

*September, 1969*

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest  
to the Sydney Bushwalkers, Northcote  
Building, Reiby Place, Circular Quay, 2000.

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—ooOoo—

TREE AT MY WINDOW

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Tree at my window; window tree,  
My sash is lowered when night comes on;  
But let there never be curtain drawn,  
Between you and me.

Vague dream-head lifted out of the ground  
And thing next most diffuse to cloud,  
Not all your light tongues talking aloud  
Could be profound.

But, tree, I have seen you taken and tossed,  
And if you have seen me when I slept,  
You have seen me when I was taken and swept,  
And all but lost.

That day she put our heads together,  
Fate had her imagination about her,  
Your head so much concerned with outer,  
Mine with inner, weather.

—oOo—

(Written by an American, Robert Frost, with  
Taro and his tree in mind).

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"TARO"

1879 - 1969

This remarkable man left us at his home at Auburn on 14th August, 1969, at the ripe old age of 90 years, for bushwalking and camping beyond the distant horizons - who knows where? Certainly his earthly remains have become "earth to earth" and "ashes to ashes", but his spirit (whatever that expression encompasses) will be wandering over the many tracks and trails he knew so well.

Hec. Carruthers has given me the privilege of a preview of his tribute to Taro and with his sentiments I am entirely in accord.

So much could be written of Walter Tarr; to those of us of the older generation who knew him and his many attributes (and perhaps one could also say, some of his idiosyncrasies) so well, it is not necessary but, to those of the younger generation who perhaps did not know him so well, one would commend Hec's words and add that here was a man who, in the true sense of the word, was indeed a "bushwalker".

One would not use the word "Vale", but "walk on, Taro", and may the track continue easy.

JOE TURNER.

—oo?oo—

TARO!

Taro, the man is dead. Taro, the spirit lives on in the hearts of all those who appreciate the wonders and the beauties of nature. For Taro saw beauty in nature - the curve of the distant hills, the graceful lines of a majestic gum or the beam of golden light caressing the meadow; even the minute flower was not beneath his notice as, carefully placing it in his floroscope, he transformed, to the beholder, an insignificant weed into a thing of beauty. His profound understanding of music and his appreciation of the ballet and opera demonstrated his enjoyment of the finer things of life. (One opera on film was visited fifty times by this incredible man).

Here was a man who gained a great deal of satisfaction from his physical capabilities; when out on a walk he carried his pack and kept up with the crowd despite his age. (He was knocked off his push bike at the age of 89). He also appreciated the capabilities of others, admiring them for their outstanding qualities. Orally, nothing pleased him more than to be able to provoke some worthy opponent into a discussion on a controversial subject. Not only did he like to air his views but, without the other person being aware of it, he was testing them out to observe their powers of reasoning. A number of people, not aware of this motive, regarded him as argumentative. Taro had many a quiet laugh after the discussions came to an end.

There was one incident in Taro's life that gave me an insight into his real self. That was the time a stray cat entered his domain. To those of you who knew Taro's backyard, you will realise it was an ideal place for a cat; no dogs could gain access and there was always plenty of long grass to lie around on. So this cat decided this would be his "garden of Eden", so he moved in. Taro, noticing him, ignored him, assuming that he was just passing through. A week later the cat was still around and Taro still continued to ignore him. But as the weeks progressed, Taro became intrigued with his boarder. Here was no fawning feline that wanted to purr around his legs, but an independent animal that asked for no favours. The cat just lay and watched Taro from a safe distance as though appraising him. This was new to Taro so he made the first move in offering scraps of meat and then milk. The cat accepted these only when the donor was absent.

It took a few weeks to gain the cat's confidence but Taro was now involved with an unusual challenge. This disdainful creature, who sought the sanctuary of his yard should not continue to ignore him, so Taro increased his efforts and eventually gained the friendship of the cat. Day by day they became friends although neither one invaded the privacy of the other. Here was a kindred spirit and Taro derived much comfort in having the cat around. It came to accept him and a firm friendship was beginning to develop.

