

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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. Enquiries concerning the Club should be referred to Ann Ravn, Telephone 798,8607.

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MAY, 1981.

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IN THE SHADOW OF JAGUNGAL AND ROY BRAITHWAITE.

by Bill Gamble.

My first walk with the Club was in June last year - Bundeena to National Park Station via Deer Pool and a few other points. The leader was Roy Braithwaite. In July I was to meet him again on a Sunday walk when 42 people trailed him from Cowan to the pub at Brooklyn. We met again over Easter when I joined his Round Mountain walk in Kosciuszko National Park. His party was small. Besides me, there was one other Club member - his son-in-law Guy Vinden.

Members who were unable to join the walk through lack of transport, or decided that the high country was no place to be in the autumn missed a good walk in fine weather. Also, it was an opportunity to be in the company of a man who has had a walking affair with the Kosciuszko area extending back more than 30 years. There was plenty of time to talk and hear a little about the Snowy Mountains before the National Park was formed. The relationship between the summer stock routes and today's walking tracks became apparent and the impact on those routes during the construction of the Snowy Mountains Scheme could be appreciated. It all seemed much clearer with Roy's comments along the way.

All walks have to start and end somewhere. For the purposes of this account, Bradleys Hut alongside the highway just short of Round Mountain is as good a place as any. It was after 9.00 pm on Thursday, 16 April, before we reached the hut. The night was cold and clear. The hut colder and drafty to boot. We decided to bivvy inside and slept close to the fire. We were glad when morning came.

By 8.15 am on Good Friday we had left the Round Mountain trailhead with Jagungal our destination, via Farm Ridge. The route was by turns clear and unclear, although undoubted. We inspected Round Mountain Hut and found it to be much the same as the others we would pass (but not use) along the route, the log hut at Pretty Plain excepted. The Tumut River was crossed with dry feet and lunch stop was alongside a small creek just down from the old stock yards where Farm Ridge Hut was once located. Our little world of silence was broken by a trail bike - a couple of people, and out looking for stray cattle so they said - but we were soon left to ourselves and saw no one else until the following day.

Shortly after passing O'Keefe's Hut and now in the 'shadow' of Jagungal, we left our packs alongside a small meteorological hut and scrambled up a ridge to be sitting on the trig point at 2061 metres shortly before 4.00 pm. Above the bush line, scrambling on rocks, it was cold and windy. We wasted no time in entering our names in the log book and then hastily descended a few metres to a sheltered place on the lee slope for a snack and to enjoy the view. As an expatriate New Zealander used to high ridges above the bush line, I found the surroundings somewhat reminiscent of other places across the Tasman. Briefly, I felt quite nostalgic. The long view to an Australian landscape and Roy's reminder that a campsite had yet to be found brought me back to Kosciuszko. We descended quickly on much the same route as we came up, and found a flat, grassy campsite among the snow gums just off the track, about 2-3 minutes walk from the met. hut where we retrieved our packs. Water came from a small creek flowing down a gully from high on Jagungal. It was

after sunset before we had finished evening meal, but the full moon which was to follow us during the walk made cleanup chores easy. We retired from a warm camp fire and awoke to a freezing dawn.

On Saturday morning we pushed south beyond Jagungal, on open plain at first then through rolling snow grass country to reach Grey Mare Hut for lunch. We stopped for a late morning snack at Back Flat Creek below the hut and had intended to go farther before lunch, but the diversions were many. Twenty-nine years had elapsed since Roy's last visit and there was much for him to rediscover in the remains of the gold mining operation in the gully up behind the hut. Notes within the hut reminded users that rats were the permanent residents, and that a copperhead snake frequented and/or lurked about the toilet out back. In the warm sun we surveyed the rolling country to the east and had lunch.

From Grey Mare Hut we cut across on a rather indistinct lateral track to join the Grey Mare trail coming up from the south end of the Park, in the process disturbing three or four emus browsing. We followed the trail through to the turnoff to Pretty Plain Hut. The fork is unmarked and the track does not pick up clearly for about 100 metres. A cairn or other sign would be useful to pick up the fork. All I would suggest for those coming, as we did, from Grey Mare Hut is to be alert for a steep descent through Mountain Ash into a saddle which climbs again steeply to the west. On the far side of this short saddle is a small snow grass meadow and the track runs north down the western side. For those coming up from Pretty Plain there should be no doubt.

