

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
Bush Walkers, Box 4476, G.P.O. Sydney, N.S.W. 2001.
Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening from
7.30 p.m. at the Wireless Institute Building, 14 Atchison
Street, St. Leonards. Enquiries concerning the Club
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JULY 1976

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THE JUNE GENERAL MEETING.

by Jim Brown.

Being inconveniently placed only a couple of days ahead of the June holiday week-end, the General Meeting was fairly late getting going when all the transport and campsite plans for coming trips had been thrashed out. Not that this mattered greatly, as all the indications were of a fairly short business programme, and in fact the meeting lasted just 34 minutes, from 8.28 to 9.2.p.m.

One new member, Ray Turton, was welcomed, and we skipped through the minutes for May. Arising from our questioning of the fee for our P.M.G. box, it was mentioned that our box appeared to be the second smallest size available, and it was added that recent press announcements suggested a likely review of charges, possibly to our monetary advantage.

Amongst correspondence, as well as the usual bulletins and magazines was an advice from Hans Stichter that he would be going overseas for about 4 months and would be unable to do his representation at Federation, and the letters to Jess Martin and Edna Garrad, asking them to accept Honorary Membership in recognition of their long and valued membership of the Club. Both had accepted. We also learned that the lease of a piece of property above Coolana had lapsed and it was understood a Wollongong resident was seeking occupancy for recreational purposes.

The Treasurer next told us that working funds, boosted by the inflow of annual subscriptions at this time of year, and augmented by the \$55 from the auction and other unusual incomings, had risen from \$1146 to \$1576 during May.

A Federation report was presented, but as the monthly Newsletter now accompanies our magazine, the points raised were covered by the bulletin issued last month.

Walks activities were next reported, beginning with Neville Page's trip to Bonnum Pic on May 14/15/16. Intended to give instruction to newcomers, only one prospective member appeared, so the teaching "did not play a major part". Neville reported that, evidently following some earth tremors, Bonnum Pic is collapsing at the rim and the visitors' book has been brought back from the edge. Scheduled on the same week-end, Hans Beck's Nattai jaunt was altered to join up with the Bonnum Pic party. On Sunday 16th, Gladys Roberts led a trip into Cowan Creek, a pleasant routine walk with 25 present.

The second week-end under review had two advertised Friday starting trips, but the Kowmung jaunt of Tony Marshall did not proceed. Out towards Yerranderie, however, Bill Burke's team numbered 24, and experienced almost perfect weather, camping near the old court-house at Yerranderie. On the haul up Acetylene Spur on Sunday one or two of the party professed exceeding weariness, but all were back to the cars at 3.30 p.m. Sunday saw Margaret Reid's party of 31 going out from Wondabyne to Pindar Cave, a pleasant uneventful walk.

Over the 28/29/30 May week-end Barry Wallace took over the programmed Capertee Valley trip, finding many small cliffs which don't feature on the map. Several of the party topped Pantoney's Crown, while others retreated. Sunday saw an ascent of Mt. Airly, with excellent valley views. No news was available as to whether Barbara Evans' Nattai River walk had gone, but on Sunday there were two well-attended trips, Joe Marton leading 17 to Mount Solitary and back, whilst David Ingram tried a new approach to Marley via Cabbage Tree Creek, with 24 in attendance. The creek is well-named for its stand of palms, and duck and cranes were disporting on the lagoon near its mouth.

On the first week-end of June the two Friday night trips were amalgamated, with Peter Miller leading basically the walk originally to be taken by Hans Beck. A small party of 4 went via Splendour Rock to the Cox and back up the Cox, with chilly fording reported. One of the Sunday walks didn't go (voice from the audience "What, again?") but Alastair Battye took 17 out into the West Head country on a trip that gave good diversity of track walking, bush-pushing and rock-hopping.

In General Business, Neville Page enquired if we had submitted any proposals for the Paddy Pallin Foundation allocations. He was advised, no, we hadn't, and then suggested we think of suitable projects for next year's funds. It was mentioned Federation had advanced three items with a total expected expenditure of about \$2000. It was left only for Peter Miller to say three members had dined together as a prelude to the evening's gathering, and the arrangement would play again in July. As said before, we closed at 9.2 p.m.

MEMO FROM THE SECRETARY.

Any amendments to the constitution to be included in the agenda for the Half Yearly General Meeting must be in the hands of the Secretary not later than the August General Meeting.

* * * * *

THE S.B.W. INDIA TRIP.(EPISODE 4)

by Marcia Shappert.

For some reason none of us liked Bombay as soon as we arrived. We booked into a hotel, then went into the city (we were half-an-hour away by train) to try to change our departure date. We were told our confirmed (in Sydney) seats were only stand-by. After a lot of haggling we finally got confirmed seats on the day we were originally booked.

We split up in Bombay. Len wanted to stay close to the city to be near the trains. All through India he was much more interested in trains than temples.

That evening Wayne, Neil and I went out for dinner and a few beers. Neil had heard about the red light area, called "The Cages" and we decided to have a look. We got a taxi to the area. It was one very narrow dark street, with young girls (they looked about 12-15 to me) sitting in small cubicles with bars on the doors. As I was getting out of the taxi, one woman ran up to me and pulled me towards one of the cages by my breasts! I screamed and ran off down the street, with Neil and Wayne after me. For the rest of the evening I stayed between the two guys. What an experience! Some kids ran up to Wayne, grabbed him by the leg and called "Daddy, Daddy!" We were the only Europeans in the area, so after a little while we left.

The following day we all had a late start. We decided as long as we couldn't leave Bombay, we might as well see some of the sights. We took a ferry from the famous Gate of India to Elephanta Caves. Meagre fare compared to the caves at Ellora and Ajanta. The caves are named after the huge elephant statue that once stood there. The six caves on the island date back to the 8th century but were vandalized by the Portugese who used them as cattle sheds and artillery grounds.

