

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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MARCH 1977

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EDITORIAL

My term of office as Literary Editor having come to an end, this is my last issue of the Sydney Bushwalker for the time being. Having had a few stints at the job, which I quietly admit to actually enjoying, I now hand over to two whom I'm sure will do an excellent job; Dot Pike and Owen Marks. Searching for a theme on which to write my departing editorial, I extracted from my library the first issue of the magazine I ever edited: April 1967. Flicking through those pages I came to "Letters to the Editor", and was reminded at once of that prolific composer of words, that really great person of the S.B.W., Walter Tarr, better known by bushwalkers as Taro (now deceased). Taro kept those letters coming at a constant rate, not always suitable for publication, but ever alive with wit and the wisdom of his years. Many were letters of chastisement for some error of omission or commission, whilst others were comments on some contemporary issue. The April 1967 letter was a comment on an article by Don Finch describing a trip to Watson's Crags. Parts of the letter are worth quoting:

"It (Don's article) said it was one long day and night stretch of unmitigated misery.... I counted the words in that story - over 2000, and in that 2000 there were only two words that carried any suggestion of pleasure; "COMFORT STOP!" Clubbies should again read those words with the eyes of reason. Many years ago I had an idea of building a HORROR UNIT. This would be a device situated in the Club room, whereby members actually in the city could wallow in misery, without spending endless cash and travel time. It would have a moving ladder with uneven spokes and strong brakes. It would be vertical of course - a mini Eiger with some 1½" traverse sections just above strands of barbed wire, which would hold them if they fell, and thus save a Search and Rescue job down in some bottomless crevasse or valley. Wind up to 100 m.p.h. could be turned on, as well as jets of water - down, up, sideways. Stones of assorted sizes could cascade down in a shower by pulling the usual string. And as well, abseiling could be done by well greased cords. Imagine it - all this in Reiby lane with the cars of their cobblers down in the street, waiting to take home the mess. There is room for more variation, but that could be left to the most savagely sadistic of those life triflers."

And that, dear friends, is what it's all about. May this journal continue for centuries to come, to chronicle the masochistic meanderings of its enthusiastic members.

THE YEAR OF THE COLO - PART 2.

(Map references COLO HEIGHTS 1:25,000)

by Jim Brown.

Stage Two, so far as the section along the river was concerned, was planned to be identical with that covered by the 1971 party - from Boorai Creek to Angorawa Creek. Of the 10 or 11 miles of river involved, I had once been a mile downstream from Boorai, and I had also penetrated a little way up from Angorawa some years before - not very far - not as far as Main Creek, which comes in from the west about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile up. This left about 8 or $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles of Colo as my "last territorial demand".

My specifications were similar to those of Stage I - the river should be fairly low to facilitate crossings, and not too cold in case one had to make a good many deepish fords. The 1971 party had taken an elapsed time of 27 hours with an actual walking time of about 10 hours along the river stage, and I thought I should be able to convert this to 30 hours elapsed and about 14 hours' walking. The opportunity came when the rest of the family went interstate over the long Christmas weekend, and at 5.30 p.m. on Christmas Day I parked on the Culoul Range, a short way in from the Putty Road. There was little point in driving further west along Culoul, as I expected to come out from the river along the next main ridge to the south, and the further I drove along the ridge at the start the more I should have to cover on foot along the same trail on the last day.

I used the warm, bush-scented summer evening to march out along Culoul, turning in for the night at a place where a bull-dozer hollow held some water. In the first light of Boxing Day I was less pleased with the scummy look of the water, so went on along the trail until it dived down into the upper part of Boorai Creek and there had breakfast. The trail then carries on, first in the valley of the creek, but presently rising again at a saddle on to Boorai Ridge and finally ends at a clearing, possibly intended as a helicopter landing spot, not far from the big tumble-down into the Colo. It was now about 10.0 a.m. and the day becoming brilliant and hot with a drying westerly wind. As a matter of fact, the Sydney temperatures for the Sunday, Monday and Tuesday ranged between 28.2 C and 32.4 C, and I guess they were well above that on the Colo.