It was late afternoon by now and the coolness which came with the shadows seemed an incentive to make a fairly fast pace to our campsite wherever that might be. We made an inspection of the log cabin at Pretty Plain and found it in excellent condition. The occupants seemed to consider it their own - gear was spread out in such a way as to make it awkward for latecomers - and we sensed that they really did not care for our being there. But our intention was to camp farther on.

Already Pretty Plain was cold - it was only about 4.30 pm - and the dampness pointed to a freezing night if we stayed low. We dropped our packs about 5 minutes downstream from the log hut and scrambled up a low ridge to the west looking for flat ground. Atop the ridge and about 10 metres off the lateral track connecting Pretty Plain Hut with Dargals trail was an excellent campsite. Flat, grassy, protected by some scrub and snow gums and plenty of dead wood for the fire. In one carry, we drew enough water from Bulls Head Creek for the evening and breakfast and returned with our packs. The night was a carbon copy of the previous one.

The morning sun hit the camp early while we were having breakfast. It would have been quite easy to have sat around the fire sipping tea indefinitely. But we were away about 8.15 am. The original plan had been to walk down Pretty Plain towards the Tooma River and then on towards Patons Hut. Roy figured we were in too good a shape to be let off with such a short walk, so the amended route was to continue along the lateral up to Dargals trail; and then down the north end of the ridge to a lunch stop by the Tooma River. Until we reached Dargals trail the track was indistinct and not helped by a recent fire which had obliterated most of the track

for about a kilometre. We negotiated the spur without getting too sooty, then turned north to follow the ridge top trail. The view to the west was sweeping, to the Murray River far below and to mountains beyond, but the price was a chilly wind. Away to the east, Jagungal stood high in the skyline, distinctive and dominating all around it for many kilometres. Along the way we continued our speculations about soft pads of dung containing undigested berries which had been scattered regularly along the tracks. They seemed about as regular as the wombat holes and we pondered the connection. Guy led the plunge off the ridge to the banks of the Tooma River.

Before lunch, Roy led the unclean ~~into~~ the cold waters of the Tooma; Guy followed less enthusiastically - the third member who does not believe in washing on walks (the natural oils must be left on the skin to protect one from the cold) lighted the fire then, reluctantly, washed his feet. Which proved to be quite unnecessary as we were obliged to cross the Tooma River after lunch and it was more than knee deep!

Up the ridge on the other side, we passed another party having lunch and then followed an easy trail to the fork with the Round Mountain track. Actually, it was a road to the old Thiess construction village and obviously built to take heavy trucks. Nevertheless, new growth on the old road was prodigious and will certainly destroy the route for vehicles if the trees are left to grow. It may make progress for the walker a little difficult too.

As we climbed away from the snow-grass-covered flat at the fork, there was a transition to gums, then into a magnificent stand of mountain ash, far grander than that encountered the previous day for a short distance before turning off on to the Pretty Plain track. On a flat saddle on Out Station Spur covered with a mature stand of these trees we camped. It was a fine campsite. On a grassy flat among the tall trees the light was filtered and the air still. A red sunset added to the light show, and we sat back from the task of cooking evening meal to sip on a brew and watch the light change in the trees. Roy declared it one of his best campsites and noted the place for future reference. And this time, water was running no more than 3-4 minutes walk away on the east side of the saddle.

Convinced that Monday's walk would be easy graft, we lingered at the campsite and did not leave until around 9.00 am. Without much thought, we wandered down the old road talking, and convinced that the route would be undoubted. I suppose it is when one goes the right way - we went the other and ended up in some of the thickest scrub-bashing any of us had got into for some years. It did not relent until we reached a short track which took us to the highway about 12.30 pm.

This is not the place for a confessional. Suffice to say we got ourselves far enough off the route for it to be necessary to sit down and discuss our lot. We decided to turn the morning into a cross-country navigation exercise instead of backtracking, even if it meant a bit of a scrub-bash in the process. It was possible to establish our position exactly and also where we wanted to go - Round Mountain. Our route, in a shallow arc to the east, took us up and along a thickly tree-covered ridge skirting some steep gullies. About two hours later, maintaining a compass

route, we emerged on a low ridge at a small hut below Round Mountain. With time pressing and satisfied with our route-finding efforts, we stopped playing games and dropped onto a short track and were soon out on the highway and walking back to the car at the Round Mountain trailhead about a kilometre away. Back at Bradley's Hut we stopped to have a light lunch, a brew, and tidied ourselves for the drive back to Sydney.

Club members should be on the alert in future for a walk in the Snowy Mountains with Roy Braithwaite - it is an interesting combination.

Map reference: Kosciusko 1:100,000.

