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T H E

S Y D N E Y

B U S H W A L K E R

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A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers, Box 4476 G.P.O., Sydney, 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening from 7.30 pm at the Wireless Institute Building, 14 Atchison Street, St. Leonards.

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AUGUST, 1980.

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THE HIGHWAY THAT NEVER WAS.

by Jim Brown.

Earlier this year, driving along the Oberon Stock Route - that bush road which now gives us access to Bat's Camp and the Mount Colong-Colong Caves area - I found myself pondering the ups and downs in the history of that route, and also how close it came to being the first main trunk road to the interior of New South Wales. Arising from that second thought, I wondered how the early history of the State might have been changed if it had become the original Western Highway. Now, I know Thomas Carlyle cautions us that it is futile to speculate on the "might-have-beens" of history, but it's an entertaining occupation, and at least no one can prove you to be wrong - - -

Well, then, this tale falls into two sections - the way in which the Stock Route just missed early fame, and secondly, the fluctuations in its condition and usage over the last 40 or 50 years. The intervening years I leave to more talented researchers.

PART I - NOVEMBER, 1802.

If you have the February 1957 edition of the Club magazine, you can look up an article in which Dot Butler described in reasonable detail the exploratory trip of Francis Barrallier in 1802, eleven years before the successful crossing of the Blue Mountains by Blaxland's party via the east-west ridge from Emu Plains. In the August, 1976, and July, 1977, issues Paddy Pallin discusses the great mystery of where Barrallier actually got to in the Yerranderie area - without reaching any positive conclusion.

To avoid the need to delve into these narratives, it is perhaps enough to say that Barrallier, an Ensign (Lieutenant Junior Grade) in the N.S.W. Corps, set out in November, 1802, with a party including convicts, soldiers and aborigines to cross the Mountains. He was a surveyor and engineer, and his venture had the backing of Governor King. It is certain that he went by way of Sheehy's Creek, Nattai River and Wollondilly River, then climbed into the hills west of the Wollondilly near the Tonalli River. However there are two schools of thought as to what happened when he reached the Peaks area (near Yerranderie). Perhaps he went north-west through the obvious break at Byrnes Gap. Others believe he went south of the Mootik Plateau, passing somewhere near the later site of Colong Station, and went up into a gap south of Mount Colong. In either case, he was really surprisingly close to success, being within a short distance of the ridge that runs to the west from Bindook to Mount Werong - the divide between the Kowmung gorge on the north, and the Murruin Creek-Wollondilly system on the south. From his most westerly point on the Yerranderie highlands, it would be not much more than a day's march to Mount Werong.

There, he erred sadly. Historians generally seem to be agreed that he descended into the creeks flowing into the Kowmung, reached the junction of that river with Christy's Creek, and after some abortive exploration thereabouts, retreated in disorder.

We have no further concern with the unlucky soldier/surveyor/engineer here. The important point is that, at a time when it was beginning to be

appreciated that the struggling colony must expand over the limiting mountains, he came within an ace of success. Had he won through to Mount Werong and the Abercrombie country, and the pleasant highlands near Oberon, he would almost certainly have been followed by a wave of settlers and colonists. There would have been little incentive to pioneer the harsh sandstone scarps of the Blue Mountains if a known way had existed through the lovely and fertile river valleys. And if the silver at Yerranderie and the gold at Mount Werong had come to light, this would have been a bonus and a stimulant to the opening of the Western Highway along the Oberon Stock Route.

Only seven years after Barrallier's abortive trip, Governor-Designate Lachlan Macquarie landed in Sydney to subdue the unruly rum-oriented, officer-controlled settlement. One of the proposals he favoured was the creation of a large class of small-holding farmers <sup>as a bulwark</sup> against the greedy and overpowerful "graziers". To this end, the rich land around Oberon would have been eminently suitable for small farms. Instead, the area opened by the successful mountains crossing of 1813 was the lower land around Bathurst - very good for sheep farming, not so suitable for the little handholder. Moreover, a British Government wondering when New South Wales would begin to show signs of being self-supporting, slowly shifted its support toward the well-to-do graziers who were shipping valuable wool to England. Of course, the Government didn't bother to let Macquarie know of their change of heart, so that well-intentioned and humane, but humourless, autocrat kept on striving to promote the small farmer-settler up to the time of his replacement. He may even have succeeded if he had had enough suitable land to bestow on his proteges.

One can only guess what would have happened if the first road to the west had gone via Burragorang and the Oberon Stock Route. Certainly the early history of the State would have been different, and probably some effects would have persisted right down to the present. Suppose, for instance, the Western Highway and railway went in via Burragorang, spanning the upper parts of the Warragamba Dam by a long and lofty bridge. Or would Burragorang have been too important and populous a place to be devoted to Sydney's water supply? Maybe the Cox/Kowmung system would have been dammed instead - somewhere above the Wollondilly junction. And maybe we would have a lot less grand walking country, both on Cox and Kowmung because of the Blue Breaks - Colong urban development.

