

August, 1969

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A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the
Sydney Bushwalkers, Northcote Building, Reiby Place,
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POSTAL ADDRESS: Box 4476, G.P.O., Sydney, 2001.

EDITOR: Bill Gillam, 19 Old Bush Road, Engadine, 2233.

BUSINESS MANAGER: Bill Burke, Coral Tree Drive,
Carlingford, 2118.

TYPIST: Dorothy Knightley, 17 Mahratta Avenue,
Wahroonga, 2076.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The 1969 BUSH-WALKERS BALL will be held on FRIDAY,
12th SEPTEMBER, 1969, at Paddington Town Hall, 9 p.m. - 2 a.m.
(Dress optional)

Tickets are now available - \$3.00 (single)

THE NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Your attention is drawn to :-

1969 CONFERENCE & DINNER to be held on Saturday, 18th October 1969,
at North Sydney Council Chambers at noon
and 6 p.m. respectively

Guest Speaker at the Dinner: Mr. William S. Steele, Assistant
Director (Wildlife) of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.
Following Mr. Steele's address, two colour films will be shown:
"George Washington's River" (an outstanding film on water pollution)
and "Gardens of Japan".

Tickets: \$2.00 each

Ticket applications to be forwarded no later than October 10th, to:

Mrs. Beryl Nipparess,
Scenic Road,
Kilcare Heights,
via HARDY'S BAY, 2256.

Cheque, money order, etc. made payable to "Nature Conservation
Council of N.S.W."

THE JULY GENERAL MEETING

Jim Brown.

Three new members were announced and were welcomed at the outset of the meeting. Allen Kearns was there; Ian Younger (of a clan already well known in the Club) couldn't make it, and John Campbell had been whisked off to a new job at Cooma immediately after admission.

Matters developing from the June minutes included a progress report on the Kangaroo Valley land purchase. It seemed probable that a settlement would be reached at a meeting of the vendor's solicitors and the representatives of the Quakers and Walkers set down for 21st July. About \$300 in additional contributions had come to hand but some promised donations were still outstanding.

One of the long outstanding vacancies - that of Conservation Secretary - was filled by a volunteer, Bill Ketas, and later in the evening, on Jim Calloway's suggestion, Maureen Taplin was elected to the still open position of Lady Committee Member.

Correspondence contained an invitation from new member, John Campbell, for people en route to the snowfields to pass a night at his quarters at Cooma. Joe Scotland returned after a lengthy period working the Alps, had sought re-entry to active membership. Congratulations went to Taro for his 90th birthday, and a youth group of the Y.M.C.A. movement was seeking a guest leader to conduct a party of boys on a walk from Jenolan to Katoomba during the August school holidays.

The Treasurer reported an upward movement in the Club's working funds during June, reaching a balance of \$622.

An innovation was adopted in presenting the June walks reports; those leaders present at the meeting were invited to give a brief comment on their own trips, and several pitched their own tales. The walks covered included Alan Round's trip in the Kanangra - Christy's Creek area, with 4 people, on the first weekend in June; on the same weekend, 25 were out on Jim Brown's day walk in the hills behind Coal Cliff. On the Queen's Birthday holiday weekend snow conditions were poor, but a party led by Doone Wyborn managed to get in some skiing near Smiggins Hole. Since Ross Hughes was unable to take his programmed trip, Alan Round substituted a walk in the Yerranderie Area, attracting 18 people, and the Barry Zierens/Len Davidson combination ran a day walk in the Ku-ring-gai country (28 starters).

The following weekend, Jerry Sinzig with 9 folk, did the Mount Solitary traverse as a day walk, and Owen Marks ran a jaunt from Bundeena to Garie - he confessed he remembered little of it as he developed an excruciating lumbago in the afternoon. (From recollection, there were 16 people, and after a very brisk lunch, they made the only bus from Garie). Barry Wallace's Instructional brought out 16, with no less than 12 prospects included, and learnt "how NOT to cross flooded streams".

Pat Harrison went to the Capertee Valley with 9 people, traversed Crown Mt. and climbed Tyan Pic, and Jim Calloway had 12 starters on a day walk in the Burning Palms area.

Amongst coming social events was listed a theatre party to "Hair" on 30th October at \$3 a head.

Wilf Hilder reported from Federation that a flash flood in the Nattai some weeks ago had demolished the bridge below Shea's Creek and a temporary pontoon affair had taken its place. The Catholic Bushwalkers were seeking affiliation, and a standard sized canister for visitors' books at scenic points were being prepared. Bert Carlon had announced his intention of improving the old stock trail over Yellow Dog for use as a riding track, and New Zealand S. & R. people planned to present a "survival in the snow" demonstration in September. The local M.L.A. for the Blue Mountains area was organising an S. & R. group and some Federation members seemed rather put out over the proposal. Hacking River was at present badly polluted by coal dust from the Metropolitan Colliery near Helensburgh.

To close the night, Owen Marks asked if the Kangaroo Valley land would be ours by the Beginning of August, when he had advertised a "camp on our own land). He was assured the prospects were good. Which took us off at the modest hour of 9.5 p.m.

ANNUAL SUB SCRIPTIIONS

	\$
Active Member	5.50
Married Couple	7.50
Student	3.50
Non-active Member	1.00
Non-active with Magazine	2.50

Subscriptions are now overdue - if you have not already paid, please send cheques etc. to :-

The Treasurer,
The Sydney Bushwalkers,
Box 4476, G.P.O.,
SYDNEY. 2001.

COMMENTATOR.

(The usual fate of the written word very often seems to be that of a pebble slipped into a pond; there are no ripples and the colour of the pebble is soon forgotten. Very often the author cannot remember what the pebble felt like or why it attracted his attention. Potential writers take heart. In the past few months appearing in these pages have induced people to try new territory (Pat Harrison's Bimberi trip), and have revived memories in stout middle-aged hearts (Pat Harrison's Crosscut Saw). The same Pat Harrison is indirectly responsible for the following article).