Then one day Taro told me the sad story. The cat had died! I did not think it possible but Taro really missed the cat. He had become firmly attached to it and for several weeks he always mentioned it in his conversation. Although he would not admit it, I'm sure he shed some tears at its departure.

Those who knew him well and understood him were fond of the old nonagrarian and know that, in his passing, we have lost a sincere friend who was always anxious to lend a hand if needed and most important, was a man who did not divulge confidences.

For nearly forty years, I have known and admired Taro, having enjoyed his company around many a glowing camp fire and in the future will miss the welcome from 87 Alice Street.

Now the gate at Voltaire has closed for the last time on this modern Socrates and I feel sure that at this moment, St. Peter is receiving instructions as to how he can improve things around Heaven.

—ooOoo—

#### AT OUR AUGUST MEETING

by Alex Colley.

The meeting commenced with an apology from Phil Butt and a presidential welcome to three new members, Peta Snellgrove, Douglas Ackland and Owen Manley.

In business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting, the President outlined the position regarding our Kangaroo Valley Land. A meeting had been held between representatives of the Quakers and the S.B.W. Trustees, and the land had been temporarily transferred to Killana Pty. Ltd. ( Mr. Harold English's Real Estate Company). It had probably by now been transferred to the S.B.W. Referring to the Crown Land adjoining, which the Club had hoped to lease, Don said that it had been found that the Club could not fulfil the conditions of such a lease, which required improvements to the land and agricultural use. Mr. Chambers, who held the lease, and had the right to recommend a successor, had at first been in favour of the S.B.W. having it, but had now, in response to a consideration of \$200, recommended that it go to a friend. The Quakers, who will have a warden on their property, could however fulfil the lease conditions, and if they apply, their application would very likely be supported by the Water Board, which fears that, should the land be cultivated, erosion would result.

The Quakers had offered to pay our rates in return for grazing rights on our property. They also said that the road into both properties needed re-making, and that a bull-dozer was now available to do the job. It was suggested that we might co-operate in this work. The proposal about grazing rights was left to the Management Committee, to be appointed. The question of road repairs was debated, it being moved that the Club should investigate the possibility of building a road. The President told us that the present road could be negotiated by pushing the car. Jack Perry was of the opinion that, with a bit of work, we could do a satisfactory job ourselves. It was also pointed out that the road we used could be used by others, and that it was a pity that the Club, which had been fighting against roads in primitive areas since its inception, should now be discussing one in its own primitive area. A vote was taken and resulted in a 14 all deadlock.

Noting that some didn't vote, the President called for a second show of hands, which resulted in the motion being defeated by 17 to 16.

Barry Pacey moved that we should ask the warden to be appointed by the Quakers to look after our own property, so as to keep shooters and other undesirables away. The motion was carried.

A further cheque for \$10 from the Dungalla Club inspired a motion from David Ingram that Dungalla Club members be invited to use the land when they desired. The assertion that this should be unnecessary, since all Dungall Club members were S.B.W. members, was refuted by the sponsors of the motion, who pointed out that some Dungalla Club members were ex-S.B.W. members. The motion was carried.

A further query was raised as the use of the land by Bush Club members. Ron Knightley pointed out that this raised a further problem. What instructions should the warden be given as to who to admit, should the Quakers agree to our request that he watch over our land? He asked that the Committee give consideration to this question.

The resignation of Maureen Taplin from Committee left a vacancy, and the meeting elected Meryl Watman to fill it.

The Treasurer reported an opening balance for the month of \$652, and a closing balance of \$763. It was also revealed that some 150 subscriptions are outstanding. A general reminder that subscriptions were due had been included in the last magazine, but Ron Knightley asked that the former practice of sending a specific reminder personally addressed to those who had not paid be resumed.

