

# The Sydney Bushwalker

---

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bushwalkers,  
14 Atchison Street, St. Leonards.

POSTAL ADDRESS : Box 4476, G.P.O., SYDNEY, N.S.W., 2001.

JANUARY, 1972

Editor: Jim Brown, 103 Gipps Street, Drummoyne. Tel. 81-2675.

Typist: Kath Brown

Duplication: Jim Vatiliotis.

Business Manager: Ramon U'Brien, 7/25 Dartbrook Road, Auburn.  
Tel. 888-6444 (Business)

## IN THIS ISSUE.

From the Editor	Page	2
At the December General Meeting		3
"Food"	Dot Butler	5
Paddy's Advertisement		6
Moruya - Deua Rkver - Araluen - Braidwood	Jess Martin	8
Why Bulldoze the Boyd (from the Colong Committee paper)		11
Ausventure Advertisement		12
"Buck"	Alice Wyborn	13
Li-lo Landlubbers	Neville Page	14
Mountain Equipment Advertisement		16
Membership Notes	Geoff Mattingley	18
Letter from Frank Leyden, abroad		19
That Change of Address...		20
Coming Walks, February, 1972	Pat Harrison	21
The Smokewalkers (from N.P.A. Fire Fighting Force)		22

---

Enquiries regarding Club - Marcia Shappert, Tel. 30-2028

From the EditorWhere Shall We Wander?

With depressing regularity, it seems, we hear of projects that threaten the accessibility of favoured walking country, if not the despoilation of the country itself. Coal mines in the Southern Blue Mountains; transmission lines near Medlow Gap; a radar-type installation spanning the Nattai Valley; and, of course, the extension of limestone quarrying at Bungonia -- all these are disturbing schemes that have materialised in the past twelve months. Sometimes it almost seems that we are going to be crowded out, or at least hemmed in, by the "march of human progress" (cliche). By the way, is it really progress?

So it may be timely to have a look at what has happened to deprive us of walking country in the forty-four years since the Club was founded.

Some of the country once frequented by day-walkers has been lost - the French's Forest, Oxford Falls area, for instance - and in other places habitation has spread out towards the rim of the gullies, as at Engadine and Heathcote. But the presence of reserves and parklands both north and south of Sydney has contained this sprawl, and more recently the establishment of the Blue Mountains National Park has secured a reasonably "safe" area in the foothills west of the Nepean.

In the week-end walking country, Burragorang has been flooded, but we still have the Cox and the Kowmung above their junction, and now protected to some degree as a catchment area. The Wollondilly south of Jooriland is still ours, and the Nattai above Blue Gum Creek, notwithstanding some coal mining ventures. The Grose flows largely through the Blue Mountains Park, and so far we still have almost unlimited access to the vast and unchanged Colo River system. Some of the Shoalhaven Gorge will be closed by future water supply proposals, but walkers rarely enter that part of the valley.

The increase in the ownership of private transport has also extended enormously the range of our walking territory. Complete generations of walkers thirty or forty years ago never saw the Budawangs or the Northern Blue Mountains, or the high country behind Canberra - places that now appear regularly on the walks programmes as the site of normal two-day trips. Even the rash of fire trails and bush roads carved out for various reasons ten or fifteen years back (and we deplored them at the time) have allowed excursions to be made into some interesting places within the compass of two days. This includes the Middle Colo (from Culoul Range) and the Southern Blue Mountains (from Bindook).

Thus, in over forty years our sphere of activity has not been too seriously diminished, and our increased mobility has so far more

than compensated for the regions lost to us. There seems good reason to hope there will be plenty of unspoiled places for our successors to walk in long after we have crossed our last watershed.

This doesn't mean we should be complacent about it all. There is only one Bungonia. There are no readily available replacements for the Nattai Valley. Whilst we shouldn't cry despair that every inroad into walking country spells irretrievable disaster for the sport, neither should we accept such development as necessary or inevitable. It's a good cause to fight.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### At the December General Meeting

The attendance of 35 at the beginning of the meeting was reasonably good, considering it was a wet night in a sequence of showery days, and there were no buses on the roads. Two of the four new members were present - Nora Freeman and Deidre Jones, but the two male representatives, Dennis Brown and Bill Terpstra, hadn't made it.

Since neither Minutes nor Correspondence contained anything of real moment, we were quite quickly at the Reports stage, with the Treasurer advising a closing balance in November of \$1,171., only a small amount below the previous month's tally. Pat Harrison duly produced a fairly full statement of November's activities, commencing with Roy Higginbottom's Christy's Creek trip, which had seven starters, found low water in all streams, but experienced a snow-fall during the homeward trip. On the same week-end Neville Page's team of ten was on the Clyde River, going up Pigeon House on Saturday, but abandoning the attempt on Byangee Walls on Sunday owing to rain. The same rain dampened Joan Cordell's day walkers, 14 of them, along the way from Waterfall to Uloola, but it was finer in the afternoon when they sighted an outstanding display of flannel flowers near Audley.

A week later was the second car-swap Colo trip, reported in the last magazine. Don Findh's account of the reverse-way party mentioned a couple of Colo walkers who were well down towards Angorawa Creek and thought they were still above Wollemi Junction! Bill Hall took over and re-arranged Alan Hedstrom's trip in the Kiama area, but details of the walk were not known: and Jim Callaway's Sunday trip from Garie to Heathcote was diverted slightly to provide swimming opportunities.

Bob Younger had the Friday nighter next week-end, out into Martin's Creek and the Nattai. Despite some rain Saturday the trip was highly successful - Bob applauded the early starts feasible with daylight saving, and considered there was scope for time and motion

studies. Saturday saw Neville Page with 13 people, including 9 prospectives, heading it over Mount Solitary, and debating with a person claiming to be a Water Board Ranger who wanted to see their permits. Meryl Watman reported that the Sunday trip from Heathcote to Engadine via Kangaroo Creek was attended by 17, and was a routine walk.

