

THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKER

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 Rooms on Wednesday evenings after 7.30 p.m.

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JANUARY, 1974.

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THE DECEMBER GENERAL MEETING

by Spiro Ketas.

About thirty members and visitors were present when President Bob sounded his ancient and oriental gong with a skillfully executed back-hand stroke. No new members were presented and after last month's minutes were read and received without incident, Sheila commenced with the correspondence. A request was received from Rigby Services, South Australia, for colour transparencies of birds, nests, eggs or habitat to be included in a new Bird book. Also we learned that John Holly had accepted the committee's invitation of Honorary Membership.

The Treasurer's Report showed a closing balance of \$943.67.

In the Federation Report Wilf reported that the Army was not using the road between Sassafras and The Vines much, if at all! Apparently the Government's economy measures on defence expenditure had eliminated a great number of week-end artillery shoots. Bushwalkers were advised to drive through this section provided that there is no sentry, then access can be obtained to the Budawangs through the Wog Wog Creek road. At the moment Federation and the Army are engaged in a lengthy paper-war as the future of access to the Budawangs is still not clear.

A disturbing report of possible camping bans in the Royal National Park was also discussed in Federation. This and other measures apparently are the aims of the National Estate who seem to be duplicating the role of N.P.A. and also forgetting all the ground work put into the establishment of certain areas by bushwalkers many years ago.

The repairs by Federation to Carlons Chains amounted to \$176. The Blue Mountains Council has decided against contributing at all towards the cost. In closing Wilf reported that the Medlow Gap road is still open though parking has been under question, and that Federation is considering Reunion sites for 1974; already suggested are Wyong Creek, Thirlmere Lakes, The Blue Labyrinth, Blue Gum Forest and Fitzgerald Creek (Long Angle Gully). Bushwalkers driving to Yadboro Creek in the Budawangs should take care not to become lost as new roads have been put in.

And a last couple of interesting points, bulk postage is going up again, 50% in March.

Paddy Pallin has been receiving enquiries recently from prospective bushwalkers wishing to join a club in their own suburb or home area, this decentralisation of clubs may be desirable in the future.

Jim Vatiliotis' Castle trip on the 17/18th November received first mention in the Walks Report. He did manage to become lost at night on the new roads. Fourteen up the Castle in the morning and back to Yadboro for lunch. Also that week-end Roger Gowing and two others covered Stanwell Park Beach, Stanwell Park Rocks, Bulgo Headland, Burning Palms, Garie. That Sunday Sam Hinde and twenty others enjoyed themselves swimming at Burning Palms and Era, starting their walk from Otford.

The next week-end Bill Burke's walk down the Six Foot Track, Mini Mini Saddle, Little River, Galong Creek was attended by 10 people and ended in the Devonshire Tea House of the Hungry Walkers in Megalong Valley. Kath Brown's Sunday walk that week-end was the usual, as she put it, attendance 12.

December 1st/2nd, David Rostron's li-lo trip down the flooded Cox's River attracted fourteen daredevil hell-riders who zoomed around sharp bends at 4 m.p.h., raced over intrepid rapids and fought off li-lo-eating trees, i.e. all but George Catchpole who sat on his li-lo playing his recorder quite oblivious to the turmoil about him. Fortunately the party survived the river with only one casualty, a very sunburnt Tessa. That Sunday, December 2nd, Sam Hinde led or was led by the older members of his group of 20 Heathcote to Waterfall via Kingdom Come.

On December 8th/9th Wilf's Kiandra trip was postponed and Roy Higginbottom's hard walk went with four starters. Hans Beck's Blue Gum trip went according to programme with 5 members and 4 prospectives, unfortunately marred by rain on Sunday. That Sunday Kath Brown's Little Marley trip provided a pleasant day for its 10 starters, having lunch at the Deer Pool and swimming at Little Marley.