In her walks report Dorothy Noble told us that Sam Hinde, in his walk to Marley, had found that the country round Marley was reverting to nature. The track was overgrown, and since cars could no longer get down there a lot of fresh growth had appeared. Barry Pacey, making his own report, said that the walk to Burbundah Creek, attended by 5 members and 4 prospectives, had been "terrific". Good camp sites and swimming pools abounded. He said that Barry Wallace intended to lead the trip in the reverse direction in November. Ten members, 2 prospectives and 2 visitors attended the wine tasting and walking trip led by Brian Griffith and Craig Shappert in the Broke area. The wine, the weather and the companionship had been very good. Owen Marks' trip to Barallier and Tomat had been led by Phil Hall. The "Persian Carpet" of ground plants had not been located but stinging nettles and stinging trees abounded. Sam Hinde's walk to Jerusalem Bay had been led by Bill Cosgrove and was attended by 23 members and visitors. On July 26/7, Marion Lloyd led 5 members and 2 prospectives down Merrigal Creek to the Cox, and on the Sunday of that week-end Mabel Pratt led 23 members and prospectives down Kangaroo Creek. The party was increased to 30 by some Bush Club members who asked to join up with it.

It was announced that the Federation Ball would be held on 12th September in Paddington Town Hall.

The N.Z. Alpine Club "Safety in the Snow" weekend will be held on September 20/21/22.

In the Federation Report, Wilf Hilder drew attention to a report on Myall Lakes, available for \$1, containing good photographs and maps and a description of the project. Since Park Trusts have been transformed into advisory Councils, there had been a wholesale resignation of politicians, and there were a number of vacancies on the Councils. The Trustees of the Blue Gum Forest were concerned at the over-camped condition of the Forest, and would like to see less use of it until some recovery in ground cover took place. Phil Butt had been elected Federation President. Our President offered the Club's congratulations. There are vacancies on Federation for an Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and Public Relations Officer.

Wilf also told us of two new maps covering Widdin Brook and some of the country between Sandy Hollow and Maryvale. He also brought the Club a complete schedule of topographical maps available in N.S.W.

The meeting closed at 9.20, with apologies from the President for it having lasted so long.

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#### XMAS HOLIDAYS.

Anyone interested in a South Seas Holiday?

Departure date is Sat. 20th Dec. and returning Mon. 12th Jan.

Visiting N.Z. (AUKLAND) 1 day; TAHITI - 8 days; SAMOA - 7 days; TONGA - 5 days; FIGI - 3 days. (24 days altogether.)

Air Fare is \$368.90 return.

Camping all the time - learning the hula - wahine watching.

Passport and smallpox vaccinations are necessary.

Also if anyone can give me any information on these places I would be grateful.

Contact Owen Marks at club or phone 30-1827 (H)

THE WOLGAN VALLEY*by* PAT HARRISON

We had camped at Wolgan Gap,  
Had a short and frosty nap,  
    With the Curlews crying all around,  
And Big Frank Taeker got up early  
And he sounded somewhat churly,  
    For the morning air is chilly in the Wolgan.

When you cross the Wolgan in the morning,  
'Ere the sun begins its dawning,  
    And your toenails are a-tingle,  
You may call for Hookway or for Taeker,  
Or for any other water breaker,  
    For the morning air is chilly in the Wolgan.

But the wattle boughs were all a-bloom,  
And they chased away the morning gloom  
    With the glory of their green and gold,  
And their beauty more than made up for  
The cold we had to stop for  
    When we crossed the Wolgan in the morning.

And at last we came to  
A place that had the name to  
    Of Annie Rowan Clearing,  
And we slung our tent among the fern  
In the manner walkers learn,  
    For the evening air is chilly in the Wolgan.

And we gathered bark and laid it  
And a warm and cosy camp we made it  
    With the fire burning brightly all the night,  
And the Currawongs among the trees  
Awoke us from the night-long freeze,  
    For the morning air is chilly in the Wolgan.