For the final week-end there was a choice of Max Crisp's Bonnum Pic jaunt, which took out 19: they met a Mr. Sampson who owns the Wanganderry property, and is quite amenable to walkers, but likes to know who is going through - his Sydney 'phone being 78,5144; or Peter Levander's substantial day walk in upper Wollongambe Creek, with 13 people who found the stream very muddy.

Arising from the final report, there was some discussion on the fouling of the headwaters of some of the Colo streams. Wilf Hilder was able to tell us that a sand-washing plant near Newnes Junction was responsible, and on a motion by Pat Harrison it was agreed to draw the attention of Federation. Owen Marks also had a comment on the Walks Report, particularly on the party which acknowledged it didn't have a time-piece: Don Finch, who had reason to be interested, pointed out a watch was not one of the essentials listed on the Walks Programme.

Kath Brown reminded the meeting that as yet there were no takers for the convener or organisers of the 1972 Re-union - but no offers were received. Phil Hall mentioned that the reservation covering the Barren Grounds ended 50-ft below the plateau: there were coal deposits, and if mining were permitted it could cause subsidence and damage to the rare swamp ecology on top. Wilf mentioned that the 50-ft vertical was a normal practice in such gazettals, but agreed it could have bad results if mining occurred. We then carried Phil's motion to write to the Lands and Mines Departments, and ask Federation delegates to bring the matter up.

The Cloth Badge sub-committee next presented its findings, including two samples. Three quotes had been obtained, one between \$1.50 and \$2, another at \$1.25 (minimum 100), and the third at 85c. (no minimum). The samples (for the two cheaper models) were passed round, and considerable discussion took place on which was the better. It was finally resolved that the cheaper (85c.) variety be adopted, with addition of a leaf on the flannel flower and breaking of the word "Bush Walkers" - this may slightly increase the price - and that the Club purchase 100 to be re-sold to members only.

Only a few minor points remained. Dot Butler was able to tell us she had persuaded the Electricity Undertaking to divert a power line away from Coolana, and Wilf Hilder reported that the access from the Mongarlowe Road to the Budawangs had been plotted on a map: the owners of the property were quite content for people to pass through subject to reasonable behaviour and cleanliness. Colin Ferguson referred to prospectives on day test walks without packs, and Geoff Mattingley said it was included in the list of essential

paraphernalia, and newcomers were also advised accordingly.

The meeting closed at 9.52 with a S. & R. alert for a youngster astray in the lower Blue Mountains. As it happened, he walked out early the next day before the searchers took to the bush.

\*\*\*\*\*

### FOOD

(At the Club's Christmas Party the western wall was decorated with a series of sketches and the following verse, which Dot Butler describes as "mostly Hilaire Belloc" - but certainly with Butler additives.)

Alas! What various tastes in food  
Divide the human brotherhood!

Birds in their little nests agree  
With Chinamen, but not with me.

Colonials like their oysters hot,  
Their omelets heavy - I do not.

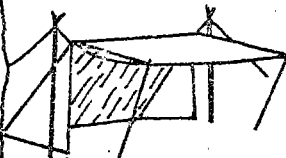
The French are fond of slugs and frogs,  
The Siamese eat puppy-dogs.

The nobles at the brilliant Court  
Of Muscovy consumed a sort  
Of candles held and eaten thus  
As though they were asparagus.

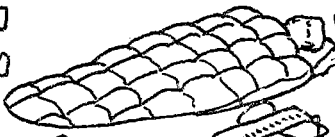
The Spaniard, I have heard it said,  
Eats garlic, by itself, on bread:  
What if your President should come  
To lunch with you at half-past one  
And you were jovially to say,  
"Here's bread and garlic! Peg away!"  
I doubt if you would gain your end  
Of keeping Spiro as a friend.

In Italy the traveller notes  
With great disgust the flesh of goats  
Appearing on the table d'hotes;  
And even this the natives spoil  
By frying it in rancid oil.

In Maryland they charge like sin  
For nasty stuff called terrapin;  
And when they ask you out to dine  
At Washington, instead of wine,  
They give you water from the spring  
With lumps of ice for flavouring



# PADDY MAIDE



DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S IN STORE FOR YOU, OR  
DO YOU HAVE THE "CHE SERA" PHILOSOPHY?

We can tell you one thing that's in store -  
in a few years you will be using maps scaled in  
kilometers with the height indication in meters.  
But for a long time you will still have to use  
maps graduated in yards and miles, and with the  
heights shown in feet.

You won't be able to count those ounces (because  
every ounce counts) - you will have to think in  
terms of grammes - or litres if you insist on  
carrying fluids.







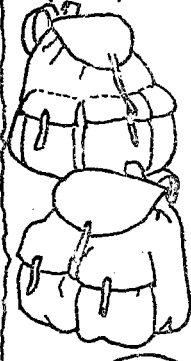
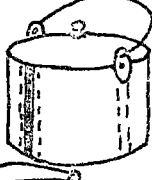
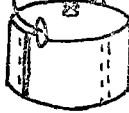


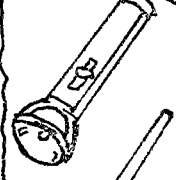
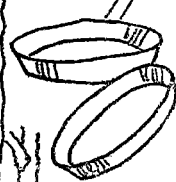
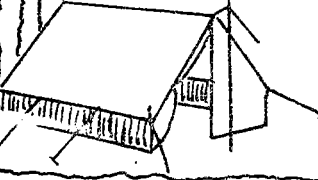
If you wonder what's in store for you, try  
Paddy's Store, where the equipment available  
is light and rugged, whether it's rated in  
pounds or kilogrammes. Even a decimal dunce  
will get the full pound (or kilo) at Paddy's,

PADDY PALLIN

65 Liverpool Street, Sydney

Phone 26-2685

**PADDY PALLIN** Pty.  
Lightweight Camp Gear Ltd.  
69 LIVERPOOL STREET, SYDNEY  
26-2685

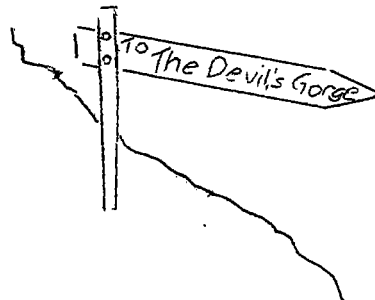
That sometimes kill and always freeze  
The high plenipotentiaries.