* * * * *

EASTER ON TALLOWA DAM.

by Peter Miller.

We started off from Bendeela camping ground in beautiful sunshine with four kayaks and one canadian. Helen Gray was there to see George off and "assist" in packing an extraordinary amount of gear into his kayak. (Getting gear into and out of kayaks was an art but we improved with practice.)

In review order we paddled slowly past the car campers. In the van was the flagship steered by Admiral Miller with midshipman Robert up forrard. Next came Tony Marshall in a kayak with go fast stripes which flashed ahead very quickly. George Gray was in a kayak which carried all the comforts of home including a camp oven and cold beer. Gemma Gagne was in a well worn but worn well kayak and Fiona Moyes was in a slalom kayak which proved to be unsuitable for flat water paddling.

We found that about an hour and a bit was all we could stay in the canoes as our muscles had not adjusted to the cramped positions. We made camp quite early as a strong headwind made the going very difficult.

The campsites on the Kangaroo River arm of the dam are delightful and we were able to find a clear creek running into the dam next to our grassy spot among the wattles. Each night there was a bright moon and each day the sun shone all the time. Paddling across the glassy water and breaking up the reflections of the fleecy white clouds and the trees was a truly delightful experience.

On Saturday we paddled down to the dam wall by lunchtime. On the way we passed several sailing canoes doing zero kilometres per hour in a very light breeze. There were quite a lot of canoes on the dam and lots of people camping.

The Shoalhaven arm is in direct contrast to the Kangaroo arm. The scenery immediately changed from rolling park-like country to very steep hillsides with unclimable cliffs above. We found a small sandy campsite left by a big flood and off-loaded the gear. We looked at the gear, the river and the cliffs and pondered on the horrors of having to walk out from such a location - nobody offered to go first.

George and Tony paddled up to where the Shoalhaven runs into the dam and spent some time shooting the rapids. Fiona, Robert and myself went as far as Grey's Point and returned to camp rather worn out.

The view from the campsite was quite remarkable with the steep hillsides plunging down into the water and the cliffs above. It was a perfect night for sleeping out followed by a glorious sunrise.

On Sunday we paddled back down the Shoalhaven and up the Kangaroo. We paddled up Bundanoon and Sandy Creeks among the dead trees. The main arms of the dam have been cleared of trees but not the side creeks or some of the steeper parts of the Shoalhaven. We continued along the Kangaroo arm past the narrow rocky section and back to the open country to another perfect camp spot. There was a full moon and an unbelievably beautiful sunrise.

On Monday we made a leisurely start and paddled back to the cars at Bendeela.

Flat water paddling lacks the dash and excitement of white water canoeing. On the other hand it is a delightful way to see the countryside without actually killing yourself with effort. The Canadian was excellent for carrying three people with gear and we could take it in turns to rest and admire the scenery. The kayaks are better in windy conditions because they have a lower profile. It is a bit complicated getting gear in and out of the kayaks but not impossible.

It was one of the very best Easters that I can remember. I enjoyed it so much that two weeks later I went back and did almost the whole trip again in two days.

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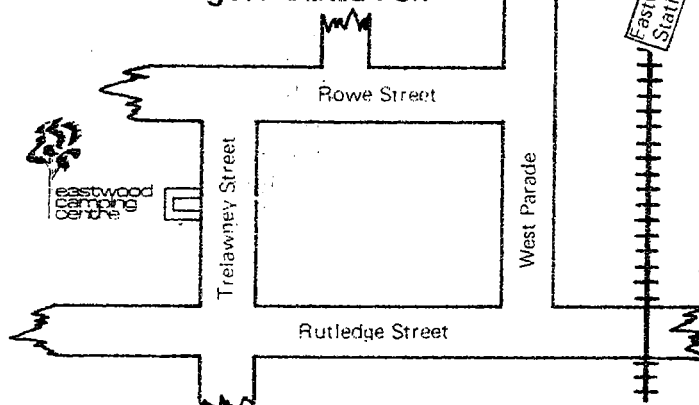
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SUNDAY MORNING AT COOLANA REUNION

by Nancye Alderson.

I am lying in my tent
And through the opening
I can see the white mist
Shrouding the trees.
The smoke is drifting
Up from the fires
As the bushwalkers are
Cooking their breakfast.

3.
Mums, dads and children
Cook steak and bacon
My toast is burnt
On the log fire.
We are sitting here lazily
And enjoying the scene.
Now we make damper and
Everyone kneads the flour.

