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

CONTENTS.

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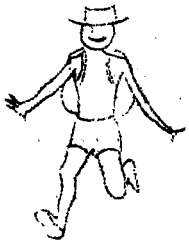


GOWING TO THE DOGS.

D. Noble.

Leader: Roger Gowing.

As we had caught the Saturday afternoon train, it was threeish before we started to stride out of Katoomba and along the road towards Narrow Neck.

The leader's plans had been rather vague apart from the intention to reach Splendour Rock. We had hoped to reach Medlow Gap that night, with the idea of meeting the leader there, whose party was to arrive by car. The return route was shrouded in mystery, the leader being rather fond of an air of secrecy. Actually, I doubt whether he knew himself.

As always, the walk out along Narrow Neck was never ending. How on earth could Alan Pike insist that his favourite walk was Narrow Neck by moonlight? Indeed, he intended to leave Sydney that night and do just that, the idea being to sleep in the cave at the end of Narrow Neck and catch us up on Sunday morning at Medlow Gap.

However, we did not reach the end of the road until dark, and after some considerable discussion about whether to continue (the blackness into which Taro's ladders descended had been thoughtgully observed), we almost decided what to do. A decision was not forthcoming until, to our surprise, the leader arrived at the scene and promptly started a fire in the middle of the road. So we abandoned our argument about distraught leaders raging at Medlow Gap, and Neville directed our attention to the fire-on-the-road-and-no water. The fire was eventually sufficiently rationalised in words and stamped out in fact for us to proceed around to the cave without a guilty conscience. Here we cooked and ate our tea, having by then scraped up a modicum of water from somewhere. I did my usual trick and extinguished the fire with my dinner, much to the indignation of my stomach.

Since Alan had not arrived during the night, we assumed next morning that he was not coming and after breakfast we packed up and galumphed out to Clear Hill and down to Medlow Gap.

Not far past Medlow Gap we could see Mt. Mouin sticking its head out of the surrounding scrubbery, and we decided to make a detour to see the view from the top, as none of us had been there. The whole of the State was in the throes of a drought, and the Wild Dogs were no exception. Thus, although the view from the top was interesting, it wasn't exactly colourful. We found a book to sign, but no writing implement, so we made a token effort with a lump of charcoal.

We left Mouin by slithering down the dry and dusty leaves which covered the rocks, and about half way down who should we bump into but Alan on his way up! He had driven up early in the morning and left his car at the start of Narrow Neck, making a mere Sunday jaunt out of our trip. By some coincidence he too had decided that Mt. Mouin that day would be worth having a look at.

We left him to continue his way up while we started out towards Splendour Rock. Somewhere along the line we got slightly displaced by Ken enthusiatically misleading us off down a hill. The result of this was that Alan, who had taken a shortcut, beat us out to Splendour Rock. Actually not all of us made it. Some fell by the wayside and went hunting for water in Mobbs Swamp while others, namely myself, flaked out on a dry and windy Playground of the Dingoes.

On being reunited with the party I witnessed a few rumblings of discontent caused by the leader's desire to have lunch down on the Cox. It was pointed out that we were expected home that night, and that some of us had a train to catch, even if we didn't know what time it went.

Eventually, Roger conceded our point and we began the trek back along the wombat parade, down to Medlow Gap and along the road a few miles to have lunch at the first creek containing water.

After lunch we continued along the road until we came to the turnoff to go up the ridge to Carlon's Head and the chains. These marvels of man's ingenuity had been described to me sometime previously in full heart-rending emotional detail, and preparatory to the trip I had been assured by the leader that Carlons Head was not on the itinerary. Nevertheless, there I was.

We trailed slowly up the ridge and it was quite some time before we reached the chains. With grim determination I tackled them, ignoring the exhortations of the others as they waved their arms and legs around in space and enthused about the glorious panoramic view. Indeed, there's not much up there that's not view, and that was the bit I was clutching onto like grim death, my eyes like another limb, fixed unwavering on the rock in front of me. I climbed non-stop encouraged by the thought that I might get a decent look at the view if it wasn't too dark by the time we reached the top.