In Massachussetts all the way  
From Boston down to Buzzards Bay  
They feed you till you want to die  
On rhubarb pie and pumpkin pie  
And horrible huckleberry pie,  
And when you summon strength to cry,  
"What is there else that I can try?"  
They stare at you in mild surprise  
And serve you other kinds of pies.

And I with these mine eyes have seen  
A dreadful stuff called Margarine  
Consumed by men in Bethnal Green.

But I myself that here complain  
Confess restrictions quite in vain.  
I feel my native courage fail  
To see a Gascon eat a snail;  
I dare not ask abroad for tea;  
No cannibal can dine with me.

But Walkers are a race apart  
Their eating feats delight the heart.  
Come join our ranks, dear Jill and George,  
You'll love to see the devils gorge.



\*\*\*\*\*

About 20 years after those expatriate Kiwis, Nan and Paddy Bourke, first came to Sydney and the S.B.W., they have lit out for Melbourne, where Paddy is to fill another niche in the hierarchy of I.C.I. Nan, of course, has been one of our back-room girls as Club Auditor for a good many years, and they have been sounding out Melbournian Geoff Mattingley as to walking clubs over there. No fixed abode as yet, because daughter Rosemary is studying Indonesian as her language at High School, and there's only one school where this is taught in Melbourne. So it's a case of first finding a home in a suburb within the territory of that school.

Moruya - Deua River - Araluen - Braidwood.

by Jess Martin.

In 1936 Gordon Mannell and his uncle Jack Lynch (2 years Gordon's senior) were visiting a policeman relative in Braidwood, and during their stay they browsed amongst old papers in the convict-built gaol, which recorded details of early settlement in the area when convicts were incarcerated in the gaol or assigned to work for property owners in the district. Amongst these old papers they found a sketch map of "George's Pack Track" across the ranges from Moruya to "Bendethera" (owned by the George family) on the Deua River - the upper waters of the Moruya River.

The boys made plans for a later holiday and after consulting Myles Dunphy, who had visited the area some years before and then later returned from the Krawarree side with his sister Cora to holiday with the Rankins (a few miles downstream from "Bendethera"), Gordon wrote to old Mr. Rankin advising him of the planned trip and asking for permission to pass through the property.

At the last moment, unfortunately, Jack Lynch and Nanette Gorringer dropped out and Jeanne Travis, Gordon Mannell and I caught the train to Bomaderry one Saturday morning early in March, and were driven by Mr. Con Bartlett to Moruya. We had to wait for the vehicular punt at Bateman's Bay and arrived in Moruya just in time to buy some bread, parcel up our homegoing clothes and mail them to be collected in Braidwood a week later. We walked a short distance out of the town on the Araluen Road to camp for the night.

On the road early next morning, and crossing the bridge near the Kia-Ora butter and cheese factory we began to watch for the mouth of Burra Creek. Just then we were hailed by a man with an Irish brogue, who told us that Mr. Randolph George had ridden out to "Bendethera" the day before and he was expecting Mr. Alan Rankin to follow him, to look at some cattle running on the river banks. "Tell him Dinny Millkin said that Alan Rankin had a poisoned foot and would not be out". He described the beginning of the Pack Trail, where it went up the spur behind some old fruit trees near an abandoned farmhouse.

When replying to Gordon's letter, Mr. Rankin had advised him to be sure to take the right-hand fork in the track near the top of the ridge, because only on that track would we come to water.

We came to an enclosure on the ridge, in which stock were penned when they were being walked to Moruya for sale, and in a shallow gully below this Gordon found water, and as it was near 4 p.m. we decided to stop for the night, not knowing where the next water would be found.

Shortly after leaving our camp spot next morning, we reached the top of the range and the track dropped steeply down to Diamond Creek, one of the loveliest creeks I have seen, above a fine waterfall. Wading up the creek for a short distance and crossing to the right-hand side,



and then downstream for a few yards, we again climbed up and up and then down to Coondella, a really lovely grassy spot, ideal for a camp. This place, we were told later, was used by the family when crossing to the coast on horseback - a ten-hour ride.

The track wound its way round the hillside and then we saw "Bendethera" - or what remained; just the kitchen which, as was usual with so many of the old homesteads, was separate from the main house. Mr. George welcomed us, thanked us for Dinny's message, and showed us a good spot to camp, and suggested we come over in the evening to spend some time in front of his fire, a large open fireplace in which we sat toasting our toes. It was cold enough for a good fire, too.

An enjoyable evening was spent listening to Mr. George's tales. He was 78, and could remember the police coming to the house when he was a small boy, hunting the bushrangers of the Clark/O'Connell gang. They used to hole up in the Nerringundah country near the Deua source. Near Braidwood later we met one of the Rankin girls who had married a member of the Clark family.

Mr. George told us of a good fishing hole - next day Gordon caught three fair-sized perch - also an apple tree, the fruit of which we thoroughly enjoyed.

We listened and yarned late into the night and Mr. George told us that quite a number of University people had visited the Bendethera Caves in earlier years; and then he said he would show us the entrance to a cave next morning. Con Creek runs into the Deua near the house and, riding his horse, Mr. George took us up Con Creek until the bed of the creek became dry, with the water issuing from a hole in the hillside. Thereon we were on our own, being advised to take the right-hand creek where it forked and we would find the cave entrance behind a figtree on the right-hand hillside of a blind gully. Mr. George told us that the aborigines in that district always planted a figtree to screen such places.