During the one-hour ferry ride to the islands Neil complained of pains in his chest. We all told him it was all the excitement of the "cages". We arrived at 4 p.m. only to learn the last ferry left at 6 p.m. There were millions of people there, so we decided to get into line at 5. It was already very long. We stood in line until 8 p.m. before we finally got on a ferry. It had been dark for a few hours, so it wasn't until we got aboard the ferry we noticed how ill Neil looked - and we still had an hour's trip ahead of us.

By the time we got back to Bombay, Neil was having difficulty breathing and could not walk unassisted. We helped him to the nearest hotel, which was the huge Taj Mahal, where we asked if a doctor could examine Neil. We were told that was a privilege only accorded house guests! Someone offered the information that there was a hospital nearby and we got Neil there in a taxi. The doctor's diagnosis was a heart attack. We were all stunned. We decided we would have to admit Neil. We had agreed to continue with the trip if anyone of us got sick, but now that we were faced with the decision it was difficult to do so. However, we felt we really couldn't do much for Neil and he was being well taken care of.

By this time it was nearly midnight. We wrote a letter to the Australian Consulate explaining the situation, tried to locate Len and arrived back at our hotel about 2.30 a.m. Much to our surprise Len was in our room when we arrived. Wayne, Denise and I decided to sit up and play cards till 4.30 a.m. when Denise had to leave for the airport for the flight to Aurangabad. (Neil was supposed to go with Denise, with the rest of us following on the 10 a.m. flight.) It was a long night. I barely got to sleep - about 5 a.m. - when the bell boy called me to the phone. They had been unable to contact any of Neil's relatives back in Australia.

Wayne and I had an early start to get Neil's things to him in hospital and back to the airport by 9 a.m. When we checked in at the airport we were told our flight had been cancelled. That meant poor Denise was waiting at the Aurangabad airport for us with only 15 Rs (U.S.\$ 1.50). We really had to make lots of noise before we got an assurance we would be put on the next day's flight.

The airlines put us up at a nice modern hotel and we all had a room to ourselves. We spent the day catching up on sleep and washing. Wayne spent the day trying to get a phone call through to Australia and Neil's family. Then he spent all night on the phone arguing with the phone operator about who would pay. It seems the hotel receptionist didn't understand what "reverse charges" meant. We were quite happy to leave Bombay the next morning at 6 and I'm sure it's one place I won't go back to by choice.

We arrived in Aurangabad and had a very happy reunion with Denise. We took our packs to a hotel and left immediately for a bus tour of Ajanta.

The caves are a series of subterranean Buddhist temples. There are 30 caves in all, carved out of a horseshoe-shaped cliff, itself surrounding a deep valley. "The caves and their artworks were not the product of one particular era but were created over a period of 8 or 9 hundred years - from about 200 B.C. to about 650 A.D. - and nothing is known about the monks and/or artisans who created them beyond the obvious fact that the Ajanta site was as remote in those days as it is today. The work, in other words, was that of an isolated religious order, executed through centuries of dedication."** The caves were 'lost' for many years and not rediscovered until 1819, when a British army officer, on the trail of a panther, stumbled on one of the caves.

The interior of the caves are covered with paintings depicting both myth and legend along with real life. Unfortunately, few of the murals have survived intact, and at present the Indian Government is underwriting an ambitious project to copy the cave paintings exactly as they were. For this reason, some of the best caves were closed and we were unable to see them.

We spent the day at Ajanta, returning to Aurangabad that evening. The next morning we took another bus to Ellora. Here there are 34 cave temples built from the 7th to the 13th centuries A.D. We had all heard about Ellora, but were really not prepared for what we saw. Each temple is carved out of what once was a solid mass of rock, without scaffolding, starting at the top and chiseling downwards. The difficulties must have

been monumental. Yet, each figure is perfectly proportioned, and in some cases the carvings are as intricate as lace. The huge elephants carved out of rock are standing near three-storied temples.

All of us were overwhelmed and spent the day exploring them.

On the Jaipur airport I got talking to two Americans on their way to Aurangabad. They were going to stay at one of the caves at Ellora. I spent some time looking for them and almost found them, but fell, gashing open my leg. Richard had been living in India for 8 years, so living in a cave for a month was nothing new to him.

Len, Denise and I got a motorized tri-shaw back to Aurangabad, leaving the others to catch another. However the tri-shaw driver wouldn't take them so far, so they decided to wait for the bus. Someone had overheard what was going on and flagged down a passing sugarcane truck for them. They had a very interesting ride.

We went from Aurangabad to Hyderabad by train - a 12-hour trip starting at 11 p.m. We were told there were only 4 seats available for the 6 of us, but not too long after the trip started two more seats were available. There were three of us in two compartments. Each compartment held ten, four on each seating facing each other and two on the luggage racks above. It was quite a night. I finally laid down on the floor between the two seats. I had to keep my eyes closed the whole time. There was an Indian man who had his foot dangling right above my face, and there were huge sores all over it. Wayne, Denise and Heather in the next compartment had a party all night with booze we had brought along from Aurangabad. Heather, at one point, got laughing so hard she woke everyone up. The next morning we breakfasted on salmon that Louise's mother had tucked into her pack. We really enjoyed it.

We arrived in Hyderabad about 11 a.m. and had to leave for Madras at 8 p.m., so we saw very little of that city. We did spend a few hours at the Salar Jung Museum. It houses the fantastic collection of one man in 78 rooms. I'm sure that if we hadn't all been so tired we would have appreciated it more.

From there we went to the Char Minar (an immense arch with four minarets) and the street of bangles. One shop after another sold brightly coloured bangles. "For a handful of rupees - maybe a dollar's worth - you could festoon your arm with a dozen or more delicately spun glass circles. There were lacquered bangles, golden filigree bangles adorned with little bells, even bangles encrusted with semi-precious stones."**

From Hyderabad we flew to Madras, arriving at our hotel a few minutes before midnight on New Year's Eve.