I was not disappointed. The sun was just sinking behind pink clouds and the purple hills made a satisfying contrast. I was jolted back to a rude reality by someone duly informing me that those chains had been there for about thirty years. True or not I didn't know, but I was glad I hadn't been told before going up.

After downing the last of the food we continued upward and after reaching the Narrow Neck road we walked along in the dark and cold until we reached Roger's car which had been left about half way along. The original occupants plus a few extras piled into the car and rattled off into the gloom, leaving four of us to follow on foot.

We found the others at the AB and discovered that the last train had just gone. So we had a leisurely meal and mulled over the seemingly unsolvable problem of how to fit a total of nine people plus packs into a Volkswagon and a sports car. Every permutation and combination was considered before an attempt was made to fit us all in.

Being squashed into a sports car with three other people and their packs all the way to Sydney was not exactly comfortable, but compared to the prospect of a cheerless journey in the small hours on the Mudgee Mail, it was almost a Luxury Tour.

GOOD WORK.

Thanks to Pat Marsden for typing the massive walks programme and to Joan Rigby for her helping hand during the year.

Mike Short.

Due to editorial forgetfulness, the brevity of the meeting and a flood of literary efforts, notes of the January meeting will appear next month.

BARRINGTON IS TOPS.

Ray Hookway.

Maps Woolooma and Gloucester.

Pat Harrison and I were off to the Cradle Reserve in January and as both of us had new boots we thought to combine a muscle conditioning walk with a boot breaking exercise.

After discussing several possible areas we settled on Barrington Tops as being close to Sydney and containing the full range of country to be experienced on our Tasmanian walk. Our planned route would include a climb of over 4000 ft to mountain plains of over 5,000 ft. elevation, and would be through rain forest and over open "button grass" swamp plains.

Due to a too merry christmas a planned 4 a.m. Boxing Day start became a 6.20 a.m. start and after a pleasant drive through Maitland and Dungog we arrived at Barrington guest house at about 10 a.m. We parked the car under some trees outside the guest house gate and set out.

The route passes the front of the guest house and strikes up the hill at 45 deg. to the start of a track through the rain forest. After a few hundred yards the track divides at a notice "Ridge track." The Ridge track is a fire trail which clings to the top of the ridge all the way to Lagoon Pinch. We took the right hand track which parallels the Williams River, along the valley, passing through the most beautiful rain forest I have ever seen. Magnificent Blue gums, Turpentines and Beech abound and all are festooned with vines and ferns. Many of the trees are adorned with staghorns and crowsnest ferns and the whole is breathtakingly beautiful. The track is crossed by about eight streams and the sound of the river as it rushes over granite rapids is nearly always present.

A diversion was made at Lions Rock to examine the river but no felines were found.

Further along the track we met two highly excited boys bearing between them on a stick, a very dead and badly battered 5' black snake. They were hurrying back to the guest house to find a bottle to preserve their catch and perhaps to give their mother heart failure! This was the only snake we saw all weekend.

An hour and forty minutes after leaving the guest house we reluctantly left the rain forest and struck up a steep hill to meet the ridge track just below Lagoon Pinch, reaching there at 2.10 p.m.

Three cars parked at Lagoon pinch had been driven up the Allyn River Valley to avoid the 2 hour walk from the guest house. This route is not to be recommended as several fordings of the river are necessary and from comments of one of the drivers, the river runa fast and strong. An entry in the "Selby Alley" hut visitors' book tells of one Holden utility which was washed downstream during a river crossing.

At Lagoon Pinch the climb up the main ridge to the Tops really begins. Up and up a steep and badly eroded jeep track, steeper and steeper. Around a corner it levels slightly but it's only fooling. Around another corner and again it lives up to its original name of "Gutbuster".