We entered the cave and found a wire rope descending into a sinkhole, screened by ferns, at the back of the cave. However, our torches were not very reliable and, not being keen on dark holes, we went no further.

Next day we said good-bye to Mr. George and wandered down the river, the water so clear that 15-ft. of water looked shallow. Plenty of wildlife - kangaroos, huge goannas and small and large birds, also a few snakes; there were many wildflowers and tree orchids.

Mrs. Rankin and her two daughters, Irene and Kathleen, welcomed us, insisting we have lunch with them, and then we made our camp on the river bank. Mrs. Rankin had come to the river as a bride (at the time of our visit she was in her late seventies) and they were practically self-sufficient, growing their own vegetables and fruit. Poplars had been planted when they first made their home, and these and the almond and walnut trees were magnificent.

Mr. Rankin and Mr. Jim George had ridden to Krawarree to a cattle sale. In the afternoon the two men returned. Mr. Rankin, a fine looking white-bearded gentleman who looks belied his age of 84, did not seem tired by his long ride. Mr. Jim George was Randolph George's younger brother, and was living with the Rankins.

The Rankin womenfold showed us many of their handicrafts. Snow lies on the ground in winter, and the girls had made quilts of rabbit fur, piecing the different coloured skins into beautiful patchwork patterns. The house was slab-built with a bark roof and the interior walls lined with periodicals and newspapers; a large open fireplace in the kitchen and all their cooking, including bread and cakes, was done in camp ovens. The brick fireplace and oven outside had fallen into disrepair. The family were hoping to persuade the old couple to move to Moruya, which they did a few years later.

We reluctantly refused a pressing invitation to stay all our holiday with the Rankins and after a couple of days set off down the river towards Araluon. We next met and lunched with the Blanchards, father, mother and daughter who was home on holidays from training at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Their house was near the track leading out of the valley to Krawarree. Further down river we met Mrs. Davis and her daughter Nita, and the two children, Myrtle and Vernon. The two women had built their own cattle drafting yards and worked the place themselves. After an afternoon talking with the Davis' we went on to Noringla Creek.

Up Moringla Creek to "Yang Valley", a property owned by a Mr. Bonsley who lived out from Braidwood. Mr. Huggett, the manager, came down to our camp and said we were to come to the house as the creek was rising and would isolate us. We stayed in the house overnight.

Into Araluon, where we bought more food. We planned to go to Major's Creek and from there to the Shoalhaven River, but were warned there had been a steep rise in the river and what we planned to do would be impossible.

The publican at Major's Creek, one Syphronie Turnbull (delighted to have a new audience), regaled us with gossip about all the people we had met, showed us his aviaries of birds, drove us to a goldmine where we were invited down the shaft for an spection - but as we would have had to stand on one foot in a bucket to be lowered, we declined - and then he drove us some miles across flat, scrubby, uninteresting country to near the Shoalhaven.

We looked at the river and as it was running a banker, we decided it was not attractive, and headed for Braidwood. We lunched in a paddock where a herd of Aberdeen Angus cattle became too interested in us, and hurriedly set out for our next camping spot, on a creek just out from Braidwood.

After dark we entered the town and as Jeane and I considered we were both too dishevelled for public gaze, we waited in the doorway of

a shop while Gordon visited the mail-car office to pick up our "town" clothes. Unfortunately, the town's electricity supply had been inaugurated the night before and the local policeman noticed we girls and he returned, accompanied by the sergeant, just as Gordon was pulling his trousers up over his shorts and we were fastening our skirts. "Hm, dressing in a public place!" We were then questioned as to our identity, age, and where we were staying.

When we called at the police station next day to obtain directions to the Bensley's on the Braidwood-Morrigna Road, and Gordon mentioned his uncle who had been stationed in Braidwood, the sergeant was very affable. After referring to the previous night's encounter, the sergeant told us they were on the look-out for some escapees from an Institution.

We inspected the town, including the old gaol and some of its records, and then on to the Bensleys, whom Gordon had met on his previous visit.

On the Saturday the Bensleys drove us into the town, and Gordon was interviewed by the local newspaper, and account of our "intrepid" trip appearing in the next week's paper.

The evening mail car drove us to Tarago, where we boarded the train for Sydney, after a most successful holiday.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Why Bulldoze the Boyd ??

That good question is put by the Colong Committee in a "white paper" it has issued.

For a long time, it says, forestry has ranked second bottom on the land use scale, just above national parks and recreation reserves. Since a good deal of land which is too rough or too poor for agriculture or grazing is Crown Land, this is the land which the Forestry Commission has had to use. Its proposal to use the Boyd Plateau for growing pine forests is thus consistent with its past policy and means.

However, the "white paper" says, the situation has changed quite drastically in recent times. Australia has to import timber and timber products valued at about \$200-million a year, and this may be expected to increase. The action to make Australia self-sufficient in timber is to grow certain high-yielding species, such as pines - particularly *pinus radiata*. For most efficient working the plantations need to be concentrated so that large volumes of timber can be supplied to processing plants.

On the other hand, grazing has become largely unprofitable in the field of wool production, and at present the country has to expend large sums annually in subsidizing the wool industry.

It argues that a strong case exists for examining the practicability of devoting to timber production areas of the Central Tablelands now given over to unprofitable grazing, instead of laying waste naturally forested

# AUSVENTURE

---

## WILDERNESS -

Have you heard of UDJONG KULON on the Western Tip of Java? Charles Lindbergh (President of World Wildlife Fund USA) called this - "The Last Paradise".

We have just scouted it. It is a place where you can just be, eat mango, swim, run naked along a white coral sand beach, explore jungle, travel in fishing boats and hide up to see one of the last 37 Javanese rhinoceros in the world, the Banteng, barking deer, wild pig, leopard and monkeys galore!

MOTORIKI ISLAND - North of Suva - another unspoiled spot near Fiji.