## PART II - RECENT TIMES.

Long, long after Barrallier's time, a stock route was formed along the Mount Werong ridge, and in 1910 R. H. Cambage, the historian whose name is perpetuated in Cambage Spire, could say of the gap at South Peak near Yerranderie - "This is the passage through which the whole of the stock traffic is conducted between Burragorang and Oberon, and the greater part of the road between this passage and Mount Werong, about 25 miles, is still only a bridle track."

If anything, it deteriorated over later years. In 1937, when I bought my first map of the area, the old "Blue Mountains and Burragorang Tourist", the route was shown in a broken black line, denoting a discernible trail, as distinct from the dotted line indicating a "negotiable route". Please

don't laugh at the notion of using that particular map for bushwalking. Until the late 1950's and early 1960's, there was nothing better available for much of the area west of the 150th meridian. The old "Tourist" map and some of the special locality maps compiled by Myles Dunphy were the walkers' only lead to the shape of the ground.

It might be imagined that walkers often travelled over the Stock Route. In fact, few of them knew anything about the country west of Colong and Bindook, apart from the Kowmung gorge itself. I know of only one S.B.W. party to tread the Stock Route - a group of 11 at Easter, 1957, led by John White, and including David Ingram (senior) who told the story under the pseudonym of "The Gent in the Tent" in the magazine of March 1958, just before the rising tide of Warragamba severed access via Burragorang.

Evidently its use as a stock route had also declined, as David's narrative says, in part - "From Back Swamp Creek (near Bat's Camp) we began to ascend a low ridge, keeping in a N.N.W. direction. Before long, evidence of the stock route, which seems to have been a dray track at one time, became apparent. The route had obviously not been used by wheeled vehicles for some years. It drops suddenly into saddles, climbs out again, and (sometimes) disappears into stands of young eucalypts."

Later on the same day - "Soon after starting off again, we lost the trail for a few minutes in a damp fern gully, but found it again after a scout around, to arrive just north of Mount Shivering."

On the following day (Easter Sunday) - "A couple of miles brought us to the Long Plain, where the trail turns in a northerly direction and becomes very indistinct for a couple of miles across swampy ground. Care in direction finding is needed here."

Some amateur prospectors at Mount Werong told the S.B.W. party there were once 150 trappers and gold fossickers living there. Also that "during the 1930's two local bushmen had set out along the Stock Route we had just traversed, and had not been heard of since". David winds up with a warning to any who may follow "once on the main ridge running east to west from Bindook to Mount Werong, stick to it - - otherwise Trouble with a Big T."

The fortunes of the old Stock Route had reached their lowest level. As a result of the Burragorang flooding, local landholders, notably Neville Lang at Bindook, were inspired to provide their own access. We must have heard something about it in the Club, as in 1960 I walked along a shockingly muddy, churned-up jeep road from Mount Werong to Back Swamp Creek (Bat's Camp) taking only 4½ hours for the outward trip and about 6 hours for the uphill return.

Then, in the middle 1960's, the Department of Civil Aviation built a direction finding beacon at Nyanga Mountain, about 5 km east of Bindook, and the jeep road was given a major face lift. I have some vivid recollections of this, being forced by a combination of circumstances to change the plan for a trip, and returning from Bindook via the Stock Route, Jaunter, and the Upper Kowmung to the Boyd River Crossing on the Kanangra Road.

It was February, it was hot, and there was a lot of small broken rubble along the newly formed road surface. Even though I did most of the Stock Route by night, I finished with horribly blistered feet. In fact, that particular ordeal must have permanently toughened my soles as I've never had any blisters since!

At all events, when next you drive to Bat's Camp and curse the corrugations and curves and hills and dust between Werong and Back Swamp, just remember this is a trail that was, then wasn't, and now is again. Also that it might very well have been the highway to the west, complete with service stations and advertising bill-boards.

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THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKERS  
(Founded 1927)

Box 4476 G.P.O.,  
SYDNEY. 2001.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN:

That the Half-Yearly General Meeting of the Sydney Bush Walkers will be held on Wednesday, 10th September, 1980 at the Wireless Institute of Australia, 14 Atchison Street, St. Leonards at 8 pm.