The track skirts the right hand side of the ridge for half the distance then crosses to the left for the remainder. The ridge is heavily timbered and palm ferns abound, the views are normally spectacular as the ridge drops steeply away on both sides, but a heavy mist limited our visibility to about 200 yds.

The weather was warm and muggy as the road passed through a rain forest on Scouts alley and climbed steeply up the Corker to Mt. William at 4,600ft.

Although the area is very damp, water was a problem. All the way up Pat promised a spring around the next corner but it was not until after lunch that it finally showed up. Lunch was washed down with water from one of the many gutters across the road. (This gutter was dry on the way back). Most of these gutters were undrinkable due to being churned up by a landrover earlier in the morning.

Once on the plateau water became no problem as there are many creeks crossing the track. Good water can also be obtained from the Barrington River and the Edwards and Brumlow Creeks.

A diversion was made at 2.30 p.m. to inspect the Selby Alley hut, a roomy well-furnished and beautifully located hut belonging to the Newcastls Technical College walkers. A further side trip was made 40 minutes later to Carey's Peak (5064 ft) but again the fog obscured the view and the Allyn River Valley was a sea of mist.

We then set out along the old Tomalla track, across the Edwards plain. Here the scenery changed, we skirted gullies reminiscent of the Snowy Mountains, being covered in snow grass dotted with patches of swamp, and devoid of any timber, the timber line ending about 100 ft. above the valley floor.

We crossed 3 swamy valleys as the clouds lifted and made a good camp at 5 p.m. in a good hut on the site of the dd Crosby hut about 50 yds from the Barrington River. The night was cold but we slept well.

Next morning, early (does Pat Harrison ever start late?) we rejoined the track and set off for the fabled Beean Beean Plain. The countryside is hilly and lightly timbered and is good walking country.

We followed a right hand branch in the track down to a gauging station on the upper Barrington River. The river here flows strongly over granite boulders and is a beautiful stream with many deep holes and plenty of good campsites.

After a short walk down the river and a chat with some Newcastle walkers we retraced our steps to the track junction and again set out for the Beean Beean plain which we reached at 12.30. The plain is a magnificent 2 x 1 mile expanse of open flat country.

White painted stones and a wind sock mark the borders of an emergency airstrip but close inspection convinced me that if any aircraft was foolish enough to land, then there really would be an emergency.

We crossed the plain, joined the new Tomalla track and set off back toward the car, calling at the Crosby Hut which we reached at 2.p.m., to recover our bags. The weather remained fine and warm and the views from Carey's Peak and from the steep ridge back down to the guest house were really spectacular. We made good time on the return trip covering one 5 mile stretch in one hour.

We reached the foot of the ridge at 6.30 p.m. as the sun was setting and as we walked back through the rain forest we were thrilled by the sight of thousands of fireflies, some hovering only inches from our faces, their tails blinking furiously.

We stopped for a cold beer from the icebox and long enough for Pat to pick up 5 ticks before setting out for home at 8 p.m.

Barrington is a fine walking area with plenty of scope for a variety of walks and with a wide range of spectacular scenery. The Newcastle expressway gives speedy access and as the distances are comparable with the Budawangs I don't understand why the Barrington area is not more popular. Both Pat and I agree that it won't be long before we go back to Barrington.

Bob Binks tells us that on Paddy Pallin's walk from Kathmandu to Everest during December/January there were 3 S.B.W. (counting Paddy) and 13 "visitors". Bob adds that Paddy pushed or pulled (mostly pulled because he was in front) 13 of them to the top of Kalar Pathar.

THE BUSHWALKERS' SKI LODGE.

Jim Vatiliotis.

Most of us have at some stage or another complained about the high cost of accommodation at the snowfields or about the "comforts" of camping at Sawpit Creek. So I decided to investigate the possibility of building our own club lodge.

I found that it is virtually impossible to obtain a reliable estimate of the cost of building a lodge, but we would probably need 75 to 100 members, paying about $300 each. The cost of running the Lodge during the ski seaon would be about $15 to $20 a week per bed.