It would have been almost 16 years since I last went down Boorai Ridge to the Colo and the difference was scarcely believable - there was a fairly clear foot track all the way and towards the foot, where it goes down over rather crumbly earth and clay slopes in places, someone had rigged a "fixed rope" for perhaps 700 or 800 feet. I couldn't make up my mind whether I preferred using the rope as a hand-rail or taking a grip on rocks and trees when I needed to supplement my footing. By 11.0 a.m. I was on the Colo, just above Boorai, and spent 20 minutes "cooling off", first in the pool and then under a shady tree.

The first leg down the river proved to be one of the easiest, over

a succession of sand bars separated by shallow runnels of river: it was also extremely hot in this windless north-to-south section of the valley, but an hour later when I paused for lunch I had made good more than a mile, and was beginning to persuade myself that the reputation for ruggedness was exaggerated - at least along this bit of the river. I had noticed too, that other walkers had followed the same way quite recently and in fact I saw their footprints all the way to Angorawa. Going downstream appeared to be the traces of another solo walker, while two (or maybe three) had come upriver.

After lunch the sand bars which had assisted progress became far more widely separated, and most of the going was over sun-heated rocks and through closely grown scrub, much of it ti-tree. The rate of advance dropped off quite markedly, especially as I found it necessary to halt ten minutes in every thirty and soak myself back to a reasonable temperature. Sometimes I stripped and sometimes I sat in the water in shorts and shirt; in the latter case I was bone-dry (except for sweat) within 10 or 15 minutes of going on. These conditions persisted until about 5.0 p.m., when I turned the corner at reference 728164 (Colo Heights 1:25,000 map), and found another chain of sandbars which took me to the outflow of Pinchgut Creek by 5.20 p.m. Throughout the afternoon there were swarms of bush flies, and I would guess that I accidentally swallowed a dozen or so which I sucked in with my breath on the more strenuous patches.

From Pinchgut Creek there was an improvement because the western cliffline cast shadows over the valley: it was still very warm, with a westerly wind breathing down this part of the ravine, which heads about south-east, but the heat was gradually going out of the sand and rocks. Apart from odd sandy patches along the banks, one was fending a way through scrub - sometimes dry ti-tree, sometimes moister, denser vegetation, and progress was pretty slow - not much above a mile an hour, and as I was walking only 40 minutes in the hour, probably about a kilometre per hour in actual coverage. A good, dry, level sand spit about half a mile upstream from Canoe Creek was reached shortly after 7.0 p.m. and became Sunday night's camp: the presence of a shallow overhang in the rocks nearby clinched the decision to stop there, although I really had no fear of a break in the dry weather.

A warm, still night gave way to a warm, slightly hazy dawn, and with a firm resolve to cover ground before the heat increased too much, I moved off at 6.40 a.m., passing Canoe Creek soon after 7.0 a.m., and finding some more stretches of level sand in the river bed for perhaps a quarter mile. This was rather deceptive, because it was followed by some of the worst going of all, as I negotiated the big elbow in the river between references 728138 and 730130. It need not have been so severe if I had crossed to the right bank, but by staying on the inside of the bend I was first compelled to sidle on a steep, densely-vegetated slope, and later had difficulty in clambering back down to river level. In fact the two miles from Canoe Creek to reference 734121 took almost three hours, and by 10.0 a.m. the day was growing hot - so hot I felt the need to make long pauses and soak in the river after relatively brief periods of walking. There was a gusty, dry wind, and just enough cloud to stop the rocks from

becoming as uncomfortably hot as they had been on Sunday.

I crawled on into the westerly curve leading towards Tambo Crown, finally lunching from 12.30 to 1.45 a short distance above the junction of Tambo Creek. At the junction, when I came to it about 2.0 p.m., it was surprising to find two whole loaves of stale, sliced white bread, still in their paper wrappers, on the rocks. Evidently the local bush animals either don't understand bread, or they share the view of the State Premier on its calibre as food.

After Tambo Creek I felt I was on the home stretch - a bit over three kilometres, mostly towards the south east, should bring me to Angorawa Creek. I rather fancy the walking became less strenuous, but the cloud cover was dispersing and the sun on my back rested like a hot blanket, so the rate of advance remained pretty slow, with Main Creek junction coming up at 4.40 p.m., and finally Angorawa at 5.30 p.m. Another half hour's spell there, more pints of tepid water swallowed, and then a slow scramble up the inclined bars of sandstone, feeling thankful for the afternoon shadows. Night camp at 7.15 p.m. on Monday was about a mile up Angorawa Creek and again on sand.

