

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 should be referred to Mrs. Marcia Shappert - tel 30.2028.

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OCTOBER 1976

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JUST A SMALL CANOE TRIP.

by Wade Butler.

"Are you interested in a canoe trip?" I said to Marco.

"Yeah. Where will we go?"

"We could start in Queensland and follow the Darling River system down to the sea."

"And how long will that take," says Marco. "A week or two?"

"Yeah, yeah. More like six months."

That suited Marco so we built a canoe. It was a 15 ft. fibreglass canoe and capable of carrying 3 or 4 people plus luggage. All we needed were a few floods to get the rivers going and we would be on our way.

There had been a lot of rain in southern Queensland and so things looked all right about Christmas 1975, so we booked our canoe and ourselves on the train for Texas on the Dumaresque. We arrived at Brisbane to find our train to Texas had been cancelled as it was Christmas Day. We didn't want to wait 4 days for the next train so we decided to go to Dalby instead as we heard the Condamine was a roaring torrent and just about to flood Dalby. It was raining when we arrived at midnight so we slept in a shed at the railway. Next morning we bought some food, carried the canoe to the nearest gutter and started paddling. We followed a small creek down through the golf course and by midday had reached a great expanse of water which we figured must be the Condamine. The first bridge we came to we couldn't get under so we had to unload the canoe, get out, and carry it around.

Sometimes the river was hard to follow as water was just everywhere, so a lot of the time we didn't worry and just followed the main current or the line of gum trees. At first the river was rising about 2 ft. overnight but within a week we caught up to the peak and started sailing down the leading edge of the flood. There were stranded sheep and kangaroos and possums, and we even rescued a koala who had eaten all the leaves off his tree and didn't want to swim to the next one, so he was the captain of our ship for the next day until we made camp and set him free in the nicest gum tree.

By 3rd January we had already reached Surat, which meant our going was much faster than we had at first thought it would be. This, no doubt, was due to the very strong current in the river and a nice streamlined canoe.

We left notes at the Post Offices so that John or Sue could find us as they wanted to join us somewhere along the river. It was two months later when John finally caught up. However in the meantime we smashed our canoe. This was quite a good trick. We had paddled up to the weir just below St. George, got out and had a look. The water only dropped about 1 or 2 feet so we thought we would give it a go. We shouldn't have. As we went over it looked all right and then we got caught in a heavy backwash which was very turbulent and filled the canoe up with water. There was nothing we could do except jump out and swim down underwater, as this was the only way the current could drag us out.

We got out without too much trouble, waited around, and saw our beautiful canoe upside down and all smashed to pieces, and bits of gear floating down the river all over the place. We retrieved most of our gear, including our food pack which was saved by a very buoyant pack of Weet-Bix. Lesson one!

It took two days to replenish our gear and fix the canoe, now with a square front. We headed off down the Balonne not being too sure which branch to take when the river divided further down. As it turned out we didn't have to worry because we didn't see the branch anyhow and we ended up in Culgoa. Had we taken the other branch we could have ended up in the Narran which ends in a lake.

Every ten miles or so we would come across giant colonies of flying foxes hanging upside down in the paperbarks. As we went by they would leave their roost and turn the sky black and settle in another tree about half a mile further down. Sometimes we would see the same group four or five times before they decided to head back upstream. Bird life was very good - cockatoos, galahs, cranes, ibises, spoonbills, eagles, pelicans, ducks, waterhens, etc., and Marco spent a lot of his time until his camera was wrecked at the St. George weir, perched on the front of the canoe taking pictures. Every now and again we would stop at a homestead and find out where we were and often they would feed us up with lots of goodies. Once we even had a fortnight's supply of fruit, which was much appreciated.

One day we found an echidna swimming across the river. He was travelling very slowly so we decided to take him in. That night I heard a scratching at the canoe. I wondered what it was and then I realised I hadn't let the echidna out. I got out of my mosquito-proof tent and went over and with a paddle tried to get him out of the canoe. Meanwhile I was having trouble staying on the ground as the mosquitoes were just about carrying me up into the sky. The echidna wedged himself under the seat and I had lost three litres of blood so I decided he could stay there until the morning and went back to bed. Next morning I had to sink the canoe before I could get him out.

This country is very flat, whereas the country up till now was not so flat. We had been used to the river rising about 1 ft. overnight, so when we were looking for a campsite we wanted something at least one or two feet above the river level. We travelled for miles and miles and the highest bit of land was only 6 inches above river level, so well into the night we decided 6 inches would just have to do. It turned out quite O.K. as the river now was spreading out and not up; the locals reckoned a 12 ft. rise at St. George would only cause a 3 or 4 inch rise where they were.

