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THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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

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Meetings at the Club Room on Wednesday evenings after 7.30 p.m.

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DECEMBER, 1972.

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THE NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING.

by Jim Brown.

A certain amount of distraction occurred during most of the November meeting, with a metallic clangour that sounded like someone opening 44-gallon drums with a cold chisel in a nearby yard. At least it was a rather small assemblage that strove to hear the fairly brief proceedings.

New member Joe Marton was welcomed, but none of the several other admissions of recent months who have not so far reported to a general meeting were present. October's minutes were ratified and it was stated the Conservation Secretary would be writing on the Club's behalf regarding the proposed route for the gas pipe line.

Correspondence contained advice of a book on the Bungonia Caves produced by the Speliological Society, and of a price list for air drops in the Tasmanian backwoods. The State Planning Authority had declined permission for sand miners to operate on the high dunes along portion of the seaward side of Myall Lakes, but the Mineral Deposits people have lodged a protest, and conservation bodies were to obtain legal representation at the hearing. On a motion by Alan Hedstrom the Club voted \$100 to the expenses, and also agreed to subscribe to the monthly bulletin covering conservation proposals for Myall Lakes. Outward correspondence included advice to our landlords that we will not be in residence on Wednesdays December 27th and January 3rd.

The Treasurer produced evidence that our working funds stood at \$1,184 at the close of October, having appreciated during the month, probably as a result of last post payment of overdue subscriptions. Federation affairs reported at the meeting have been covered in the November issue of the magazine, and the Social Secretary advised that his report and forecast of coming attractions had been left at home.

Virtually all left to cover was the walking activity during October and early November, the account starting with the leisurely Blue Gum camp led by Maria and Don Hitchcock on October 6 - 8: five people were present and you might call it uneventful, except for a slightly sprained ankle suffered by Don on the Saturday afternoon. The programmed caving jaunt at Wee Jasper was cancelled, but Alan Pike's 2 day walk compressed into one very long day proceeded out south from Katoomba and finished around midnight with about 32 miles notched up. The other day walk, in the Calna Creek country went in rather hot weather, and the party managed to sub-divide, as well as negotiating some fairly thick scrub.

On the second week-end there was Alan Hedstrom's trip to Myall Lakes, with a roll-up of 8. The party made its way some distance north from Mungo Brush, finding some nice stands of trees, but also seeing some burnt patches of low scrub. This was also the week-end of the S. & R. demonstration, and John Holly thought he may have been the only S.B.W. present. However some 50 people were present and the arrangements worked well - even to the quenching of a fire at Euroka which other picnickers had started. Roger Gowing's day and a half along the coast from Bundeena apparently went as

scheduled, and on the Sunday Bill Hall's trip out from Waterfall attracted about 20 starters and is to be accepted as a test walk for any prospectives attending. Someone observed that the party passed through large swathes of hakea "to prove it wasn't impassable".

Came the week-end 20 - 22 October, and Jim Vatiliotis conducting his Kanangra Creek walk - 15 people who were given "ample rests" - and reportedly carried out in pleasant enough, though rather muggy, weather. The Darke's Forest - Woronora River trip and the day walk listed for 22nd in the Mount Victoria area both fell through, while John Campbell took on another extended day walk in the Gerringong Falls region in lieu of Wilf Hilder. There was a certain loss of cohesion at times between elements of the party, and the best they could do was a poor second to Alan Pike's jaunt - they were back to the cars at 11.15 p.m.

The last week-end of October it rained; it rained quite a lot. Two trips were programmed and one led by Ray Hookway in the Barrington country went out with 15 people, but was curtailed somewhat owing to the inclemency. No one turned up for the Sunday jaunt so the leader went home.

In the last week-end prior to the meeting there were again two trips scheduled and the first lapsed, leaving only Marion Lloyd's "historical tour" of Blue Mountain sites around Hartley. This attracted 20 people, and one "Dirk" detoured to purchase land at Mount Victoria. After inspecting Hartley Vale and Hassan's Walls, the team headed homeward.

And with the time standing at 9.15 p.m., and all business wound up, so did most of the gathering from the November general meeting.

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#### BRIG in SWITZERLAND.

by Marion Ellis.

In enjoying the friendly atmosphere of Brig you discover an aspect of the Upper Valaise which is quite impossible to describe in any tourist guide.