And if your troubles you would lighten  
Then go and spend a night on  
    The Wolgan where the wattle trees are golden,  
Where the Cabbage Gums and Yellow Box trees grow,  
Where the frost at noonday sets your cheeks a-glow,  
Where the Wolgan Walls are row on row,  
    And the murmur of the river close at hand.

OBSERVER HAS A GOOD MONTH

We didn't see any robins. Perhaps it was too early. The children nearly always see them first, a blood spot looping across the snow or perching on the snow poles. I am sure robins must be color blind to stand red-breasted on the orange road markers. It may have been that my children were at home. We ski-ed every day under blue skies on snow that fell the day before we arrived, which is ideal if the snow is thick enough. It snowed and blew the night the Grays, Phil Hall and Griff the Grub arrived. I unfastened the tent for them, re-cocooned and then had my beard examined to see if it was up to Main Range standard. Phil undressed, re-dressed and then addressed (someone he knew) when he realised he had left his sleeping bag in the car. He shuffled bravely out into the snow to wake Helen who had elected to stay in the warm car padded by an unexpected sleeping bag. They had words. Griff tried his bivvy bag, sounding like an animated chip trying to get bag into a Smiths bag. The bag filled with condensation. It was left on the tent to dry, a fact discovered when the three of them had given up looking for Mawsons Hut. Griff's covetous eye made them have one last look which found the hut. (Griff was The One in Every Party. He blistered his hands waxing skis at Munyang, fell heavily in the first half hour and, dependent on glasses, broke them together with a tooth). They left my share of the food when I decided not to go, substituting beef mince and egg powder for the prawns and chicken of the prepared meals.

... ..

No stay at Sawpit Creek is complete without the possum. It inspected my wife and me the first night we camped, broke bread with us on the second night and on the third day inspected a pocket which had contained chocolate during the day. The pocket owner and the possum leapt for different trees. Each night it climbed onto a convenient branch and gave its Chaucerian call. If it was a mating call it is no wonder there are so few possums.

Before we acquired the portagas lamp the possum came down readily to the firelight and the weak glow of a torch. It is a temptation to leave the food box out while the evening is talked away and to check with a torch that noises are not tomorrow's breakfast being spirited away. Possums dislike wind, on such nights they presumably fast. With the lamp lit and extra people and the children around, he inspected us for a long time, several hours, before descending. The moment the light was moved to put the children to bed, he crept into the food boxes. Whillier kicked him.

Formalities over the possum arrived the next night as soon as the lamp was lit. It hung for a long time by its rear feet and supernatural

tail, leaning out from the tree trunk at a quite impossible angle. Whillier gave it a biscuit to make up for the kick. Possum, biscuit in mouth, goes from head down tail clockwise round the tree. The children are suitably impressed.

At dusk the kangaroos, one complete with joey come through the trees. At child height we investigate ice crystals, snow patterns, new wildflowers, old rocks. The children are wide-eyed. Susan at two, conservation converted, expert at identifying evidence of wallaby occupation.

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It always feels like spring when you come back from the snow. You pant and gasp, go barefoot again, shrug off the cold wind as not really cold. For a few days.

Among many passions I have one for native orchids. There was a Sarcocochilus in spike before we went ski-ing. I had inspected it a hundred times while it was in spike, a very frustrating period of several months. Because we had guests I waited long enough to put on trousers before looking.

- Its out.
- What's out?
- The Sarcocochilus.
- What's that?
- The one in the tree.

Half a dozen pure white blooms against the dark of the casuarina. There is a general exodus, no one completely dressed, and inspection of the garden. Look at this. This is in bloom. This is in spike, these seeds have germinated, these rhododendrons cuttings are shooting (a new technique here threatening to take over most of the living area of the house), look at these flannel flower seedlings. Breakfast. Shoes and socks are reluctantly put on to feet which undeniably are cold. Then around the garden again. The smaller Sarcocochilus varieties are in flower, fully one eighth of an inch in diameter, some dendrobiums are out and are even smaller. There are early melaleucas and heaths. It is spring. The children are told to look for terrestrials on the way home; there is one blooming in a pot of azaleas.