We passed through Weilmoringle and Collierina which turned out to be only a point on the map that didn't exist at all. Finally we came to a giant-wide river that wasn't choked with ti-trees. This must be the Darling. At last we could test our sailing gear as the river didn't change direction every ten minutes. We hoisted sail as a storm was brewing. This is not ideal conditions as we weren't used to sailing. Immediately a giant gust of wind came and blew the canoe head over turkey and the sail sank, never to be seen again. Well, that was brief. Lesson No.2.

We reached Bourke on 21st January, much sooner than we expected. However Marco had had enough of sandflies, mosquitoes and paddling for a lifetime so he left in the pouring rain. For a city bloke he hadn't done too badly. I didn't want to give up now as we had only just, after 1,000 miles, reached the Darling River. So I loaded up with provisions and off on my merry way.

The next day I ran into a bloke fishing by the riverside. As I hadn't been able to catch any fish before, I asked him, "What's the story? How do you catch them?" "You dig up these big fat worms. They have all come to the surface now that the ground is wet." I tried that and after digging up half of New South Wales found a dozen nice big fat worms. It worked all right and that night I had about six 4-lb fishies to eat. I'm a gutz at the best of times, but I'm afraid they stopped me, and I had to leave half of one for breakfast.

Time passed quickly and fairly uneventfully for the next 1,000 miles, through Louth and Wilcannia - awaiting its highest flood ever recorded (37 ft. 9 ins.). Then on to Menindie. On Lake Wetherell I came across an old abandoned ruin. I couldn't believe my eyes (I'm a very untrusting soul). What I saw was a big tree covered in a giant grapevine with millions and millions of grapes on it. After filling my belly, plus a bit more, I filled the canoe up to the gunwhales, leaving only just enough room to get in. The fish had gone off in the last day or two. This, I found out later, was due to the lake. The fish couldn't get up through the regulators, and for some reason they don't like travelling downstream. Consequently the lake had no fish. However at the outlet of the regulator a girl was scooping up fish by the netfull. She gave me two or three nice big ones as I hadn't had any for the last couple of days.

I left there and paddled out into the sunset across Lake Pamamaroo. I realised, when I was out in the middle of the lake, I wouldn't get to the other side till well after dark. However, no good turning back, and as there was a light wind behind me I hoisted sail - a sheet of plastic this time. This worked quite well and to my amazement I was across to the other side before dark.

Next day I paddled through Copi Hollow to Lake Menindie. When I was out in the middle and couldn't see land except where I was heading I dived overboard and got my head stuck in the mud - it was only 10 ft. deep! That surprised me but I did manage to free myself and come to the surface again.

Through the outlet regulator, back into the Darling, and I paddled upstream to Menindie where who should I meet but John Reddell. So now there were two of us to travel the rivers to the ocean. We hardly went a day without giant fishes and heaps of grapes to eat. One day we even came across a paddock full of watermelons. As there were plenty about we loaded up 15 and headed off down river. Another day or two and we reached Pooncarie where the local postmistress filled us up with apples and grapes, plus a whole lot more to eat on our way. You can never complain of country hospitality.

The river started slowing down and widening with lots of rushes and reeds on the banks. We must be coming into Wentworth and the mighty Murray River. It was now 25th February, with two and a half thousand

miles of river behind us. The water in the Murray was clear but our dirty water turned the Murray brown.

Now we had left all the mosquitoes behind, the weather was getting cooler and we had only about 500 miles to go. There are numerous locks in this part of the river and it is quite ridiculous when they open - 200 ft. x 50 ft. locks to let our tiny canoe go through. A few more locks and a week later we reached South Australia and Renmark. The towns in S.A. on this part of the river are very pretty - nice and clean, lots of parks and surrounded by orchards.

The local fishermen said fishing was very bad since the Darling had turned the river brown and they weren't catching anything. Perhaps the last two months had taught us something because we didn't have any trouble; we were still catching our dozen or so every night.

Between Blanchtown and Swanreach we met Jack and Jackson - Jackson being the cat and Jack rowing a mighty rowboat. Jack was on compensation because he had a crook back. However he didn't find the rowing much hardship. Further down we met another cat, a tiny starved black kitten so I gave it a fish about twice its own size. An hour later there wasn't any fish, and there was a big fat belly lying in the sun.

On past Mannum, past Murray Bridge, and we reached Lake Alexandrina. We had heard stories about this lake, how 15 ft. speed boats had sunk in the heavy seas on the lake, and times when larger boats had to wait a fortnight before crossing. It took us two days; the second day the water was so smooth you could see reflections really well. Later on, however, a small wind came up and we were really battling to stop the canoe filling up and make any headway. Consequently we stuck to the shore and that night the wind calmed down. Finally we reached Goolwa on the 18th March, 1976, after a very worthwhile 5,000 kms.

Just to end it off, we paddled down to the Barrages, walked over the sandhills and had a swim in the Great Southern Ocean. As far as I know this is a "first", or if not, a "second", down this particular system. We sold our battered canoe in Adelaide after deciding not to paddle back upstream. And that's the end of the story.