Tuesday morning, and a definite threat of heat - it was up around 32°C in Sydney that day. Another early start to gain advantage of the cool morning, and by 8.0 a.m. I was another mile up at the junction of Adderley Creek. Most unwisely, I had decided to go out via Adderley Creek, with the object of avoiding a long trudge along the tar-seal of the Putty Road. According to the maps I should only have to make about $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles along the creek bed and should reach either a fire trail or a timber-cutters road which would bring me out at Grassy Hill, with less than one mile to walk on a busy road. That is, according to the maps.

In fact, the $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles up Adderley Creek to the timber miller's trail took from 8.0 a.m. to 11.0 a.m., with a few tricky cascades and at least one recent rockfall thrown in to lend diversity. Having identified the old ruinous trail, I rested half an hour, filled a plastic flask with water, and set out with a light heart and the comforting belief I was "done with the rough - road all the way now".

That timber road has, I guess, not been used this 10 to 15 years, and within a few hundred yards, although the formation could still be recognised, was vanishing amongst treefalls and vines. Finally it virtually disappeared into some of the densest thickets of lawyer vine it has ever been my misfortune to see. Possibly I just mislaid it. At all events by noon I was picking my way down through the mess of prickly bush, with a return to Adderley Creek as my prime objective. Even that loathsome creek bed seemed a desirable place.

Not even Adderley Creek can go on interminably. After another half hour I could see a ridge on the right where the lawyer vine gave way to normal dry scrub only about 50 feet up the slope. Then a very quick lunch sitting on a wet rock in a shallow pool, and in the searing heat of early afternoon I inched my way up on to the ridge between the two most easterly arms of Adderley Creek. A short bush-push brought

me to the end of a dilapidated vehicular track, and that in turn led to the main fire trail leading out along the ridge from Grassy Hill. In the heat-wave I was walking for 20 minutes and stopping for 10, but still came to the Putty-Singleton Road about 4.0 p.m. and back to the car near the Culoul turn-off by 4.50.

Surprisingly, after drinking tepid water and fruit juice in vast quantities and eating a few biscuits, I felt restored enough to shave and wash, put on clean clothes and start for home. Of course, at Colo Heights at 6.0 p.m. the Police and Fire Brigade people closed the road to traffic (because of bush fires) about 5 minutes before I got there: I was vehicle number 8 in the queue. When the road still remained closed at 9.0 p.m., I drew out of the queue, went back towards Putty some 4 or 5 miles and slept by the roadside, finally heading home on Wednesday morning to arrive soon after 7.0 a.m.

I can't say I really enjoyed Stage 2 of the Colo exploit. If I were to do it again, I should tackle some parts of it in a very different way. But then, having done it, I don't have to do it again, do I? Maybe I'll be content to let 1976 be my own Year of the Colo.

* * * * *

S.B.W. SONG GROUP.

by John Redfern.

The song group made a successful start on the 16th February.

Under Christine Kirkby's leadership the following enthusiastic members were present: Stephen Akeroyd, Barbara Holmes, Edith Kelly, Gordon Lee, Len Newland and John Redfern.

Come along and join in and learn some folk songs and ballads. A Guitar Player would be particularly welcome.

The next meeting will be held in the Committee Room at 7 p.m. on the 27th April (prior to the 4th club meeting of the month).

1977 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscription rates for 1977 were decided at the Annual General Meeting and are now due and payable. They are unchanged from last year at:-

Ordinary member	\$8.50
Married couple	\$10.50
Student member	\$5.00
Magazine sub.	\$4.00

The sub. for non-active membership is decided by committee and will be advised next month.

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING.

by Barry Wallace.

The W.I.A. Hall was almost crowded when Helen and Spiro ascended the podium and called the meeting to order at about 8.15 p.m.

We had apologies from Gordon Broome, Margaret Reid and I think Sheila Binns. New member Owen Kimberley was a no-show but Robert ... was on hand to accept his badge and constitution.

The minutes were read, with Dot Butler pointing out that the \$150.00 compensation from the Electricity Commission N.S.W. was to be followed by another \$280.00.