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(To be continued)

**"India on \$5 and \$10 a Day" by Jan Aaron.



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THE COLLECTOR.

by Owen Marks.

Most people have hobbies. Some people count bushwalking as a hobby. But what do bushwalkers do for a hobby? Idiot types of bushwalkers have a list of mountains they have climbed, canyons that have been descended or similar rare and wonderful deeds that they themselves hold quite important yet others deem as mad. I, too, have an achievement that is quite unique, yet one that has come upon me quite by accident.

I suppose it all started in Burma. I had booked a three day boat ride up the Irrawaddy River from Mandalay to Mykina, and suffering from brain disease at that time, I went first class. I would sit all alone under a canvas awning on the captain's bridge and with a waiter in a starched white uniform and would eat off a starched white tablecloth. I would see Burma passing by whilst eating and drinking water from cut glass tumblers. A succession of dirty villages, seediness all around. At night the boat would pull up at some wharf and I'd walk around and talk to all and sundry. I was asked home by a local and when I walked in the mother laughed so much she was rolling around the floor in pain. She had seen us coming and it reminded her of the legend of the black and white swan. I never found out what the legend was. Anyway in three days the boat was arriving at Mykina, which is quite close to the Chinese border, when I was down at the back of the ship and I saw the cook bringing up buckets of river water. You have guessed correctly; that is what I had been drinking the whole trip. I never knew it then, but it was the beginning. My hobby Famous Rivers I Have Drunk.

In Egypt lies the Everest of River Drinkers. The Nile starts in two places - Uganda and Ethiopia. Both Blue and White Nile pass thousands of towns until they converge at Khartoum. Then through the Sudan, down the cataracts until Egypt is reached. Lake Nasser extends from the border to Luxor where the famous dam is. At Luxor I shall start my story.

I was the only passenger of European complexion on the 3rd class section, which happens to be a long punt that is pulled by a boat complete with engine and houses the first class riff-raff. Even though I was first aboard the punt when it arrived all the crew sold spaces to the passengers. This they'd do by spreading out carpets. There was a space about one foot wide with no carpet on it and my sleeping bag was there in 20 seconds, and I lay down immediately. Fait accompli. I wasn't very popular. The train arrived from Cairo and the punt was overloaded by the wildest looking mob in history. My section of the punt was then occupied by a family of three camel traders, who would place their own carpets down and await the trip. They were quite remarkable. It turned out that they had sold 1000 camels which they had driven down from the Sudan to Cairo or somewhere. I asked how much camels were worth in Cairo. £100 each it seems. Times 1000 = a small fortune. They were armed and as well had curved knives on their upper arms under their robes. They had no fear from me, so they became quite friendly. I gave them my eyedrops, but the oldest started to drink it. I told him to lay down and I would drop in the liquid. He was very frightened and I think he thought I was going to kill him. I was down on the

carpet on my back and he was shouting in Arabic and jumping on my stomach. His sons pulled him off me and I gazed at the ruins passing by and brushed off this incident.

Abu Simbel ahead, and the boat pulled in and I was the only 3rd class person off. There were two New Zealanders, retired, from 1st class plus four or five Nubian types. Abu Simbel was swarming with Swedish engineers with 2 ft. long syringes that they were injecting into the porous stone that makes up this rock out temple. (If you cast your mind back, this was the temple that was to have been jacked up to avoid being flooded. It finally was cut up and rebuilt with U.N. help on a cliff above its old site.) Myself and Kiwis wandered around with these Swedes as our guides and we all had a wonderful time. Going out into the sunshine, we were flabbergasted. The boat was gone. No toot, no nothing. There going upstream and rounding the bend was our transport.

The Kiwis laughed and said "They will return soon". Two hours later they weren't so sure. What to do? A 20 mile walk along the river bank to a road where a jeep could take us down to the Sudan border, where the boat would be and the Sudanese railway began. But first how about a nice cold drink? We would have to walk all night as it would be too hot etc. The train went once a week, and who would know if all our baggage would be stolen. Yes, a cool drink would be most grateful. From the hessian bag came cool water that was like an angel weeing over my heart. Yes; it came direct from the Nile. I went down with one of the scientists to refill it. They have been drinking it all the year and they say it is pure. It can't be seeing how it flows through all that filth, but they had no effects. Neither did I. Three hours after we had been stranded a toot was heard and our boat was coming back. My camel-trading friends had missed me the moment the ship had sailed but the captain had refused to turn back for them (Me, actually). Later on during 1st class afternoon tea time the Kiwis were missed and the captain was really frightened of three foreigners having to wander around the bleak border regions alone without any security, so back he came.

We were paraded before the captain like naughty children and I was asked to join in a meal 1st class. I asked the waiter if the water was from the Nile because I could recognise the taste. We laughed and I went back to my friends. I always have happy memories of Abu Simbel; nowadays there is a hydrofoil express service and it's all changed.

In the U.S.A. is the state of Montana. A lovely part of the world and the beginnings of the Missouri. I was hitching and the driver said, "How about a drink of the Missouri?" The road passed over a little creek, a crystal clear stream with its label "Missouri River". If an American is willing to drink water from a creek you can be assured it is purer than melting snow. That's how easy the Missouri was. The Mississippi was only slightly more difficult. I was hitching from Canada and my first night was at Leech Lake. This was the source of the Mississippi (which I never knew until I came across it) and I drank from the clear waters. I didn't see anyone drinking, as the camp site had tank water, but it was crystalline and cold.

In Switzerland the River Drinker can knock off the Rhine and Rhone

in only a few hours of walking, or with a car in half an hour. There is a pass called the Furka. On one side is the Rhone, the other the Rhine. Both are drinkable and indeed it is THE thing to do. While I will admit that the Beautiful People and Jetsetters are noted by their absence, groups of tourists in V.W.s and cyclists drink from the snow and glacier fed streams. I was cycling around Switzerland and the only water available was what was by the roadside. These passes are quite high and steep and I was always hot. And when there is such magnificent scenery and gushing streams to guzzle, it is no trouble at all to add to one's list of Rivers.