* * * * *

FOLK DANCING - 10TH NOVEMBER.

7 p.m. sharp

All you dancers who enjoyed the Scottish Folk Dancing evening in September (and that was everyone) - we offer you one hour's worth of folk dancing per favour of the Kamerula Club (Brydon Allen is the experienced maestro - he's got the goods).

Come and get the blood coursing in your veins before sitting down to a couple of hours' earbash at the General Meeting. This is an experiment. If you like it we can make it a regular thing. Get-togethers with other clubs are to be encouraged. Be there!

* * * * *

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THE HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING.

by Jim Brown.

A rough count of heads at the beginning of the meeting showed about 40 present. The time stood at 8.17 p.m. A new member admitted a month previously, Ian Rose, received his badge and plaudits, and a little later Tanya Schell was greeted. One new member of September, Paul Douglas, was not present.

We concurred in August's minutes and, as a question arising, agreed that the catalogue produced by the Southern Cross camping equipment people could be included in an issue of the magazine on the basis of all postage costs being met, and no precedent created. We also learned that the meeting at Kangaroo Valley to consider the land behind Coolana had not reached an agreement, and all parties would now make their separate submissions to the Lands Dept.

In "Correspondence" we heard that the transfer of property to provide an easement for an electricity line across a section of Coolana had been signed by the Trustees and was now going to the Solicitor. The Treasurer's account showed our bread-and-butter funds to be \$1784 at the close of August.

No doubt the matters mentioned in the Federation report will have been covered by the bulletin which accompanied the September magazine, but there was one question which arose from an advice that the people now re-developing Yerranderie were asking for more direct road access - probably via Burragorang. We debated this and concluded we should tell Federation we were opposed to construction of a new road, or the opening to general traffic of the Water Board's access route. Alex Colley remarked on revived interest in the Greater Blue Mountains National Park project, with various bodies urging establishment of reserves around Bindook, on the Nattai Tableland, and the N.P.A. seeking the region north of the Colo River. Peter Scandrett commented on growing interest in bush parklands by the National Trust.

We now pushed on to walking activities, with John Redfern reporting on Tony Denham's Myall Lakes trip of August 13-15: what with bad weather and one car party which didn't reach the walking ground, things were not good and the trip was abandoned on Saturday afternoon. Alastair Battye's Megalong journey went generally as planned, but one member suffered an injury and two others returned with him: the depleted team went on, arriving back to the cars quite late on Sunday night.

Two day walks went ahead on Sunday 15th, Peter Miller's jaunt (attended by 5 people) on the West Head peninsular striking high tide and a neck-deep wade near the beginning. Thereafter some seldom walked areas were visited, with nice views along the Hawkesbury estuary. Your reporter's Glenbrook Creek trip was uneventful, and about 20 people took part.

For the following weekend there were three abroad on John Fox's Fitzroy Falls - Kangaroo Valley walk, the river being crossed downstream from Coolana and return by another ridge successfully carried out on

Sunday. Big crowds were away on Sunday, 12 attending Victor Lewin's Blue Gum Forest trip and 29 out with David Ingram to study streaking activities along George's River: surprisingly, Minto railway station proved elusive for some of the crowd on the return.

At the close of August Joe Marton inherited Hans Stichter's Cox's River jaunt, and a small group did the journey in the reverse direction to that programmed - details not to hand. Len Newland recounted the doings on the latest David Cotton/Bee walk - honey for lunch and a leisured stroll on Madden's Creek in the afternoon, and Sheila Binns' party of 19 on the Uloola trail had a pleasant, uneventful day.

The last weekend reported, Sept. 3-5, included Brian Hart's Brogers Creek walk, and John Redfern told of good views around Budderoo and Gerrin-gong Falls with return to Brogers Creek via a steep rocky stream. It was not known whether Tony Denham's south coast day walk went as programmed, but the other day walk north of Broken Bay had its share of events, including a cops-and-robbers pursuit of the ferry by a power boat with the tail of the party, then a walk through extremely good wildflowers, finishing at Wondabyne in the last glimmers of daylight - peak attendance was 19 on the few occasions that everyone was together.

The agenda for the Half-Yearly Meeting includes selection of a site and organising committee for the re-union of the following year. For the normal March Re-union (which is neither the 49th or 50th Re-union, by the way, as the club did not begin to re-une until a few years after its birth) we chose Coolana again and the names of Peter Miller, Peter Scandrett and the ubiquitous Spiro were noted as the basic committee members, with power to co-opt.

Then we did turn our attention to the proposals for celebrating our 50th Anniversary (the exact date will be 21/10/77). A good deal of discussion followed, but the resolutions finally carried envisage a three-pronged activity, which may be shortly stated as:-

(1) A bush re-union at a place easily accessible by road, and preferably with cabin accommodation nearby for older members who may not wish to camp.

(2) A dinner, probably at a City hotel or restaurant, and held on a Friday or Saturday evening.