A G E N D A

1. Apologies
2. Welcome to new members
3. Minutes of the General Meeting held on Wednesday, 13th August, 1980
4. Correspondence
5. Treasurer's Report
6. Federation Report
7. Walks Report
8. Coolana Management Committee Report
9. Determination of the venue of the 1981 Annual Re-union and election of Convenor(s)
10. Constitutional Amendments (No notices have been received by the Secretary as to proposed Constitutional Amendments as at 13th August)
11. Discussion of the motion resolved at the August General Meeting that: "The Conservation Secretary be requested to list main points for inclusion in a submission to the National Parks & Wildlife Service on Kosciusko National Park management for discussion at the next (i.e. Half-Yearly) General Meeting."
12. General Business
13. Announcements: (a) Walks (b) Social

(Sgd.) SHEILA BINNS  
Hon. Secretary.

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OBITUARY - BRUCE MCINNES.

The sudden death occurred on 30th July of member Bruce McInnes, who joined the Club in 1947.

The Club extends its deepest sympathy to his family, fellow members Kath and daughter Debbie, and Robin and Geoff.

BUSHWALKING MEMORIES OF BRUCE.

by Bill Gillam.

It doesn't seem long ago yet the details are now almost of the nature of historical facts. There was a 5.21 pm train to Camden, then a bus to Yerranderie. Trains ran to Kurrajong. Last trains from the mountains determined whether you ate at Blackheath or ran from Evans Lookout. The Club still owned the Era land. Siedlecki could still create the chaos and revolutionary terror of Central Europe as he drove you to Carlons or Newnes. Club meetings were parliamentary sessions rather than reports. Marie Byles said she had never bent even a twig in the bush, to which Myles Dunphy replied that he still carried an axe and until recent infirmity a rifle as well. Ray Doyle of Glenraphael and Max Gentle of Gentle's Sheerdown were around, Ray carrying a swag and Max a gigantic airplane compass across endless ridges with an exhausted crew trying to maintain an infinite trust in the leader.

In winter we walked the classic mountain trips; the Gangerangs, Davies Canyon, Kedumba. We summered at Era, swimming, partying at the huts and warded off nothing more dangerous than deer, cows and horses, and mosquitos. An idyllic life in which a handful of friendships were fully formed without perceptible beginning but which endured. Bruce, friendship and those golden days were integral.

We remember our bushwalking friendships by the walks we did together. Two of many I made with Bruce stay in my memory.

Bruce was imperturbable, amiable, cheerful and seemingly inexhaustable, despite going to sleep at every ten minute rest. Kanangra to Yerranderie was a favourite trip for a holiday weekend. Taxis, or a hired bus, to the Mud Hut, a day on the Walls, a day down to the Kowmung, then the wonderful walk up the Church Creek track to Yerranderie. Bus deposits, food lists, tents were arranged with ledger precision. Most such trips, by their nature, produced no dramas. In pouring rain, Bruce and I ended up on Sunrise Bluff while the main party descended into Christie's Creek. The Kowmung was up. We swam to the right bank and then walked upstream to rejoin the others. Another swim. What we thought would be a welcome to two prodigals was anti-climax. Eric Pegram had gashed a leg on a falling rock. He was too big to carry, too injured to walk. Roley Cotter nominated Bruce, among others, to walk to Yerranderie and help. They swam the river, Bruce's third immersion, and disappeared in the gloom. Horses were organised and brought to the river that night, Eric was ferried across, propped on a horse and led to Yerranderie. The rescue party had walked for thirty hours in cold rain when they returned to Yerranderie and the uncertain bus trip to Camden.

Possibly in the same wet winter five of us set out on an ominous King's Birthday weekend to walk from Glenbrook to Bimlow. Glenbrook Creek was just fordable, the Euroka track another watercourse; long before we reached The Wheel reason told us Bimlow would be cut off. We camped - Bruce, Jack Wren, Hilma Galliot, Shirley Evans (Dean) and myself. For three days we sat under a double tent fly, scavenged enormous logs for a campfire, talked brilliantly and ate indifferently. Then walked back to Glenbrook in the same continuous downpour.

Hilma and Bruce were wonderful people to walk with. My memories of them are not just of that golden time but also of the thirty years of enduring friendship since. After their passing has been grieved their memory will remain.

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#### THE JULY GENERAL MEETING.

by Barry Wallace.

The meeting began at about 2025 with 40 or so members present. New members Fiona Moyes, Jo Witts, Peter Rossell, Robert Garnett and Geoffrey Yendall were welcomed in the usual way and even the other David Ingram turned up to get a badge this month.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received without comment.

Correspondence brought letters from the State Pollution Control Commission re Jerrara Creek, from the Orienteering Association of N.S.W., from Natural Areas Ltd. enclosing the report of their A.G.M., from Kosciusko National Park in reply to our letter about the proposed plan of management and from Brian Harvey requesting transfer to non-active status. There were the usual letters to our new members and one letter from the S.W.Tasmania Committee about a forthcoming meeting.