Correspondence In produced a slightly whimsical letter from someone asking when we were going to paint the roof of the Coolana hut. (We will reply that we are waiting for the galvanizing to weather.)

Correspondence Out was one letter of congratulations to Miles Dunphy and two to new members.

The Treasurer's Report indicated a starting balance of \$254.19 with incomings of \$351.55, outgoings of \$442.59 and a closing balance of \$2263.15.

Federation Report told of a coming S. & R. demonstration on the 19-20th March at Boyd River crossing. The next issue of the Federation Newsletter is promised "soon".

The Walks Report covered the month of walking, with a rather startling tale of Barry Zieren's party being terrorised by a group of youths at Little Marley beach. They had even taken along luminous fancy-dress for the occasion. Sounds like a good campsite to stay away from. We intend to write to the National Parks & Wildlife Service pointing out littering and destruction of flora at Marley and asking the appropriate authority to approach about the terrorism.

A comment about the requirement for map reading instruction for prospectives on test walks from David Ingram produced an extended debate, but no resolution.

And then it was just a matter of announcements and then off to the coffee and biskies at 9.18 p.m. There's nothing quite like a good short meeting.

* * * * *

CONSERVATION REPORT(Being part of the
S.B.W. Annual Report)

The Club has been a strong supporter of the conservation efforts of the New South Wales Federation of Bushwalking Clubs. Individual members have been active in other organizations such as the Colong Committee and the National Parks Association, and, in addition, many members have made donations to such organizations.

A number of Sydney Bush Walker members joined the Federation bus trip to the Border Ranges at Easter, and gained first hand knowledge of this beautiful area, which we seek to preserve from logging. Partial success was achieved when the Premier stopped the construction of a road to Lever's Plateau.

One of the Club's oldest and greatest conservation projects - the creation of the Greater Blue Mountains National Park - was very actively promoted during the year. The Federation joined with the National Parks Association, the Colong Committee, the Bindook Committee and the Colo Committee to produce a special issue of the N.P.A. Journal devoted to the project. The Club donated \$100 towards this campaign.

A substantial gain was made when the Premier and the Minister for Lands announced their decision to add 160,000 hectares in the Southern Blue Mountains to the existing National Park. It was fitting that, shortly after this announcement, Myles J. Dunphy, originator of the park proposal and a Club Founder, was awarded the O.B.E. A wilderness study recently completed by the University of New England proves that the largest wilderness area in eastern New South Wales is in the Northern Blue Mountains and the second largest in the Southern Blue Mountains.

The Club's very own conservation project, at Coolana, is described in the Annual Report.

SPECIAL NOTICE

To Members walking on the Colo River: There is apparently a water gauge sited on the Colo River just below the Wollomi Creek junction. Would Members having any information about the gauge, including exact location, please pass it on to the Colo Committee (via Federation Delegates if necessary)

Paddy made

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BUNYIP RUCKSACK

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SENIOR RUCKSACK

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

BUSHMAN RUCKSACKS

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

PIONEER RUCKSACK

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

MOUNTAINEER DE LUXE

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

MOUNTAINEER

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

TRAMPER FRAME RUCKSACK

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

KIANDRA MODEL

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

HOTHAM MODEL

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

CARRYING BAGS

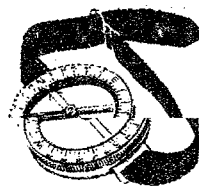
P.V.C. or nylon.

'A' TENTS

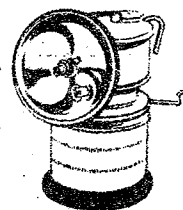
One, two or three man. From 2½ to 3½lbs

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S.B.W. OFFICE BEARERS - 1977.