The main attraction of the town is the Stockalpen Castle with its golden onion shaped towers, its exquisite courtyard, elegant arcades and loggias. The castle was built by Baron Kaspar Jadok Van Stock about the end of the sixteenth century. This Baron was a fine politician and business man and Brig with its fine schools, convents and colleges is a great monument to him. The Commune of Brig bought the castle from the last descendants of this noble family and had it restored in 1956. Today the Palace houses the local Administration, office and law courts, etc. Conducted tours enable visitors to see the interior of the Chapel with its precious silver reliefs, the Hall of Knights and the period furniture, a fine portrait gallery, and in the Archives are over 1600 documents of this illustrious family dating from 1257 to 1815.

The Stockalpen Castle is a true picture of the commercial opulence

which the great Simplon Pass produced. Owing to the unique geographical position of Brig and the proverbial hospitality of its hotels, restaurants and pensions, this town has become a tourist centre of international repute and a favourable vantage point for so many excursions into the many beautiful valleys and snow covered mountains.

One delightful trip is to catch the train to Gletch and an easy walk from there takes one to the Great Rhone Glacier, which I understand is the largest in Switzerland. Another day we caught the Post Bus over the Simplon Pass - stopping on the way to lunch with some young nuns who were holidaying from the Convent at Brig. They were fine walkers, just tucked their long habits up and away they went. It was a very pleasant interlude. Lunch by a small blue lake and surrounded by the great mountains. Snow began to fall and we were invited down to their chalet and served splendid hot coffee, home-made bread and jam. I had a fleeting vision of these young ladies flying down the mountain sides on skis with their long skirts flying out behind them. Simplon area is a lovely summer holiday place and in the winter a skiers' paradise.

All residents of Brig walk. It is a familiar sight to see whole families in their strong and warm clothing and sturdy boots, with their rucksacs, off for the day or weekend into the mountains and valleys they love. Brig, like most Swiss towns, boasts at least three brass bands and on our last evening the entire town turned out en masse to celebrate their 300 years of freedom. It was a fitting farewell for us, so we joined in and marched along with the bands - men, women, children, babes in prams and dogs!

Brig is a bushwalker's heaven. Plenty to do at little cost. Good clean, cheap accommodation, and after the noise, heat and traffic of Rome, it was a wonderful place for us to recuperate ere we set off across Europe to Norway - but that is another story. It was with real sadness that we said goodbye to the friends we had made in the dear old town of Brig.

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#### NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE WEEK

February 19-25th 1973

The National Park & Wildlife Foundation was created to provide a financial arm to the National Parks & Wildlife Service which is a Government body, responsible to the Minister for Lands, for the care, control and management of National Parks, State Parks, Nature Reserves and Historic Sites. The Service also has the general responsibility for the protection and conservation of wildlife and of Aboriginal relics. The Foundation, which consists of a group of individuals prominent in industry and public life, is incorporated under the Companies Act as a company limited by guarantee and registered as a charity.

The Foundation will conduct an all-out public appeal during N.P. & W. Week on February 19-25 1973, which will climax with a state-wide door-knock appeal on Sunday 25th February. Thousands of volunteers will be needed. CAN YOU HELP? More information next month - keep this date free.

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FEDERATION NOTES - NOVEMBER.

by Ray Hookway.

At the November meeting of Federation Richard Wood of the Wilderness Protection Committee reported on the proposed Moomba-Sydney gas pipeline through the Wallangambe wilderness area of the Blue Mountains. After general discussion Federation voted \$100.00 to help finance a pamphlet to publicise the proposed route and seeking public support to oppose it. A protest meeting is to be held at the Springwood Civic Centre at 8 p.m. on December 8th.

The Wilderness Protection Committee was formed specifically to fight for the strengthening of the National Parks and Wildlife Act to help prevent commercial intrusion into our parks and reserves. They have been reasonably successful to date in obtaining press coverage of the proposed pipeline route but the matter is important and urgent enough to call for the personal assistance of all bushwalkers. The Committee has prepared a comprehensive report on the route proposal with details of the viable alternatives. A copy of this report is on the Club notice board and interested people can obtain their own copy by ringing Richard Wood or Hugh Bannister on 662-2848 (B).

Federation Conservation Secretary Murray Scott is preparing a report on the recreational value of the Wallangambe area and is calling for club reports of walks conducted in this area during the last 4 years. Information on private walks would also be appreciated. Reports should be given to a club committee member.

Off-the-Road Vehicles.