If we can get about 50 people who are enthusiastic enough to form a club, we should go ahead and apply to the National Parks and Wildlife Service for a site and draw up plans for a lodge. An application fee of $100 is payable plus $125 survey fees.

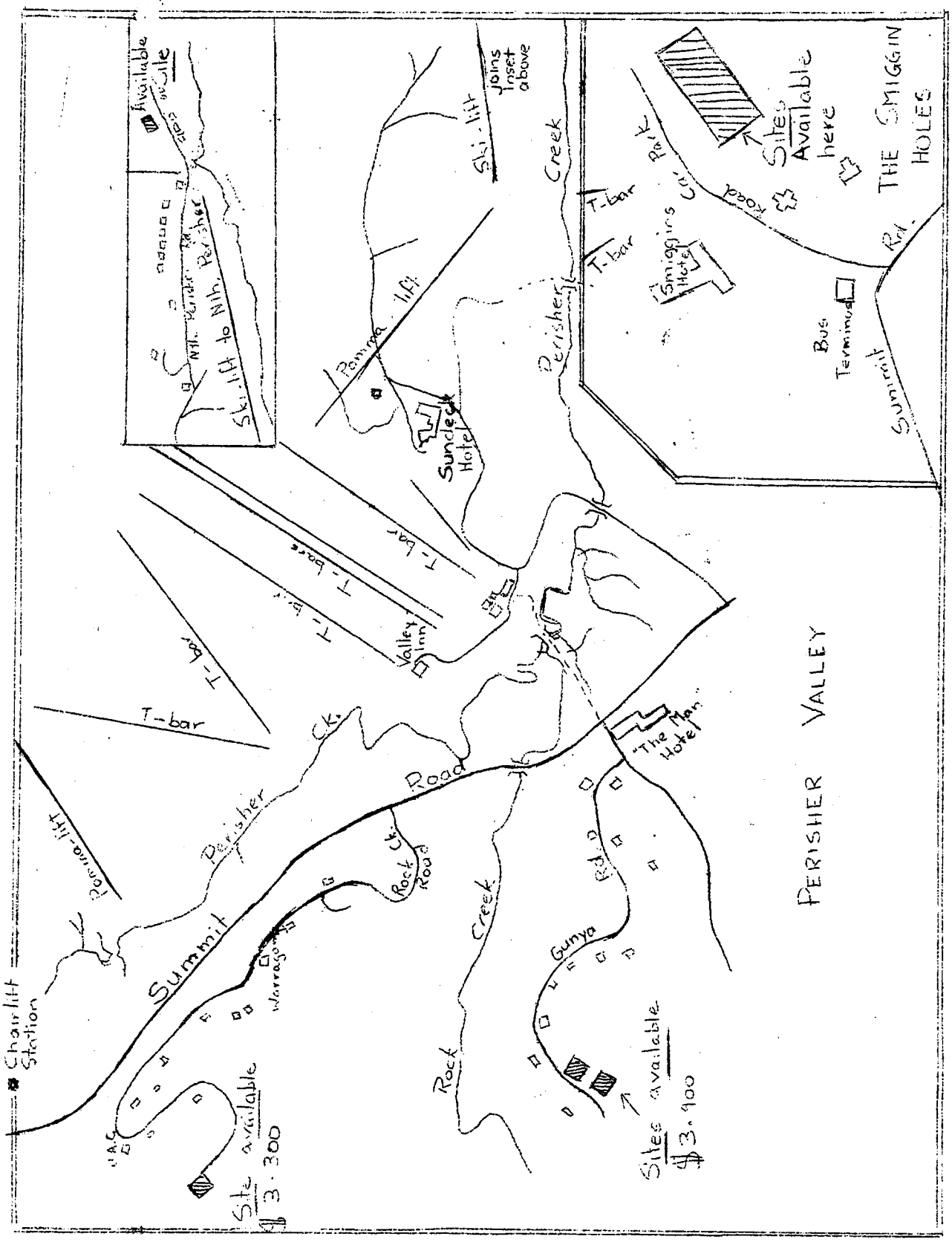
At this stage we would know the costs involved, and we would be faced with our biggest problem - collecting the money from members. This is where the whole project could collapse, and I think that the members who form the Club should be prepared to pay $50 to show that they are genuinely interested.