The following office-bearers and committee members were elected at the S.B.W. Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday, 16th March, 1977:-

President	*	Helen Gray
Vice-Presidents	*	Alastair Battye
	*	Bob Hodgson
Secretary	*	Spiro Hajinakitas
Assistant Secretary	*	Sheila Binns
Treasurer	*	Neil Brown
Walks Secretary	*	Len Newland
Social Secretary	*	Christine Kirkby
Membership Secretary	*	Fazeley Read
Committee Members	*	Denise Brown
	*	Diana Lynn
	*	Owen Marks
	*	John Redfern
Federation Delegates	*	John Fox
	*	Gordon Lee
	*	Gordon Broome
		Frank Molloy
		Len Newland
Substitution Federation Delegate		
Conservation Secretary		Alex Colley
Magazine Editors		Dot Pike & Owen Marks
Magazine Business Manager		Bill Burke
Duplicator Operator		Peter Scandrett
Assistant Duplicator Operators		vacant
Keeper of Maps & Timetables		John Holly
Equipment Hire		John Fox
Search & Rescue Contacts		Don Finch
		Ray Hookway
		Marcia Shappert
Archivist		Phil Butt
Auditor		Gordon Redmond
Solicitor		Colin Broad
Trustees		Heather White
		Bill Burke
		Gordon Redmond
Coolana Management Committee		George Gray Dot Butler
		John Redfern Bill Burke
		Barry Wallace Peter Scandrett
Kosciusko Huts Assn. Delegate		Gordon Broome
Projectionists		Hans Beck (slides)
		Bob Hodgson (movies)

* Indicates members of the Committee.

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WALKS NOTES.

by Len Newland.
Tel. 43,5860 (B)

WALKS FOR APRIL.TEST WALKS

- 1, 2, 3 - Carlon's Farm, Blackhorse Range, Splendour Rock, Cox's River, Breakfast Creek. A good solid walk with a good solid leader - Hans Beck. Get those hill-climbing legs ready.
- 22,23,24,25
(Anzac) - Blue Breaks, Kanangra Walls, Axhead Range, Lacy's Plateau, Broken Rock Range, Kowmung River, Kanangra Walls. David Rostron advises that dry camps may be involved, so take water bottles, and again be prepared for a bit of hill-climbing.
- 22,23,24,25
(Anzac) - Budawangs. Three day walks from a base camp, giving a day test walk credit. First day sees Victor Lewin's favourite sunset from Pigeonhouse. The second day, Monolith Valley. Third day, Castle Gap.

HARDER-THAN-TEST WALKS

- 7,8,9,10,11
(Easter) - Bell Station to Richmond Station via Grose Valley. No slowpokes here. Victor Lewin leads this Grose Valley classic.
- 15,16,17 - Yalwal Creek, Bunbundah Creek, Legendary Pass, Colley Plateau, Leyden Creek, Ettrema Creek, Yalwal Creek. Peter Harris leads this walk in an area I have never heard of.
- 29,30,May 1 - Mt. Thurat, Mt. Paralyser, Whalania Deep, Mt. Guouogang, Kanangra Creek, Mt. Strongleg, Mt. Cloudmaker, Kanangra Walls, Mt. Thurat. Bob Hodgson now has a phone number: 212,4455 (B). With names like Paralyser and Strongleg, Bob's mention of 2500 m climbing comes as no surprise.

INSTRUCTIONAL

- 2, 3 - Bryden Allen's rock climbing instructional, all grades catered for, is to be held on this weekend at Mt. Victoria. Meet at Mt. Piddington Lookout car park at 9 a.m. Saturday morning.

WEEKEND WALKS

- 7,8,9,10,11
(Easter) - Guthega, Snowy River, Mt. Kosciusko, Mt. Townsend, Lake Albina, Main Range, Watson's Crags, Leaning Rock Falls, Rolling Grounds, Kerries, Gungahon, Guthega. David Rostron advises that, contrary to what appears in the programme, this walk is in fact easy.

WEEKEND WALKS (CONT.)

- 15,16,17 - Bungonia Lookdown, Adam's Lookout, Bungonia Limestone Gorge, Shoalhaven River, Block Up, Tolwong Mine, Adam's Lookout. Ian Watt advises that his trip will involve 2-3 km of rock-hopping with full pack; swimming, depending on the level of the Shoalhaven; steep descent from Adam's Lookout, and ascent on return; and possibly abseiling.
- 29,30,May 1 - Budawangs: Sassafrass, Newhaven Gap, Tanderra Camp, Style's Creek, Binari's Pass, Quiltie's Pass, Newhaven Gap, Sassafrass. Frank Roberts leads this walk thru' the beautiful Budawangs.