The Treasurer's Report showed an opening balance of \$1840.80, Income of \$592.70, Expenditure of \$321.78 to provide a closing balance of \$2111.72.

You may have noticed that some months there is a Walks Report and some months there is not. Well, this is one of those months.

The Federation Report indicated that there had been a Search & Rescue alert over a Three Peaks trip group, that cattle have been sighted in the Budawangs, that the Camden Bush Walkers have been accepted into F.B.W. membership and that there is continuing pollution in Wollangambe Creek.

General Business saw a vote that we donate \$25 to the S.W. Tasmania Committee.

So then it was just a matter of the announcements and off to the severely depleted biscuit packet at 2108.

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OBITUARY - JEAN AUSTEN.

by L.G. "Mouldy" Harrison.

Jane Hamilton Austen was born 85 years ago. On the 25th July her mortal remains were laid to rest.

During the intervening time Jean - as she was always known - had an extremely interesting and varied life, and during that period made hundreds, if not thousands of friends. She always moved around with a twinkle in her eye, a ready word and a sense of fun bubbling over. She was a very good swimmer, and when she was quite young was part of a swimming and diving act that took place in the Hippodrome Theatre, which is now named The Capitol. They used to dive into a pool on the stage, then swim out through an underwater tunnel hanging on to a rope, and come out the other end and up into the fresh air. Perhaps five minutes later she and the other swimmers would return by the same route and appear again to the amazed audience.

It was well after this that Jean and Ernie Austen joined the Sydney Bushwalkers as foundation members. It was quite likely that this would happen as Ernie represented Australia as a walker at the Olympic Games in Paris in 1924. Bushwalking was a natural outcome, and a great place to make friends in those Depression years.

I have been away holidaying with Jean and Ernie on a fortnight's trip, and learned that together the two could sing around the camp-fire for three evenings without once repeating the same song. Jean was a strong walker and was one of the first of the Sydney Bushwalkers to walk down the Grose River. This was the first appearance by girls in shorts. Jean was a splendid camp cook and later frequently won the damper competition at the Reunions.

At one concert arranged by the S.B.W. in The Savoy Theatre Jean was chief choreographer. She had carefully schooled a number of our more husky hairy, stalwart walkers. The curtain rose, the stage was bathed in moonlight blue light, and the Swan Lake dancers in white tutus and wreaths were revealed. The tableau was greeted with rounds of applause. Slowly the group unfolded its arms, the heads were raised and they then moved out across the stage revealing their large bushwalking boots. This brought the waves of laughter that Jean had planned.

Jean and Ernie were very regular walkers and spent quite a lot of time in the northern part of the State. The excellence of their camping was evident when the weather was at its worst. They both seemed able to maintain dry tents and dry clothing in any weather. Good planning, good training, simple food and great strength made them respected walkers.

As the years rolled on and Jean was no longer able to go on walking trips she supported Ernie at his Golf Club. It was not long before she had organised a men's ballet for them also.

Jean had been confined to her home for several years and in the last 18 months her sight failed completely. She enjoyed a little chat on the



phone, but with declining strength was not able to hold the ear-piece for very long.

For many years John Sands & Co. used to engage Jean to select and buy their Christmas cards, and then she would join their staff for about six weeks and train sales girls and supervise and sell thousands of Christmas cards to their customers. This part-time job suited Jean admirably. She was able to see lots of her friends in the heart of the city and yet not be tied to a permanent job that would interfere with her bushwalking and other activities.

Jean and Ernie made many friends wherever they went. Jean was a very generous, out-going person, and could always see the humanity and the fun in any situation. She and her husband Ernie were loved and respected by all walkers in the early days. It was Jean's husband who made the first ceremonial presentation of the Bone of Office which is still used to call order at the S.B.W. meetings.

All who knew Jean mourn her passing, and wish Ernie well, who by the way, had his 89th birthday in July.

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#### COOLANA FUNDS.

Coolana Wildlife Refuge is the Club's property on the Kangaroo River. It was bought with Club members' donations and is maintained also by donations, the main expense of course being the annual rates. The Coolana Committee has set itself the task of fund-raising, and it wishes to put on record the very pleasing donations received over the past twelve months:-

Trustees of the Estate of the late Marie Byles	\$1,000
Fazeley Read	\$1,000
George & Mary Davison Conservation Fund	\$585
Ira & Dorothy Butler Conservation Fund	\$425
Natural Areas Ltd.	\$100
"Whakka" Newmarch	\$50

We would especially like to thank Fazeley who put in real work selling sleeping bags to augment our funds. Maybe other members can think up some similar form of fund raising.