(3) A special birthday issue of this magazine, produced by our own resources as usual, but enlarged and with illustrations; to be posted to club members and subscribers at no extra cost; but any extra copies to cost 50 cents.

A good deal of discussion hinged on the whereabouts for the bush re-union and dinner, and it was agreed that the President would talk with Ray Kirkby of the Dungalla Club, who could express some views for the club's senior citizens; Helen Rowan would investigate further a venue for the dinner; the details to be settled at the October meeting.

In general business, Geoff Bridger spoke with some concern of the effects on conservation programmes of the reduction in Commonwealth funding, which could even force some bodies out of existence. The usual announcements followed, and the closure came at 9.45 p.m.

* * * * *

Paddy's

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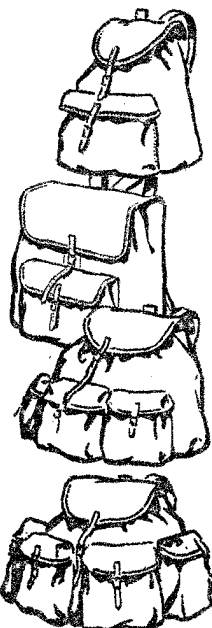
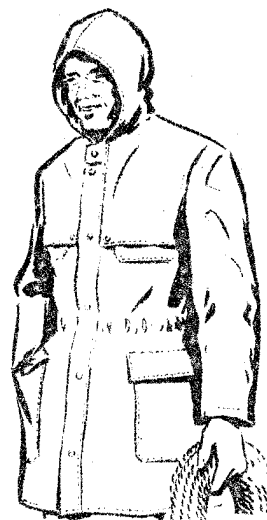


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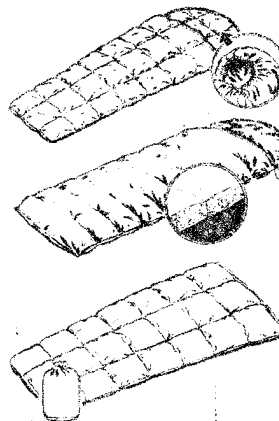
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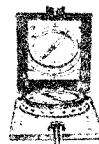
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Paddy's

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EMOTIONALIST CONSERVATIONISTS.

by Marie B. Byles.

This is mainly to express gratitude for the restrained and judicial attitude of the editorial in the August issue even while making a plea for the exclusion of powered vehicles from wilderness areas.

Perhaps it would assist the conservationists to adopt the editor's restrained attitude if we remembered that we should not get 'hot under the collar' about the misdeeds of others if we were not hating the same type of 'sin' in ourselves. This is a psychological fact. We do not worry about other people's misdeeds if we do not have basically the same failings ourselves. Next time we find ourselves getting angry, look within and find that underneath it is our own ugly side that we are subconsciously hating.

This does not mean that we must stop working for conservation. On the contrary it means saving our energies instead of wasting them on hating others who despoil nature.

In the case that the editor mentioned, the offenders were trail bike riders who are believed to have tied bushes to their vehicles, set them on fire, and dashed through the disused tunnels thereby destroying the exquisitely beautiful glow worms. They were doubtlessly perfectly pleasant lads, but they were considering their own fun regardless both of the needs of others and the needs of nature. In other words, it was their own self interests that guided their activities - just a lark, why not?

I like to think that bushwalkers, who were first among the conservationists following Myles Dumphy (the father of Mylo), would never do such a dastardly thing as those trail bike riders. But are we really any better, when we follow our own self interests regardless of the interests of nature and of other people?

When there was a proposal to take a road along Narrow Necks the bushwalkers to whom I talked about it, remarked, "Good oh! We can then get out to the Gangerangs (or whatever their pet objective) in a short week end." They were oblivious of the superb beauty of the Narrow Necks and the views that the cars rushing through would never reveal. They cared nothing that this area provided the best bushwalking country within easy reach of the railway; they knew nothing of the tourist type of bushwalker who 'adores walking' nor of the numerous children who enjoy it.

If we bushwalkers are seeking only our own selfish pleasures regardless of others and of the well being of nature, are we any better than those trail motor cyclists who were merely having a good lark?

On the boat on which my family travelled to Australia in 1911 there were toilet cubicles whose doors were high above the floor. My little brothers crawled underneath the doors, put the 'vacant' latch over and substituted the 'engaged' signal, and crawled back again. Then from a safe distance they giggled as the unfortunate steward climbed up and

from the top struggled to get the 'engaged' changed to the 'vacant' signal. We laugh at the little boyish prank. But what is the difference between their lark and that of trail bike riders with their burning bushes? In both cases something or someone was injured.

This is no reason for not making rules and regulations to prevent powered vehicles from entering wild bushlands by side tracks. But we cannot expect such regulations to be effective if we do not ourselves set the example of selflessness.