BASE CAMPS

- 7,8,9,10,11
(Easter) - MacArthur's Flat. An easy weekend with Tony Denham.
- 22,23,24,25
(Anzac) - Budawangs: Wog Wog Station. A medium weekend with Tony Denham.

EXPLORATORY

- 30, May 1 - Fitzroy Falls - Kangaroo Valley. Last time John Fox went into this area, we could not locate the shortest way into the valley according to the map. This time we are going to find it. I lead.

DAY WALKS

- Sunday 3 - Heathcote, Tukawa Rill, Robertson Knoll, Uloom Falls, Heathcote. This time I lead an easy day's outing in the Royal National Park.
- Sunday 10 - Helensburgh, Wilson's Creek, Bola Heights, Burning Palms, Palm Jungle and back to Otford via the cliff track. Ray Carter in the Royal National Park.
- Sunday 17 - Glenbrook, Campfire Creek, Euroka Creek, Glenbrook. Joe Marton leads this pleasant walk in the lower area of the Blue Mountains.
- Sunday 24 - West Head to the Basin and return. Roy Braithwaite presents this journey into Ku-Ring-Gai Chase.
- Sunday May 1 - Helensburgh, Burgh Track, Bola Heights, the Causeway, Couranga Track to Waterfall. The Royal National Park is popular this month. Jim Brown leads the latest expedition.

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Now the A.G.M. is over, how about some walks for the new programme?

Bushwalker Bob couldn't walk this month - he must have sore feet.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Avenida Portugal 146
Lima, Peru.
Postal address:
Castilla 3714,
Lima 1, Peru.

Greetings -

I am writing to let you know about the South American Explorer's Club which we have just opened in Lima, Peru and to ask your help in getting the club and its services known to your members.

A primary aim of the Explorers's Club is to collect, record, and make available accurate and practical information on South America in two broad areas of interest to members -- First, the field sciences, such as archaeology, botany, oceanography, ecology, and geography. Secondly, the travel and adventure/sport side of exploration, cave crawling, mountaineering, backpacking, scuba diving, white water running, hiking, canoeing, cycling, off road vehicles and horseback trekking.

Further, the club is set up to provide as much technical support as we can muster in a given field and at the same time, offer an operational base and congenial atmosphere where members with different skills and expertise can get together, talk, and plan expeditions. Located in downtown Lima, the club has reception room, lounging area, reading and map rooms, library, and rooftop terrace. Membership is open to anyone interested in South America.

With the club set up, we are hard at work on our magazine, The South American Explorer. The first issue is already blocked out and will appear in February. In English, a monthly, the magazine is a tabloid format running 48 pages plus, featuring five full-length articles, with other sections of news, reviews, travel info, and club activities. The South American Explorer is for active members. Scientific articles will be written by researchers presently working on projects throughout the continent. We're also going for fresh, genuine adventure. Up-coming articles will cover balsa rafts, wildlife, primitive arts, the natural sciences,

ethnological studies etc.

The regular annual membership fee of US\$ 25 covers all club dues and 12 issues of The South American Explorer.

We'd be grateful for any help you could give us in spreading the word about the club and magazine. We're also interested in making contact with other groups who share a common purpose. Further, we'd be interested in exchanging publications and other technical and general information.

Best Regards,

Don Montague, Editor
The South American Explorer.

(Editor's Note: The South American Explorers' Club is not known to me personally, and the publication of this letter should not be taken as any sort of endorsement of its activities. The letter is published for the general information of readers who may wish to investigate the club further. If any readers do have knowledge of the South American Explorers' Club, please let us know about it so we can print your comments for the information of others)

EPIGURIANS

GENERAL MEETING 13TH. APRIL 1977.

The next pre-meeting dinner will be on the abovementioned date and will be at the NAMROC Chinese restaurant on the Pacific Highway opposite the Clubrooms (not far to walk). Meet outside at 6.00 p.m.. All members and visitors welcome.

Peter Miller.

THE VALLEY OF THE SWAMPY PLAIN

By Jim Muir
Coolamon

(This article appeared in the July 1937 issue of the Sydney Bushwalker. It is delightfully **descriptive**, and having historical interest, to my mind deserves a resurrection.)