Following on protests regarding the use of off-the-road vehicles in National Parks, Federation has been advised by the Minister for Lands of his intention to allocate special areas for this type of activity. Federation is concerned that such plans should not result in a reduction of existing parks and is watching the position closely.

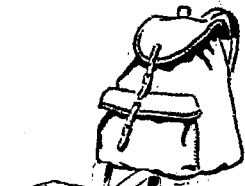
Wolgan Valley.

Extensive road work has been carried out in the Wolgan valley related to the Slater-Walker coal development. A new road has been made by-passing the Devil's Pinch and it would be possible in dry weather to drive to Rocky Creek. However, a new gate has been erected at the Devil's Pinch corner and this will undoubtedly be locked. Timber is being removed along the route of the road and the picture is most depressing. Apparently plans are for a coal washing plant on the southern escarpment with a conveyor from the valley floor.

This scheme should be watched closely to forestall possible damming of the Wolgan and pollution of the Colo. It has taken decades for nature to repair the devastation caused by the old Newnes shale workings, but it will take man much less time to again "civilize" the area.

# Paddy made

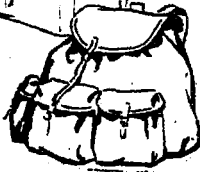
Lightweight bushwalking and camp gear



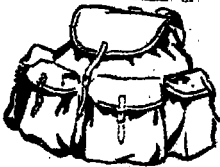
**BUNYIP RUCKSACK**  
This 'shaped' rucksack is excellent for children. Useful day pack. Weight 14ozs



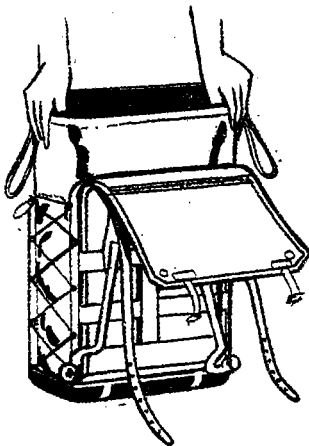
**SENIOR RUCKSACK**  
A single pocket, shaped rucksack. Suitable for overnight camping. Weight 1½lbs



**BUSHMAN RUCKSACKS**  
Have sewn-in curved bottom for extra comfort in carrying. Will hold 30 lbs. 2 pocket model 1½lbs 3 pocket model 1½lbs



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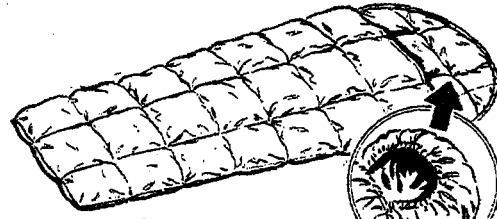


**MOUNTAINEER DE LUXE**  
Can carry 70lbs or more. Tough lightweight terylene/cotton, proofed fabric with special P.V.C. reinforced base. 20" x 17" x 9" proofed nylon extension throat with double draw cord for positive closure. Flap has full sized zip pocket of waterproof nylon. Outside pocket. Bag is easily detached from the frame to form a 3' sleeping bag cover for cold, wet conditions. Weight 6lbs

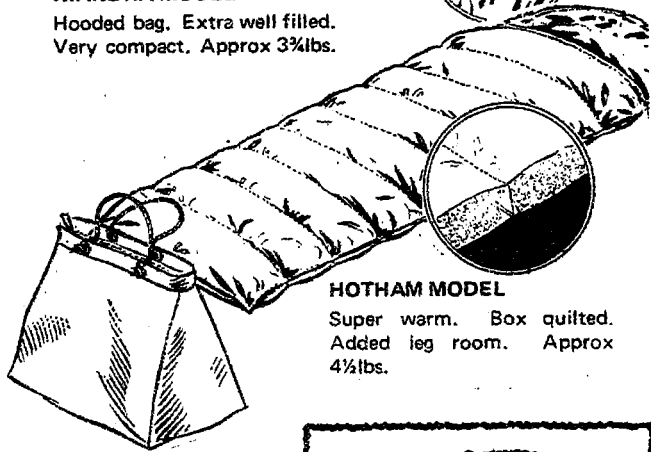


**MOUNTAINEER**  
Same features as de luxe model except for P.V.C. bottom reinforcing. Weight 5½lbs

**TRAMPER FRAME RUCKSACK**  
Young people and ladies will find this pack a good one. It will carry sufficient camping equipment and food for 3 or 4 days or more. Has 3 pockets, capacity about 30 lbs. Weight 4lbs.