The Amazon but not quite. Outside Cuzco is a slight pass that all the tourists cross going to Macchu Pitechu. The train climbs out of the ancient lake bed and goes down the Urubamba Valley. The famous Peruvian fortress where I was fortunate to camp in, got its drinking water from the hill overlooking the town. This same water flows into the Urubamba River, which in turn becomes the Umayali, becomes the Maranon (the Amazon's original name) and that in turn becomes the Amazon as we know it today. I had drunk from a stream that fed into the Amazon's furthest tributary. I wonder if that would hold? Correspondence will be entered into.

Last Xmas with Helen Gray and Frank Taeker we were in beautiful down-town Benares. The Holy Ganges flows through to the Bay of Bengal all the way from Tibet. Early one morning we all walked down to the steps near the tilted submerged temple. Let me describe the surroundings. Behind us were 100 yards of steps climbing up to the base of the palaces. These buildings have a remarkable drainage and sewerage works. Simply it works like this - channel onto the top step and it will cascade down to the river. While we were watching along came a lad with a flat stone under his arm and a parcel under the other. It turned out to be a young goat that may have been killed for a sacrifice that very morning. He tied the stone to the animal and heaved it into the river only 20 ft. or so from where the pilgrims were immersed in their ablutions and prayers. Upstream 100 yards or so the burning ghats were blazing merrily and bones and ash were being plopped into the murky waters. Maybe you think that the ashes purify the water? That would be cancelled out by the ruling that all small-pox victims along with lunatics and babies are thrown in without burning or any preparation at all, apart from prayers.

We were assured by these very same devout Hindus that here in Benares a miracle takes place. (Benares is the centre of the Hindu cosmos. When the world will come to an end, Benares will miss out. Good for an investment, eh?) The River Ganges at this very spot where we stood, becomes pure. It has been proven beyond all doubt. The scientists at the Universities; Government analysis has verified it, and so have thousands of ordinary Indians who have been drinking it for centuries or millenia. They take it home in bottles for their loved ones and for their local temples and shrines.

Of course I didn't drink it. Not enough dedication or drive. Certainly my hobby is now in tatters; River Collecting is all over for good. There must be other interesting things to collect! No doubt there are other readers of this magazine who collect strange things, and are bursting to tell. I'm sure the Editor would like to hear from you; this magazine will publish anything.

HAPPY COLLECTING!

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DAVID'S BEE WALK. SEPTEMBER 1975.

by David Cotton.

This little trip attracted 52 people, quite a remarkable effort considering that they had organised transport arrangements themselves as I was rather busy at the time. Whilst people were arriving and getting settled down to do a little relaxing in the sun, I was rushing around tidying up the place, putting the door on the toilet and getting organised.

The show began in a rather confused vein, as I had mislaid my set of notes and had to work from a set of 'roughs' from the beekeeping book that I was writing. After the practical demonstration morning tea was organised and a large crowd of people bustled around my little garden kitchen boiling up billys of tea and looking like a swarm of bees around a honey pot. During morning tea about 12 pounds of honey comb was consumed together with 4 large brown loaves of bread and half a pound of butter.

Whilst morning tea was in progress I spent a few hectic moments hunting a small group of people out of my little humpy. When I am busy, housework slips sadly to the bottom of my job list, and besides, housework is not an area in which I shine.

The walk was a little late in starting, so after a brief stop to inspect the waterfall it was off downstream. After a rather hurried lunch we continued our walk down the creek to the track leading to the property where we had left some of the cars to ferry the people back to the Orchard.

All in all it was a rather hurried business and we could have done with at least another hour to have really enjoyed the pleasant walking conditions, weather and scenery.

I was amazed that no one had become lost on the walking part of the trip, quite a lot of people were observed scrambling out of the bush in many different places and some were even caught disappearing along wrong tracks and ridges.

An added bonus for the finish of the trip was a visit to the 'Burnett's' cacti establishment where an unbelievable variety of cacti are on display, (from memory, I think there were over 12.000 different varieties on display). Quite a few people indulged in modest purchases of rare and exotic cacti in small square pots. This was a tremendous finish to what I felt had turned out to be a very exciting and pleasant day.

DETAILS OF DAVID COTTON'S BEE WALK.

To be held on Sunday 29th August at Glenburnie Orchard, Darkes Forest.

The program will begin at 9-30 am., with a short discussion on the social and biological life of the honey bee. This will be followed by a practical demonstration of inspecting a bee hive.

Morning tea will be provided consisting of bread, butter and honey-comb fresh from the hive. Please bring your own cup.

After morning tea a short easy walk will be undertaken down ~~O'Hares Creek~~ via a picturesque waterfall and through a ~~delightful~~ area of natural bushland where a lunch break will be enjoyed at one of the many tranquil pools along the way.

HOW TO GET THERE.

Travel south along the Princes Highway through Waterfall, keeping to the Highway, DO NOT take the tollway, Darkes Forest turn-off is about 4 miles south of the Stanwell Park turn-off, and Glenburnie Orchard is the first farm on the right hand side about 2 miles from the Highway.

Persons requiring transport should see me at the clubrooms.

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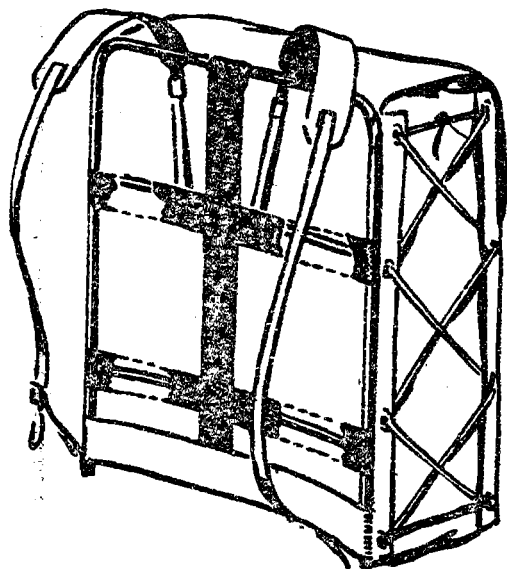
BEE FILM NIGHT.