KILABI farm centre, Mount Hagen - another.

If you don't want to trek to Everest or Annapurna, or in the Indian Himalayas, or climb Mt. Wilhelm, or trek across Viti Levu, or if you would like to combine active and more passive enjoyment of wilderness - and if you want peace closer to home, what about a weekend at Chakola Wildlife Refuge, Kangaroo Valley?

That's our game.

For catalogue:

AUSVENTURE.  
P.O. Box 54,  
MOSMAN, N.S.W. 2088  
Telephone: 960-1677.

arças, such as the Boyd Plateau. In this way it would enable men of the land to continue their chosen way of life; utilise their skills and a good deal of farm equipment and machinery, as well as the "infrastructure" of roads, homes, farm buildings, power installations, etc.

Such a programme would utilise already cleared land in a locality climatically suited to pine culture, land on which some of the worst erosion in the State has occurred, and this could be arrested by re-afforestation.

Why Bulldoze the Boyd? As the Colong Committee puts it, it is a good question.

\*\*\*\*\*

Buck.

by Alice Wyborn.

(A letter written by Alice Wyborn from Canada was so long in the mails that Alice had returned before it was received. Accompanying the letter was a verse of appreciation about "Buck", the golden retriever owned by Ross and Margriet, who kept Alice company while the "children" were climbing in Alaska during July, 1971.)

Who wagged his tail when first we met  
 and almost said "I don't know you - yet"?  
 Who always wanted to lead the way,  
 but always stopped when told to "stay"?  
 Who carried his pack both there and back,  
 and always managed to find the track?  
 Who loves to swim and chase a stick,  
 not small ones, but some quite thick?  
 Who comes downhill the faster,  
 carrying the ice-axe for his master?  
 Who swam to save the canoe from sailing,  
 when the rope came loose, and the light was failing?  
 Whose funny whistle in the fog  
 sounds like a marmot, but is really a dog?  
 Who runs with me until I fall  
 but immediately comes to me when I call?  
 Who eats his meal and falls asleep  
 the whole night through without a peep?  
 Who comes inside the tent at night  
 and cuddles down until it's light?  
 Who always seems to find the right spot  
 when we want our lunch, and the sun is hot?  
 Who loves to go with me in the car  
 and roam the hills both near and far?  
 Who loves the mountains and the snow  
 as much as anyone I know?  
 Whose friendship meant so much to me  
 when family and friends were over the sea?  
 And now I say "Goodbye - Good luck"  
 to my handsome fourfooted hero, Buck.

\*\*\*\*\*

"Li-lo Landlubbers"

by Neville Page

Like those who search for the first elusive "cuckoo" in spring, here we were eager to partake of the first blissful carefree rapturous li-lo trip this season. Li-lo fanatics from way back, lining up to indulge in the festivities offered, included our Club Jester (Alan Wyborn), Laurie Quaken, Don Finch (Commander-in-Chief), Heather Smith, Dave Rostron, Lesley Page and myself. Those who said they might be along were Peter and Barbara Finch (down from the bush), but apparently not being fired by the missionary zeal of the rest they didn't turn up.

It was programmed as a day trip but Lesley and I (being Monday-to-Friday-only urbanites whenever possible) set forth on Saturday afternoon, driving as far as Mount Tomah there to camp by courtesy of John and Heather White on their most magnificent piece of real estate, complete with panoramic vistas for miles, fresh mountain air and rich soil just right for rhododendrons. Don and Heather joined us that evening and the four of us settled down for a somewhat coolish night. Later we got a heavy shower of rain which continued steadily almost until dawn, thus making fire-lighting for breakfast a job for a good wizard with a flame-flssh generating magic wand. None of us being wizards however, we had to be content with breaking up twigs into half inch lengths and using our lungs. Barely half-way through breakfast were we when Dave Rostron rolled up in his Fairmont. Little past 7.30 a.m. was it, but we took their hints kindly and hurried ourselves along as much as possible, not to have the day pass wastefully.

Away to Mount Wilson we roared, not many miles distant, there to be greeted by that inexhaustable supply of wit, good humour, and straight-out corn, Alan Wyborn. Alice was there too, but she had no intention of going li-loing, especially on a cold, miserable, wet morning like this was. Alan too, although he had his day pack with him in which was stowed his lunch wrapped in multitudinous plastic bags, said he wasn't too keen on a cold li-lo trip and would just as soon go home and do some concreting. This was just enough, of course, to encourage the white-ant element in the group and soon we had a loud chorus of dissenters, not the least of whom was the leader himself. Where had all that enthusiasm gone? What a bunch of pikers!! The leader, who wasn't in too good a mood at all, had nothing better to suggest than a change of route to Blue Gum Forest and return via Pearce's Pass. That being the case, Alan Wyborn was definitely going home to do his concreting, but wait a minute, he had a map showing a good walk to The Crater via Bell Creek and Wollongambe Creek. In true democratic style the matter was put to the vote, The Crater won (by a small margin), instructions and counter-instructions issued, Alan Wyborn was finally persuaded to come along as guide and we set forth by car to the starting point further up the Bell road. What the leader really wanted of course, was to spend the rest of the day in the warmth and comfort of the Wyborn weekend at Mount Wilson. Well that was not to be, and thank goodness too, because we would have thus missed out on a beaut little day walk.

We set forth from the Bell road about 8 miles west of Mount Wilson, Don clutching his Wallerawang 1 inch to 1 mile, and Alan studying his one-off Wyborn special 2 inches to 1 mile. With such guidance how could we go wrong? Immediately (as we later, but much later, learnt) we proceeded down the wrong ridge. But then, what is wrongness anyway; it's all relative, and as long as we get to where we want to go, it can hardly be said to be wrong. As I said, we followed the wrong ridge (too far west) resulting in our arrival, after a couple of hours walking, at the brink of a formidable drop by way of a sheer cliff. A substantial creek flowed below, possibly Bell Creek, but impossible to determine from the top. But the walk had been an eye-opener to some very interesting terrain so far, and even had we been forced to turn back at that point, the day would not have been wasted. But even if the thought entered our heads, the need did not eventuate as co-leader, adviser, navigator Dave Rostron found a good way down to the creek where it was confirmed to be Bell Creek (by its direction, volume-flow etc, though how I don't know since these creeks flow in all sorts of funny patterns).