**KIANDRA MODEL**  
Hooded bag. Extra well filled. Very compact. Approx 3½lbs.

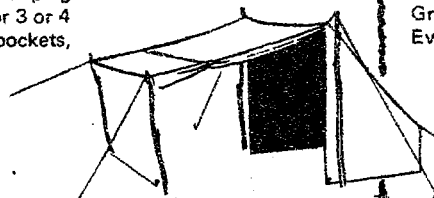


**HOTHAM MODEL**  
Super warm. Box quilted. Added leg room. Approx 4½lbs.



**CARRYING BAGS**  
P.V.C. or nylon.

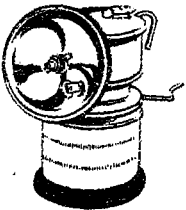
**'A' TENTS**  
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**WALL TENTS**  
Two, three or four man. From 3¾ to 4½lbs



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Bushwalking books.  
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Aluminium cook ware.  
Ground sheets.  
Everything for the bushwalker.



# Paddy Pallen

New Maps

A dyeline map of the Kuringai Chase is now available.

The 1935 Wallerawang 1 inch/1 mile military map has also been reissued.

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TASMANIA '72 - (Part 3). by Don Finch.

The party of eight moved off from Lake Pedder about 7 a.m. It is about 11 miles from the Lake to the Scotts Peak Dam across open button grass plains. The temperature rose higher with the sun and soon the heat-haze danced across the plains. We passed the end of the Franklin Range on our right with Mt. Solitary over the left shoulder. Good time was made and a long break was called at a large creek about 4 miles from the Dam. Pack weights were well down as the food for the next 2 weeks was still in the back of the hired car which was parked at the Dam.

Arriving at the dam site Heather and Dot stayed with the gear while all of the boys walked the 1 mile or so over construction roads to the car. Bill and Snow found the wet canteen and after telling the manager where they had come from he finally agreed to sell them some refreshments. It was probably their physical appearance that swayed the balance. Everybody sat in the car to drink the beer, several bottles of lemonade were saved for the girls. By unanimous decision, based on the argument that any beer left would only get hot, every last drop was polished off. All the food was put in the empty packs and carried back to where the girls were waiting.

Barry Wallace and the other five people who were still at Lake Pedder were to take the hire car back to Hobart in 3 or 4 days time. All of the empty beer cans were left in the car in the hope that Barry and his party would be impressed. As it turned out they walked out on a rather cold day and the effect was spoilt.

After picking up the rest of our gear which had been left with the girls the party continued over construction roads and gravel pits which were posted "Port Davey Track". The track finally veered off from the rubble heaps down into a small creek and could be seen winding across the undulating country to the south. The temperature was still very high. The bottom of the creek was silted up from the dam workings. Shade was at a premium, requiring a short scrub bash into leech country. Lunch consisted of cheese, salami, dried fruits, honey, scroggin and 2 Brazil nuts each, courtesy of Peter Levander.

The 150 lb of food for the next 9 days were sorted out in the blazing sun. Graham Cunningham, our most able mathematician, was soon thinking in multiples of 16. All of the food was in calico bags with the contents and weight written on the outside. An even weight distribution was soon achieved, although Graham was ready to give three cheers for the grams and kilos. By mid afternoon the party was moving along the track to Junction

Creek Hut about 6 miles distant. The heavy packs and the long day had taken the spring out of everybody's step. Log crossing over several creeks had to be negotiated and Dot, while walking across a log and looking at a bird at the same time, slipped on the log, landing on her knee cap. After resting for a while the party moved on, Dot using a stick for support.

The Arthur Range stood on the other side of 10 miles of button grass. Beyond the Huon River the Arthur Plains stretched to the south east into the hazy ranges of the distance. And in every other direction were mountains and valleys, creeks, button grass and stands of tall timber.

Then we saw the white signpost and letter-box that marks the junction of the Port Davey Track and the Arthur Plains Track. The hut where the party was stopping for the night was about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from the signpost. It was a tired party that arrived at the three-sided corrugated iron hut built by the Hobart Bush Walkers. Thick scrub provided additional protection from the wind, quite a cosy place to camp and very much appreciated.