5.
Damper and honey
What a spread
As everyone mingles
And enjoys the cooking.
Then down to the river
For a swim
A quick plunge
And we are wet.

7.
All too soon
I am packed
And ready to go
Back home.
As I push up the track
With the pack on my back
I feel
At peace.

2.
A kaleidoscope of tents
Is scattered around
And everyone enjoys
The stillness of the bush.
The sun is shining
Through the trees and
Cobwebs are heavy with dew
Birdsong is an unbroken melody.

4.
What a big decision
Where to put the damper
And such great care
To heap coals on the lid.
At long last the
Judging of the dampers
Large and small are tasted
The prize goes to a young lad.

6.
Li-los and swimmers
They move along
The deep of the river
Which carries them away.
Back up the hill
For a hurried lunch
Then down comes my tent
For folding.

BACKGROUND TO BUSHWALKING - VOLUME TWO - 1968-80.

by Jim Brown.

This is an abridged version of the item presented at the 1981 Reunion.

INTRODUCTION: In October, 1967, at the Club's 40th Anniversary Reunion, a group of members presented a programme we called "Background to Bush Walking."

To understand the significance of the title, it is necessary to bear in mind that the term "Bush Walker", which is now known and used and understood all over Australia, came into being when we adopted as our Club's name - "The Sydney Bush Walkers". The term just didn't exist previously. Thus you could say that everything that has happened since 1927 is part of the background to bush walking.

In the 1967 reunion play, a summary of events from 1927 to 1967 was outlined. It included noteworthy news items from Australia and abroad, interspersed with comment, gossip and scandal from the Club's archives. Some items were serious, some frivolous, a few just plain interesting.

Before bringing the story up to date for the years 1968 to 1980, we intend to re-play two or three specimen years from the first volume, hoping to give you the feel of the thing before we come closer to the bone. Here we go then.....

Jim The year 1934.

Bob Celebration of Melbourne's centenary.

Barbara The Centenary Air Race from England was won by Scott and Black, in just under three days elapsed time.

Jim In the Club, a year of sin, sex and sensation. Nine members were hailed before the Committee in January and reprovved over incidents at a Christmas camp. One for nude sunbathing, three for insufficient costume, one for petting....

Barbara (cutting in) Why only one? Surely you need two, like a quarrel?

Jim (ignoring interruption)....and four for co-tenting.

Bob In February a letter was sent to Carlons concerning two people who spent a week there, purporting to be married and members of the Club, when in fact they were not

Don What....not married?

Bob Not members either.

Dot And in May a member was rebuked for attending a meeting in an intoxicated condition.

Jim Sometimes, in addition to the news items, we threw in a kind of topical song, as in 1938.

Barbara That year opened with Sydney's Sesqui-Centenary (150th Anniversary).

Don In September British Prime Minister Chamberlain returned from a conference in Munich forecasting (hopefully) "Peace in our time".

Bob In February a member was suspended for six months for cutting down a sapling at Burning Palms.

- Dot April saw the Club securing a lease of the camping site at Morella Karong, just off Heathcote Creek.
- Barbara But by September there were so many strays using the side track that parties were advised to go there by different routes and a working bee was held to disguise the track.
- Jim (SONG) If a campsite takes your fancy, and you want it for your own,
You must hedge it round with dangers
And discourage wandering strangers
With a track that's overgrown.....overgrown.....overgrown.
- Bob Christmas/New Year saw the Tigers undertaking the first "in-the-water" trip down the Kowmung, including Morong Deep.
- Dot In 1941, that darkest year of the 2nd World War, the topical song had a ring of the protest songs that were popular 20 years later.
- Jim Disasters in Greece and Crete, redeemed to some degree by the stubborn defence of beleaguered Tobruk in North Africa.
- Barbara In June, Germany invades Russia.
- Bob December 7th - Pearl Harbour and the U.S.A. becomes involved.
- Dot Signs of the times were.....
- Don) in quick The June General Meeting cancelled - no quorum.
Jim) succession Subscriptions of 25 members on Active Service waived.
Dot) The Club's maps stored in a Bank Vault - maps had become virtually Secret Documents
- Barbara In March it was reported that people were shooting rabbits during the night at Era. Federation was asked to investigate - -
- Bob The walkers didn't want to be the Bunnies -
- SONG (to "Moringtown Ride")
(Barbara sings verses... ALL sing chorus)
- Bombing raids on cities, armies plunder Greece,
Ships at sea torpedoed, when will this torment cease?
(Chorus) Bombs and mines and shooting, any place you stray
Even down at Era Beach killers seek their prey.
- Bunnies being slaughtered over all the earth,
Even down at Era Beach....now that's a cause for mirth. (Chorus)
- When will human bunnies find they can enjoy
Lovely things surrounding them, and not have to destroy? (Chorus)
- Jim WELL, THAT'S HOW IT WENT IN 1967. NOW LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT
1968 TO 1980. FIRST 1968.
- Dot Australia was still getting over the shock of the disappearance of Prime Minister Harold Holt while swimming in Port Phillip Bay just before Christmas 1967.
- Don Elsewhere, important people died violently....In the U.S.A. Martin Luther King, a Negro rights leader, was assassinated.