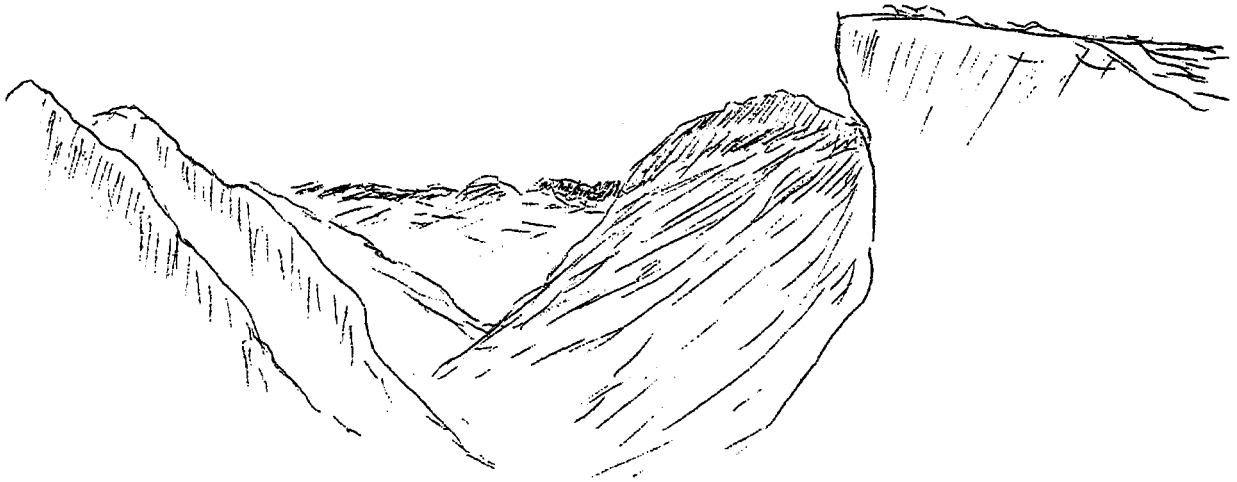
By following the creek a little, sliding down a few rocks, and doing a thigh-waist deep wade, stripping off where necessary, we were able to negotiate the narrow canyon-like watercourse and by chance located a safe exit, thus enabling us to continue on our chosen course. We now passed through country presenting a variety of interesting scenery including monolith-type outcrops of rock, 10 and 20 feet tall, twisted and misshapen by wear and erosion over aeons of time. Every now and then we would climb to the top of one of these monoliths to survey the surrounding landscape of craggy peaks covered with scrubby tea-tree and low profile eucalypts, criss-crossed with deep-cut gorges. One spectacular feature of the walk was the prolific display of flannel flowers - clumps of creamy white blossoms extending for up to 25 or 30 feet in a patch. Beautiful to behold indeed!

By now the initial gnawing of sharpening appetites began to warn walkers that the time was approaching for a meal stop. It was decided though, that we should not stop until Wollongambe Creek was gained, and there we could satisfy our hunger in comfort at water's edge.

As it turned out, we didn't have long to wait because we soon came upon another of the area's characteristic deep gorges. Facing us from the other side was the beautiful warm face of a deep yellow-orange sandstone cliff, and between us and the river stood three or four levels of cliff line. First away again was front-liner Dave, searching for a way down. According to Alan there was a relatively easy way down, as described by daughter Lyn, involving a squeeze hole and tunnel which negotiated the highest of the cliff lines. Upon discovering the way, it proved to be exactly as described, and in fact was quite easily negotiated by everyone.

What confronted us at the bottom, however, was no crystal clear stream awaiting our indulgence, but a thick, bright yellow, very very dirty river. We were not unwarned about this greeting as the subject of the Wollongambe's pollution had been raised at the Club meeting that very week, but it was still a terrible shock to see this man-made despoliation of Nature's beauty, and here of all places, comparatively quite isolated from the activities of man.

# Mountain Equipment



Perhaps you have come back from that long holiday trip over Christmas/New Year with gear that has worn well, but is now well-worn.

Sometimes it is these testing trips that convince you that you really will have to replace that pack or that sleeping bag - certainly before the return of cooler weather means a resumption of energetic walking jaunts.

That still leaves plenty of time for you to come over to North Sydney and see what we have to offer in the way of high-class, super-light equipment designed to go on taking the kind of punishment that walking gear should be built to take.

The address is -

167 Pacific Highway, North Sydney

and the telephone - 929-6504.



Apparently a gravel-washing plant is emptying muddy outflow into the valley, and this is eventually finding its way downstream and into the Wollongambe in quite substantial volumes. So thick was this coloured mud that visibility below surface was nil. Fortunately we were able to locate a side creek running freely with cool, clear water which was beautiful to drink, but the contrast was manifest to us as we sat and watched this untouched mountain stream meet the dirty yellow river and merge together, to continue its journey as a polluted flow of harsh, undrinkable coloured fluid.

Here it was we had lunch, in a conveniently placed overhang, floored with lovely soft sand, our fresh water supply babbling down across the rocks at our left. Heather passed around first of all a billy of delicious tomato soup, which was tried by everyone, and then followed it with a gourmet's delight of different cheeses, smelly and not so smelly. Others partook of the usual cabanossi and biscuits etc. etc.

Still overcast and cool, not many of the party felt much inclined towards having a swim; in fact the only water numph to venture forth with swimming costume was Laurie Quaken, and he only as far as his upper calves (lower knees).