To be held on Wednesday night 25th August at the clubrooms, The films to be screened are different to those shown some time ago and include: 'SECRET IN THE HIVE' ? ' HONEY, NATURES LIQUID GOLD', narrated by Roger Climpson. and 'HONEY HARVEST'. These films are on loan by courtesy of The Australian Honey Board, and should provide an enjoyable evening of fascinating entertainment.

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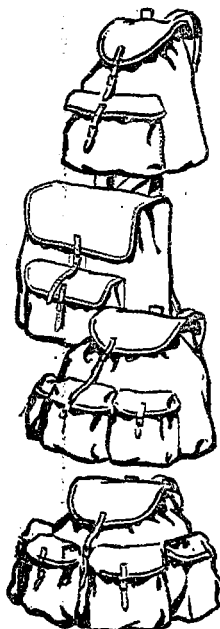
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This 'shaped' rucksack is excellent for children. Use-full day pack. Weight 14ozs.

SENIOR RUCKSACK

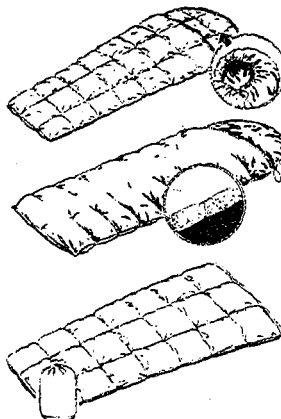
A single pocket, shaped rucksack. Suitable for over-night camping. Weight 1½lbs.

BUSHMAN RUCKSACK

Has sewn-in curved bottom for extra comfort in carrying. Will hold 30lbs. 2 pocket model 1½lbs. 3 pocket model 1½lbs.

PIONEER RUCKSACK

Extra large bag with four external pockets and will carry about 40lbs of camp gear. Weight 2½lbs.



KIANDRA MODEL

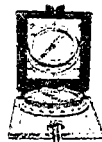
Hooded bag. Extra well filled. Very compact. Approx 3½lbs.

HOTHAM MODEL

Super warm box quilted. Added leg room. Approx 4½lbs.

SUPERLIGHT MODEL

Half the weight and packed size of regular bags. 9" x 5½" dia. 2lbs.

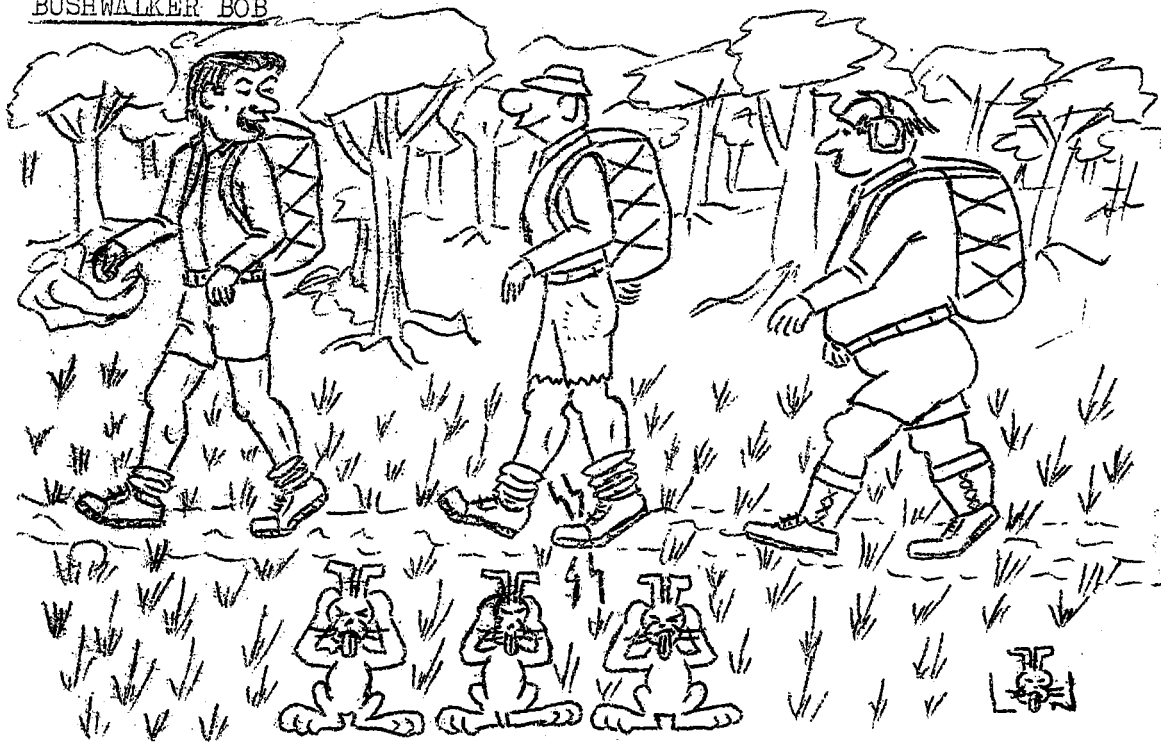


Everything for the bushwalker, from blankets and air mattresses, stretchers, boots, compasses, maps, books, stoves and lamps to cooking ware and freeze dried and dehydrated foods.



Paddy Pullin

69 LIVERPOOL ST. SYDNEY - 26-2686 61-7215

BUSHWALKER BOB

"New walking shoes?"

WALK NOTES.

by Len Newland.
(Phone 432419 (B))

WALKS FOR AUGUST - Refer to Walks Programme for route details.

