK.

The Editor's attention was drawn to an article which appeared in the St. George and Sutherland Shire Leader.

The article stated that regular night patrols have been introduced after reports of deer-poaching in isolated park areas. It was reported that these patrols would continue indefinitely. Mr. S.P. Weems (Wildlife Service Director) plans to appoint more rangers to improve park security as soon as funds become available. It was pointed out that it is very difficult to successfully prosecute suspects.

#### URGENTLY NEEDED.

WANTED - BUSHWALKING ARTICLES TO FILL THE MAGAZINE.

What's happened to the Club - Isn't anybody walking any more? Are we degenerating into the "Sydney Camping Club" or the Sydney Politicians Society?"

Get out on those walks and bring back the storics for the magazine. This month there is only ONE trip reported. Are we to believe that there was only one trip in the last month? You don't have to be a talented writer or have a photographic memory to be able to write up a walk for the magazine.

Just record your impressions and send it to me - URGENT.



"OF COURSE WE'RE NOT LOST - I'VE MERELY
DISCOVERED A PLACE THAT'S NOT MARKED
ON THE MAP!"