The first item of General Business was a motion submitted by Kath Brown that the club donate \$25 towards the River Canoe Club's Building Fund in order to assist them to restore their clubroom which was burnt down a few months ago. Motion passed unanimously.

Sam Hinde informed the meeting that Tod Sloane had recently passed away. Tod Sloane was 83 years old and was a bushwalker well known in the Heathcote district.

Sam also passed on Frank Leyden's Christmas greetings to Club members. Next the meeting discussed the future plans of the authorities to close all camp sites in the Royal National Park and it was decided that Alex Colley, the Conservation Secretary, should investigate the matter.

The gathering then thanked Geoff Mattingley for the hard work he had done for the club and wished him every success in his re-location in Melbourne.

The clock hands showed 9.30 as President Bob raised his hand, executed another of his expert backhand strokes and the meeting concluded.

COOKBUNDOON AGAIN.

by Jim Brown.

When I first envisaged having a look at that part of the Wollondilly between Paddy's River and a point a mile or two upstream from the Wingecarribee Junction, I felt it could probably be done in one weekend, provided one didn't mind having to slog out about 15 miles of road to get back to where one left the car. In fact, weekend number one got me about 9 miles down the river to a place marked on the map as The Hammocks. Deteriorating weather decided me to pull out there on Sunday. The second try advanced me only another five miles or so, but presented a couple of quite spectacular granite gorges with very slow progress: again I climbed out from the river early on Sunday.

Possibly with the idea of having a more positive target, the third bid brought me in from the vicinity of Tugalong House at the end of the road which runs north along the divide between Wollondilly and Wingecarribee. What with State Elections and a train I wanted to record on film, it was already 2.0 p.m. Saturday afternoon before I started down a ridge near Tugalong.

The spur was not well-chosen. It proved to be a stubby ridge which set me down into Limestone Creek, and in the main I followed that down to the 'dilly. I say "in the main" because I saw no limestone, but did find some awfully smooth, slippery granite which forced me up and out of the creek bed a couple of times. However 4.0 p.m. saw me by the river - and a regular job I had to find it because Limestone Creek actually enters a swampy back-water, separated by a rocky "island" and dense casuarina growth from the main stream. The 'dilly, when I came to it, was boiling along in great style, much swollen by recent rains.

One of the beauties of daylight saving is that 4.0 p.m. is not really late afternoon. I continued upstream until after 6.30 p.m. and still had ample daylight to establish myself for the night. This was simplified by the fact that it was warm and clear, with a westerly wind breathing, and I had left the tent in the car. In the $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours along the river the going had been generally fair. I suppose about half of it had been pleasant grassed flats, and the other half a jumble of boulders. Naturally, the easy part felt much less than half.

It had been attractive country with a mixture of forested and cleared hills rising from the valley and looking warmly golden in the westering light. Once or twice rocky bluffs had forced me to go a hundred feet or so up above the stream. There was an abundance of wild life, ducks on the river, wallabies and wombats and once an echidna burrowing against a boulder. The remnants of a couple of fences were seen, but little evidence of any frequent human visitation - no fireplaces, no rubbish, except a few tins and fragments of sawn timber which must have been swept down by floods. Saturday night's camp was barely a mile down from my previous point of exit.

Thus, on Sunday morning I was back on known ground soon after 7.30 a.m. There is an easy ridge at that point, but the slides I had taken on the

previous trip through the nearby granite gorge had all proved light-fogged, so this time I repeated the gorge, and finally drew out just opposite Cookbundoon River. Once again I was impressed by the rush of the river, now considerably higher, through the cascades and pools of the ravine - it's a place well worth a visit. The passage of the gorge, about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, took something over an hour and several times I had to go up - as much as 200 or 300 feet above the stream.

Just after 9.0 a.m. I started up the hill. Steep and mainly grassy with some loose rock - nothing worse. Then a long tramp over the cleared land up top, so that it was approaching noon when I came out on the Tugalong Road. Finally six miles back north on the road in a dry, almost hot wind. Come to think of it, with cars sensibly dispersed in advance, a fairly lively party would be able to cover all that part of the Wollondilly from Paddy's River to Limestone Creek in a weekend, and bring back memories of a stream that is somehow a bit different to our other mountain rivers.