TEST WALKS:

- August
6, 7, 8 - Kanangra Walls - 36 km with Tony Denham. Splendid views with some big descents and ridge climbing.
- Sunday 8 - Narrow Neck - 20 km with Joe Marton. Look over Katoomba and Jamison Valley from the very narrow ridge. Ropes may be needed - talk to leader first. Rough going in Cedar Creek.
- 13,14,15 - Megalong Crossing - 35 km with Alastair Battye. Walking alongside water almost all the way in the famous Cox's River area.
- Sunday 22 - Mt. Hay Road. (Blue Mountains near Leura) - 15 km with Victor Lewin. Spectacular views of Grose Valley. Steep descent to Blue Gum Forest and then climb out. Track all the way.

WEEKEND WALKS:

- August
- 6, 7, 8 - Cox's River Exploratory trip with Geoff Bridger. Could be rough - distance may not be very great. Try it.
- 13,14,15 - Myall Lakes with Tony Donham. These beautiful lakes north from Newcastle are threatened by the sandminers.
- 20,21,22 - Kangaroo Valley area with John Fox (who now has a home telephone No. 416955). Exploratory trip from Fitzroy Falls to Coolana. Could be rough.
- 28,29 - Cox's River area - Saturday morning start. Hans Stichter is going overseas and will not be able to lead this walk. A volunteer leader needed. Carlon's Farm - Breakfast Creek - Cox's River - Galong Creek. 20 km. A good medium walk for prospectives with beautiful scenery and interesting climb (not difficult) up the waterfalls of Galong Creek - you normally don't get wet. Contact Walks Secretary if interested.

DAY WALKS:

- Sunday 1 - Woodford - Glenbrook Creek with Len Newland. 14 km Easy. Train 8.10 Country - tickets to Woodford.
- " 1 - Waterfall to Engadine via Kangaroo Creek with Meryl Watman. 18 km Easy. No water at lunch stop, so no fires. Train 8.20 E. - tickets to Waterfall.
- " 15 - The Basin - West Head Road with Peter Miller. When he put this walk on the programme Peter didn't look up the tide table, but your feet at least are guaranteed to get wet.
- " 15 - Blaxland to Springwood with Jim Brown 15 km. A walk uphill up Glenbrook Creek is probably what makes this walk medium. Most people walk down Glenbrook Creek. Quite a lot of tracks near Springwood.
- " 22 - Minto - Georges River with David Ingram. Roads, tracks and a little scrub along parts of George's River south of Liverpool. 13 km.
- " 29 - Waterfall - Kangaroo Creek with Sheila Binns. Track walking in an area where the spring flowers should be on display.
- " 29 - Bee Walk at Darkes Forest with David Cotton. Contact David at the club room about transport, rendezvous and time. David has beehives and a lot of knowledge about bees. Maybe honey for morning tea. This can be just a picnic, or a walk around Darkes Forest as well.

FUTURE WALKS: Closing date for the Spring Programme is August 4th. So would you please decide to put a walk or two on and let me know the details A.S.A.P. Test Walks especially welcome (note only four in August).

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO KALA PATTAR!

by Gordon Lee.

Here I sit in a grotty, noisy, rat-infested, stinking (there's a cesspool outside the window) hotel room contemplating the enormity of the task of writing my first - long overdue - instalment of the journal of The Adventures of Marco Lee and Lin. I have decided to call this installment - "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Kala Pattar". Climbing Kala Pattar was in a sense a mere nothing when compared to the hazards, the obstacles, which had to be overcome getting there.

Bangkok, for example. If you can survive the chaotic traffic (definitely no place for the unwary) and the pollution, then watch your step, you may be caught from above. Literally millions of martins (I think) roost on the overhead wires at dusk and if they come to rest, their metabolism certainly doesn't. Then there's a chance you may be drowned in a kong (spelt "klong" but when pronounced that way is completely unintelligible to a Thai). You may be hightailing (sorry) longtailing peacefully - if this occupation can be called peaceful. The Thai boatmen have developed the useless habit of revving their motors incessantly. I have digressed - peacefully, when a string of longtails longtailing in the opposite direction threaten to swamp your frail craft with their huge bow waves.

Back to the traffic again. Pedestrian crossings in Bangkok are only a means of gathering the citizens in one place so that the motorist can bag one - somewhat like the beaters on a shoot. Someone informed me on good authority that there were 100,000 traffic rules in Bangkok - one for each driver. Still there seems to be few accidents.

Language of course has to be coped with wherever you are, and when you get your songs and (psalms) sams (numbers) mixed, then you're in trouble. Or perhaps it's the kais and KAIS - chicken and egg depending on pitch - so you order an egg and instead get a confounded chicken.

And when browsing through Theives Market it could take an immense summoning of word power to prevent being whisked off by the Grrr!. Wow!! luscious (nice) young ladies leaning on the parking meters. Lin was no end of assistance. I have since had my arm replaced in its socket. Couldn't even get a look at the Sins of Bangkok - tops off in 10 seconds bottoms off in 15 - two of the local gendarmes wandered in, not without warning. There was a flashing of lights, dressed ladies replaced the undressed, so the tops remained covered and bottoms unrevealed.

The public transport system works well. No bus in Bangkok is ever full - there is always room for one or more passengers. They hang out of the doors like a human bunch of grapes with hangers-on on the hangers-on. If you survive all this and make the maze of the bus routes work for you, then you can travel anywhere in the city for 75 setung (1,000 = \$1). But don't become too blasé. Just to confuse you, now and again a bus appears where it shouldn't or doesn't appear where it should.

Eventually we arrived in Kathmandu. Once again the battle to get to Kala Pattar was mounted. You quickly learned to duck for cover

across the Lamjura Pass at 11,580'. There were plenty of people willing to offer you a flight - at a price. Some even offered to let us charter a whole plane. Thinking we were all set to fly out for \$U.S.35 we fronted up in the afternoon to confirm. "So sorry, no flight, they flying in rice." Fair enough, rice is more important than bodies. Next time, "Yes we have flight. Be at airport 7.00 a.m." Whee!! we're off. Don't count your chickens, there's many a slip. Airport, usual Kathmandu fog unusually heavy. 11.00 a.m. no plane, no flight, back to K'du.