On a recent walk your Observer was taken to task over a literary statement he had made some years earlier. He was, for once, nonplussed. The article had appeared three years earlier; it was written hurriedly in response to a frantic appeal from the then Editor to "fill-in", and the task taker had been storing up his wrath until he joined the Club. The statement was that Henry Lawson's poetry was in general, inferior to his short fiction; in fact, most of the poetry was written in conscious competition with Paterson and was less realistic and innovating than the fiction. It was an arrow shot into the air; for many years the poetry of these two was a prerequisite for camp fire scholarship; I have heard the Bush Christening as word perfect from my grandmother as from a contemporary. It was often implied that these two were the giants of Australian poetry, holding the 'folk memory'.

These two balladists of the Nineties were in effect reflecting the nostalgia of people looking back wondering where things went wrong and deliberately, at times, ignoring the origin of the people and the recurring disasters of droughts. In the thirty years from the gold finds there has been increasing stocking and spread of occupation before the depression of '91-93 brought an end to the promise. Some of us will remember that peculiar episode of the 1950's entitled the Call to the Nation, in which it was suggested that Australians could possibly work a little harder. It was printed on cloth and copies appeared all over the place, including, I recall, the change room where I would swap a greasy laboratory coat for the brighter garb of a young man about Tech. Russell Ward recalls that the copy appearing on Goulburn Station, had inked on it:

"The chained us up like horses and sold us out of hand,
And they chained us up to ploughs, brave boys, to plough
Van Diemens Land".

Lawson and Paterson looked back on the green years and the footloose mateship. Sardonicly, Joseph Furphy perceived the true harshness of the land, and its real despair-not the child lost in the bush and found dead, but the child lost and never found. Furphy went unread; Lawson's fiction was neglected. Dr. Bean, in a preface to a recent edition of "On The Wool Track" tells how nothing he had read (presumably the balladists) had prepared him for the immensity and desolation of the far west of the State. A generation of poets after the '90s, driven to come to grips with the country whether they were read or not, became intensely separate. Some, like Shaw Nielsen, wrote beautiful lyric verse; Chris Brennan wrote in the French tradition, both avoiding involvement. Gradually, in verse appearing in the last thirty years, poets have realised the epic nature of the Australian experience, and in some hard edged lines have produced poetry as realistic and moving to prove the promise of the earlier Australian fiction.

In the hope that some may be led to read them, especially Pat Harrison.

The poetry is well worth reading, even if it is harder to memorise than the balladists. Some of the things that have jumped up and grabbed me, follow:

Robert D. Fitzgerald is a retired surveyor, a resident of Hunters Hill and the grandson of an early authority on Australian orchids. Impeccable qualifications, he practised surveying in Fiji, and put into his own verse many of the legends of the Fijians. In "The Wind at my Door", a recollection in tranquility of his own ancestors he speaks to us all, who:

..... need some star
of courage from his firmament, a bar
against surrenders.

..... these are the Irish batch of Castle Hill,
rebels and mutineers, my countrymen
twice over...

..... if you would pray brother, pray for a clean death.

(Furphy wrote of the sleeper cutter with his fingers caught in a split log, the other hand reaching, scrabbling, but never catching the axe to chop off the fingers, the skeleton barely holding the cloth together).

There is serenity in a lot of Fitzgerald's work, drawn from the knowledge that a peculiarly different type of life survived the trials and is inheritable.

... I think in your unanswering tombs
you feel, though me todays known bliss
because, you, living, saw such blooms
in coloured spring times far from this.

The practical surveyor peeps through in "Heemskerk Shoals":

..... the gain
was learning what not to expect.

Or in "Quayside Meditation", the very stones of Hunters Hill came out:

..... saying which I can turn about and face
concrete and glass as things familiar-known
like brick, shell mortar and grey Hawkesbury stone.

Not surprisingly many of the newer poets took explorers and erected elaborate but very moving symbolic structures around them. Kenneth Slessor, an editor of the Sydney Sun, in "Five Visions of Captain Cook":

Men who ride broomsticks with a mesmerist
Mock the typhoon. So, too, it was with Cook.

Although Judith Wright took a rather large volume, "The Generations of Men" to record the misfortunes of her forbears, the Dalwoods of the Hunter

Valley vineyard, two lines of verse are the crystallisation

... he weathered all the striding years
till they ran widdershins in his brain.

Or, from an early poem, published in wartime:

... round us, round the company of lovers
Death draws his cordons in.

There is a lighter side to modern poetry which nevertheless draws its strength from the same sources. David Campbell's "barmaid who knows that men....

... look at me as they look for rain.

Or, A. G. Austin in a dug-out in Torbruk:

In my cave lives a solitary rat,
(A celibate rat,
I can vouch for that).

I can't resist John Manifold's odd person:

...I knew a most superior camper
Whose methods were absurdly wrong.
He did not live on tea and damper
But took a little stove along.

There are a whole host of poets, contemporary in the last thirty years.
They are worth reading.

Recent historical writings suggest that the "unlocking of the land" which came to an end in the nineties, was not a result of genuine "land hunger", whatever that vague symptom is. Reason suggests that there were few permanently successful gold-diggers once mining and land companies began their operations. Pressure for closer settlement came from the middle-class of solicitors, doctors and storekeepers in country towns who saw the large squatters bypassing those towns when selling their wool, and backloading, from the ports, their provisions. None of the State systems of land holding were entirely effective, due mainly from basic misconceptions of agriculture - a mistake extending to the Ord River schemes of the present day. The legislation did break the political power of the squatters, leaving them as a still active pressure group. No one, to my knowledge, writes odes or even couplets to the Country Party.

THE YO-YOS GO NORDIC

A Yo-yo is a person with enough energy to put on skis, ski downhill to the lifts and run, with increasing confidence and diminishing adventure the one run until lunchtime. At lunchtime, he will ski downhill from the top of the lift to the hut and give his day ticket to a similar spirit with less energy who couldn't get out of bed early enough to justify a day ticket. Confusion arises, but invention is not lacking when the yo-yo arrives at the tow to find the ticket has gone back to the hut. One merely pleads that one changed one's parka and could Just this time?

