

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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

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S.B.W. CHANGES ITS MEETING PLACE.

The building in Atchison Street, St. Leonards, where the Club has been meeting for the past eleven years, is being sold at auction on June 16th, and it seems fairly certain that we will have to obtain another meeting place. A booking has been made at the Upper Hall at the Cahill Community Centre, 34 Falcon Street, Crow's Nest (nearly opposite Mountain Equipment), about one kilometre via the Pacific Highway from St. Leonards station. The Club will meet there on June 30th and subsequent Wednesday evenings, and the question of future accommodation will be fully discussed at the monthly General Meeting on July 14th. See also special notice enclosed.

KIANDRA CROSSING.

by Patrick McBride.

It is cruel at 5.30 am on a July morning in Sawyers Hut. The insect chirp of my alarm watch had never sounded so heartlessly authoritative as I sat up in my sleeping bag and reached for pants and woollen shirt. Chris and Craig Austin were already stirring and soon we were munching muesli beside steaming cups of tea, with yellow candlelight softening the stark walls of the hut but doing nothing to ameliorate the gelid air temperature. After a mere three hours' sleep our minds and bodies were fortunately somewhat numbed to externals although Chris did mutter that none of this would be happening to her if she had married a golfer.

A blaze of stars all the way to the horizon welcomed us outside as our boots crunched shallow prints in the crisp snow. We piled into David Rostron's Commodore, (temporarily ours after a midnight exchange in Cooma) mentally checking that no articles had been overlooked in the darkness of the hut.

Kiandra seemed even colder in the bleak grey of first light as we plodded up sheet ice on the back hills, carrying skis on shoulders. As the slope eased, patches of snow began to appear and soon we were able to wax up and let the skis carry us. The thin layer of snow and frost crystals over a hard base gave superbly fast skiing on blue wax.

On top of the ridge pale yellow and practically horizontal sunlight shyly touched the higher trees and rocks, leaving the hollows blue-cold. Frost crystals produced sparkles of brilliant silver with hints of spectral colours as our movement caught their reflected light. It brought to mind the glories of skiing in Norway where such wonder lasts all of a winter's day. Snow gums were bent under loads of recent snow, sometimes mimicking round boulders when their branches had frozen to the ground. One playful tree had produced an arch for us to ski through.

Four Mile Creek came up in 90 minutes and we halted for a quick snack of dates and scroggin, washed down with icy creek water. Snow gum saplings lining the banks cast long shadows on the smooth snow, the stretching Chinese calligraphy of early morning. From the trees sporadic puffs of snow fell as exposed leaf edges and branchlets trapped the sun's heat, warning that the snow under our skis would also soon be changing.

Still running well on blue we strode up the long ridge that leads to Tabletop, revelling in the fast snow and ideal weather conditions. The swish of our skis was the only sound breaking the clear brittle air. Across the open spaces punctuated lines of animal tracks curved in frozen rhythm; prints of hare, fox, wombat; the feet that made them now hidden in burrow or bush from the sun of this glorious morning. Whatever had we done for the weather gods to be so kind to us?

Dropping packs we diverged to Tabletop, eager to catch the view that had always been misted out on previous crossings. It was a pure white wonderland we saw, a magic relief map beckoning us on to regal Jagungal and the distant Main Range with promises of sparkling snow and benign weather.

On the way back to our rucksacks Craig was leading and he nonchalantly side-slipped a 60 degrees slope at the edge of the mountain. Chris and I following managed neither the side-slip nor the nonchalance, while Craig waited politely below, watching with bemused puzzlement our erratic, ski-waving performances.

Twelve o'clock saw us at Happy Jacks Creek, settling down to lunch on a bare terrace beside the wooden footbridge. There was a welcome in the lichen-covered rocks and dry tussock of this place, a genius loci favourable to man and independent of the warmth that lay in the company of friends. Somehow the stone and grass whispered a memory of languid summer days trapped inside them, underneath the surface grip of winter.