There are sites available at Thredbo and Smiggin Hole but most bushwalkers prefer Perisher Valley. The best of the sites available at Perisher are shown on the map on the opposite page (near the Jolly Swagman Lodge at the end of Gunyah Road which runs south from the "Man"). There are a number of sites available at North Perisher and one near the Yeti Lodge.

It would be possible to reduce the cost to members by borrowing money to build the lodge and then allowing non-members to use the lodge and help pay off the loan. This would involve a lot of work in running the lodge, and there would always be the chance that we would not make a profit from non-members and members would have to pay the loan off.

The only other way to reduce costs is to do some of the building work ourselves, but this would only be possible if people were prepared to volunteer for two or three weeks work.

The N.P.W.S. has a very strict building code, and there are restrictions on the type of building materials used, the size


Ski-lift to Nth. Perisher
Available Site
Nth. Perisher Rd.
Ski-lift
Joins Inset above
Pamma lift
Sundeck Hotel
Perisher Creek
T-bar
T-bar
Smiggins Hotel
Road
Sites Available here
THE SMIGGIN HOLES
Bus Terminus
Summit Rd.
T-bar
T-bar
T-bar
T-bar
Valley Inn
Pamma lift
Perisher Ck.
Road
The Man Hotel
PERISHER VALLEY
Chairlift Station
Summit
Warragoon
Rock Ck. Road
Rock Creek
Gunya Rd.
Sites available $3.900
Site available $3.300

of rooms etc. so that the lodge would have to be properly designed and built.

Well if anyone has read this far and is still interested, please contact me! If there are enough people interested we will have a meeting to discuss some of these problems and decide whether we should go ahead.

Jim Vatiliotis 7987214 (H)
211-1555 (B)
156 Bland Street,
Haberfield. 2045.

The Rockhopper.

Barry Pacey.

He stood gazing in rapt ecstacy at the scene before him. There as far as the eye could see, rock after rock, boulder after boulder was a wide flat river bed just waiting to be leapt upon. He took in the meandering watercourse with its frothing, gurgling persistance as it advanced toward him and he too gurgled. And had one been present one would have seen his lips part and little bubbles of saliva emerge thereon to dribble down his shirt front for he was happy.

Soon he was off speeding like a possessed wallaby over the rough and tumble of his new found playground. As he skipped gaily from rock to log and yea back to rock again his thoughts wandered to pleasant things and he recalled the previous night when he had been named International Leaper and Flautist Extrordinaire at the Purple Ferret Hotel.

He flitted still further and with each flit came thoughts of song. It was a pleasant song of birds and flowers and springtime and all that is nice. And had one still been present one could have seen startled and puzzled looks on the faces of local fauna as they lifted their heads to see a strange figure go bounding by. A figure that would leap now and then to great heights until finally with arms flailing and joyous cries emitting therefrom it would disappear round yet another bend in the river.