I SAW A STRANGE LAND
... (PART 2) ...

by Marion Lloyd.

Ayres Rock and The Olgas

..... I drifted back into the dreamtime..... I could visualise the aborigines walking many miles to this place for their hunts, corroborees, rock paintings, rituals and initiation ceremonies, followed in time by white men who passed by it during their explorations of the unknown. Their usual mode of transport were camels which were often regarded as ships of the desert as they often spent days on these waterless seas and invariably passed over wave after wave of sandhills.

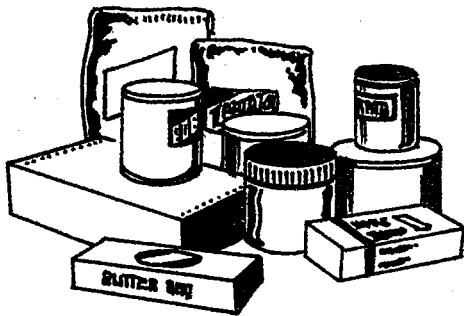
Gradually the peace and isolation of this place was being disturbed, slowly at first, by the penetration of explorers, settlers and then by the early intrepid sightseers until it reached a crescendo with the large influx of tourists. The mode of transport changed from human power, to horse power, camels and donkeys and much later on the motor car and aeroplane.

Once only the tough adventurous person came here, and the Olgas only saw white men spasmodically. As motor vehicles became more reliable and comfortable and the roads were blazed, graded and improved the numbers of tourists increased from a handful to thousands. About 1944 a young school master from N.S.W. set out for Ayres Rock from Alice Springs on his motor cycle and never returned. He was found dead. Prior to 1948 camels were the only safe means of transport to the Olgas and Ayres Rock. The graded track ended at Curtin Springs and from there a direct course of 43 miles would be doubled by the necessity for weaving round the succession of sandhills. The total absence of water on this stage made the use of horses too hazardous.

In addition, visitors were discouraged because Ayres Rock was within an aboriginal reserve until the land round it and the Olgas was excised from the

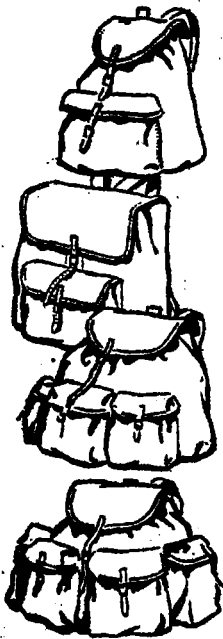
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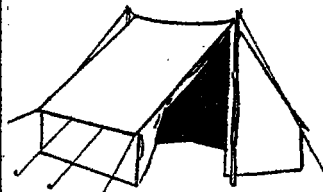
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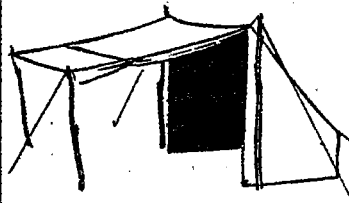
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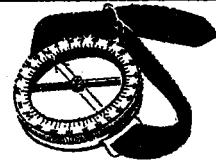


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Everything for the bush-walker, from blankets and air mattresses, stretchers, boots, compasses, maps, books, stoves and lamps to cooking ware and freeze dried and dehydrated foods.



Paddy Pallen

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Reserve in 1958 and dedicated as a reserve under the N.T. Reserves Board control. During the early post-war years a good many people flew, by their own or Connellan aircraft, over and around Ayres Rock and the Olgas. The news began to spread about this amazing country with its three unusual geographical features rising out of the desert, Olgas, Ayres Rock and Mt. Connor, the first two being regarded as two of the world's greatest natural features.