Bob A few months later, Robert Kennedy, brother of the former President, who had also been assassinated, was shot and killed.

Barbara Apollo 8 became the first manned space vessel into Lunar Orbit.

Bob At the Annual Meeting, subscriptions were set at \$5.50 Active, \$7.50 Married Couple and \$3.50 Student.

Barbara But in June there were still 193 unfinancial, including 143 "Actives".

Jim Battle was joined in company with other conservationists to prevent limestone mining near Colong Caves by a cement company.

Dot The Club magazine truly became the official organ with a decision that it be part of the subscription and mailed to all full members.

Don ONWARD TO 1969.

Bob In July America put the first man on the moon - while Astronaut Collins orbited in the mother vessel, Armstrong and Aldrin made the small step that was a big leap on to the moon.

Jim The world of finance was shaken by the mining boom in Western Australia. Shares in the Poseidon Nickel mines rocketed from about \$1 to more than \$200, then slumped.

Dot At an Extra-ordinary Meeting in February, we decided to go ahead with the purchase of about 90 acres of land in Kangaroo Valley, using the Era Trust Fund and other donations.

Barbara Our co-purchasers of the total block were the Society of Friends (Quakers) who said they liked us as nice quiet neighbours.

(PAUSE....THE PLAYERS LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER....THEN SONG - to "Silent Night")

ALL Silent Night!

Bob Holy cow!

What a din, what a row!

Don Fiddles and bagpipes and hullabaloo

Jim Down on the shores of the Kangaroo

Barbara) That is our nice quiet neighbour

& Dot Holding re-union once more.

Don Anyway, we bought the land for about \$3,900. And the August meeting decided by the narrow margin of 17 to 16 NOT to build an access road.

Bob During June/July the Australian Andean Expedition, including S.B.W. members Dot Butler and Ross Wyborn were climbing lofty South American peaks. Their main triumph was on Mt.Lasunayoc, about 20,000 ft.

Dot Later that year oldest member Walter Tarr - Taro - died just a few months after his 90th birthday. He had been taking part in selected overnight walks until only a few years before.

Don There was a complaint at a meeting about the mis-spelling of place names in the Walks Programme.

SKETCH

Jim Oh, hullo, are you going before Committee for admission, too?

- Barbara Yes. Tell me, what did you do for your week-end test walk?
- Jim This one here - see. KANGA WALLS - MOUNT CLODMAKER - STRING LEG - COOKS LIVER - KOWDUNG ROVER - GINGER RANCE. It's supposed to be about 60 KILLERMETRES.
- Barbara Ah, yes. I did quite an easy one. We camped in GIUE BUM FOREST and climbed out over MR. KING GORGE.
- Bob On to 1970.
- Dot The commencement of Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (S.A.L.T.) gave some hope of a lessening in world tensions.
- Don And (very timely, it turned out) the first big discoveries of North Sea oil were made.
- Jim Perhaps the years numbered in the 70s were those when conservation made its big leap. Instead of a few dedicated souls striving, often in vain - it became an issue that most governments had to make at least a show of taking seriously.
- Barbara There was the continuing fight for Colong. Some conservationists bought one or two individual shares in the cement company and managed to provoke Donnybrooks at the annual meetings over a few years.
- Don There was a proposal to call the Kangaroo Valley property "Wandandian"a name said to mean "home of the lost lovers".
- Barbara But we turned it down - it sounded too permissive. Later we called it "Coolana" - meaning "happy meeting place".
- Jim In a debate on payment of shire rates, it was suggested that if we classified it as a "cemetery" or "seminary" we wouldn't have to pay.
- Bob And one member said if we called it a seminary, farmers would think it was a stud property.
- Dot Meanwhile, a party doing Claustral Canyon was joined by a stray dog, which had to be lowered down the waterfalls in a pack. It was reported the dog didn't enjoy abseiling and at the end of the trip was suffering from "Claustralphobia".