The next day Dot moved off about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour before everybody else. Her knee had stiffened up overnight and she didn't want to slow the party. A swirling mist was blowing around the hut when we left. On the track visibility was sometimes down to 100 yards; the track is well defined and very easy to follow. After climbing for 4 miles we dropped down into the watershed of the Crossing River. As we moved around the end of the Arthur Range a vast expanse of rolling button grass came into view. Mountains bordered the button grass plains and the lower ridges, which were also covered with the button grass, had patches of green scrub, while the creek and river were flanked by long lines of tall timber and thick scrub. Twelve miles to the south-west we could see the low hills that the track climbed to an area known as The Lost World Plateau.

We arrived at the Crossing River about 11.30 and had a swim and an early lunch. Dot was still in front, in fact we had not yet seen her, although at times visibility would have been several miles. We did see her tracks and the "D" made of stones that she left at regular intervals. So much for her sore knee.

The afternoon march was hot and dry, with the scene change almost imperceptible, giving the impression that we were getting nowhere fast. The track finally swung around to a southerly direction and was heading towards the low hills I mentioned earlier. Finally by late afternoon objects on the hill were discernable and soon we were walking around the side of the ridge in the shade of small trees. The previous night I had told everybody that we would camp at the first reasonable campsite we found after reaching the hills. Dot had remembered this and had stopped about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile off the button grass in a small shady glen. She had of course been there for hours.

We moved on for another 2 miles to a campsite by a large creek. The three tents were soon up and everybody collapsed on to sleeping bags for a short rest before tea.

The next day we intended to walk all of the way into Port Davey - a long



march. The morning was misty and light rain was falling intermittently. Dot had left early again as her knee was still sore and tended to stiffen up with long rests. From our overnight camp the track climbed higher following an even grade around ridges and hills. The rain persisted most of the morning. The hot climbs made the wearing of parkas uncomfortable but the icy wind on wet clothes was even worse. We arrived at the Spring River at lunch time. A log about 40 feet long, 2 feet in diameter and 20 feet above the river is used for crossing - a rather harrowing experience as the log bounces slightly and is quite slippery. We had lunch immediately after crossing the log. Dot was still ahead. We had about 6 miles to walk to Bathurst Narrows Hut on the shores of Port Davey. Over more button grass, up and down steep though short hills, down through a rain forest, up a steep muddy climb on hands and knees, more hills, creeks and button grass, on and on with the rain still drizzling down. Then a view of Port Davey - we must be getting close. A check of the map, still 3 miles to go - everybody hopes it's not like the last 3 miles. Over more hills, then Heather slips on wet grass and sprains her right ankle. The boys take all of her pack weight and soon we are on our way again. The hills gradually become less frequent and the rests more frequent. The last climb, into a fire damaged saddle, then a view of the home run about a mile downhill and on the flat to the water's edge and the hut.

The bay looked really terrific after seeing button grass for so long. The side of Mt. Rugby was burnt out as were other locations, the total area being quite large. Mt. Rugby is on the other side of a small cove from the hut. One of the small rowing boats that are used to cross Bathurst Narrows was moving slowly across the water.

At the hut we found Dot curled up in her sleeping bag. John Murray and wife of N.P.A. were also there, and a Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan. We all made ourselves comfortable and after milo Peter and I went fishing, unsuccessfully. The tang of the salty breeze and the knowledge that the next day was only a 6 mile day soon had everybody relaxed and in high spirits, well able to appreciate the isolation and beauty of Tassie's south-west. Heather cooked up a batch of custard powder that she had found in a food cache along the track. She was really looking forward to having custard on her dried apricots. After mixing it up and waiting for quite a while for it to set she had a taste and found to her dismay that it was only egg powder.

The next morning our Greek fisherman collected a plastic bag full of mussels which were grilled in the ashes. Bill and Spiro cooked up some in garlic butter for the gourmets.

After lazing around for most of the morning we packed up and went over to the row-boat. The Narrows are about 300 yards across opening out into large bays on either side. A choppy swell runs through the Narrows, and in rough weather it is too dangerous to cross. Dot, Heather, Bill, Spiro and I went across in the first boat. Then Spiro rowed the boat back towing the second boat which was to be left on the other side. All the boys then came back in the first boat. The boat was beached and turned upside down.