The gully was completely burnt out, and access, though improved, is still indescribably dirty. There are Diuris and Thelymitra wherever you look, occasional double-tails, a new variety. The Gymea lilies and

the single leaves of the terrestrials are the most prominent green things on the gully floor. The lilies all have new, unworn leaves, some are spiking and showing a touch of red - charred eriostemons are putting our new sucker growth in great profusion, grass trees have shed seed already (they are the first green things to emerge after a fire).

In the afternoon the whole family goes observing in the rain forest behind Erina; stiff necks looking into casurinas, wet feet from the overnight rain, leeches and ticks from the paperbark groves. A patch of greenhoods growing like buffalo grass, daughter goes frantic from a very large leech. There are two mopokes asleep in the fork of a paper bark - they must have moved for me to see them; if I look away and then back I can't see them. The boys can see a terrestrial at five hundred feet. They can't see the birds. We all approach closer. At five feet there is a chorus from the humans, a grunt and a disdainful look from the birds. The birds go back to ecclesiastical slumber. The humans attack the leeches again.

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Another orchid fan telephones. His sarcocylus is flowering, his gracillicaulis is tremendous, his calanthe is in spike. And on top of all this his Calochilus, yes the bearded one, positively, is in spike. Just say something like the earth abideth. Or something like that.

KELLY IN WINTER

by PAT HARRISON

When the month of August comes around it brings a strong temptation to visit Mt. Kelly (6,001 ft.) in the mountains near Canberra. And so it was year that ten of us succumbed to the temptation. Laurie Quaken picked up Fran Everingham, Chris Baker and myself, and headed for the gate outside Gudgenby Homestead, with instructions to keep a sharp eye out for a green Renault which would precede us to the camping place. Our only stop on the way was at Charley's Cafe at Mittagong, where we exchanged greetings with Neville Page who was taking an Instructional Walk out Wanganderry way.

About 2.00 a.m. on Saturday morning we reached Rendezvous Creek and found a green Renault on the side of the road. We pulled up and went across and began calling out above the roar of the boisterous creek. No answer. We then inspected the car as well as we could without torches in the inky darkness and came to the conclusion that the vehicle was an abandoned one - doors missing (or so it seemed in the dark), and no answer to our repeated calls. We therefore went on to

Gudgenby Gate, and after abduelling the tent and having a cup of hot soup, were glad to get into our bags and away from the cold.

At 7.00 a.m. Doone Wyborn came up from Rendezvous Creek with the rest of the party (John Kitchener, Dick Glen, Lesley Wood, Bronwyn Seccombe, and Lindsay Gilroy) and the mystery of the "abandoned" Renault was solved. It seems that our calls were heard but they were so well ensconced in their sleeping bags that we had gone on by the time they had got their zippers undone!

It was a fine crisp morning when we set out at 8.30 a.m. across the three miles of cleared country to the foot of the spur at 964871. On the way across the paddocks we had a good sight of Sentry Box Hill up the valley of the Gudgenby.

We had an hour and a half for lunch after we encountered the first snow. One thing is certain; tea made from melted snow tastes worse than the water we've been getting in Sydney lately. The sandshoe brigade changed over to boots and we continued on to the crest of the 5,700 ft. feature (Ref.919898). It was delightful trudging up through a cover of snow, but granite boulders and mallee-like Snow Gums are not conducive to rapid movement, and every immersion of bare flesh in the snow was followed by a few minutes of torture. The southern slope of this peak (and of all the others nearby) certainly looked wintry with its plaster of snow as we approached it.

Having sampled the view from the top, the increasing chill in the air (although the sky was calm and blue) accelerated our desire for a good camp site. We picked out a grassy spot on the far side of the creek to the south and then ploughed our way down through a basin of virgin snow with the aid of improvised alpenstocks, and by about 4.30 pm, we had a big fire going and tents were up (with bark on the floor) and hot food was cooking. This is the time when tent owners reap their just reward. Having carried up and down the scungy ridge, you now invoke your unalienable right to sleep in the middle, and in this position, with the help of two pullovers, three pairs of Paddy's sox, gloves, balaclava, inner sheet, Everest sleeping bag, pyjamas, all your ordinary clothing, plus several copies of Saturday's Herald, ensures that you have a warm night.