(END OF YEAR 1970)
To be continued.

* * * * *

THE APRIL GENERAL MEETING.

by Barry Wallace.

The meeting began at about 2023 with 30 or so members present and the President in the chair. There were no apologies so we welcomed new member James Field in the traditional way and moved on to the Minutes of the previous meeting. These were read and received.

Correspondence brought requests for transfer to non-active status from Jacqueline Bruen and Fran Christie, a N.P.W.S. circular relating to the proposed plan of management, and access for, the Morton National Park, and the usual outgoing letters to new members. Matters arising saw the meeting elect Alex Colley to co-opt members to a committee which is to produce recommendations on the proposed plan of management.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we had started the month with \$2248.43, spent \$323.08, earned \$478.00 and ended the month with \$2403.35. The Coolana account closing balance was \$31.28 after payment of rates.

The Federation Report indicated that the Sydney Rock Climbers Club is withdrawing from Federation and that F.B.W. will provide no further financial assistance to the proposed Wild Rivers Club. It appears that there will be no significant action on the S.W. Tassie issue until next summer and that there will be no moves on mining under national parks until after the N.S.W. Government elections. F.B.W. intend to issue a newsletter in May and are seeking volunteers to help with production. The Ball survey is now complete and the format of the Ball will be in accordance with the survey results.

The Walks Report began with the Reunion, held over the weekend of 13,14,15 March. The weather was fine and warm, and about 130 people attended. We are promised a full report in the magazine. David Cotton's 9-day ramble on Wollemi Creek failed to start. Over the weekend 20,21,22 Bill Burke led 9 people on his Megalong Valley-Cox's River trip in fine weather with "no problems". Peter Harris had 16 starters on his Ettrema Wilderness walk and Ian Debert had 13 people on his 2-day trip on the Upper Grose. Of the day walks, Tony Marshall led 8 people on his Upper Grose trip and we have no report on Ann Brown's Stanwell Park trip.

The weekend of 27,28,29 March saw Pat McBride lead 9 people on his Budawang's walk. The walk was described as good, although there was some shortage of water on Warre Head. Gordon Lee's rock climbing day was cancelled but his abseiling instructional attracted 10 starters. Peter Miller's Kowmung trip was described as "beaut", with 5 people attending. Bob Younger's day walk in the Royal National Park attracted 13 members and 11 prospectives with the water being described as C.K. There was no report on Peter Sargeant's West Head walk.

Ray Hookway's Crown Mountain - Tyan Pic walk over 3,4,5 April attracted 12 starters on a weekend that turned out a rather mixed bag of weather. There was no report of Peter Christian's programmed Marley to Otford walk but Jim Brown had 10 starters on his Glenbrook Creek walk. Jim had to modify the walk somewhat due to flooding in Glenbrook Creek.

There was no General Business and after the announcements, the meeting closed at 2110.

* * * * *

The Club has received the following letter from SUTHERLAND BUSHWALKING CLUB:

P.O. Box 250,
SUTHERLAND. 2232.
May, 1981.

To all Federated Bushwalking Clubs,

The Sutherland B.W.C. has chartered a coach to take a club party to the Warrumbungles National Park on the October long weekend. It is anticipated that about 20 seats will be available for other clubs to use.

Details of transport are as follows:-

- * Cost - \$30.00 per seat. This covers coach, driver and a small allowance for postage and paper work but no profit.
- * Coach departs from Sutherland 6.30 pm on Friday October 2nd. Pick ups will be arranged according to requirements of passengers - probably Parramatta about 7.15 pm.
- * Arrival at Camp Blackman about 3.0 am.
- * Return from the park at 1.0 pm Monday, arriving back at Sutherland by 10.0 pm.
- * Local transport in the coach can be arranged e.g. for a day walk in the vicinity of Mt.Naman or Tondurion Spire.

Points to consider:-

1. Private transport would cost at least the same.
2. Provision of a driver allows you to plan through trips using coach pick up at the other end.
3. The distance would be prohibitive for a 3 day weekend without driver so the worst of the crowds from Sydney can be avoided.

Walks.

The Sutherland Club would prefer members of your club to organize their own walks at the Warrumbungles. There is plenty of time to include this trip in your program of trips for October. It does place a strain on our club's resources if we have to provide the trip leadership as well as the coach service. Please do not hesitate to discuss possible plans with either Joy Scott 520,0750 or Don Rice 528,4095.

Bookings.

Deposits of at least \$10 per seat required after July 27th.