In a season with little snow, the fall of nearly one foot as we arrived was sufficient to put off our cross country trip. We needed to get back our confidence, this snow will only last another day; how do we wax?, where do we go? These discussions in a warm hut after a superb meal are a wonderful excuse for not washing up and it seems a pity to lose such a fruitful and divisive subject by going. All theoretical discussions, from the causes of the war - any war - to the state of the stock market, become increasingly abrasive until the point is reached when ...

Four of us had bought cross country skis. Bill Bourke proved to be a dedicated yo-yo, but Don Matthews, Helen Gray and myself took our skis from the rack and then, from some inner compulsion, secret voice or logical deduction achieved the greatest spread of waxes for the one condition that was possible. I went for sticky purple, Helen for sticky orange, and Don for sticky green with a touch of sticky blue under the foot. The results were identical - we could walk downhill as fast as we could walk uphill. Don rationalised that the object was to walk uphill and you couldn't tell until you had gone half a mile whether the wax was right. We made two major discoveries; the skis, even with all the snow bailed-up on their foot were light and that untracked snow is very beautiful. Somehow, we arrived at Cooma Hut, the Mecca of Cross Country; Mathews swears it was chance, Helen says it was fortuitous because her bindings were falling apart. The Word on Waxing looked at our skis and gave us an hours free lecture which cost us only two more colours and two rubbing blocks. We scraped and scraped at the stickiness and threw away the chewed-out chewing gum in which we had put our trust. We took The Word back to the hut.

PERISHER GAP: The next day, 8.30 a.m., Spiro Ketas, Snow Brown, Shirley Dean and Duncan, the advance party have hired skis from the Cooma Hut, presumably waxed for the expected conditions. Helen, Don, Bill Bourke and myself have done the washing up and have joined them for the run into Farm Creek and the crossing of the Snowy at Guthoga. The weather is magnificent. One by one we slide off. And fall. There is an unbreakable crust of ice. It is of the clear artificial variety encountered in lemon squash. It is possible to stand and run straight, but then there is no turning resistance. Falling is so easy; your bindings take effect half way along the big toe. The Gap is full of brittle laughter and the sound of brittle skis and bodies coming to some sort of accomodation with the ice. Bodies meet the snow in attitudes undreamt, toes have been turned in arcs on the far side of astonishment, egos have looked for quiet places in which to hide.

GUTHEGA: We can see Tait peeping over the skyline. The level snow across

the dam has been the easiest yet, and spirits are renewed.

Someone says, "Where now, leader?"

No one replies.

Everyone looks at Mathews. Mathews is mute. In agony he searches his soul. Finally he speaks.

"I was thinking of going up the Summit Road towards Spencers Creek and the Chalet".

-But aren't you the Leader?

-No.

-Then who is?

No one wants to be first among equals. I have forgotten who is carrying the roast leg of lamb for lunch. Onwards. Among the trees of Guthega Creek we find new wazards. Snow drifted over the miniature 'schrunds around hidden rocks. Bill Bourke finds one big enough to conceal himself, and from which he escapes by climbing a tree, skis and all. Helen and Duncan try Sliding until Duncan loses a stock hundreds of feet above the creek, gives his skis to Helen to carry, retrieves his stock and then foots it until he can persuade Helen to bring his skis down to him. The line of skiers expands, contracts, finally halts with everyone present so that a screwdriver can be found and matches jammed into Helen's bindings.

Consett Stephen Pass is a great white bowl of sparkling ice above us. Duncan takes a higher tack at the mountain so that he is above and behind me every time I look up. Helen has found a fluted buttress leading onto a very steep slope. Below the buttress there is an even steeper slope falling off into the creek. Mature consideration tells me I will roll forever if I try below the buttress. It is a damn awkward buttress. Trudge, trudge, trudge. The skis hold an astonishing angle on the ice. Duncan still above and behind, Helen's orange pack full of waxes and scrapers and rubbing blocks above and ahead, blue skies moving ever so slowly across the white world.

We have reached the pass.

Duncan, helen and myself climb a small pinnacle of rock coated in ice. We climb to the top on skis. Bill Bourke reaches the pass and takes off his skis. The others come into view, toiling, walking, dragging skis across the slope of the pass. We foregather, rest, eat. The leg of lamb is carved and then the bone passed around.

Tait is too remote, another hour's climb at least. There is a low ridge shielding us from the view of Watsons Crags. Is it worth while to climb? Duncan, Helen and myself, having rested longer, are the only ones who think so. On the reverse slope the sound of skis on ice is astonishing. The ice is wierdly wind abraded - the view is magnificent, Watsons Crag close and enormous, far away in Victoria Feathertop looking like the one true mountain.

When we turned back Duncan almost immediately disappeared. The pass up

which we had trudged must surely "track" now in the warmest part of the sun. It wouldn't. Every fall sent a clattering bucketful of ice down the slope. Stand up, run, fall. No laughter. The party scattered again out of the Pass into the trees and, wonder of wonders, the snow soft and balling under the skis. A body count at Guthoga; Duncan had skied effortlessly down the ridge.

There comes a time on any trip when apprehension about getting home at all gives way to the lesser apprehension of getting home before dark. Returning up Farm Creek, Mathews, Helen and myself began again to have binding problems. We formed the steadily plodding rearguard, watching the various styles of the others as they moved up Perisher Gap. Duncan still maintaining a higher track, Shirley marching competitively, Bourke calling on an infantry-acquired fatalism, Spiro and Snow moving smoothly.

Sunset and the Rearguard came to the Gap at the same time. We looked back at the Main Range and the sculptured pink ice of the Gap. Ahead of us the shadow of the Earth crept into the sky. Perisher Gap astonishingly delineated. In darkness we Skied gingerly down. Irony of irony the skis, ran, turned, checked. In the light of the drying room there were long patches of white wood rubbed free of all wax and tar.