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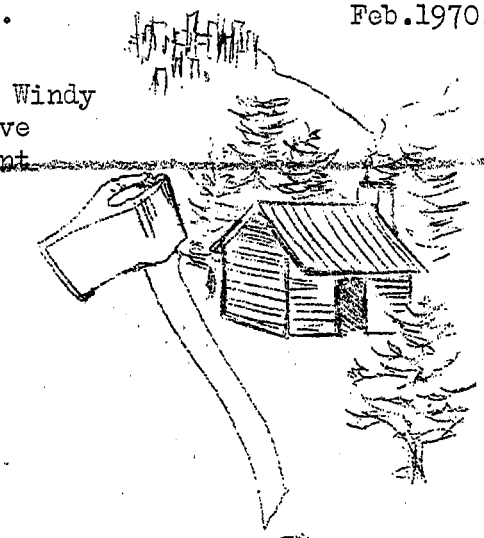
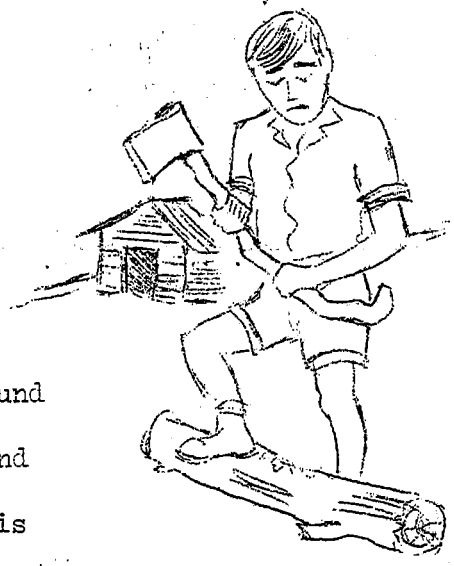
Poem extracted from the log book of the Windy Ridge Hut in the Tasmanian Cradle Reserve by Ray Hookway and Pat Harrison on recent trip in the Cradle Reserve.



Across the stony ridges.
Across the swampy plain.
Are many sungy axes
From Narcissus to Du Cane.
But for cutting up your firewood
When the weather's like a fridge
There is nothing to compare
With the axe at Windy Ridge.
The axe that's in Pine Valley
It's head is almost split.
It's sides are bent and bulging
At the back they've welded it.



But its quarter inch wide cutting edge
Will still cut at a pinch.
But the Windy Ridge hut's specimen
Has it's blade width half an inch
The windy ridge axe handle is as warped as some mens' minds
And when they lift it upwards it curves around to their behinds.
It was once a tender sapling all terrible and bent
But now as an axe handle is the cause of this lament.
When the Hugel is in torrent and Narcissus is in flood,
When the plains behind Olympus are a sea of sticky mud,
Cart Machettes or a choofer although it breaks your back
Cos you'll never never cut no firewood
With the Windy Ridge Hut axe.

S.B.W. KANGAROO VALLEY.

Allan Wyborn.

Someone once said that Kangaroo Valley takes its name because there are no kngaroos there. When Charles Throsby first came into the Valley in 1818, everything that hopped was called a kangaroo, but we now know the species remaining in the Valley to be the wallaby, of which many still abound.

Over New Year Alice and I decided to visit the SBW's new land acquisition, and were surprised to find not one club member there during our four days stay, although we did hear that the Waggs had passed through.

The direct approach down the coast is via Broughton Pass and Brogher's Valley, leaving the Prince's Highway at Berry, and this normally is a very scenic drive. However, New Year's Eve and the following morning brought rain and a heavy fog which was almost impenetrable - so no views. The Broughton Pass section over into the top of Brogher's Valley is now good bitumen, but the steep drop into this valley proved a hazard due to the slippery conditions. Having passed through Kangaroo Valley Village, the gravelled Scanzi Road branches to the left down the Kangaroo River on the southern side. The turnoff at about three miles is at a house on the right just past a gravel storage area. It is also at this point that the 22 foot wide bitumen highway to the dam will branch along the present turnoff. This road is to be constructed by the Shoalhaven Shire Council at a cost of $1,000,000 plus, and is scheduled for completion by June 1971. We will then have a highway which will be about 400 yards at the closest point from the south western corner of our land.

In the house mentioned above, the owner John Holland is a frequent visitor from Wollongong, and he is conservation minded. It is across his land that access is obtained to the S.B.W. land along the Kangaroo River. About 200 yards from the house, a branch track to the right again next to another house is our access. Vehicles may be driven in about 300 yards, but from here to the river there is a drop of 350 feet, and the track is partly washed away and steep. A small amount of road filling near the top would allow access for another 200 yards. We have it from John Holland that the S.B.W. can traverse his land, but he in turn would like to use our track down to the river.