What about that electricity tower at the entrance of Coolana. Is it a fact that we tried to get more compensation than was offered? Is it not a fact that we did not need any money at all and that the tower was in fact a benefit to us. Why then did we selfishly seek for any money? Why did we not send it back?

We complain about rapacious land subdividers who take away our beloved bush. At the same time we try and get land for ourselves on the edge of bushlands and end by destroying more bush, and finally when the rates rise too steeply, subdivide it, stick out for the highest possible price - and watch more bush being bulldozed!

No wonder conservationists tend to get emotional and angry. We are most just as self-seeking as others.

Two new publications with a conservation objective have just come to hand. Before we bring out such publications do we ever remember that every sheet of paper used, directly or indirectly, helps to destroy the very trees which we conservationists help to preserve? And so let me end quickly before using more paper and helping to murder more trees!

* * * * *

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Make a diary note now so as not to forget the Club Christmas party to be held at the Club on Wednesday 15th. December. Further details in this magazine next month.

THE ANNAPURNA SANCTUARY.

by Peter Harris.

I thought I had typhoid, and thus delayed my flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara. The following morning all was well, except for a brilliant yellow tongue and a most revolting taste in my mouth, and it was with a feeling more of apprehension than enthusiasm that I boarded the Pilatus Portus at Tribuhaven Airport en route (at last) for Pokhara. With me was my sherpa/porter/cook, whom I had hired in Kathmandu, and who arranged the purchase and hire of supplies we needed. Once at Pokhara we hired another porter to carry some food and tent, etc., and within 20 minutes of landing we set off along the dusty trail from Pokhara bound for the Gurung village of Hengja, site of the first night's camp.

It was indeed a pleasant change to see the difference in culture between the Sherpa people and Gurung people, the most striking difference is the construction of dwellings. Sherpa houses are chiefly made of disorderly stones or mud, with either nonconforming slate or bamboo as roofing material, whilst Gurung houses are more neat, comprising walls chiefly made of mud, and either thatched or neat slate roofs. The Gurung people are less outgoing by nature than the Sherpas, and their mode of dress is more stereotyped.

At Henja we pitched the tent in the river bed. Having been in many similar, embarrassing situations like this one before, I was well aware of the possibility of rain and flood. Suffice to say, nature did not spoil my unbroken record, and early morning saw me floating, tent and pack in hand, through flood waters to high ground in the form of a leaking tea house. It was the only house that I have ever been in where full waterproof gear and umbrella were needed to keep dry.

After studying the rather suspect sediment in my tea, and standing over the water pot to ensure that it boiled, we made our way up the river valley to a tiny group of tea houses called Suikhet, and left the standard path to begin the arduous climb to Dhampus. The rhododendron forest was almost jungle-like in its density, with much lichen and mosses hanging from the branches, and with bright sunshine the branches were shimmering with the early morning rain. After a climb of 4,000 feet, and passing through the terraced village of Astam, we arrived at an inn on the ridge top. Here, at lunchtime, my sherpa complained of headaches, so feeling the part of the big white medicine man, I supplied him with two aspirin. Poor chap nearly died! How was I to know he was allergic to A.P.C.? I carried the pack and gear up to our campsite at Dhampus, and returned to the inn to assist the sherpa back to Dhampus.

From Dhampus, Machapucharre stands spectacularly snow-capped above the ridge, reminding one very much of the majesty of Ama Dablam near Khumjung. Beyond the ridge Phewa Tal (the lake at Pokhara) can be glimpsed, and as one goes higher the might and beauty of Annapurna Himal is seen through the trees, and presents a magnificent vista from Dhampus Pass. Dhaulagiri can also be seen above Ghandrung from this point.

About here I fell into conversation with a Nepalese farmer who was

later described to me as a "very rich man" because he owned 60 sheep. He was very keen for my little knowledge of fruit cultivation and described his country as a useless place which will grow nothing. Questions also directed at me were in regard to the number of wives I had in Australia, number of children from each wife, and my "extra-curricular" sex life. Being somewhat on guard, I bade him farewell at Landrang and made a most knee-jarring descent to the Mode Khola River, glancing unbelievably at the route up the cliffs opposite the village of Ghandrung perched high above the river.

A break at a tea house about one-third of the way up the climb refreshed me for the remainder of the ascent, and it was with a feeling of deep exhaustion that I stumbled into the Hotel Annapurna at Ghandrung, making all sorts of noises and signs for food and water. With me in the hotel were a French hippie, a Japanese couple, an Australian girl and a Frenchman who later accompanied me up into the Sanctuary. In this hotel you pay only for the food you eat, and nothing for accommodation, and the evening was passed by drinking much "chang", which is an alcoholic drink fermented from rice, and discussing the qualities of hashish, both good but more bad.