Dot and Heather had already moved off towards the King Memorial Hut at McLabuca. It was an easy walk across button grass plains with only a couple of small hills along the way. We passed the site of a geological survey. The King Memorial Hut by bushwalker standards is quite luxurious. An internal combustion fire that operates without smoking out the hut stands in the centre of the one large room, 6 bunks with mattresses line the walls, a large table with chairs and bench tops with open cupboards complete the furniture. The toilet is quite unique; the seat is stored in the hut on a nail. If the seat is missing you know the establishment is being used; it is by far the cleanest toilet in the southwest.

Another sort out of food was necessary as the girls had decided not to continue on around the coast track owing to their injuries. They did, however, catch a plane from Mr. King's airstrip, which is near the hut, out to Cox's Bight on the south coast.

During the next 6 days we were going to walk right along the south coast of Tasmania along a track cut by the Dept. of Public Works in 1966. All of this next time the editor manages to needle the article out of me.

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#### OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY ---

Ira Butler, an old member of the Club, and husband of Dot Butler, died at his home on November 24th.

Ira was a keen walker for many years and did a number of long and difficult trips in country then little known to walkers. He was a keen photographer, and, as such, a contributor to our social programmes. Those who walked with Ira know that his slow and unassertive manner masked a very sensitive and exceptionally rational mind. As an economist Ira reached the top, being economic adviser to the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank when he retired.

By this time his walking days were over, but he kept close to nature by devoting his time to orchid growing, and soon became an acknowledged expert.

To Dot, who has been a very active member for a very long time, and to her family, we extend our deepest sympathy.

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DOWN 'ROUND COOKBUNDOON.

by Jim Brown.

An impression I have formed over the years is that bushwalkers are less likely to be creatures of habit than those mortals who take their recreation in more conventional ways. However, even walkers tend to follow certain behaviour patterns, and one of the most noticeable is the tendency to concentrate walking activity in certain geographical areas, while other places may be largely neglected or ignored. Of course, some of these by-passed localities have been favoured walker habitats of the past, and are perhaps only in recess, but there are others which appear to have been given meagre attention throughout most of the years that walkers have been plying their craft. What's more, it's not because these places are invariably remote or difficult of access, or even lacking in scenic appeal, but simply, I think, because they have never been adequately "promoted". Of course, some of our people may have been to these spots, but if so, they have been unreasonably reticent about it.

Two that come to mind quickly are the Wingecarribee River, which includes quite a rugged ravine over its last six or seven miles before joining the Wollondilly: and the Shoalhaven Gorge between Badgery's Crossing and the Kangaroo River Junction - this latter I visited for the first time about a year ago, and found it quite spectacular and well worth looking over. To these I should now add the middle Wollondilly, and if you ask for a definition of "middle", I shall say, from Paddy's River down to the junction of the Wingecarribee.

Now there's something like 25 miles of river, with at least one prominent side stream, the Cookbundoon River, coming in from the west. It's all clearly shown on the Moss Vale and Mittagong inch to mile maps: it's within 100 miles of Sydney, and from an initial exploration the going does not appear to be so hard as to deter all save the tiger walkers, nor so much of a lolly as to be unworthy of walker attention. It's all quite pleasant country, and rather different from the walking on most of the other rivers in our near mountains.

In its upper reaches the Mulwaree, which becomes the Wollondilly, flows in shallow upland valleys, north from Goulburn, through farmlands. In its middle section, down from Paddy's River, it begins to entrench itself, until by the time it is joined by the Wingecarribee, not far upstream from Goodman's Ford, it has become the deep-cut valley we know around Barallier and Burnt Flat. In about 9 miles, the river bed falls from 1,600 feet above sea level to 1,000 feet, while the tops remain at a fairly constant elevation of from 2,000 to 2,400 feet.

Road access is remarkably easy. At the Crossroads, about 10 miles down the Hume Highway from Berrima, the Canyonleigh Road takes off to the west. For the first five miles it is sealed, then separates into two fairly good gravel roads, one continuing west through Canyonleigh to Paddy's River and the other turning north along the ridge that separates the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee catchments.

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M O U N T A I N

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E Q U I P M E N T

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On a recent reconnaissance I went in along the Canyonleigh Road as far as the Paddy's River crossing, about 10 miles from the Highway. Apart from the last mile down to the river the road surface is quite good, but some care would be needed if driving down to the river at night. This descent is quite short because the 'dilly has not dug itself deeply into the country at that point.