At the foot of the track near the river flat is a small two room hut much in need of repair and a cleanout. A tree fern growing outside the door of the hut gives shade to the visitor on the door step. Several plum trees, a pear tree and a grape vine, all loaded

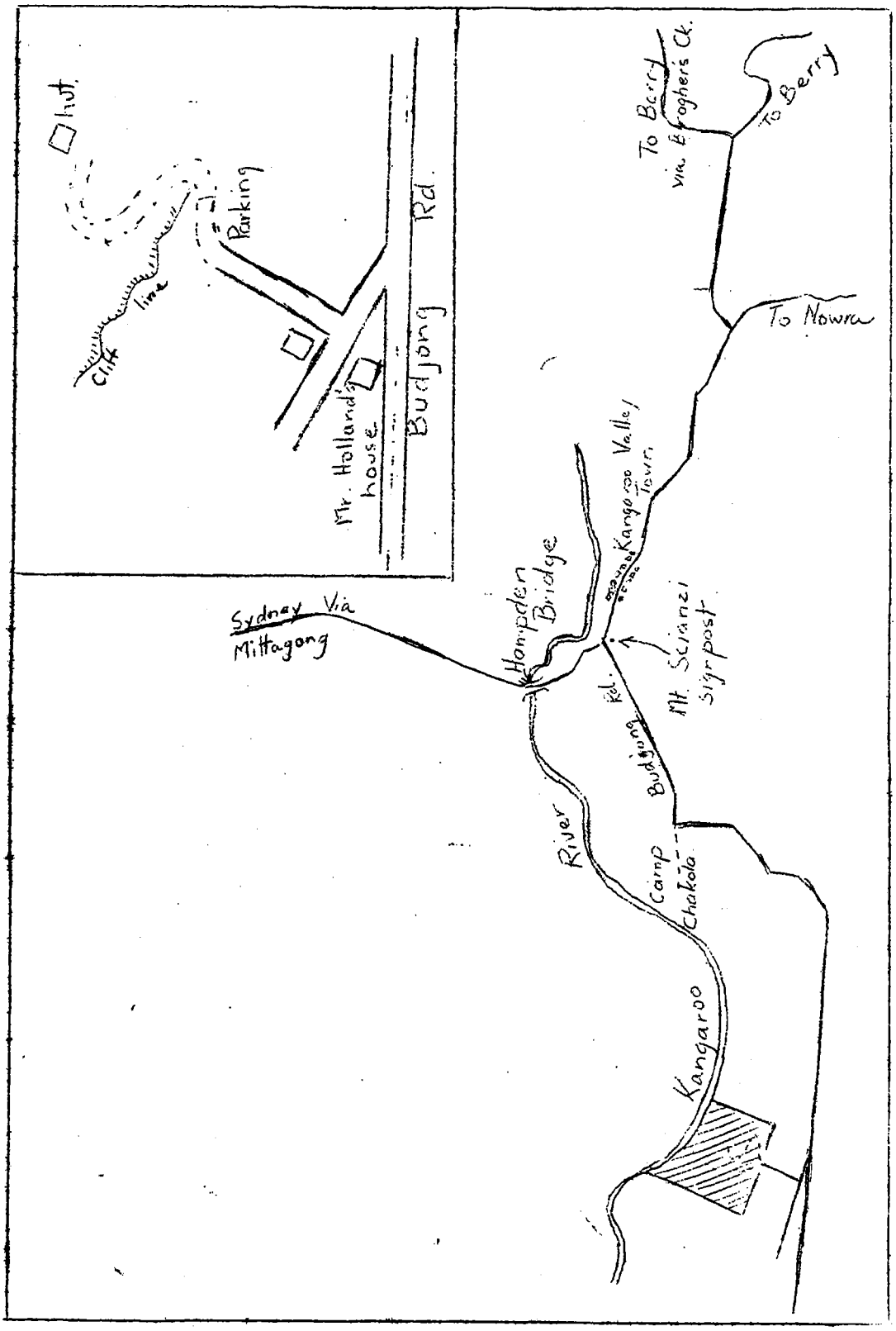
with fruit, another hut now reduced to floor level, and a shed, are the only other signs of a long forgotten habitation. The addition of a small tank fed from the roof of the hut would help, as the river banks are steep and could be slippery. The hut will be about 30 feet above the finished dam water level, but most of the river flat will be inundated except for a small island at the top of the present river bank. This flat is at present covered in three feet high paspalum making it unsuitable for camping. The marking pegs for the dam water level are now in position, and indicate that in a few years time our land will consist mainly of a steep wooded hillside with various small flats and hollows on the way down, which would be suitable for camping on.