Away up stream some ninety odd miles above Albury, two glorious mountain streams unite to form Australia's most noted waterway. The valleys of these two rivers, the Swamy Plain and the Indi, afford a wealth of walking possibilities, if I should favour one more than another it would be the valley of the Swamy Plain.

Access to the valley is gained by the road from Bringenbong, climbing a steep saddle, from which a splendid view of the mountains is obtained. The mighty Dargals stand like sentinels to the right, and above the misty cobalt of the foothills their barren purple crags frown down in a forbidding yet alluring manner, while away to the south, Townshend and Abbott Peak hide Kosciusko from view.

The road descends into the valley and runs for some seven or eight miles to the end of settlement. This strip of valley, known as Khancoban, is as pretty as its name. Graceful poplars and willows line the river, and fine Hereford cattle feed knee-deep in luscious grass. It is always beautiful. Spring seems to dwell eternal in this delightful spot.

At the entrance to the valley, where the road descends from the saddle, Swamp Creek is forded. Along the creek's left bank a track runs up stream and over the Dargals Range to Pretty Plains beyond. Thence it travels on to the Bogong, where tracks command the whole of this southern tableland. From here one may penetrate the mists of romance that enshroud Jagungal, Gungarton, Twynam, Townshend and Kosciusko.

Kosciusko is accessible from Khancoban by two other routes, one direct in 15 miles, and the other over a better grade, via Groggin, in 40 miles.

A narrow gorge of the Swamy Plain has prevented occupation along the river valley beyond Khancoban, but a track leaves the end of the settlement and makes a detour over a range to the south east, and the river is again met about 5 miles farther upstream. This track is trafficable by foot and horseback, and though monotonous over the first three miles, opens out on to scenes of rare beauty, even transcending the tranquility of Khancoban.

On the southern side of this steep grade, tree ferns grow in riotious profusion, while the sight of a lyre bird is not uncommon. Coming down the wall one gets an unforgettable view of the "Kosciusko Range". Actually Kosciusko cannot be seen as it lies closely behind this range, across Wilkinson's Valley.

Just before the river is reached the track crosses the Bogong creek which has had its birth up under the mountain of the same name. Looking back down the river from the junction, one can see the narrow gorge that prevented the track following the river. This has been called the Devil's Grip and also the Murray Gate, and was once surveyed as a site for a proposed dam.

The track continues up the valley over delightful flats and river crossings. These flats bear the name of Geehi, and act as mustering paddocks when the cattle are brought down off the tops in autumn.

At Geehi the Swampy Plain is a glorious stream, strangely reminiscent of the Cox in its most turbulent mood. The bed of the stream is strewn with large, smooth granite boulders, washed from Kosciusko's side, and the water bubbles over these in wild gaiety. But with an inch of rain on the melting snow in the hills, trouble stirs, the waters boil and eddy, they lose their burbling gaiety and surge tumultuously forward with an ominous roar. Let him beware who is caught in the hills by the river in this forbidding role.

As one ascends the valley, he continually views before him the grey-blue wall of Townshend and Abbott Peak, and is thrilled thereby with the expectation of adventure. From the flats below, one can clearly perceive the change in vegetation on the slopes as the altitude increases - first the heavy timber, then the misty grey of dead mountain ash, snow gum, dead snow gum, then grey formidable granite crags devoid of vegetation.

Three or four miles from the Wall the river makes a right angle bend and is joined by the Geehi Creek. From this junction a track leads over the divide to the S.S.W. on to the Indi River at Groggin. From here tracks radiate to Kosciusko, Nariel and Omeo, and down the Indi to Biggara.

A short trip may be made to Kosciusko from Geehi by climbing Hannel's Spur which ascends from between the Geehi Creek and the Swampy Plain River. A definite track now exists, but the grade is terrific. From Geehi at 1,350ft., a six mile climb lifts one nearly 6,000 ft. to Kosciusko. Water is adequate in the driest times, but it is a little difficult to find on the lower slopes. One of the most disappointing features of this route is that the walker is climbing a 7,000 ft. mountain all day, and just when he reaches the top on his hands and knees, thinking his job is done, he finds he's on the shoulder of Abbott Peak, and that the cairn-crowned top of Kosciusko lies away to the south east across Wilkinson's Valley.