In the all-electric kitchen, Joan Rigby had soup and coffee waiting for us.

ANDEAN EXPEDITION.

Be amazed at the sophistication of a typed letter from this wild and rugged spot. Our donated Remington typewriter, carried in to base camp in rawhide nets on the backs of mules over incredibly rugged terrain, is doing a sterling job. Our base camp is situated at 14,200 ft. in a grassy cirque completely encircled by snowy giants rearing up at incredibly steep angles to heights of 20,000 ft. Yesterday, Keith McNaughton and I made the first ascent to the Expedition's credit of an unnamed peak of 17,300 feet. Meanwhile three of the other boys were making an attempt of an 18,300 ft. peak marked on the map as Yanama but called Quellucocha by the local Quechua Indians. We are all supposed to be fairly acclimatised to the heights, but we suffered to a greater or lesser extent from shortage of breath as we got above 16,000 ft., so much so that John Gamlen, Birko and Mike Feller were unable to complete the last few hundred feet of their summit ridge.

Today we are having a rest day at base camp. Some Indians have been up to see us from the village of Yanama, 7 kms. down the Rio de Yanama Valley, about 3,000 ft. below us. They came bearing potatoes (papas) which they bartered for a block of Cadbury's chocolate and two biscuits, and three empty fruit tins which are highly sought after articles in this primitive community. Tomorrow they will come again bringing us half a sack of potatoes which they will exchange for the sack we gave them to carry them in. They seem delighted with the bartering bargains they make, so we are being

careful not to inflate the local prices by offering what they would consider overpayment. 5 eggs are exchanged for one block of chocolate.

Cows pasture to 16,000 ft. in the high upland pastures and our camp is frequently invaded by the inquisitive beasts who won't take no for an answer but come right up to the camp, browsing inquisitively right against the tents. Although they look rather fearsome with long sharp horns they are really quite pleasant beasts and give an air of romance with their thick hairy coats and playful butting of each other. Some days an Indian will come up from the valley settlement below to check up on his cattle and we all shake hands all round and do our best at conversation in sign language and a bit of Quechua-con-Spanish, all to the accompaniment of broad grins on the part of the local lads.

The days are fine and sunny. But as soon as the sun sinks below the surrounding mountains the temperature drops sharply and we rug up in our down jackets. It is quite pleasant during the day in shorts and shirt, but the night temperatures drop to 20 degrees below zero at base camp, and probably 5 or 10 degrees lower at the high camps at 16,000 feet. In the high camps up on the glacier ice the insides of the tents ice up at night and food taken from the pressure cooker is cold before it is eaten. Nevertheless we find that Paddy's marvellous sleeping bags are completely adequate, even without the half-bag and down jacket which we have with us for emergency occasions. You can strip off to your underwear inside the sleeping bag, put your clothes under you, and be as snug as a bug in a rug inside the Moade tent with the sleeve doors three-quarters closed. At base camp we have a big Community tent where we do the cooking on primuses and into this tent everyone crowds at meal times, sitting on petrol drums and sacks and being careful to keep their elbows at their sides while they eat so as not to knock their next-door neighbours off their drums. One night Mike took the lid off the pressure cooker before it had cooled down sufficiently and the resulting explosion of super-heated steam caused pandemonium in the tightly packed crowd. Three people are still being treated by Johnno the Sutton for burns. Incidentally, Dr. John Sutton now bears the name of "El Vampiro" (the Vampire) due to his fiendish desire to take the blood of his victims for his medical project. He thinks he is really on to something quite original in the way of studying the presence of growth hormones in the blood at high altitudes. He is already planning his next venture, which will be to Mt. Kenya. Once bitten by the Expedition bug and you're infected for life, or so it would seem in Johnno's case.

Fay Retchford and Leslie McNaughton, the wives of two of the Melbourne boys, have been with us at base camp for a couple of days. They are going back to Cusco tomorrow or the next day and taking all our letters out with them, so there is a great deal of letter writing going on as this might be the last chance for getting mail out till after the end of August. The girls came in on mule-back, 5 days up the Santa Teresa Valley, but they will be walking back alone. Although the country is probably the wildest on earth (and this is no exaggeration), with its raging rivers and mile deep gorges, nevertheless the old Inca tracks are kept in reasonable repair by the Indians, and there is nothing for the girls to fear from the Indians who are a kind and gentle race. The women seem fairly shy, but the children are delightful inquisitive little young-uns who come and sit in a circle around us when we are travelling through the inhabited regions and stop for a meal. The odd tit-bits of delicacies we give them are received

with broad grins of delight.

On 26th June, Richard Bennett decided he must fulfil his obligations to Channel 9 of Melbourne, and make them a complete recording of a climb. Seeing that they had specified that they were particularly interested in the woman climber, I was to be star of the piece. I had to wear a photogenic crash helmet and colourful gloves and see that my socks were pulled up and my shirt-tail tucked in and my sun-cream was tastefully applied. It was suggested that I borrow Fay's uplift brassiere to give more sex appeal to the picture, but a fair go is a fair go - I can't breathe in the damn things and anyhow, a mountaineer doesn't necessarily have to have her bosoms on her collarbones like an American tourist. When I was all decked out to Birko's specifications, we started off up the grassy hill from base camp, but before long, I began to steam up so out came the shirt tail for ventilation, down went the socks, off came the long pants and the crash helmet and there I was a bushwalker in shorts. This was much more comfortable and Birko decided he wouldn't waste any good film until we actually got to the beginning of the rock climb. After an hour's climb up the lower grassy slopes, we came to the real climbing problems so we dressed again as mountaineers and it was on. Birko and I were on one rope and Mike Feller and John Retchford on the other. Birko took us from every angle in all sorts of hazardous positions, clinging on to rock faces by our finger nails and to ice precipices by ice-screws, ice axes and the skin of our teeth. Film was running short as we struggled up the final steep ice-filled couloir and gained the summit ice-cap. We were totally unprepared for the incredible sight that met our eyes. The entire summit was like a turbulent sea whipped up into two foot high waves and then frozen into a state of icy immobility. These waves were as fragile as foam and we kicked our way through them along the icy curves and sweeps that led to the summit. The actual summit was like a foaming ocean wave, immobilised suddenly as it was in the act of breaking. It's curving underside was hung with great glistening icicles and the whole effect was one of breathtaking beauty. We picked our way gingerly along this fragile airy skyway. John Gamlen and Keith McNaughton had now joined us from below so the movie camera was passed over to John to operate and Birko was filmed belaying La Pequena (the little femme) first onto the summit of our first virgin climb. (This should really appeal to the T.V. viewers). Birko came into the picture and held up an ice axe displaying the flags of Peru, Australia, and the Expedition emblem and the last of the movie film went through the gate. 240 ft. of tense gripping adventure in the highlands! Mountaineers grappling with death 18,000 ft. up in the rarified atmosphere, looking down into the miles deep canyons where the Santa Teresa River foamed through its rocky gorges to meet the mighty Urubamba, the Father of Waters, roaring over its rapids on its thousands of miles journey down through the jungles to the Amazon Basin and the tropic sea! You can just imagine how the viewing T.V. housewives will lap it up.