Our 90 acres of land has about 50 chains along the river, and it was originally taken up by one Michael Donnelly. Bendiela Flat on the north side of the river will be mostly inundated by the dam. A fence marks our western boundary, and at this point there is a good swimming pool with a log to dive from, but no fences were found for the eastern and southern boundaries. However, a natural cliffline about 30 feet high marks the approximate southern boundary and makes a good barrier for cattle. Above this cliff burrawang palms and christmas bush are much in evidence, and on the hillside to the river there is good tree cover, mainly gums and large banksias. Through the trees are seen vistas up the valley and across to the wooded hillsides and rock walls of Barrengarry Mountain. Plentiful wildflowers should make a good show in the spring. Wildlife on the slopes consists mainly of wallabies, echidnas and lyre birds. Perch and eels are in the river, but no one seems to try the fishing. The pool upstream from the hut is about a quarter of a mile long, and with the rapids downstream, provide for canoeing and rubber dinghies. Two people in the latter passed through while we were there, having taken 2½ days down the Shoalhaven from Tallong and up the Kangaroo to Hampden Bridge. The bed of the river contains some semi-precious stones such as banded jasper, quartz crystals, some agate and plenty of petrified wood. Kangaroo Valley is noted for the last mentioned.

About a mile south of our land is Budgong Gap, over which a rough road leds into Budgong Valley and on to Nowra. This valley is quite rugged and mostly uninhabited, and could provide some pleasant bushwalking. The locals believe an escaped panther roams in the valley. The views from the high Gap back into Kangaroo Valley are very good.

It would seem our Club will hold the land for some time, and therefore we should consider giving it a name, perhaps relating to bushwalkers.

The foregoing represents the present position. What of the future? Much will depend on the attitude of the Water Board and the


Hut
Cliff line
Parking
Mr. Holland's house
Budjong Rd.
To Berry via Broghers Ck.
To Berry
To Nowra
Kangaroo Valley Town
Hampden Bridge
Sydney Via Mittagong
Mt. Scrivener Sign post
Budjong Rd.
River
Camp Chakola
Kangaroo

Shoalhaven Shire Council to the water usage from the dam. Further complications are the proximity of the ever growing Morton National Park and the presence of farmlands in the valley. However, these bodies can be influenced by the general public and conservationists such as our Club.

Reference Maps:

1. Parish of Bugong, County of Camden
2. Burrier, 1:31680, 8928-11-N
3. Bundanoon, 1:31680, 8928-1-S, provisional.

TRANSPORT TO THE RE-UNION.
(14th-15th March, 1970 at the Club's land in Kangaroo Valley).

Train Fare to Nowra is $3.77 2nd class return from Sydney.

Timetable of trains.

Saturday:	Sunday:	
Dep. Sydney 9.35 a.m. (Daylight Express Reserved Seats only)	Depart Nowra 2.15 p.m.	Arrive Sydney 6.5 p.m.
Arrive Nowra 12.21 p.m.	5.50 p.m.	9.25 p.m.
Dep. Sydney 1.3 0 p.m. Arr. Nowra 4.25 p.m.		

I F

1. Members willing to offer car transport to others

2. Members who would like to obtain a lift with others going by car

3. And members who intend to travel by train and require transport to the Re-union site

contact Bob Younger (Tel. 571158) he will endeavour to co-ordinate and arrange.

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