As cars and roads improved so too was this land's privacy intruded upon and not always was it shown proper respect.

"After the grading of the first track to the Rock in 1948 the place was visited with caution initially and numbers were also limited by the requirements to obtain permits from the Welfare Branch. Len Tuit of Tuit's Central Australian Tours and Bond's Tours were the only people catering for tourists in those days. The first aircraft to land at Ayres Rock was piloted by E. J. Connellan on 20th April, 1958. With the removal of restrictions in 1958 and the acquisition of the place by the Reserves Board that year the popularity of the Ayres Rock trip began to increase; in 1958 - 2,296 visitors, 1967 - 18,965 visitors" - and from 1973 more than 100,000 expected annually.

With the adventurers and tourists came the entrepreneurs who could see that here was something they could sell as a tourist attraction. This large lump of masonry was going to become a very valuable piece of real estate. Tents replaced the gunyah, then huts, then motels and camping grounds as well as the usual secondary growth and facilities. Progress had come.

Olga's sister was on the map. The biggest pebble in the world, come and climb her; see her changing colours. She is now included in tourist brochures, package tour itineraries for both Australian and foreign visitors, for the airline, tourist and bus companies. She has become a landmark and trademark in competition with the Sydney Harbour Bridge and more recently the Sydney Opera House. Kodak is making a fortune. She is in, it's fashionable to have been there and to have climbed her.

The Rock is contributing to the N.T. coffers. Alice Springs has become a boom town during the tourist season. The park is indirectly providing employment, investment and tourism in Alice Springs and the Northern Territory generally.

The chockstone in the river has been removed, the trickle of visitors has become an unchecked flood. They come from overseas and from all over Australia to discover the Rock. Are these numbers threatening her existence? Is the Rock reaching saturation point in providing facilities? Is private enterprise and tourism raping the Park? Is Tourism destroying this natural feature and desert environment? Not all tourists have respect for the Park and some are quite apathetic about where their rubbish lands, the denuding of trees for firewood and indiscriminately destroying wild life. Progress has come, stores, motels and roads. A network of roads have sprung up. From my perch I could see vehicles whizzing around the Uluru and Katajuta circuits with a connecting arm like a speedway. I could see a plane circling to land. Development at the Rock seems to have sprung up in a higgly piggly fashion with facilities, stores and hotels scattered over a wide area.

The N.T. Reserve Board is quite aware of this and has frozen further major development until reassessment and planning for the Park's future has been undertaken. Although the N.T. Reserve Board is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Park there are many other departments and bodies which lay claim to have a say in the Park's policy, e.g. Commonwealth Govt. Depts. of Recreation and Tourism, Environment, and Aboriginal Affairs plus tourist and conservation bodies. Whilst red tape mounts up and departments and bodies haggle the exploitation and numbers increase.

Must there be progress and can progress and the environment be compatible? Can tourism and conservation compromise? Much damage has been done, what remains is the Rock. But where are the original inhabitants and fauna? The influx of tourists has been accompanied by the almost total disappearance of the desert aboriginal. For the Pitjandjara the land has been desecrated; it was a meeting place, hunting ground, initiation and sacred area. Myths were woven around the Rock's features.

It had 11 waterholes in a region of several thousand square miles of country noted for its aridity and lack of surface water, Maggie Springs being of an almost permanent nature. Numerous caves around its base provided warm and roomy shelter. Grass and other feed and trees grew around its edge and euros, wallabies, bandicoots and other small creatures provided a constant source of food for the hunters. Additionally the feed and water attracted kangaroos, emus and dingoes from the surrounding desert.