The girls are taking this film out with them when they leave today, so it should reach Australia in about three weeks time. Channel 9 has been asked to let Peter Marsh know when it will be filmed, so he will pass the information on to anyone interested.

YERRANDERIEMarion Lloyd.

Well, after packing landrover, we couldn't find the maps, so unpacked, then repacked. But it was uncomfortable for our backseat passenger so we had to unpack etc. About 8 p.m., we set off at long last after what was to be a 6 p.m. start. It was quite an eventful trip with Alan Round, Dot Noble, John Campbell and myself singing in different keys. We stopped at Mount Victoria to be refuelled. We decided we wouldn't take the short cut via Jenolan Caves Road, but be on the safe side, and take the road to Oberon. One smart club member told Alan about a beaut short cut which was a very good road, and we decided to take his advice even though it was getting late and was a longer way to go. This route was through Oberon and to turn of onto such and such a road which led into a pine forest so many miles from Black Springs.

We passed through Oberon about midnight, then headed towards Black Springs. Unfortunately Alan was very mixed up about the directions and of course the road map of N.S.W. was over 30 years old and everything was out; added to this we were of the firm opinion that we are NEVER wrong. However we eventually got to Black Springs and then Alan couldn't remember if it was before or after the Shell garage so we took a road to the left and chuffed up this for about 10 miles. After a while we reckoned it was the wrong road, so decided to go all the way back, pass through Black Springs once more and start again. After chuffing up and down the road several times arguing our heads off at every turn off we came to, even if it was going in the wrong direction, we agreed to abandon the attempt of getting through at all costs that night, and return to Oberon. About 3 miles out of Oberon there was a huge campfire by the side of the road, completely abandoned. It called invitingly to us and of course we accepted at once. There was already about 3" of frost on the ground.

Here we decided to have a couple of hours' sleep. It was 4 a.m. and we were nearly out of petrol. How I blessed that fire, the heavy frost had frozen everything including myself. Alan, at 6 a.m., dragged us from our flea bags, stuffed us up with rib sticker (porridge) and a gallon of tea, and we set off again about 7 a.m.

When we pulled up at a garage at Oberon, we noticed a car full of scouts. I asked them where they were going and they informed me that they were going to Colong Caves. One scout nearly swallowed his apple whole, when I gave a hyena laugh and tore off to tell Alan the good news. The scouts gave us all the details and instructions which sounded so easy. Needless to say they assured us with that classical remark "You'll be right, you can't miss it". So we had to go back up the road and then turn off towards Porter's Retreat and thence to Batch Camp. We passed the other end of the road which nearly turned down the night before, and we could have kicked ourselves for being so stupid. We arrived at Batch Camp about 9 a.m. After mucking around, we left Batch Camp about 11 a.m. During this interval we watched with amusement scouts and cavers trudging up the hill with their 40 lb. packs, pans and billies swinging to and fro making a wonderful percussion band. One crowd had so much stuff that they had to carry their surplus junk between 2 poles - all for 3 days caving. I think I had something like 20 lbs.

We set off along the track; about 15 minutes later there was a shriek from Dot. She had put her foot into an old rusty dingo trap. Fortunately no harm was done, but we were careful from then on. We passed about four more, if we had not been looking out for them, I am sure another foot would have been caught. We walked through a swamp, a short puff up and down into a saddle, and brisk effort up Mt. Colong. Here we found water from a spring and had lunch on a nice grassy slope. We were all agreeably surprised to find how pleasant Mt. Colong is. Most of us climbed the cairn and signed the visitors' book. Some cheated - they signed the book without climbing the cairn. About half way down Mt. Colong our navigators had their first serious disagreement on which way we should go. People went off in all directions, it's a wonder nobody was lost, but they were all back about half an hour later when the rest of us were nearly frozen. We took a vote and then proceeded to take the right route and eventually got off the ridge.

When we were nearly on the fire trail, John Campbell, who was racing through the bush, jumped on a stick which went straight through his sand-shoe into his foot. With great presence of mind, he ripped his shoe off and sucked the debris etc. out of the wound. Of course this had the desired effect and everybody, startled by this sight, wanted to carry his pack and one even went to the extreme of wanting to carry him. Gee! some I call really smooth, but really the wound was pretty bad. We reached the fire trail and followed it for about 4 or 5 miles until we came upon a creek running across the road. By this time John was on the verge of collapsing but never showed it. After camp had been set up, time could now be spent on doctoring our ailing John. It was rather hilarious, everybody knew the exact treatment and poor John, bewildered by it all, collapsed and let the first aiders take over, all doing treatment they thought best. Might I add that every treatment was different. I am sure it was this good nursing, love, care and attention that pulled him through. Next day John remained at camp whilst we followed the creek to Yerranderie (being about 4 miles).