At the next Club Auction on 19th November (proceeds to Coolana Funds) items of some value are sought. Donors are entitled to put a reserve price on these items with any extra money raised going to Coolana Funds. This is also an opportunity to get some good bargains, so bring along your money!

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DO-IT-YOURSELF TREKKING IN NEPAL.

by Elwyn Morris.

Travellers and bushwalkers who want to halve the cost of organised trekking may be interested in the cheaper budget trip I made last year, with Bangkok, Burma and Calcutta thrown in, for approximately \$1,500. Fares and other costs will have increased, but the trip should not come to much more than that for a month, or preferably, six to eight weeks.

Fares. The current (June, 1980) off-peak Bangkok return is \$610 off-peak, \$836 peak, with 21 days advance booking (book well ahead for the Christmas period, though). A group of ten brings these down to \$490 and \$734 respectively, and \$612 if you go in off-peak and return in peak, or vice versa. A group can then proceed on pre-booked Thai flights to Khatmandu for \$320 return.

I shopped around the many travel agencies round the Hotel Malaysia in Bangkok, where long-distance travellers share information, a big swimming pool, and air-conditioned rooms for about \$3 a night each. For \$140 (about \$120 direct) I bought a one-way ticket by Burmese or Royal Nepal Airlines with a week stop-over in Burma and three days in Calcutta; if returning the same way, get a return ticket, as these discounts aren't available in Nepal, or (except with rupee-fiddling) in India.

Burma and Calcutta. I then immediately applied for my Burmese visa at the consulate not far away, and spent some interesting days in Bangkok and Chiangmai. You can do cheap walking treks into the hilltribe areas, including the Golden Triangle, from Chiangmai, but leave all your valuables and especially your passport (which is what the Thai passport forgers are after) in a safe place. I found the Je t'Aime Guest House took good care of my valuables; even by day around Chiangmai itself, bag snatchers operate from moving motorbikes.

Unlike all the wheeler-dealers who bought Johnny Walker whiskey and Benson and Hedges cigarettes at Bangkok airport duty-free and sold them on arrival in Rangoon, I managed to spend a whole \$100 for my week in Burma. But this included train to Mandalay, return air to Pagan - which I strongly advise, rather than getting stuck in a boat on the boring banks of the Irrawaddy for two days as the others did - and air back to Rangoon, where everyone stayed at the YMCA. Burma is like a trip back to World War II and before except that it's much more dilapidated. The people are a delight.

Calcutta's cleaned up centre ("Keep our city beautiful!" urged a billboard in the slums on the way in from the airport) resembled a dingy London, and was well worth seeing, not least for the rich intellectual and cultural life of Bengal, and for the thousands of white-clad cricketers on the Maidan on Sunday, in the rather cold January sunshine.

Khatmandu. Ignoring the offers of free lifts and the advice of the government tourist official (who as in India was probably getting a cut, as what she suggested in the way of a budget hotel was a lousy deal), I headed for the traveller-recommended Star Hotel. Unlike others nearby,

including the famous Khatmandu Guest House next door, this had enough hot water for showers at all times, and was quiet, at \$2 a night each for a double room. It is near one of the many hygienic and excellent restaurants in Khatmandu, KC's, where you can pick up lots of trekking and travelling information.

I bought some health food, including wholemeal bread, canned fish and other food for the trek, as once on it you only get rice, dahl (lentils) and vegetables, with wholemeal pancakes, hot lemon, and tea. I also bought an excellent guide, "Trekking in Nepal", by a British doctor whose health advice was invaluable, and a map of the Annapurna area. At the Tibetan shop next door to KC's I bought second-hand or hired all the trekking gear I needed. Unless you are going into snow, you don't need boots; my jogging shoes from Woolworths proved excellent. I included sunglasses, a hat, balaclava, gloves, sweater and parka, shorts (it gets hot), medical supplies including tetracycline for infections and other anti-dysentery drugs, and gifts of useful things like needles and scissors. Some travellers give sweets, soon-burst balloons, and cigarettes, with little regard for the effects on their recipients or the landscape. Locals will ask you for pills; even if they do have the aches and pains they claim, a single treatment will do no good, and there is a mission hospital in Pokhara.

#### The Pokhara - Jomsom - Muktinath Trek.

This 15-day return trek is rightly recommended as the easiest and most scenically varied in Nepal, with views of Annapurna and Dhaulagiri (round 27,000') and villages to eat and stay in all the way.