The water buckets began to crackle when they were used, the fire was built up to monstrous heights, the song books were taken out, and I lay back and listened and toasted myself while the young 'uns sang the night away.

Desert boots are not the best footwear to use in snow conditions, and it was for this reason that one member of the party did not climb Kelly on the Sunday morning. Another member stayed behind, but for some other reason - sleeping, I think.

It was another glorious day, warm and sunny among the snow gums on a little snowplain, and during the leisurely lunch time was taken to sun our gear. The homeward route was down the creek all the way, with a bit of sidling on the right bank where it begins to drop. We of course wanted to do a round trip, but the better route would have been to drop off our ascent spur into this creek around Ref. 930883, both going and coming.

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#### COMMENTARY

##### DO WE NEED NEW DIRECTIONS?

Two events in the past month have made your Commentator think more deeply than he is accustomed; the death of Taro and a non-bushwalker comment expressing surprise that the magazine was not more of a platform for conservation. These events show us in two rôles; as we see ourselves and as others see us.

Ourselves as we see ourselves: To me it is somewhat incredible that we have existed for forty two years under the same basic rules. Either they are very good rules written with deep insight or the club lives its collective life apart from the constitution. The diversity of the membership and the astonishing multitude of its interests would seem to indicate the second proposition. The basic entrance qualifications, compatibility and a rough estimate of walking ability, judgements often made by very young people and superficially monitored by a remote committee would not seem to make for a cohesive membership. "You only know people by walking with them" is as much a truism now as forty years ago and like most truisms is misleading - the reasons a person has for joining are seldom acknowledged. Loneliness, a dangerous feeling for adventure, the enthusiasm of some member the prospective knows; the very diversity of the membership ensure that most times these needs will be met. And so we have a continuing strength of new members despite the apparent official or constitutional inertia. A vague entity, "the club", really consists of the dozen or so people you talk to on a Wednesday night, the people you walked with in the last few years and the deep friendships made over a long period. It is an "exchange situation" where your satisfaction of being identified with a group are roughly balanced by what you contribute to the group.

This exchange situation ensures that while you are walking or working for the club, the club meets your needs. What it does not do

is guarantee that the age difference and diversity of interests will make the club as effective as an entity as it can be satisfying to the individual. Before Taro's death there was a theoretical possible difference in ages between members of seventy four years; too large a difference for most people to comprehend and certainly a source of stress not envisaged by Taro's contemporaries when they wrote the constitution. Most social associations have far more limited reasons for existence than our own. Emigre clubs, ex-service clubs, chess clubs continue their life by fostering an increasingly narrow interest to the point sometimes of alienation from the evolving community around them. We have avoided alienation by diversity and informality. In the process have we neglected to provide some mechanism for greater continuity?

As others see us, through the magazine: The magazine claims to be a bulletin of matters of interest to ourselves. It is furthermore part for the cost of membership; these days you get it whether it is of interest or not. Does it work well enough as a record of meetings and some of our walks; those walks on which there is someone keen enough to put down a few notes or a walk on which something sufficiently outrageous, humorous or delaying has occurred. Well conducted walks should have none of these things. Surely these are not the only interests of our members. What about those expert photographers who seemingly have looked critically at most of the world in terms of "f" numbers without, it seems, ever having considered putting pen to paper. What about some wild flower enthusiast sharing his enthusiasm. Some more navigational and access problems and answers from our self admitted experts. More poetry. Perhaps some fiction.

As a club we seem to have abdicated our enthusiasms for causes to other bodies. What about starting some more crusades. You don't know how loud your voice is until you shout. Or how sharp your pen is unless you dip it into some ink.