I think it is one of the most exciting places I have been to. To start with, there is a shaft which goes straight down at an angle of 45° for goodness knows how many hundreds of feet. They must have had a job pulling the trolleys up - the trolley rails can still be seen. All the houses are pretty much the same; made of bark or timber slabs cemented together by mud.

In the main street was what appeared to be a hall, probably some pub and something else. Next was a grocer store and/or real estate and one or 2 other shops, all standing but gradually disintegrating. Over the road is a Post Office, but unfortunately someone had bought it and were doing it up. While we were there, the people concerned were painting it green and white and many renovations were being made to it. It is the only double storey structure in the village. It made the rest of the place look terrible and took away the atmosphere of a complete ghost town. I was most upset about it because I felt that now the place is inhabited, I would not be able to sleep there and see the ghost that is rumoured to have lived inside; it has even been claimed that its apparition has frightened many a bushwalker. Adjacent to it are two shacks, and in the last one we spent about half an hour sifting through papers and weeklies.

dating back 30 years. There were, believe or not, the same scandals, sensational headings, murders, rapes, tragedies and comic strips. On the walls of the lounge room were pasted front page covers of the "Women's Weekly". In the kitchen was the typical slow combustion fuel stove and next to it a small space for breadmaking and a big box for the wood. There was the typical lean to with corrugated iron stack chimney. It had a mud floor verandah and verandah posts. This little house was a typical dwelling of the village. That was the business part of the town.

About $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles up the road was the residential section. Most of these dwellings were made of mud bricks. The Church's foundation is in excellent condition, but was a complete shell inside. However, seeing that it was Sunday, we held a mock service. I think the services must have been modernised because where the altar had been and under the floor boards were dozens of beer cans and bottles. I have since found out that one of the former ministers in Orange was born here and his father was rector of this particular church.

In one backyard was an old relic of a T model Ford; about 10 yards away was half a rusty old bike frame. Margaret Wyborn informs me that it is probably the sorrowful remains of Ross's old bike that was abandoned on the last successful Mittagong - Katoomba trip. Coincidence again - Dot Noble took a photo of me attempting to ride this bike; there were several peaks in the background. Later, Dot showed a photo of a man on a horse in almost exactly the same position where I posed. It had been taken many years before by Mrs. Noble whilst doing a geology thesis at Yerranderie when she was at University.

To our delight, in another backyard was a double seater outhouse, so we all had to take it in turns in pairs to try it out. At one stage there was quite a queue. This little episode reminded me of a hilarious book called "The Specialist". He went from town to town out west specialising in this particular art. His pride and joy was a seven seater.

Some of us went across the paddocks to the courthouse and police station; one was inhabited by a mining company and the other by a water board employee. To get there, we had to edge past a German shepherd dog; we were agreeably surprised to find it very friendly. We had a bit of a chat to the drillers and water board employee and then took off down the road to the cemetery and some other mines. On the way we met the rest of the party, i.e. Owen and his followers. He gave us such a colorful description of the little buds that went to Heaven and one poor soul who was foully murdered and dearly missed and dirty old holes that were so deep that the bottoms couldn't be seen, we decided to return with them. We explored a few more houses and a dairy then went back to the main street and had dinner on one of the front verandahs. It was getting cold, so lunch was brief as we decided to go back before we froze.

We stopped on the outskirts to explore the kiln, processing works and open cut section of the mine, then it was a fast walk back to camp. We collected our gear, had a strong brew and marched about 4 or 5 miles down the fire trail to pitch camp once more. The ground was hard, water murky but not bad and it was cold. At one stage there seemed to be a contest to see which group could build the biggest fire without being scorched or

having to eat burnt food. The food was exchanged so much that some of the menus ended unspeakable, unprintable but quite eatable.

Next day we set off up the path to the mountain, skirted around one side of it and then onto the ridge. Here once again, 18 members and 18 navigators had to give their opinions and of course it became a complete muddle with 18 different interpretations of north, contour lines, bearings etc. that I for one became completely confused. Of course there were the usual reconnoitres just as a diversion. Eventually after such a magnificent group effort we climbed off the ridge into Colong Creek and thence the pretty walk to Colong Caves.

Here we borrowed a couple of carbide lamps and explored a few caves, after which we had a strong brew, a little bit of something to eat from several obliging cavers, bit of a chat, then along the creek and up that notorious Acetylene Ridge. How some of those cavers with all their junk and emergency rations can climb that hill is hard to comprehend. May be that is why they fill the hungry bushwalkers as they go by.

After a spell at the top we made fast time back to Batch Camp arriving about midday. Some were gone in ten minutes but after 4 of us had lunch, cleaned up and once more gone through the process of packing, unpacking and repacking, a couple of hours had passed by. To fill in time I walked along the road whilst the rover was being fed with water and petrol, spark plugs checked, wind screen wiper being fixed plus a hundred other mechanical operations. About 3 miles down the road I was picked up but had another half an hour delay. A couple of Victorians in a Rover wanted directions to such and such a place; they were on holidays and were aiming to follow the Great Divide - its whole length via the back roads. The men pored over maps for quite a while, sometimes later after many stops and starts, Alan put them onto the right fire trail.

About 8 p.m. we had hamburgers & chips at Richmond and about 1½ hours later arrived home tired, dirty and happy.

John told me some days later that he was allergic to tetanus injections and had to bathe his foot every 2 hours for a couple of days.

Quotes: Man lost in bush to companion as they come to a creek: "Ah detergent! We must be nearing civilisation."

The happiest people are those who think the most interesting thoughts. Those who decide to use leisure as a means of mental development, who love good music, good books, good pictures, good company, good conversation, are the happiest people in the world. And they are not only happy in themselves, they are the cause of happiness in others".

W. C. Phelps. (Many thanks to
Marian & Owen)

GAMBOLLING IN THE GANGERANGS

Barry Pacey.

I opened my eyes and peeped at the world outside from the security of my flea bag. My gaze fell back to the luminous dial of my watch. My God! Only five to six and there was nothing outside but darkness and four inches of snow.