"Yes, we have flight," (we've heard that before). "Be at airport" (we've heard that before). Sorry, I forgot to mention the snow and the weather and - Whee!! we're off at last! Remember the chickens. Single engined, turboprop Pilatus Porter (Swiss), 5 passengers and luggage. A "fair dinkum" air ride, cheek to jowl with the mountains, but all ended in frustration. Clouds blew in just as we approached the strip. So back to K'du.

"Yes, we have - " -- you only half listen, dragging, dull, hopelessly you get out to the airport once more. Gee, our stuff is actually being loaded. Surprise, surprise we are actually being loaded. Get to sit next to the pilot even. Confidence begins to flow back into the system when he gives us the latest on the weather and condition of the Lukla strip. When he informs us that he has had 6,000 flying hours in Nepal, what more could you want?

But confidence drains to a low ebb when you look out to see a wingtip brushing a dirty great mountain, or you look down as you go over the pass before the strip to see what looks like 10 feet of air under the wheels. And there's the strip looking like a match stick and half as long. Snow covers everything with a glistening, brilliant, pure white eiderdown, ruptured here and there by the houses that poke their way through it. "I'll take a look at the strip to see what sort of job they've done." So he throws (quite literally) the plane into "wheely", buzzes the strip at about 6', corners sharply parallel to strip causing our jaws to jam together and stomachs to bang on the floor. Another turn, straighten up and drop in for a perfect 3 pt. landing - what a pilot!

So we step out into this fairyland at 9,000' in brilliant sunshine and blue skies. We were at the starting point of our trek, the object of the visit to Nepal.

That afternoon we once again joined a young Sherpa we had met and talked to at the airport. He invited us to visit his home, to which we agreed, it being about 4 hrs. walk from the strip. So off we set in high spirits. It transpired that Ung Pemba was in higher spirits than we had suspected. The local chung and rukshi had (to put it mildly) caused a state of inebriation. And don't think the happy drunk Aussie husband who brings home some of his tipsy mates "to see the missus and have a feed" is unique. Here we were in Nepal 1,000's of miles from Australia experiencing much the same thing - with reservations of course, we were sober. Because the language was Nepalese and the people Sherpa made no difference, the reactions were universal.

However the atmosphere cleared, friendly relations were established

when you heard a heavy clearing of throat above you. To be hit by a flying "golly" in any country would be an unpleasant experience - in Kathmandu you could drown as well. Everyone in Kathmandu, everyone in Nopal spits, and the streets and pavements (to give them a title) are literally cemented by spittle. Everyone in K'du seems to be afflicted by the dreaded K'du Kof and this is part of the cacophony of early morning when the old city comes to life at daybreak, when the coughers are joined by the ringers (bike bells), hooters (rickshaws), honkers (Toyota cabs) and the talkers.

But thank heavens it is peaceful and quiet after the bustle of Bangkok. Things quieten down after 8/9 p.m. and by midnight the space is as still as a grave. Where the myriads of people disappeared to was and has remained a mystery.

When shopping in K'du it is advisable to wear a "crash hat" or World War II tin hat for the Nepalese have devised a method of stunning intending customers (other than other Nepalese) by installing doorways with low lintels. This is opposed by a high step so that if you don't bite your tongue as knee hits chin, and don't dent your dome, and don't trip then you have successfully entered - but wait, but wait, as with spider and fly you have come into the parlour, and it sometimes can be harder to get out than it was to get in. Each shopkeeper tries to extract the rupees from the tourist's wallet and will keep showing you item after item even though you insist "I'm only looking".

Every day you run the gauntlet of "Hello one rupee"; "You want hash?"; "Sahib, Sahib", (pointing to mouth, other hand out palm up); "You want postcard?"; "You buy Tibetan goods? Many things, come I show you".

If this is not enough to bend the mind you are faced with the riddle of the maze of the Old City street system. These are strung together spiderweb-fashion and from any one of the many "squares" you can shoot off to any point of the compass. Don't, please don't ask a Nepalese for directions. You will inevitably be confronted by "You go straight". Any ordinary person like myself interprets this as "Keep as near as possible to a straight line". It is equally obvious to a Nepalese that all you have to do is take the first fork left, the second street on the right, turn the next corner left and there you are. I have never yet "gone straight" and found myself at my destination. I'll deal with Nepalese "short cuts" later.

Flying out of Kathmandu to Lukla, or trying to, was again fraught with hazards. A word of explanation. Kala Pattar is virtually the end point of the Everest Base Camp Trek to the east of K'du. There are several ways of getting there. Walking is one. You have to walk anyway to cover the final stretch. You could fly to Jiri, Paphlu, Lukla or Songhoche. Each of those in order brought you closer to your objective. The most popular and easiest (?) was to get a flight to Lukla. This put you about 6 days walk from Kala Pattar.

The decision had been made to fly in and walk out. Normal walking route is commenced from Lamsangu, some 5/6 hours bus ride from Kathmandu, then 150 miles walk across the grain of the country, rising at one stage

and we were fed and watered, plied with hootch - rukshi - almost to the state of our Sherpa friend - given our first taste of Sherpa Tea, prepared in traditional manner in traditional vessel likened unto a crude bilge pump. The brew is an almost undrinkable mixture of some Tibetan stuff (which must come from Tibet), rancid yak butter, tea and salt. Duhd Chiar (milk tea with sugar - when you ask for tea this is what you get) made in the same manner was beaut.

We were asked to stay the night. Having nothing better to do we agreed. Were provided with bedding, a bed and a room. Lovely. But pause, dear reader, to take stock. You are informed on Nep. doorways but not houses. Most houses are two-storied. Animals (yaks, goats, cows, hens) and other things occupy the ground floor, humans the upper. To get from one floor to the other you have to negotiate the most precipitous, narrow staircases imaginable, turn sharply on to an upper landing and in this instance cross an unfamiliar room, the doorway complicated by a built-in seating bench projecting 18" from the wall, fronted by a small table. Remember, I was wearing hikeboots.