I took the local bus from Khatmandu to Pokhara and stayed at the lake (\$2, and great food), and next morning shared a taxi to the mission hospital on the outskirts of town. I then walked for half an hour along the valley to the Tibetan Camp at Hyengja, where at the first shop I asked for the guide who'd been glowingly recommended back in Khatmandu (Buchung). I paid the going rate - \$2 a day plus all food and other expenses, which came to another \$3. If you are going into snow, say the 17,000' pass above Muktinath to make a round trip, it is necessary to clothe your guide and possibly supply a sleeping bag for the colder conditions, but as far as Jomsom there should be no problem. It is important to hire a Tibetan, NOT a Nepalese from the lake area, who is unused to mountains. Tibetans, who have sadly been refugees for 19 years, preserving their culture and Buddhist religion, are generally honest, cheerful, helpful, and hard-working. They resemble Sherpas racially, but are less expensive to hire. Buchung was not only guide but interpreter, light-weight porter, food connoisseur, and entertainer. Singing merrily as he raced up the mountains, he made sure that we always stayed at houses with the best food, saw the local ceremonies, and knew who was who.

However, there is no need whatsoever for experienced bushwalkers to hire a guide or porter, as you don't have to carry tents or food on this trek, and in spite of consisting of stone stairways to heaven (it often seems), it's a busy highway where no local would let you stray, even if you tried.

Water. The biggest problem in Nepal is the water, for with Bali, it

has the worst reputation for making you sick. The Nepalese use their crystal streams in lieu of toilet paper (which they probably think unclean), and there are almost no toilets ("Anywhere!" with a wave towards the mountain-side is the usual reply to your request). There is such a fuel shortage that they may well not boil your water for tea for the required 20 minutes to kill all bugs. A guide can help by seeing that it is boiled long enough on the kitchen fire, but as far as I could see, the only way to make sure you won't get sick is to use tablets and boil your own water on your own stove. You could buy kerosene in Pokhara, and maybe pay a porter to carry it. Using and cleaning one's own drinking and eating utensils may well help. The food itself, if freshly cooked, is far less dangerous, though monotonous.

In practice, only a small proportion of those I met on the trek got sick; I had one afternoon's weakness and diarrhoea only, though I ate every meal and drank every glass of tea in Nepalese houses. There is no point in being careless and fatalistic about dangerous food and water, though; some get very ill.

The wonders of the trek itself, which I did in February in perfect weather (the season is October to April) are better known. Those in a hurry flew back to Pokhara from Jomsom, but, with side variations, I enjoyed the return trip just as much - the windswept Tibetan plateau and huddled village with its monastery at Kagbeni; the delicious hot sulphur pools where I took a bath at Tatopani, with its famous orange trees; the sweeping view of the Himalayas at dawn from Poon Hill; moonlight on Annapurna; red rhododendrons coming out; the gaily-clad Mustang people returning to their kingdom after the winter, with their ponies; monkeys lolloping in the snow at Goropani; the Tibetan New Year dances .....

It was one of the great lifetime experiences, and I can't wait to get back to try another - Annapurna Sanctuary, or maybe Everest Base Camp. Anyone coming?

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#### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS 1980.

Members who have not yet paid their subscriptions are reminded that the rates decided at the A.G.M. for 1980 are as follows:-

Ordinary member	\$11
Married couple	\$13
Full-time student member	\$ 7
Non-active member	\$ 2

The magazine is posted free to all members except non-active members who may receive the magazine posted to them for \$5 per year.

If you are not sure whether you have paid your subscription, the Treasurer will be able to advise you, and if you are still unfinancial please pay the Treasurer in the clubroom, or post your cheque to Box 4476 G.P.O. Sydney, 2001.

The Committee will shortly be reviewing the position of all members who are still unfinancial.

SEARCH & RESCUE.

The following list is the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs Search & Rescue contacts.

		<u>Home</u>	<u>Work</u>
DIRECTOR	Fergus Bell	476 4187	218 9698
FIELD OFFICER	Keith Maxwell	560 3152	887 8666 x 365
ASST.FIELD OFFICER	Peter Tuft	698 7640	666 8943 x 2489
MEDICAL OFFICER	Sue Cave	476 6530	44 1241 (Dr.Kurrle)

All bushwalkers are reminded of the following guidelines:-

- (a) As members of the N.S.W. Volunteer Rescue Association, all persons participating in Bushwalkers Search & Rescue are required to meet high standards. Consequently, the only persons to be called out will be those who have attended a recent training exercise and have a high degree of experience and ability. Prerequisites for participation include experience in abseiling, jumaring/prussicking, basic climbing skills and swimming.
- (b) All requests for assistance, in an emergency, will wherever possible, be made directly to the Committee. In all instances the Committee will notify the Police, regardless of whether Police assistance is required or not. The Secretary submits written reports to the Police on all incidents.
- (c) Communication with the press will be at the discretion of the Committee.
- (d) All persons involved in Bushwalkers Search & Rescue operations are covered by both public liability and personal accident insurance. The premium for these policies is now met by the Police Department.