Insufficient time was now left for The Crater, and since Alan's indications were that it wasn't all that spectacular anyway, we decided to change direction and head for home. Our way back followed the route along which we should have come, so what we ended up with was the trip in reverse. But again, it's all a matter of relativity, and who's to say that our mistakes didn't result in a far better walk than what was intended. Alan Wynorn took charge to lead the way back, thoroughly baffling the true leader (Don) and some of the party members by taking us through about 200 degrees of the compass, thus giving the impression of walking in a circle. But his local knowledge of the area proved superior to our supposed logic and we eventually arrived back at Bell Creek, this time at a different spot from earlier in the day, but at a much easier place to cross: a simple walk over a conveniently fallen log. The way into Bell Creek at this point was worse than following a maze, but to the man with local experience (Alan) it was simple: down one cliff and follow its base along, dropping all the time until the creek is reached. Alan also showed us a perfect little camping spot down near the creek, sheltered from the winds by cliffs, with a nearby swimming hole and unspoilt ferny glen, crystal clear pool and white sandy bottom. A real Garden of Eden!

The weather was now threatening rain, as it had on and off throughout the day, so we pushed on, spirits still high. The party in general was bearing up well against the Wyborn wit which hardly stopped for a breath between jokes (do you know why elephants have yellow on the soles of their feet?).

As we proceeded we could faintly hear the sound of cars on the Bell road, so we knew there was not too far to go, but before we made the road a great bank of cloud rolled over the hill ahead of us, threatening to envelope the party in its billowing white misty mass. As a precaution we took compass bearings on our goal to safeguard against the dangers of being completely surrounded by mist and low visibility. Onwards we marched as

the cool moisture wrapped around our ears and our faces, but we weren't far from the road and our cars now, and we pushed on merrily and in high spirits. In fact we finished up right at the spot where we started on the Bell road, thus initiating a round of self-congratulatory remarks by those who considered themselves responsible.

Back we went to the Wyborn weekend where we ate them out of house and home, and drank gallons of tea and coffee, magging and chatting about what a beaut day it had been. Reluctantly we left, for a slower than usual drive back to Sydney after the great li-lo trip that wasn't. But who cares, there'll always be the next time.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Membership Notes

by Geoff Mattingley

At the time this edition of the magazine went to press, January's committee meeting had not been held, so I cannot list any new members. Due to the Christmas break there are only four prospectives to welcome; however we hope that their enjoyment of walking will not be any less because of this. They are:

Philip Brown  
Joseph Rivera

Bob Beattie  
John Adams

At the end of February, the term of the following prospectiv members will expire. Thus they should ensure that they have completed their walk requirements and passed their oral tests in time to be interviewed by the committee at its March meeting.

Leigh Sheridan  
Susan Hancock  
Sally Briggs  
Hugh Ferguson

Neville Lupton  
Margaret Merrotsy  
Alan Rice  
Charles Sudek

You still have time! Don't waste your prospective membership fee - complete the requirements and become a member.

\*\*\*\*\*

Just before Christmas word reached us through Peter Donnelly that our recently retired Membership Secretary, Barbara Bruce, was still part of the Broken Hill scene, having evidently found it a much more agreeable spot than originally expected.

She had even located a walking group at Broken Hill, but up to that stage hadn't been out with them. Seems the Flinders Ranges in South Australia are within striking distance for week-end jaunts, and no doubt Mootwingee (where the abo cave paintings are reputed to be rather more inspired than those at Red Hand Cave) is almost in the day-walk bracket.

Letter from Frank Leyden in the Old Dart

Rambling in Sussex -

24th November, 1971.

Dear Fellow Walkers -

Winter's first snow is bright in the morning sun across the gardens and houses outside my window. Autumn gold lingers everywhere in the leafy landscape, but is fast being stripped away by the freshening westerlies.

The local Ashdown Ramblers Walking Club has made the weekends for me something to look forward to. The large extent of the Ashdown Forest exists because the soil is too poor for farming. It is largely a Natural Reserve area managed by a Board of Conservators for recreation and preservation. Animals are deer, foxes, rabbits, squirrels, birds, partridge, hedgehogs, insects and fish, swans and ducks in the ponds.

I arrived at the end of the blackberry season. The Devil swishes his tail if blackberries are eaten after Michaelmas, but as appetite is slightly stronger than religion, we cleaned up what was still left of blackberries of the Sussex Weald and Wold, not to mention windfall apples, quinces and whatever was too close to the public footpath.

These footpaths or rights-of-way were originally where the farm workers used to walk back across the fields and through the hedges and lanes to their cottages - a sort of travelling stock route for people. Now they are jealously preserved by legal enactments, track clearing parties and volunteers to walk on them to keep them in use. Mostly farmers co-operate. Sometimes they retaliate with barbed wire, bulls and sundry confusements. Navigation requires detailed maps and great skill and constitution as the 'path' may be through eight-foot bracken, impenetrable chestnuts or the lounge of "The Blacksmith's Arms".

Walks start from the local car park down past the late Oliver Cromwell's house. Then you drive like hell through all the other mad motorists to a place where you can get right away from the rotten things. Walks are graded A, B, C, D with A, 20 - 30 miles and D, 5 miles. D's have 30 - 40 people and A's 6 or 8. D's often finish in some lovely old home, stone walls several feet thick, cosy fire, tea and home made cakes!

They are a great crowd, and I enjoy all types of the walks. In summer there are night walks in the long twilight and interesting coast cliff walks. A walk is described on the Programme as "Alfriston with cafe tea" or "Lay-by at Pippingford" or "Stumblewood from The Goat". Walks reports are fully published in both local newspapers. There are no club rooms, hardly any office bearers or any business at all except walking and track clearing. The annual sub. is only five bob, and slide nights or social togetherness are at the private homes or by takeover of the local school.