Now I am not young anymore and my bladder is the same age, well worn but worn well, but aged. During the night, pitch black inside the house, likewise inside the head, my bladder gives me the message. Not wishing to disappoint anyone, let alone myself, I must of necessity, exit. Get up, put on boots, struggle with unfamiliar door bars, lift leg, duck head, stretch over bench, miss table - quietly, quietly and hang there tettering acrobatically, pointed toe fluttering about trying to find something solid on which to lodge. At last you get through the door, cross the room, along the landing - that was easy - miss the sharp right, backtrack slowly, feel for each step and gingerly lower yourself down, all of this accomplished gropingly like a blind man, for such you are. On bottom, heap of unknown substance on left. But this is easy, there's a full moon and light is filtering through chinks in the door.

Outside the air is sharp-edged cold, the gems of the heavens picked out on a midnight blue; and the shimmering, dancing sheen of the descending moonbeams lights this wonderland with a pearly luminance. Return to bed eventually after more acrobatics, only to find in the morning that our hosts had thoughtfully provided a torch at hand near the bed for just such an emergency, but neglected to inform us.

Engaging porters can be quite engaging, time consuming, infuriating and costly. Since not even the best of us can tell what the effect of altitude will be it was decided to hire 2 porters, mine at least till I found out how I was going to perform. Like the "new chums" we were, we hired one for Rs.20 and one for 15 plus food - a big mistake as we were to find out.

We moved off just before dinner for Thumbug, below Namche Bazaar. After about an hour I took my pack for an hour (it was about 16 kg) and found it no trouble, however I saw trouble but didn't recognise it - my porter had a limp. Stomach trouble as well. When you saw the mounds, no, hillocks of rice these fellows shovelled down their gullets you realised the foolishness of your agreement. And it wasn't one hillock that disappeared but several.

The sheer joy of "hitting the track" was almost overwhelming. The poetry of the landscape even at this stage put a spring in your step. There was relief at leaving Kathmandu and getting your teeth into the real meat and this whetted our adventurous appetites - we were off to Kala Pattar! Clear skies, crisp air, light snow underfoot and bright sunshine made the climb to Namche Bazaar (although I took my pack halfway up) a pleasurable experience. The added bonus of a couple of glimpses of Sagaramatha simply reinforced our *joi de vivre*.

I have never been a cow's best friend, nor would I say I was enamoured of the type of animal these hill people use as beasts of burden. On the contrary I have never been agin 'em, I haven't taken an active part in antibull demonstrations, nor waved flags at such saying "Down with Bull" - I hold the degree B.(Oxom).(Batchelor of Oxometry), but notwithstanding these undoubtedly worthy qualities one animal I sidestepped lightly (or so I thought) had the obvious intention of making a eunuch of me, coming close to doing so. It's hard to find words of soothing English and a tone to match to use to a Sherpa-speaking buffalo when its evil brown eyes are staring at you, set in a head to which is attached two feet of sharp horn, one on each side.

Two thousand feet to Namche Bazaar soon went underboot, we turned a corner and there it was, the largest Sherpa village, with its rows and rows of fawn brown stone buildings, snow-capped peaks dominating the horizon. There we found traces of the Calnans, they had passed through the checkpoint the day before.

I paid off my porter - it cost me of course - I had decided to go it alone and decision was taken to press on to Tengchoche. Laughing at altitude the party was wheeling along in fine fashion. But the altitude demon of the Himalayas, the real yeti, bared his teeth. An hour and a half from Teng. I thought I'd exchanged my hikeboots with a deepsea diver, my pack for a bag of corn and my lungs for bellows. Glad was I to see the gate of the monastery and gladder still to throw off my pack and sit down.

That greybearded, billowy, down-jacketed, shadowy figure in the corner was somewhat familiar - "Hello, Gordon!" Sharp handclasp and a thump on the back and we had caught up with the Calnans. We caught up on all the Calnans had done to date, theirs and our trials and tribulations. Heard their plans and noted with regret we would not be able to "catch" them - they would always be at least one day ahead.

Washing - simple matter. Washing machine, soap powder, a couple of rinses and hang it out. Eliminate the machine, take the source of the water 400 yds. away - downhill, and add 12" or so of snow, then lower the temperature minus something °C, and you can appreciate part of the dilemma. Having done your washing, try to get it dry - ice evaporates with difficulty. Heavens! Clouds have blown up, get the washing. What you get is not what you expect. Instead of cold, wet, clammy flexible stuff you wonder what the hell you're going to do with these icecold, plywood cut-outs. In sunlight inside the house at Pangboche they refused to thaw. After having been thawed and part dried by the fire, damp tracksuits to go to bed in at -10°C can be uncomfortable!!

(To be continued)

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SBW. FIGURINE

Dinner before the next General Meeting will be at the STONED CROW in Willoughby Road Crows Nest. Meet there at 6.00 p.m. Licenced - Australian style food

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 11TH. - ALL WELCOME

Suggestions needed for CHEAP and INTERESTING places to eat

WORKING BEE

The next Coolana working bee will be held on 7th.-8th. August. Remember, many hands make light work. And you can recover the following Wednesday at the Stoned Crow. For details contact George Gray - telephone 86-6263

WANTED

Barry Tarver is interested in purchasing the following items second hand:

- 1 two man tent
- 1 child's sleeping bag

Anything to offer? If so contact Barry Tarver at 6/30 Cleland Road Artarmon, 2064.

SUBS.

If you haven't paid your current year's subs, the Treasurer is waiting with pen poised to start crossing off names. Act now! Send him something to cheer him up.

Member	\$8.50
Married Couple	\$10.50
Student	\$5.00
Non-Active Member	\$1.50
Magazine (if not a full member)	\$4.00