Sydney Bush Walkers has its own S. & R. contacts, who in turn call the Federation's S. & R. IF REQUIRED. If you have a friend or relative overdue, please ring the S.B.W. contacts first, as they may have some information about the overdue trip for you. S.B.W. contacts are:-

Marcia Shappert	30,2028 (H)
Ray Hookway	411,1873 (H)
Don Finch	477,2251 (H)

\* \* \* \* \*



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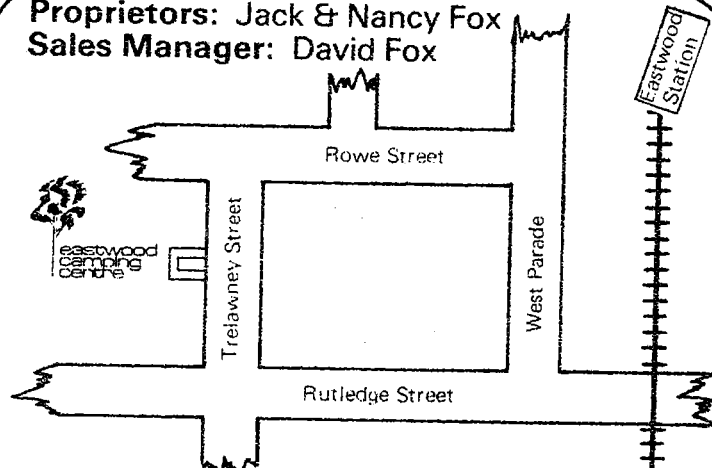
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MORE ON FROGS.

by Val Dartie.

In the magazine for June there was a most interesting article on frogs. What did it all mean? I read it once, twice and then a third time most thoroughly, and I came to the conclusion that it was a message from the gods to the mortals, or what the Bible says is pearls before the swine, but what message did it give for the humble reader? I decided to find out by my own observation, and not having the inclination to go all the way to Ettrema, I decided to go to the Botanical Gardens and do my investigation there, not far from home and near the Palaces of Culture.

I read many years ago in a poem by Auden - or was it in Enid Blyton - that "a frog is a frog is a frog", so I was most anxious to learn of the differences in Ettrema frogs and Sydney ones. So on the full moon in July last (1980 for those who may write my biography in the future) I picked my way cautiously from the Art Gallery via the Bottle Tree to the ponds; and if you are wondering why the full moon, the answer is simply that maybe one of the frogs would change into a millionaire if he would be kissed, although one look at the local samples made that seem quite undesirable.

What to look for was quite plainly stated by Mr. Peter Harris. Vomerine teeth. And here was my main problem; I had forgotten to bring my dictionary or frogological books with me. (As it turned out later, when I went home and waded through my "Noddy and His Friends" I couldn't identify any of them.)

The variety is quite remarkable. Fat ones, thin ones, brown ones with wide noses and yes, there were some with brown stripes on their yellow backs which meant they were the *limnodynastes tasmaniensis*. Gee, they must have hopped a long way, but thinking on the subject later I realised that a bird must have had a drink there and swallowed a tadpole and gone to the toilet in Our Public Gardens after flying up the coast. I couldn't see any of the ones with red triangles on their foreheads, but of course my torch batteries were getting low and I had to keep a wary eye on the surrounding bushes.

I don't know how Mr. Peter Harris managed to inspect the frogs' toes to see if they varied in length because I couldn't get the mud off their feet. My father had webbed toes - it was my first look at the real thing - and one variety, which I called the Green Meanie Taakerii, had a very shapely leg that would attract much attention at Maxims of Paris.

I smiled to myself because the Conservatorium of Music, nearby, had a Gabrielli ensemble playing, thus every frog had hidden tympani, and according to the wind, now and then became more distinct than at other times. Like Audrey, too, I laughed when up popped a serious school teacher type frog with stripes on his arm and it was followed by a little froglet standing on his tippy toes, both green and smart. Yes, Mr. Peter Harris is correct. It must be a *Hyla Caerula* with a vertical pupil.

I couldn't find any with large metatarsals and I was rather embarrassed (as obviously Mr. Peter Harris isn't) to look at the groins of the various

frogs to see the faint spots that distinguish the illustrious *Hyla Jerviensi*s, but I was reared on the saying "Don't touch a frog unless you want warts", and I can quite proudly state that I never did once during my nocturnal observations, although I would prod them with a bit of *Grevillia* that I had found stuck in my hair.

Suddenly one jumped in front of me and I got a shock too, and jumped higher. "Aha" I commented to myself aloud, "Now I know what Darwin means by natural selection. Frogs jump a little, me a bit more and kangaroos a lot. Therefore we must all be of the one species in various stages of development." It all seems much clearer now.