With the influx of the white man and a succession of droughts, most of the animals have gone. The balance of nature which was vital for survival had been disturbed. Without game the hunters have drifted to the missions and towns lured on by white men's food, liquor, tely and social services. His pride, culture and health have suffered. His tribal thinking and desert existence renders it difficult for him to conform or to understand white men's way of thinking, way of life and work. It is a pathetic tragedy for a once proud race to be subjected to a different way of life in towns that it is unable to comprehend or cope with. The hunter is a trapped animal caught between two cultures that have no answers for his escape. Although the National Park was excised from an aboriginal reserve, it would be doubtful if the Dept. of Aboriginal Affairs has enough influence to incorporate the Park back into the Reserve again.

The Rock has gained world wide fame as a spectacle and the legitimate claims of tourists possibly cannot be reconciled with the restrictions needed in an aboriginal reserve. However the Park can provide the opportunity for aboriginal communities nearby to maintain their traditional ways of life whilst participating in providing skilled assistance in Park management and services.

So the evolutionary process continues as the white man takes over to introduce a new era in the life of these two natural features - Ayres Rock and the Olgas. The Rock in particular has become a vital focal point to white Australians as well as to the aboriginals. It gives a feeling of identity. What of the future? A most controversial question. Will the

conflict of tourism versus conservation be resolved?

My dreamtime turns to nightmare as I think of the tourist promoters and developers to whom the sky is the limit in imagination and ideas. With the application of advanced technology of providing permanent water and power from natural elements (namely the sun and wind) many revolutionary changes would be possible. They could turn this brown, monotonous, arid land into vibrating excitement. Their "National Park" could put Las Vegas off the map. A "Blue Print" for Ayres Rock could include motels, supermarkets, garages, restaurants, entertainment, just everything. The roads tarred, tree-lined streets and promenades. Day and night the glitter of neon signs. A chairlift to take people to the summit. Here there would be kiosks selling trash, T-shirts, foreign and local made aboriginal gimmicks and artefacts, stuffed native animals and skins and souvenir pens to sign their names in the Visitors' Book. Moon-buggy rides to take one over the humps and bumps to Uluru Rockhole.

There would be a Sunset Strip where thousands of sunset photos are taken of the Rock. More kiosks, selling plenty of film, a large parking area and amenities block. A large grandstand and observation decks which can be converted at night for a speedway, trots and dog-racing with the dark silhouette of the Rock as a back drop.

Non-stop tours of inspection in mini-buses continually circumnavigating the Rock, with tape-recorded descriptions at the press of a button. A monorail system from the village to the Rock, thence to Dune City and the Olgas Zoological Gardens, with a connecting arm to the airport which would be of international standard for jumbo and supersonic jets.

"Dune City" could be a miniature version of Canberra nestled amongst the sand dunes between the Rock and the Olgas. Here money would be lost and won that would make our G.N.P. look ridiculous, for here would be the largest collection of casinos in the world. And at the Horseshoe Valley of the Olgas could be one of the world's strangest zoos, featuring all those unusual birds, plants and animals that once lived here and looked after by that strange, almost extinct, race of black men who also once lived here.

I don't think there would be too many bushwalkers visiting this nightmare place, but there might be some hippies living in communes in the camping areas and caravans on the outskirts of the area with electronic musical instruments and writhing bodies dancing to pop and jazz music and the screaming voice of a singer.

How would the tourist promoters and the visitors to such a "developed" tourist area regard the conservationists? Oh, these are the people who stop progress, hate developers and don't want tourists to see these natural wonders in comfort and style. Always talking about preserving this scorched, waterless, monotonous, lifeless land for posterity. Asking people to put up with dust in their suitcases or getting stuck in bogs when it rains, the heat and the flies. Trying to make it as difficult as possible for people to get to their destination - shocking roads, no water, no conveniences, no pubs and having to apply for permits. Spoiling people's fun and expecting them to walk and climb instead of catching a cable car or monorail. (To be continued).

WALKS SECRETARY'S NOTES - FEBRUARY, '74.

by Wilf Hilder.