The week-end on which I tackled it was the very wet one near the end of October. I had intended to try to go downstream as far as the junction of the Cookbundoon River, but what with showers on Saturday and slippery rocks, and then the downpour all Sunday morning, I didn't get very far - perhaps 9 or 10 miles down the river to the spot marked on the Moss Vale map as "The Hammocks", returning along the ridges on the eastern side of the valley by the Nandi and Tugalong Roads. (By the way, if talking to the locals, don't make the mistake I did. Nandi is pronounced Nan-dye and not Nan-dee.)

Downstream from the Paddy's River junction the Wollondilly presents an interesting set of variations. At the outset it is in a shallow valley, flowing over some hard, dark rock which breaks up into jagged pieces, maybe some very ancient slates. The river forms a succession of large, deep, green pools, big enough to float a Manly ferry, separated by short stretches where it divides into several small channels threading their way through dense ti-tree growth. There are some pleasant grassy flats, and some others that are desperately barren and paved with broken rock. In places cattle paddocks come right down to the river, but there is little evidence of human activity apart from an odd fence in the open places. Wild life abounds, ducks on the stream, wallabies, wombats and at least one echidna.

After three or four miles of this sort of going, a river gauging station is passed, and shortly afterwards the river valley opens out into paddocks around House Creek. Apart from a few patches of blackberry, this is very easy, open walking while the river makes the westernmost loop of the big swing around the ridges below Nundi Hill. The rocks become granite, and it is reminiscent of parts of Megalong.

There's a small abandoned house just above the junction of Dead Man's Creek, and after a few more loops through low grassy hills, the stream really begins to dig itself down. You pass "The Pound", which takes the form of a small ravine within the wider valley. A sharp bend to the east, and the river starts to tumble down the steps and stairs of a true granite gorge - slow going here for a bit over a mile. I imagine that, when the river is in spate, this would be quite a spectacle, as there are several cascades where it drops a few feet in one bound.

Near the foot of this gorge it bears away north once more, then the hills seem to crowd in again. However, at this bend there are the agreeable pastures called "The Hammocks" (I can't guess why), and this was as far as I penetrated on Saturday. Conditions on Sunday were not conducive to further progress downstream, so it was up and out on the ridges to join the top roads leading back to Canyonleigh and Paddy's River.

This leaves something like 15 miles down past the Cookbundoon junction to the confluence of the Wingecarribee. Obviously they are due to receive my further attention, but if anyone else tries it out first I'd be glad to hear how the going is, and whether there's much blackberry to get through. Maybe not the most spectacular of our local river valleys, still the middle Wollondilly is genuine walker-type country, and certainly worth one visit before you claim to have seen it all.

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#### BUNGONIA CAVES

The first hard cover book to be published by an Australian speleological society "Bungonia Caves" represents the efforts of a large number of people over a period of, in some cases, more than three years. The book of 230 pages contains maps, 55 photographs (8 in full colour) and articles covering a wide field of topics, including a foreword by Sir Garfield Barwick and articles on geology, bat and birds, vegetation, etc.

Copies available from The Sydney Speleological Society, Box 198 P.O. Broadway, 2007, or The National Trust, 123 Clarence Street, Sydney, 2000. Price \$6.50 plus postage and packing 50 cents, overseas 80 cents.

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#### SOCIAL NOTES - JANUARY.

January 17 - A very interesting film from the National Aeronautic Space Administration (NASA) on the moon. Naturally it's in colour, and I have been assured by Ray Hookway that the moon-walks are superb.

On Saturday January 20 at George and Helen Gray's place a rare and beautiful event will take place. A barbecue in the back garden, followed by an old-fashioned MUSICALE in the drawing room. Among the artists, Spiro on the violin, Helen and Owen on the piano, Alan Pike on Taro's flute and a "ferme fatale" has promised to sing a lament. If you wish to be a performer come with your musical instrument and help make the evening a success. If you are useless and can't do anything, you are still welcome. The barbecue starts at 4.30 - bring all food, drink and utensils. A good free evening's fun.

January 24 - Flick & Co. have promised to give us a film on "Life and Love in a Termite Colony". As the world's getting mighty overcrowded it may be worth while to see a film on the future.

January 31 - Our own Paul Sharp will be discoursing on "Economics of Survival" - pollution, zero population growth and conservation. Those who watch Monday Conference on TV and those who make it their business to be aware of today's problems will know him. This should be a most interesting evening.

Owen Marks, Social Secretary.