Balance to be paid by 1st September.

PLEASE SEND A STAMPED, SELF ADDRESSED ENVELOPE AND PHONE NUMBER.

Block club bookings will be most welcome on the same basis.

- - - - -

NOTE:

The Walks Secretary would be glad to hear of any club member who would be prepared to lead a S.B.W. trip to the Warrumbungles for the October holiday weekend, making use of this coach transport.

TRAVELLING WITH CHILDREN IN INDIAPART 3.

by Marcia Shappert.

We had to get up at 4.45 am to catch the 6 am train from Columbo to Polonnaruwa, where we would then catch another bus to Sigiriya, the ancient city. PJ had bought a digital watch duty free, so this was one time when we really depended on the alarm. We crept out of the house where we had been paying guests, and got to the train station just as it was getting light. (We had several of these very early morning starts, and the kids never complained once. I guess they were as curious to find out what the next town held for us as we were.)

Trains in Sri Lanka are something else!! You can't book seats, so it's push and shove with all the many Sri Lankans who always are travelling. We became more experienced as the weeks wore on, but this first experience with the trains was one to remember. As the huge old steam train came rolling into the station, a porter who noticed how lost we looked said to follow him closely and he would help us to get seats....for a price. Before the train stopped he jumped onto it and held four seats for us, which was quite a job. He was a bit put out that we didn't follow him "closely", but had waited for the train to almost come to a stop before we jumped on. Once we got on, however, the trains were a lot more comfortable than the Indian trains.

We arrived in Polonnaruwa about 1 pm really tired and hot. A little boy attached himself to us, insisting he would help us get a bus for the 2½ hour trip to Sigiriya. He stuck to us like a leech, even going with us to a greasy spoon for lunch. After much discussion between us we decided we really were too tired to make the effort to get to Sigiriya. We checked into a nice little lodge and rented bikes to ride to the ancient sites at Polonnaruwa. PJ and I each had a bike and Jenny rode on the back of Craig's. We missed the turn-off into the ancient sites so went in the exit instead. This the kindly gateman let us do, but only with the understanding that we came out that way again so the main gatekeeper wouldn't know we had been let in without paying the entrance fee. PJ pooped out about this stage and said he would sit under the tree and wait for us. The three of us continued on into the site and were really fascinated with the ruins.

There were three Buddhas carved from a huge rock face, the Recumbent Buddha is 44' long, the Standing one 23' high; the seated figure is slightly smaller and once had golden finger nails. Dense jungle now covers much of the splendour of Polonnaruwa which dates back to 368 A.D. We strolled around the remains of the Palace, the Royal Bath and a massive "stone book". It must have been really something way back then.

After about 45 minutes to one hour we rode back to where PJ should have been waiting, but he wasn't there. After talking with the gatekeeper, who said PJ had gone into the site, we decided that since it was getting dark I should wait for PJ to come back while Craig and Jenny cycled to the bike shop in case he was there. Another man came along and talked to the gatekeeper and then told me that he would send the gatekeeper into the site to look for PJ. He came back with the news that PJ had gone out the "in"

gate. Poor man. I think he was worried he would now lose his job. I was feeling rather angry as I pedaled back to the bike shop, only to see PJ standing out in front. He explained that he waited "hours" for us and then started looking for us. By this time the front gate was closed, so we couldn't pay the entrance fees or explain the situation. We were leaving the next morning, so PJ agreed to cycle over early and pay the fee. As it turned out the next morning, everyone knew what had happened and were not angry at PJ and thought him rather nice to make the effort to explain the situation.

It was at a little street stand across from the bike shop that we had our fill of "egg hoppers". I had been raving about these for the past five years, since I had last been in Sri Lanka. They're made in a hemisphere shaped pan. A thin batter is poured in and swirled around the pan. When this is slightly cooked an egg is dropped into the centre. They really are delicious and we all ate our fill for 70c.

The 4-hour bus ride to Anuradhapura was hot and dusty, but we all got seats. At one point though, Craig, who was sitting in the seat just behind the driver, had to stand when a Buddhist monk claimed the seat. That one is reserved for monks.

We stayed at a nice little "paying guest" place for \$8.50 for the four of us for bed and breakfast. (Sri Lanka is much more expensive to travel in than India. We didn't see the grinding poverty we saw in India, however. The people, in general, looked much more prosperous than in India, and many wore Western clothes.)