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# PADDY MADE

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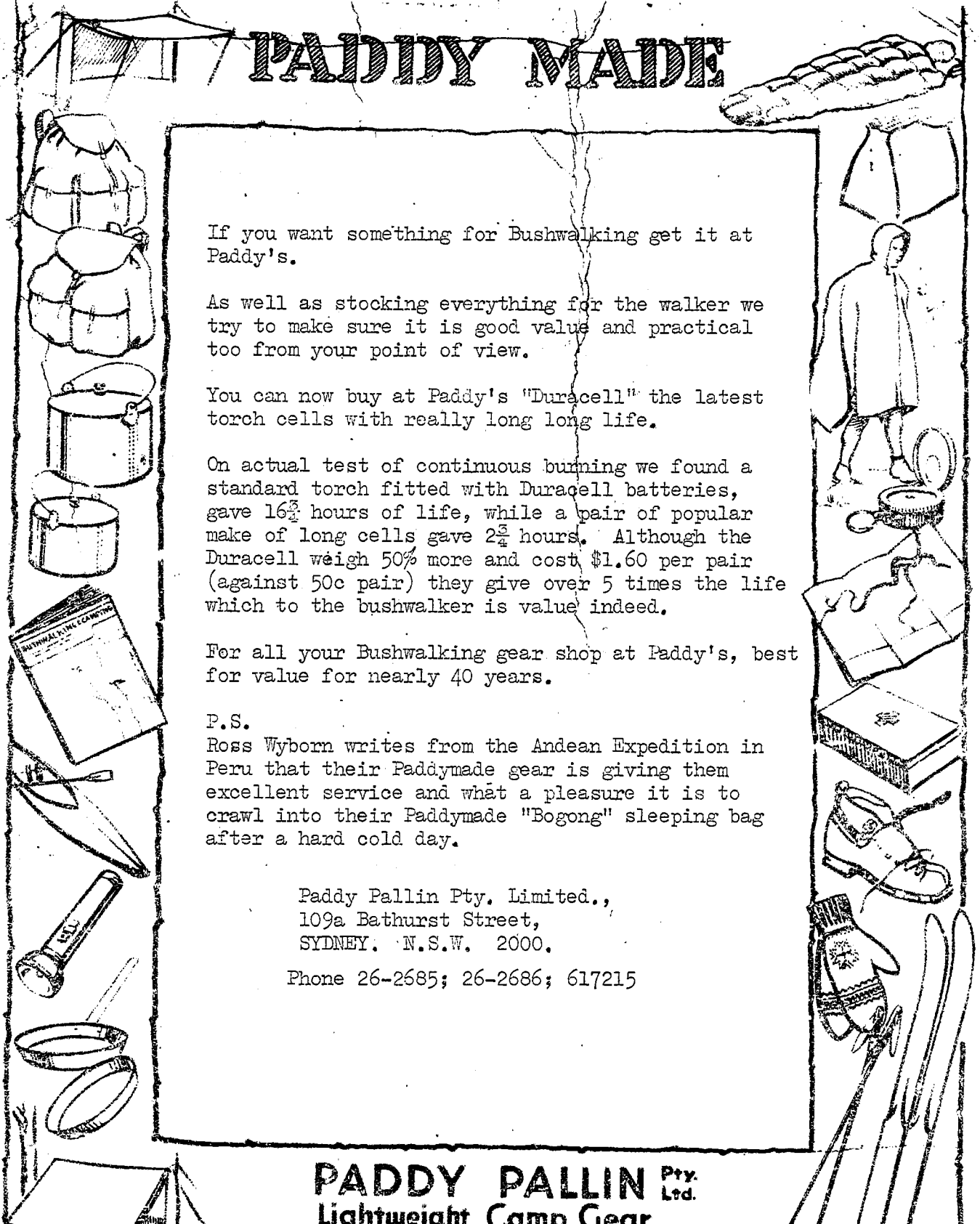
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