The stop-off at the Ivannhoe the night before had left me somewhat reluctant to get up so I happily went back to sleep.

I again woke to find someone knocking at the door. I opened it and found Owen's hairy fist beating my head. He informed me it was ten to seven and suggested I go outside and make the cup of tea I had promised everyone.

My Porta-gas stood waiting to be lit, so I did, and soon had two large billies bubbling ready to be made into tea. Within 15 minutes each member of the party had come forward from his tent or his car and had surveyed the surroundings with obvious distaste.

They crawled and shuffled their way to the Porta-gas mumbling things about cold winds and cloudy skies and there was a little man complaining of someone who had woken him at 2 a.m. to tell him that they were allright -- they had a Lilo to sleep on.

After the hot tea and an otherwise cold breakfast we packed up and drove out to Kanangra Walls in a somewhat happier state of mind.

We were soon on our way and, after a short stop to count heads and remove jumpers, pushed on again merrily singing a medley of Corsican comic opera. Atop the walls we met Henry Gold who had been up since 4 a.m. waiting for the early start I had been insisting upon. We ambled on past various mountains and along Kilpatricks Causeway where a sweet thing of a prospective wanted to know who the hell Kilpatrick was.

On to Gabes Gap where a well earned rest was had in the warm autumn sunshine and pleasant mountain breeze. It was here, appropriately enough, that we heard the legend of our delightful little rest spot. It seems that many years ago a gentle shepherd named Gabriel was moving his flock from North Weatherbury, or some such place, to agistment in more suitable pastures. Passing Kanangra Walls (which he named after his best ram) he moved on to what is now Gabes Gap and established there quite a profitable sheep station. Apparently his downfall came when he tried to pull the wool over the eyes of the local customs man by disguising his sheep as wallabies thus avoiding excessive import duties imposed at that time - but that's another story.

Up and down we went for the next three hours occasionally supported by a saddle, occasionally a mountain. After all signing the book atop Cloudmaker, we descended to a little known creek between said mountain and Ti Willa Plateau where a long awaited lunch was enjoyed by everyone. Early afternoon saw us ambling along the Plateau where we were lucky enough to come across a herd of Gibson's flightless mongooses. It was truly a magnificent sight to see them bounding through the stubby bushes back to their cliff-top homes.

Up and over Ti-Willa Mountain, and thanks to Galloping Callaway, we landed on Compagnoni Pass. We descended onto Ti Willa Buttress aided only by steel spikes and safety chains and as we heard night falling we found ourselves confronted by a formidable obstacle. The descent of Stockyard Spur in darkness had left many a wretched walker's heart palpitating and wanting for happier situations. With nostrils twitching and tongues wetting parched dry lips we began to walk, nay slide toward the icy creak thousands of feet below.

On arrival at the bottom we were met by a beaut camp site and just a suggestion of rain. However, tents were soon pitched and fires started and many a tasty morsel was soon cooking. Tea that night was a bludger's delight with soups and curries and chickens and several bottles of something or other that someone had found in a liquor cabinet discarded on the creek bank.

As the evening went on Jim said he thought that the huge Japanese ship building combines had been intimidating the Eskimo Kayak builders long enough and suggested that we petition the U.S. Government to unionise the poor blighters. A noted member was seen psycho-analysing a fair young femme prospective and there was an English chap who kept standing up and telling jokes about a fellow named Paddy and an Irish mate of his. As lateness grew near, so did I to my sleeping bag and shortly dozed off in the arms of a fair young femme prospective with a quaint psychological problem.

After a cloudy Saturday and a bit of a drizzle On Saturday night, Sunday's clear sky was more than welcome. We came into the sunshine just after we started up the Gingra Trail and the warmth of it cheered us up no end. Due to recent rain the lower part of the Gingra is now quite lush and green and it was quite pleasant to see the water buffalo grazing there again.

As we moved up the trail we were able to look to our right and trace our route of the previous day. Back past the high flat expanse of Ti-Willa Plateau with its long ridges reaching nearly to the top. Then past the ice-capped peak of Cloudmaker and the sow teeth of Rip, Rac, Roar and Rumble which had sent many a previous walker retreating, shattered, to the bar of Caves House. As we skipped along listening to the occasional chortle of a goanna the trail was becoming noticeably wetter especially to the people at the back of the party.

This caused some puzzlement until it was discovered that the ice, which had encrusted itself on the tents the previous night, was at last melting and dripping in a steady stream from people's packs. Lunch was declared near third top when a group of unnamed people raced ahead, promptly unpacked all their gear in the middle of the track and began eating. By the time the last of us arrived the immediate area resembled a medieval Ukrainian bazaar. Dirty faced little people were smiling and displaying their miserable foods in front of them while all around hung tents like great bolts of crude cloth from the Central Zambezi Cotton Mills. In spite of two twisted ankles and a sprained knee suffered the night before on Stockyard Spur we reached the coal seam cave by 2 p.m. where a fire was soon in fine shape.

It's surprising what people save to the last, for soon there was tea and coffee and all sorts of biscuits and chocolates circulating around.

When we had finished our somewhat elongated afternoon tea, the walk in the sunshine back to the cars was a fitting end to a most delightful and eventful walk.

Quoties: We hope that, when the insects take over the world, they will remember with gratitude how we took them along on our picnics.

(B. Vaughan).

He that defers his charity until he is dead is, if you weigh it rightly, liberal of another man's goods rather than his own.

Art of bludging!

(Francis Bacon)

If I wished to see a mountain or other scenery under the most favourable auspices, I would go to it in foul weather, so as to be there when it cleared up; we are then in the most suitable mood, and nature is most fresh and inspiring. There is no serenity so fair as that which is just established in the tearful eye.

(Heywood Brown).

As a nation, we Australians are wasting our air, our water and our soil. The only thing we seem to be encouraging is our concrete.

Save Colong Caves!

(B. Vaughan).

The Editor,
The Sydney Bushwalker.

Dear Sir,

In the latest issue of the Melbourne Weekend Club circular they reprinted a letter from the South Australian Activities Federation.