The following morning was wet, and as we made our way through the orderly, neat slate-roofed houses of Ghandrung, it was possible to see way up the Mode Khola Valley into the canyon area, about two day's walk away. I was shattered! The rain continued as we passed through the slate quarries for Ghandrung village, and finally took shelter in a tea house perched high on a ridge before the 2500 feet descent to the Khumnakhola.

Despite the inclement weather conditions the day was still hot, so we stopped again at Khumna Khola village for more tea. My most vivid impression of the place was witnessing, to my horror and disgust, two small children - a boy and a girl, urinating into the water channel from which came the water for tea. I almost choked on the liquid I was drinking.

With this village behind us, we were climbing very steeply prior to the ascent, and almost level with it. My Sherpa led me over a suspect track which I didn't think had been used since the time of Genghis Khan, and somehow, after passing through a most luxuriant rain forest, we arrived for lunch at the small gurung village of Chomro. My Sherpa cooked a most beautiful meal, and after 2½ hours, I could barely walk. We waddled off, crossing the Chomrung River on a stable footbridge, and then left behind the last traces of villages for the Annapurna Sanctuary.

More thick rain forest, comprising chiefly rhododendron trees and mosses with some large unidentified ferns and orchids kept us spellbound by its intense beauty and alpine fragility. There were many leeches on the ground, sometimes in a seething black mass of bodies, and I admired the fortitude of the barefoot Nepalis we passed who were returning to Chomro. There was a fleeing mass in the jungle which we later identified as a leopard near a pool of water. Thus, at Kulde Gar, where we made our camp near the British Experimental Sheep Station, I elected

to pitch a tent and seek its psychological safety, rather than brave exposure like a dead piece of meat.

The following morning was the start of our own private monsoon in the Mode Khola Valley, and we braved the elements to move up and seek the shelter of Hinko Cave. In a spectacular setting at the lower gates of the Sanctuary, we pined away both at the loss of good views, and the occasional view of the summit block of Machapucharre. The Frenchman from Ghandrung caught us up here, and we dined together like kings on a sumptuous meal prepared by our Sherpa hosts.

The Annapurna Sanctuary was within half-a-day's reach, but bad weather on the following morning persuaded us to make it a one-day trip and return to Hinko Cave in the evening. Before the ritual mists rolled in we arrived at Machapucharre Base Camp, which was taken over by a group of German Trekkers. And then, in blizzard conditions we set off up the lower slopes of Tent Peak, eventually being forced by decreasing weather conditions to return. Having heard so much about the strong walking capabilities of Sherpas, I was rather astounded in Hinko Cave when I arrived back three-quarters of an hour ahead of my Sherpa.

We didn't really see anything very much in the Sanctuary, and to this day I regret not having more available time to make the trek in better weather conditions. On the return to Pokhara we occasionally glanced back to obtain some impressive views of the Annapurna Himal and Machapucharre framed perfectly between the forest trees, but it was always with a sour feeling of anti-climax.

We returned via Sholebatti on the Mode Khola River, and Chandrakot and Lumle, and camped at Suikhet before the final slog to Pokhara. Back in Kathmandu, I was presented with a bowl full of fruit by my Sherpa, and was pleased to be able to provide him with a letter of reference which he eagerly sought after and obviously treasured.

The sojourn to the Annapurna Sanctuary was a delightful experience which I shall never forget, and I now count several Nepali people amongst my closest friends.

It is a beautiful country with a beautiful people. Don't miss it.

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A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO KALA PATTAR!PART 2.

by Gordon Lee.

Chest infections, necessitating anti-biotics delayed us half a day at Panghoche but we enjoyed the rest. Forgot to mention that Lin also paid off her porter at Tenghoche so we were both "going it alone".

From Tenghoche the landscape is dominated by Khantega and Thamserku, two quite awesome peaks, but as you approach Panghoche Ama Dablam leaves no doubt in the mind why the Sherpas revere this as the sacred mountain. Sherpa Mother they call it and will not allow it to be climbed. As you near it and pass it, the everchanging aspect of this ice-corniced tooth of rock draws your attention with irresistible magnetism.

Periche, that tiny village cradled in the hollow of a giant palm, the fingers of Ama Dablam, Towoche, Khantega, Thamserku and Awi rending the azure above, but these, like figurines on the hand of a puppeteer look down benignly, smiling on the tiny mortals whom they have allowed to occupy this portion of the Khumbu Valley.

We had been lucky so far. The altitude demon had let us off lightly. We had been wary however, for it does not pay to disregard him. A number of trekkers have already paid the penalty. One Japanese died while we were there. However except for leaden feet and a little shortage of breath things were fairly normal. By the time we reached Periche we had climbed to 16,000'. Periche was at 14,000' and temperatures had dropped correspondingly. To go out in the middle of the night to seek relief was quite an experience.