- 1974
February
(1),2,3
- This abseiling trip down Davies Canyon is led by David Rostron. Magnificent scenery down this rugged canyon with its spectacular waterfalls and fern lined cliffs. Canyon bags should be taken as there is some wading in Sally Camp Creek.
- (1),2,3
- Camping at Macarthurs Flat this weekend with Jim Vatiliotis? Lush base campsite on the Flat beside ye Nattai River (with usual Nattai attractions). Starlights Trail is a well-worn track down to Macarthurs Flat and is well graded for the climb out of the gorge. Big campfiew and singalong Saturday night.
- Sunday 3
- Special excursion tickets and a silver train to Cowan for Elaine Brown's easy walk to Jerusalem Bay. Still plenty of wildflowers out this time of year and delightful views of the bay. Good tracks most of the way on this popular walk.
- (8), 9,10
- Full moon weekend and Roy Higginbottom is making the most of it on his Kanangra test walk. Good tracks to Cottage Rock and spectacular scenery all the way. Rough going along East Christies Creek and the Kowmung, with a steep climb out of Bulga Dennis Canyon to the Gingera Track. Book early for this test walk.
- (8), 9,10
- Another camping weekend - this time to Wolgan Valley with our worthy President in the lead. Base camp at Rocky Creek 'neath the shadow of the famous north wall of the Wolgan at Bark Hut Flat - see it in the moonlight. Singalong and campfire Saturday night 'midst the River Oaks. Plenty of swimming in the crystal pools of the river on this most scenic trip.
- 9, 10
- Saturday morning start for John Campbell's Claustral Canyon abseiling trip. Great scenery down this narrow canyon with its compulsory swims and abseils. Limited numbers on this hard trip.
- Sunday 10
- Special Excursion tickets to Minto on John Holly's walk to Bushwalkers Basin (better known to locals as The Punchbowl). Good tracks and pleasant scenery on this easy to medium walk with plenty of swimming at the Basin. Discover the delights of the unpolluted Georges River with Uncle John Holly.
- (15),16,17
- John Campbell is abseiling again - this time down the mighty Jerrara Creek into Bungonia Canyon. Magnificent scenery (until they mine all the limestone), with some compulsory swims and abseils in Jerrara Creek.

-
- February (15), 16, 17 - Beecroft Peninsula - base camp on the shores of the rolling Pacific Ocean with Jim Vatiliotis. Easy walks around the peninsula and along Jervis Bay. Beautiful scenery, wild-flowers and plenty of swimming on this trip.
- Sunday 17 - Uncle Joe Marton leads this Blackheath test walk down Govetts and up Neates Glen. Good tracks and outstanding scenery all the way - but a long climb from Junction Rock to Blackheath. Private transport will make this trip reasonably inexpensive - but please book early.
- 23, 24 - Saturday morning start on Helen Gray's Li-lo trip down the 'Gambie. Make sure your li-lo is in good condition before you launch it in Bell Creek or you'll have to swim all the way. Spectacular canyon scenery on this long paddling trip - but bring your waterproof frameless pack for maximum enjoyment.
- 23, 24 - David Cotton's organising a four ring circus - so he tells me, on his last Bee Walk at Darkes Forest. No clowning - he said it would be "The Greatest Show on Earth". Get your free tickets now.
- Sunday 24 - Full details for the Orienteering and Map Reading Training Day at West Head are to be given in due course - but you will need a Silva compass and a Broken Bay one inch to the mile (1:63,360 scale) Military map and your usual walking gear including lunch - but please note that fires are prohibited in this area. The walking involved will not be arduous and prospectives as well as members are most welcome to come and learn the basics of navigation and orienteering.

Meet just inside McCarrs Creek entrance gates to Kuring-Gai Chase National Park (entrance fee is 80 cents per vehicle) at 8.30 a.m. sharp. Members coming by train should catch the 7.35 a.m. electric train via bridge from Central, arriving at Chatswood at 7.58 a.m., and if you have let the organisers know you are coming there will be private transport waiting to take you to Kuring-Gai Chase.