I enjoy the beauty of the green rolling countryside with the holly

and bramble hedges, the giant oaks and the slender white birch, the beeches, chestnut and fir. Instead of stumbling over middens on walks, substitute covens, old gravestones, mysterious monuments and hidey holes. Last Sunday's 20 miler was in the Kipling Country near Hastings. Also famous for 1066.

Had a most enjoyable evening with Bill O'Neill at Covent Garden Opera House performance of "Anastasia" ballet. Also "Great Waltz" as a stage performance at Drury Lane Theatre. G. & S. "Patience" done by a local group was great fun and included in cast some of the Ramblers. Also "My Fair Lady" at another local theatre.

My Hillman car is great for excursions further afield such as Tunbridge Wells, Crawley and the coast. But icy roads and fogs take every skill one has. Am totally converted to the GIVE WAY system, but not yet to the GIVE UP system.

The night sky when clear shows my old friends The Great Bear, Pole Star, Dragon, Cassiopeia. Pleiades is about 35 degrees south from zenith and Orion's Belt, upside down right and left reversed, just above the south horizon.

Every day I'm getting more like a white man, but it's the rich, gluggey local jersey cream and cakes that's really killing me, and I'm getting a proper TV bottom. But you should insist on colour TV in Australia, and stop looking at black and white substitutes.

My tasks here are the most interesting I have ever done, meeting people from all countries and levels, making lots of friends and learning many new things.

Wishing you all sunshine, good walking, season's greetings and all the very best -

From Frank Leyden.

\*\*\*\*\*

Well, now.... about that change of address.....

Along with the Annual Report each year goes a list of members, their addresses and telephone numbers. This leads to three questions:

- (1) Have your vital statistics changed during the last few months?
- (2) If so, have you notified the Secretary?
- (3) If not, do you want to keep them secret?  
(and not receive any Club publications)

If your answers were (1) Yes: (2) No: and (3) No.... better tell the Secretary RIGHT NOW or your entry in the Pink Pages for 1972 will be wrong.

\*\*\*\*\*

Talking of changed addresses, Wilf Hilder has recently moved, and for the benefit of people who want to contact him on mapping and similar matters, advises his new address is:

21 Jean Street, Seven Hills. Postcode 2147. Tele. 622-3353 (home)

Coming Walks - February 1972

by Pat Harrison

- February 4, 5, 6 : There has been a plethora of Wollangambe trips on this programme. The river is also being spoilt by the sand-washing activities upstream at Bell. Bill Gillam has therefore changed his outing to a fishing trip, either for Bass on the Colo or for Trout in the Middle Kowmung. Bill's phone 520-8423 (H).
- February 6:  
Ø Bundeena to Otford, the best coastal day walk there is. Leader: Jim Callaway 520-7081 (H).
- February 6: Wildflowers and apiary inspection at Darkes Forest. Private transport. David Cotton the leader.
- February 11,12,13: A different part of the Shoalhaven, led by Max Crisp. Phone 20,333 Ext.220 (B). May be swimming.
- February 12, 13: Abseiling in Kanangra Deep under the care of Roger Gowing 43-5281(H).
- February 13: Nan Bourke, who was to take charge of the Swimming Carnival at Lake Bokersley, has gone to Melbourne to live. Watch for notice of change of leader for this event.
- February 18,19,20: A flexible trip to the Wollondilly with Robin Blumb 918-6183 (H) or 40-0280 (H). Bring the children and relax in scenic surroundings, or wander off on your own for something more energetic.
- February 20: Arothusa Canyon. Abseiling and swimming absolutely unavoidable. Pray for a heat wave. Alan Pike the leader.
- February 25,26,27: Tony Denham 99-1246 (H) has all the wrinkles for a beaut trip through Hidden Valley and across to Folly Point in the Budawangs.
- February 26,27: Bill Hall 57-5145 (H) has a 1½ day camp trip in the Royal National Park. Train 12.50 p.m. electric to Cronulla.
- February 27: Jim Brown 81-2675 (H) leads the last round-up from Helensburgh to Lilyvale via Era and Burning Palms. Train 8.42 a.m. country. Return Lilyvale.

\*\*\*\*\*

### The Smokewalkers.

A circular from the National Parks Association's Fire Fighting Force has been received, seeking additional manpower, and setting out its objectives. The following is a summary of the main points made in this publication.

The Smokewalkers is a body of fire fighters dedicated to the protection of bushland from fire. They are willing to walk through rough country to get to a fire and, when reasonable safe to do so, to extinguish the fire without resorting to the back-burn method unless more direct methods are impracticable. The most appropriate role is in suppressing quiet fires burning well away from roads in rough "inaccessible" country.

The need for this force arises from the fact that fires burning in bushland away from roads and houses have frequently been left to burn unchecked, fire fighting efforts being mostly confined to the vicinity of private properties. This is wrong because:-

- \* If the fire becomes wind driven it may later threaten property.
- \* Repeated fire in an area endanger its ecological integrity by destroying certain species of plants or animals.
- \* Fires cause scenic depreciation of the bushland.

The Smokewalkers operate mainly in National and State Parks and Nature Reserves, but will fight fires if requested in other natural areas, including Crown Lands, State Forests and Water Catchments, if sufficient volunteers are available. On occasions assistance may be given to save private property.

The telephone contact system is so arranged that the whole force can be alerted within about half an hour. Transport is by members' cars and equipment is provided by the Parks and Wildlife Service. A support force has been formed to deliver food and drink to the fire fighters, to assist in driving, communications, first aid, etc.

The Smokewalkers are not intended to compete with, interfere with or criticise the Voluntary Bush Fire Brigade organisation, whose main concern is the safeguarding of life and property, and is essential for that purpose. This is a perfectly legitimate limitation (not that it always applies), but the Smokewalkers consider it should be someone's responsibility to protect the bush itself. The two forces should therefore co-exist and co-operate with mutual understanding and tolerance.

The Smokewalkers have asked that bodies interested consider the formation of Club groups, which would provide their own contact and support organisation, and this matter will come before the next General Meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*