It may be interesting for the Sydney members to realise that Clubs in other States also have practical ideas about clean camp sites. I enclose their letter for you.

Yours faithfully,

L. G. Harrison.

(See next page).

M.A.W.T.C. CIRCULAR, JUNE 1969.

The Club Executive has directed that the following open letter from the South Australian Activities Federation be brought to the attention of all members. We think that this deserves the widest publicity, and its accuracy is vouched by our members resident in Tasmania.

"On recent bushwalking trips to Tasmania, member Clubs of this Federation were appalled by the filthy conditions and lack of care in disposing of rubbish seen on many of the tracks, huts and camping areas. From reports it would appear that the more people there are in an area, the filthier it becomes. Yet this need not be so, and indeed it is extremely important to make sure that it does not continue. The use of the areas surely will not diminish, it will increase significantly with every year. So that it is up to those who want such areas, namely we bushwalkers, to ensure that we do not end up destroying them.

It must be realised that we all have a responsibility in this direction of Wilderness and Park preservation, or the authorities would have every justification in denying us access. Some of the reports that have come to us are:-

- (i) A group in the South-West opened their airdrops, took out only half their food as they thought that they would make it out on that, and then left. The rest of the food and dropping tins were left about, and another party took the best part of the day to collect, bury and clean up.
- (ii) At other airdropping zones, where space is often restricted, the airdrop tins, sacks and stuffing were simply pushed in behind bushes. Surely an area could be set aside some distance from camp for the disposal of tins. Sacks and stuffing should be burnt, or buried if too wet. There are some advocates of carrying out airdrop tins and while the idea has merit, it is a little impracticable from many of the more distant airdrop zones. If burial of tins is out of the question they should be carried until they can be either buried or flown out, e.g. from Lake Pedder. Tins should be no larger than two gallons, as larger ones are difficult to compress for burial.
- (iii) Throughout the Central Reserve was evidence of careless camp hygiene. The stench around the Du Cane Hut was revolting. The vast numbers of March flies could probably be partly explained by these conditions. One does not usually carry a flyspray when walking, and rather than starting now, it is surely better to ensure good camp hygiene on everyone's part.

There are many other examples, especially of the litter-producing type of (i), but the point's been made. Let us, instead of simply saying "it wasn't me or our party", take positive steps to ensure the problem is contained. It is the responsibility of the whole party, not only the leader, to maintain or enhance the amenity of the physical wilderness. Let us promote a feeling of respect for the integrity of the bush, and rely on commonsense. The alternative is the continuation of the present worsening situation, with the attraction of wilderness areas gradually diminishing as we spread our litter, excreta and pollution.

The letter is signed by J.A. Lothian, Chairman of the Federation's Conservation Panel, and is surely food for thought for all who love the bush.

PADDY MADE

IT'S BEEN A BAD MONTH IN SOME WAYS.

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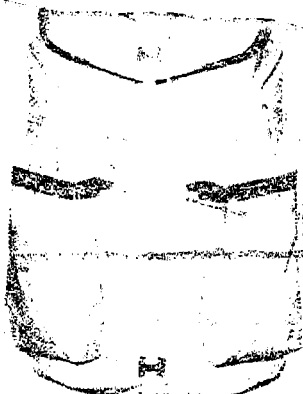
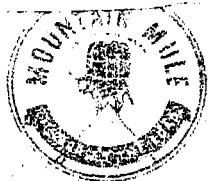
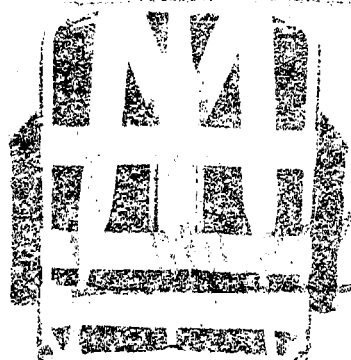
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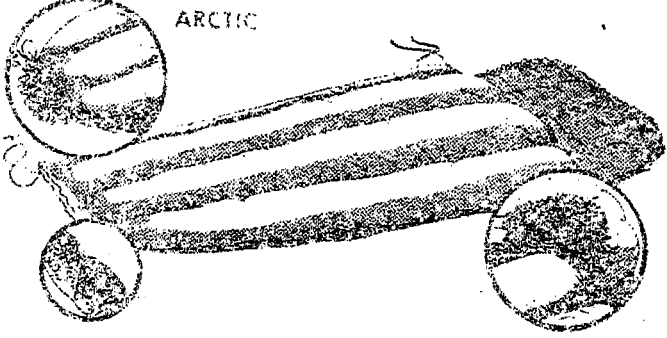


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NOTICES

Hereunder copy of circular received from the Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W.:

"Proposal to Establish a Recruitment Committee

The Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W. is anxious to expand (within the boundaries of its Constitution) membership:

- firstly, in order to represent a much wider part of the community;
- secondly, to co-ordinate the conservation efforts of many more organisations;
- thirdly, to influence more people to think about conservation matters and to revitalise pre-conceived ideas;
- fourthly, to tap the efforts of the most able people in the community; and
- fifthly, to secure an increasing source of income for the work of the Council.

The Executive would like the Recruitment Committee to be made up of persons not members of the Executive in order to spread the load of work and expand service and interest.

We have one Starter already.

We only need four or five members, preferably all from different Societies and presumably, for convenience and to save financial problems - from the Sydney Region.

The Recruitment Committee would be asked to draw up its terms of reference for approval of the Executive and subsequently to prepare a list of recommendations to the Executive.

The Committee might also plan to undertake work in contacting prospective members.

I would be pleased if you would publicise this matter through your Society meetings and journals and invite members to contact me at their earliest convenience.

3 Coopersnook Avenue,
GYMEA BAY 2227.

ALLEN A. STROM
Honorary Secretary."

OBITUARY

Walter Tarr (Tarro), one of our oldest members, passed away on Wednesday night, 13th August, 1969, aged 90 years.