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That brings us to the end of the present Summer Programme and time is running out for the March-April-May Autumn '74 Programme to be handed over to the Committee - and in fact the deadline is 31st January '74.

Just a note or two on this next programme might help you plan a trip or two - and without your help the club can't run a programme at all - all contributions gratefully received.

In March there are 4 weekends for walking (16/17th March is the Annual Reunion) with the full moon on the 8th (second weekend) and with low tides in early afternoon on Sunday 10th and 24th for those coastal walks.

M O U N T A I N *****

E Q U I P M E N T *****

* * * * *

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In April there are 4 weekends for walking including Easter 11th - 15th, plus Anzac Day, Thursday 25th. Full moon weekend is on the 7th (first weekend) and afternoon low tide Sundays are 7th and 21st.

In May there are 4 weekends for walking - most likely 2 or 3 for ski touring, judging by the last European winter. Full moon weekend is the 4th/5th May, with a low tide in the early afternoon of Sunday 5th.

I would only be too happy to suggest areas where you can lead a walk if you are not sure where to go. Please forward your proposed walk to me by phone (622-3353), by letter (Box 4476 G.P.O. 2001) or in person as soon as possible. The draft programme will be available each Wednesday night until 31st January.

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY.

While browsing through the magazines and circulars which were accepted at our November General Meeting, I came across the following in the Hobart Walking Club Circular, November 1973. Hobart Walking Club had adapted it from "Vision", magazine of P.F.A. South Australia 1963.

"How to Ru(i)n an Organisation

1. Don't attend meetings.
2. If you attend, come late.
3. When you attend, sit at the back and talk to the member next to you.
4. Hold back your subscription as long as you possibly can.
5. Don't bother about helping new members.
6. Never accept office. It is much easier to criticise than to do something.
7. If asked your opinion on a topic, answer that you have nothing whatever to say and then, after the meeting, tell everyone how it should have been done.
8. Do nothing more than is absolutely necessary - and when other members roll up their sleeves and do the lot, howl like mad about how the Club is being run by a clique."

Are any of these points applicable to the members of S.B.W.? Well, early as it may seem, the Annual General Meeting is barely two months away, so perhaps members would don their 'thinking caps' and give some serious consideration to the sixth point during that interval.

Sheila Binns,

Hon. Secretary.

I'VE HEARD OF TEST WALKS, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS.....

by Fran Christie

When I joined the ranks of prospective members I was warned about having to do two test walks and a test weekend. I bore up with equanimity. For the first month of walking I was practically a cripple each Monday. I put up with leeches, sand-fly bites, bull-ant stings, and a wrenched leg muscle that sent me off to the doctor. All in the name of being initiated into the mysteries of bushwalking, I thought.

But no-one warned me about kangaroos. Is it necessary in the process of becoming a fully-fledged bushwalker to be assaulted by a kangaroo? Because if so, I'm surprised anyone ever survives the period of prospective membership. Mine was a totally unexpected attack from a grey kangaroo at South Era during the New Year's Eve weekend. In the short bout that ensued I came off decidedly second best and had some interesting looking scratches down each side of my face to prove it. When I got back to work, I had to endure the howls of mirth and total incredulity of most of my colleagues. However, the scratches healed and I'm still a prospective member, though I hope for not too much longer.

Head bloodied but unbowed I'll press on till the prospective period is over, but all prospectives be warned - whenever you go walking, look out for the surprise kangaroo that may be lurking round any corner!

ON HOLIDAYS.

by J.B.

From New Zealand a young Aussie miss
Wrote home to her parents like this -
"I don't like their beaches,
But there aren't any leeches.
I'm having a good time. Love, Chris."

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THE CHRISTMAS PARTY.

by Elaine Brown.