We started walking from our "house" to the Sacred Bo Tree (2,000 years old). Both PJ and Jenny pooped out this time, so we left them sitting along the side of the road watching all the monkeys who were running around. (We would never leave the kids like that here, but we felt quite safe doing it there.) They were given strict instructions not to move. When we got back about an hour later, they said they had a lovely time talking with all the people who asked them where their parents were and watching monkeys.

The next morning we took a three hour taxi tour of the more distant ruins - all very interesting, but after seeing one stupa you've seen them all. We spent the afternoon shopping in the local bazaar for Christmas presents for each other as we didn't think there would be any shops at Wilpattu where we'd be heading the next day, December 24th.

Wilpattu Hotel, near the national park, was very "touristy", but we enjoyed every minute of it. We had a lovely room with a balcony overlooking a crocodile infested river. The kids thought it was great! We did see some crocs, but we also watched the monks from the monastery across the river bathe in it. They must have known how many crocs there were, or were fearless.

PJ can testify to the good fishing. He caught a few using only bread as bait. The help all made a great fuss over the children and they were put in charge of feeding the tortoises. These tortoises ate green chillies! - and really seemed to enjoy them.

While the kids were out rafting on the river with someone from the hotel, Craig and I decided to have a walk. As we were passing one mud hut, a young man invited us in. The hut had several rooms, with a thatched roof. The furniture was built right into the walls of mud. It all looked very primitive, except that they turned on a transistor radio blaring loud as soon as we walked in. (This happened quite often in our travels and we never figured out why they always had to be so loud.) They made us a cup of tea and although their English was very limited, made us very welcome. They were delighted when I asked if I could take their photo and all ran to change from the native clothes they were wearing into Western ones. I felt it would have been a better photo in their native clothes.

We decided to decorate our room for Christmas, and so collected lots of flowers (mostly frangipani) and strung them on thread we hung across the room from the fan to the mosquito netting. Craig put up the stars and streamers we had bought for the occasion in India. We still had lots of flowers left, so I made an arrangement to hang on the front door. I also made an arrangement for the table on the balcony. It all looked pretty and smelled beautiful.

The kids woke up early the next morning so we sat on the balcony and watched the sun come up while we exchanged Christmas gifts.

That afternoon we took a jeep safari into the park itself. More like a forest than jungle - similar to Chitwan National Park in Nepal. We saw lots of spotted deer, an eagle, mongoose, lots of birds, but not a spotted leopard, which the park is known for. We did see fresh paw marks though. It will certainly be a Christmas we'll always remember.

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As Ann Ravn, the S.B.W. 'phone contact, and Marcia Shappert her predecessor, can tell you, some unusual 'phone requests and enquiries have come their way. Ann rang your editor a few nights ago to report on her most recent 'phone call. A film producer rang to ask if S.B.W. could supply a stand-in stunts-woman willing to climb along a ledge 10" wide and 100' above the ground, for \$200. The only requirements were that the woman looked 26 years old and be slim, 5' 7" high, and brown hair. Ann and I were immediately attracted to the \$200 but agreed we were both too old, too big, too tall and too fair and dark respectively. (And we's possibly fall off.) We thought of Dot Butler but she is too short, and besides she was out of town.

Unfortunately, this magazine has gone to print too late to publicise the job, so to all you females, who missed out on an easy \$200, keep your eyes and ears open, a similar job may come up sometime.

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SOCIAL NOTES FOR JUNE.

by Peter Miloer.

wednesday, 17th June.Slides of Russia and Asia.

Peter Dyce will show slides of Russia and Asia. Peter has travelled extensively and the slides cover a wide variety of places and experiences.

DINNER before the meeting will be held at Chehades Lebanese Restaurant, 270 Pacific Highway, Crows Nest at 6.30 pm.

Wednesday, 24th June.Members Slide Night - Mid-Winter Feast.

The ever popular stand of the Social Secretary - members' slide night - is on again. This time the emphasis is on slides of members. Funny slides, serious slides, action shots, inaction shots are all welcome. Other slides may be shown as well as slides of members.

As this Wednesday is the closest to the shortest day and therefore the middle of winter we will celebrate with a grand supper, a mid-winter feast like they have in the Antarctic. Please bring along a plate of something interesting to eat and the club will provide the drinks.

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CONGRATULATIONS to Christine and Craig Austin on the birth of their first child, a boy, DANE.

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ENGAGEMENT. Club member Debbie McInnes, a student nurse, has announced her engagement to Tony Odlum, a student doctor. Congratulations!

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REMEMBER! Friday, 29th May at Ashfield Town Hall.

Dot Butler's Anniversary "DO".