At Loboche, the Tea Man not being present, there was only one hut that could be used. A small, windowless, doorless (it had a doorway and window openings) stone structure. And we were not alone. Nine bodies had to be accommodated. When you have to share accommodation with Sherpa guides and porters whose idea of water is something either to walk over, drink or make tea with; wear the same boots and sox unchanged and unwashed for God knows how long, and the same clothes; and you are forced of necessity to sleep head to foot with one of these, or they roll across or over you during the night or they and others emit strange sounds, u. gurgles, snores, coughs and grunts during the night; then, dear reader, you may well imagine the comfort of some of the nights left something to be desired.

We stepped out into crisp, frosty air and clear skies at 7.30 a.m. Prospects certainly looked good. Up the Khumbu, turned on to the base of the glacier, then along it till the glacial, frozen lake above Gorok Shep is reached. Unbeknown to us at the time the lake spilled over a "waterfall" - all was frozen, of course - to the glacier below, many feet below, and tracks crossed just as the edge of the fall. Our guide (for such we had at the time - another story) wisely took us some distance further up, dusted the surface with sandy gravel, for the surface was like glass and twice as slippery, and crossed there.

From above the lake, before we descended, we could see the two stone

huts of Gorak Shep alongside the glacier, the icefall and the black-looking patch of boulders known as Base Camp at the foot of the icefall.

Since the trek is known as Everest Base Camp some may have been wondering what the hell is all this bit about Kala Pattar. Kala Pattar or "Black Rock" is a bare stony ridge that runs off Pomari, one of the lesser peaks in the area. It is 18,000' high, is close to Gorak Shep and is the one high point which affords good views of the Everest massif. So we climbed it rather than going to Base Camp.

The magnificent grandeur was overwhelming. There they were - Nuptse, Lhotse and Sagaramatha. We stayed up on the Rock for 1½ hours in a piercing cold wind and some snow. But high cloud was blowing over and Sagaramatha, like a modest Moslem lady, refused to lift her veil and reveal her face.

Disappointed though we were the quest had not been in vain, for Everest is only one mountain among many and its main claim is its height. So the hazards had gotten the better of us and we had to admit defeat.

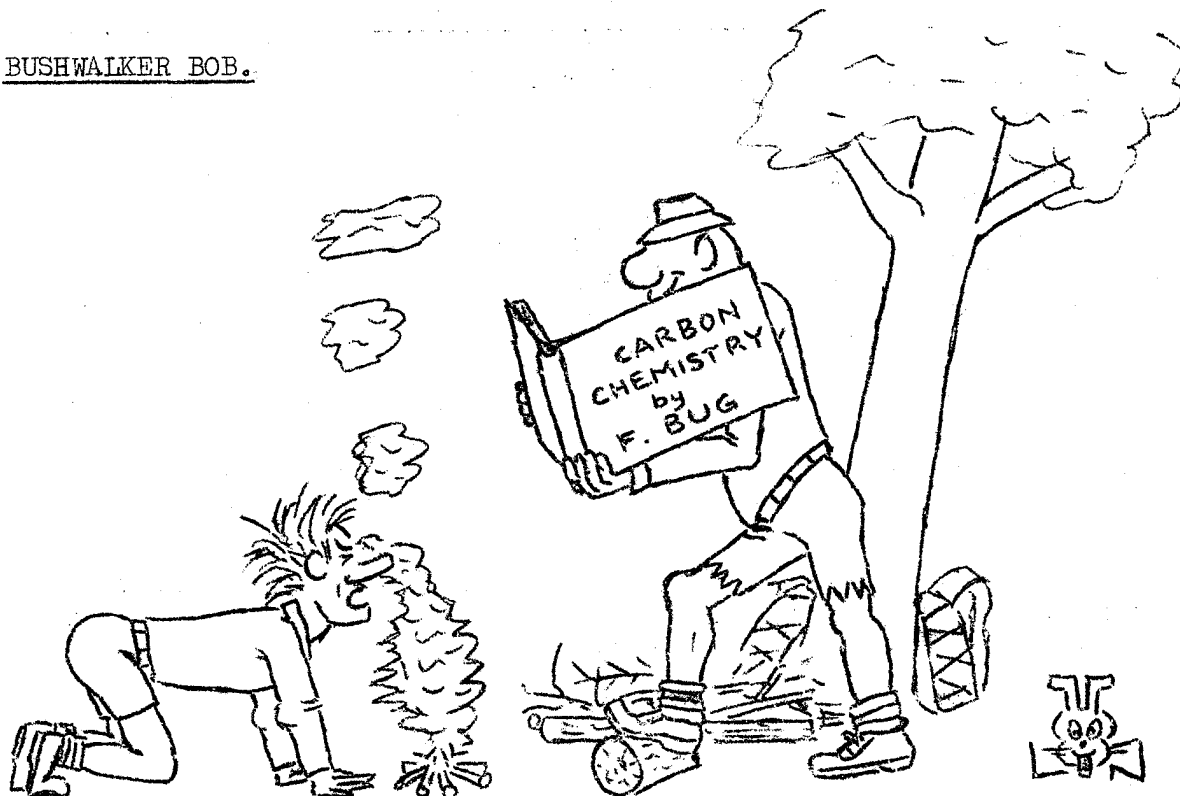
S.B.W.