A very successful Christmas Party was held at the Club Rooms on December 19th, the attendance being approximately eighty. As no introductions were needed at this party, it didn't take long for people to really get into the swing of things. There was plenty to drink, more than enough, and the supper was well worth waiting for. Some of the outstanding dishes were Spiro's spinach pie - only one thing wrong, it went too quickly; there was Phyllis Ratcliffe's home-made bread sandwiches, very tasty, (always check up on what Phyllis brings to a Christmas Party, she's an expert at cooking, remember last year the beautiful cake iced to depict a bushwalking scene?); there were a few cheese cakes (one made by a male member), also chicken pieces and a lot of other dishes too numerous to mention.

During the evening we had two items of entertainment, the first directed and narrated by Dot Butler was quite a humorous presentation of "The Forsaken Mermen", with Dorothy Pike as a mermaid who left her husband Roger Gowing with two young baby mermaids in his arms. Barry Wallace gave the sound effects and scenery changes (dressed in a black groundsheet he was supposed to be invisible as he rushed around), and Alan Pike in long white flowing robes was the priest.

Geoff Mattingley and Peter Miller also entertained us with a humorous sketch, we seem to have quite a bit of hidden talent in the club.

These two items helped to make the evening a success, and our thanks go to Dot, Geoff and Peter, and all the others who helped (including Bill Hall who poured the drinks, and those who blew up balloons, put up decorations, arranged the food, made coffee, etc. etc.) - a very enjoyable night.

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SOCIAL NOTES FOR FEBRUARY.

On 20th February a very interesting talk and slide showing will be given by Ray Powell and helped by Robert Bliss. Robert has won 2 gold medals at the International Gem Showing, the most recent one being held at the Opera House. Anything you care to know about rocks or gems, come along and ask these two experts, they will be only too willing to advise you. Perhaps you may have picked up a rock at sometime and you were wondering whether it was valuable or not, well bring it along and ask.

On the 27th February Kath Brown will give her slide showing on Fiji, there is no need to introduce Kath. I am sure the evening will be very successful.

BIRD PHOTOGRAPHS REQUIRED.

Rigby Services require colour transparencies of Australian birds, nests and eggs, habitat, etc. for a new bird book.

If you have one or more suitable photographs and are interested in their publication write to -

Sue Matthews, Rigby Services, P.O . Box 289, Norwood. 5067. S.A.

Authors of published photographs will be acknowledged at the side of each plate. Terms negotiable, closing date 30th March, 1974.

ANIMAL ANTICS 'ROUND GARRAWARRA.

by Kath Brown.

The four-day holiday weekend 29th December/1st January found ten S.B.W. members camped at various favourite campsites at Burning Palms. The weather was hot on the Saturday, then turned grey and there was light rain during Sunday afternoon and night, followed by two grey but warm days to finish off the holiday.

In consequence of the dull weather we spent more time wandering around than on the beach, and it was on a short walk over to Era that the grey kangaroo was encountered that "acted up" with one of the prospective members. Apparently there are a few kangaroos that have been spoilt by handouts from the shack-dwellers, so they hang around the settlement at South Era. This one evidently expected another handout, and was rather annoyed when it was not forthcoming. He did not seem very large at a distance, but when standing erect had a six-foot reach. I don't think he was vicious, but like all animals, had claws and they left some nasty scratches. He was quickly shooed away. The scratches inflicted on the victim's face were treated with antiseptic and fortunately have healed up very quickly.

The next "animal antic" involved a bush rat, which was observed on Sunday evening foraging around our camp site. The next day Gladys (in another tent at the same site) was most upset to find that the rat had not only raided her pack to get some bread, but had chewed through the fabric to do so. It left a five inch ragged gash in her fairly new pack. After this our group put all food, except that in sealed containers, in a string bag and hung it from a tree, where it seemed to be safe from the marauder. Down at another campsite the occupants were not so lucky. Elaine decided to give the rat a treat, so she left out two slices of bread. However, Mr. Rat decided that bread wasn't good enough, so although he took one slice, he then raided Elaine's pack and made off with a large hunk of cheese!

It seems that the "wild" animals of Garrawarra think that shackites and campers have their uses.