I was so involved in my lookings when lo, I saw a *Hyla Aurea*, or I thought I did. Yes, dark blue bottoms with a greenish bluish jacket with coppery stripes and fingers free. But the fingers free were holding handcuffs! Gott im himmel, it was the police, and so I fled with my white evening frock trailing across the Rose Garden. Pausing, I chucked my copy of Bach's B-Minor Mass at him (I had been singing in the Opera House), and I jumped over the fence near the Public Library and hid behind Shakespeare's Statue and made a wish. I wished that Dot Butler could be here with me, because I remember her story about when she slept in the grounds of Govt House Melbourne and hid in the bushes from the Federal Police.

I went straight home and couldn't help thinking what Uncle Soames would have thought of the whole operation. I took pen to paper and hence this article, which I hope encourages other readers to gaze Thoreau-like into the murky depths. My thanks to Mr. Peter Harris for introducing me to a new subject. Look what I have learnt.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### NOTICE.

The Club urgently requires someone to act as a Telephone contact - to give information concerning S.B.W. to any person enquiring.

Is any member willing to act in this capacity?

Please advise THE SECRETARY.

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SOCIAL NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER.

by Peter Miller.

Wednesday, 17th September.

"Every Day Life in China".

Ainslie Morris will show slides of her trip to China.

To get you into the mood, dinner will be held before the meeting at the Nam Roc Chinese Restaurant - 538 Pacific Highway, St. Leonards, 7.00 to 8.00 pm.

Wednesday, 24th September.

Photographic Exhibition and Wine and Cheese Evening.

David Cotton will give another exhibition of his black and white photographs and will be happy to discuss any technical details with other photographers. Wine and cheese will be served.

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ARTS AND CRAFTS EXHIBITION.

An exhibition of arts and crafts made by club members or their children will be held on November 26th.

This notice is to give you plenty of warning so you can prepare something for exhibition or dig up an item from the attic that you made a long time ago.

Paintings, pottery, weaving, sculpture, leatherwork, ceramics, basketwork or any other worthwhile hand made objects are required.

Items will be for display only.

Please advise Peter Miller, Tel.95,2689 if you are going to contribute an item for exhibition.

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ATTENTION OPERA LOVERS.

The North Sydney Opera Centre will present "La Boheme" and "The Merry Wives of Windsor".

"La Boheme" - Sept.19, 20, 23, 27 Oct. 1, 3, 10.

"Merry Wives" - Sept.13, 24, 26, Oct. 4 (matinee), Oct.11 (matinee).

Tickets \$3.50 and \$2.00 (children). Ring PETER MILLER 95,2689 for tickets.

(All performances will be held in Chatswood, Balgowlah, Cremorne and Cammeray)

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KASHMIR.

If anyone is interested in going to Kashmir next May or June for five weeks kindly see me (Owen Marks) in the clubrooms or ring me at 30,1827. I intend to go direct to Srinigar and then head on the two-day bus ride to Ladakh which was the scene many years ago of the fighting between China and India. Ladakh is the last surviving remnant of old Tibetan culture.

It will be midsummer so it will not be the correct time to see anything of India proper apart from Delhi Airport. The fare right now is \$999 return so it will possibly be dearer then.

I don't intend to live on a houseboat for more than a day or so, it will not be that sort of thing. I want to go wandering up the valleys around the Himalayan foothills and to revisit for a few days Simla and the neighbouring valleys to the north.

If a group of 15 could get together it would be considerably cheaper, but we would not have to stick together and travel as a group.

Tents and sleeping bags a must, because it is the main holiday season for the Indian sub-continent and the schools are closed for three months and therefore everything is booked out, but everything is booked out at the best of times so that makes little difference.

Once in Kashmir and Himachel Pradesh the cost of living is not expensive, just getting there is. There is no language problem, because English is still guaranteed in the Indian Constitution, and you can chat to anyone (more or less). This area is the cleanest part of India and is therefore suitable for youngsters.

Crackpots needn't apply.

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ANNUAL BUSHWALKERS BALL.

The F.B.W. is holding the Bushwalkers Ball for 1980 on Friday, 26th September at Ashfield Town Hall from 8.00 pm to 12.00 midnight.

Tickets cost \$6.00 single

B.Y.O. Food and Grog.

Last year's ball was a great success so join the S.B.W. group for this year's night of dancing and fun.

The theme of the Ball will be SOUTH-WEST TASMANIA.

The contact for S.B.W. members is - CHRISTA YOUNGER, Tel. 57,1158.

Tickets from Christa or Gordon Lee.

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