EPICURIANS

The S.B.W. Epicurians are going Lebanese again for their pre-meeting dinner in November (Wednesday 10th.)/

Venue is a Lebanese restaurant called "Dmascus Hut" and is located on the Pacific Highway (number 18) at St. Leonards. You will find it a little north of St Leonards railway station.

Gather there at 6.00 p.m. Everybody is welcome. Contact Peter Miller (home telephone 95-2689) if you would like further details.

BUSHWALKER BOB.

"I don't care if $E = \frac{c_1^2 \int \psi_1 H \psi_1 d\tau + 2c_1 c_2 \int \psi_1 H \psi_2 d\tau + c_2^2 \int \psi_2 H \psi_2 d\tau}{c_1^2 \int \psi_1^2 d\tau + 2c_1 c_2 \int \psi_1 \psi_2 d\tau + c_2^2 \int \psi_2^2 d\tau}$! That doesn't help me get this fire started!"

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WALK NOTES FOR NOVEMBER.

by Len Newland.
(Phone 43,2419 (B)).

TEST WALKS

Patrick McBride's test walk, formerly advertised for October 22,23,24 is now to be done on November 5,6,7. A solid test walk varying from the low points of the Clyde River to the high points of Folly Point, Mt. Cole and Mt. Tarn (in the Budawangs).

The same weekend contains a one-day test walk led by Joe Marton on November 7th. This is the Bundeena-Otford coastal walk.

A hard walk which qualifies as better than test standard is to be held on November 19,20,21. This is a rugged trip in a rugged area which is on the cards for a future national park. Peter Harris heads from Mt. Moogarilla to Razor Back Creek, Mt. Baker, Mt. Kerry and Blackwater Creek Canyon.

TEST WALKS (cont.)

The last test walk for this month is my own excursion down the Wolgan and back up the Capertee from and to Newnes. Date is November 26/27/28.

WEEKEND WALKS.

Beecroft Peninsula (~~Jervis~~ Bay) is to be visited on November 5,6,7 by Jim Vatiliotis. Join him for an easy weekend in good company and good bush.

On the following weekend, 12,13,14, Helen Gray has a lilo trip - another mystery destination.

The weekend November 19,20,21, in addition to Peter Harris' hard walk, there is another weekend trip to Bungonia Gorge. Peter Miller is the master here.

The Budawangs is the destination of Tony Denham on 26,27,28, but I don't know whether his route is unknown, or secret, or exploratory, or whether he is searching for new morning tea sites. Ask him.

DAY WALKS.

On November 7th, Mary Braithwaite leads from West Head to Mackerel Beach and The Basin.

The following Sunday, you have two possibilities: firstly, Evans Lookout to Blackwall Glen and Grand Canyon in the Grose Valley, led by Victor Lewin; secondly, Lilyvale to Bundeena and the Coastal Track, with Roy Braithwaite.

Sunday 21st, and again from Lilyvale, this time to Burning Palms and the Palm Jungle, led by your magazine typist, Kath Brown.

Finally for this month, Waterfall via Kangaroo Creek to Karloo Pool with swimming. The leader is Sheila Binns, and incidentally, I am intending a similar expedition myself in February.

* * * * *

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

At the October General Meeting a site for the Club's 50th Anniversary Dinner (in October 1977) was discussed.

It was resolved to seek the opinions of members as to a suitable place and to reach a decision at the November meeting.

If you intend to attend the dinner and have any suggestions, please let the Committee know before the November General Meeting.

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Extract from the "Sydney Morning Herald"

"PM CHAMPIONS CAUSE OF TRAIL-BIKE RIDERS"

The Prime Minister, Mr. Fraser, appeared as a champion of trail-bike riders before a parliamentary committee yesterday.

The House of Representatives Committee on the Environment and Conservation is enquiring into the impact of off-road vehicles on the environment.

Mr. Fraser appeared at his own request and said areas should be set aside for two-wheel and four-wheel off-road vehicles, and that they should be as accessible as possible.

Trail bike riding was "infinitely preferable to burning up the asphalt with high-speed motor bikes on which people get killed", he said.

He criticised the Victorian legislation for the control of off-road vehicles. There, all Crown lands are out of bounds to off-road vehicles unless they are specifically designated for their use.

The trouble with the legislation was that it implied that trail bike riding was bad and it should be prohibited, Mr. Fraser said.

"That is the underlying assumption", he said.

"I think it is starting from the wrong end."

Mr. B. Simon (Lib. Vic) said there was a cost factor in the enforcement of controls over the bikes.

"Would you agree that the 'user pays' principle should be applied?" he asked the Prime Minister.

Mr. Fraser said he would think that the user paid by paying the normal registration.