Sitting at my ease on a comfortable rock I felt the tightness draining from leg muscles while my ears first noticed and then accepted the splashing hurry of Happy Jacks Creek beside us. Time seemed to stand still even though the billy was soon aboil on Craig's choofer. A dreamlike quality was abroad in the mountain air and sunlight, a feeling that for this brief hour we had drifted into another world where the landscape accepted us into its own time scale, a feeling which underlay the everyday reality of lunch-time conversation. It would have been very easy to rest in contemplation at this place the whole afternoon.

However to rest was not to conquer and soon we had replaced skis and were continuing our southward travel, now on purple klister. Snow was in short supply on the Happy Jacks plains and the road itself was exposed except for narrow leads along the verge, which gave us the surrealistic delight of travelling on skis through a dry and brown "summer" landscape.

Leaving the road near McGregors Creek we portaged skis across half a kilometre of thick springy snowgrass then followed increasing snow cover to Diggers Creek. Clear, tree-bordered slopes now led upstream into the remote realm of Far Bald Mountain, a snowy dome watching our progress from the north. Swinging left avoided the steep drop after Doubtful Gap and soon our skis picked up the indistinct path of the Grey Mare Road which led to a snow bridge over the Doubtful and a steady grade up the side of Farm Ridge.

The ruins of Farm Ridge Hut loomed forlornly in the fading light. How many seasons more will these drunkenly tilted grey posts survive to reassure travellers of their navigation and perhaps bring thoughts of earlier days? Icy conditions on the other side of the ridge held my attention until near the foot of the slope when red-gold flared through the thinning trees and I paused to gaze at the west face of Jagungal, quite close now, glowing brilliantly in the last rays of the sun.

Tiredness settles like a cloak on the last lap of a journey as the body senses an end to activity and closes down most of the metabolism of fuel conversion. It suddenly became hard work to keep the skis gliding and not settle back to a walk. Twilight had passed as we picked our way through silhouette forest over faint white ground and came up to O'Keefes Hut. The candle in the window was not needed but the gesture was welcome and soon we were exchanging news with our complementary party travelling north. They were comfortably settled after a leisurely cruise up from

Guthega Power Station and made room for us at the hearth.

A semi-circle of bricks backing the fireplace radiated warmth towards the semi-circle of skiers crouched on low wooden benches before it, some of this warmth fortunately able to penetrate through the rows of socks, mitts, balaclavas and gaiters hung on strings to dry. On the walls cuttings from the Illustrated Sydney News of the 1930s loomed faintly, reflecting the equestrian interests of former hut users.

These yellowing, tattered-edged pictures were a reminder of the stockmen of the high country - what were their thoughts as they sat before the fire in this same hut forty years ago? No doubt they would look on approvingly to see their hut still providing homely shelter to tired travellers on a winter night. It makes me angry to think there are people now who want to burn and destroy our mountain huts - may they never have a day's luck.

An initially bright dawn changed to leaden grey as a cold steady southerly brought in cloud. Not a day to scale the heights. There would be no joyful telemarking down the south face of Jagungal and we set off slowly about nine, following Bogong Creek towards Jagungal Saddle.

Deep snow drifts covered all but adult trees and changed the outline of the hollows. Approaching the cloud ceiling we entered a fantasy world where banks of mist drifted softly along the ridges. Pausing for a photo I watched Chris and Craig ski ahead; two black figures, one moment hazy in mist, the next sharply outlined as a shaft of half-sunlight revealed earth and horizon. Even at 200 metres their identities were unmistakable; a person's skiing being as characteristic as his walk. It was pleasant to hang back for a while and enjoy the good even track Craig was breaking.

Because of the continuing cool breeze we sought out lee slopes and followed a route to the east of Cup and Saucer. There was no snow melt and we were running very well on blue klister, an unusual thing near noon-time. Gliding down to the Valentines, happily conversing all the way, I could have sung with the exhilaration of our swift, flowing travel. This is how the birds must feel when they fly.

After lunch at Mawsons the Kerries turned on wind and mist, producing dramatic scenery and rime on our hair and clothing. Lower down we joined the multiple ski tracks at Schlink Pass and felt our horizons contract as we passed other parties and approached mechanical civilisation. All too soon we were curled up in a warm, purring car, our thoughts on hamburgers at Goulburn and the glories of the white wilderness receding in the distance.

SKI-TOURING.

Anyone interested in ski-touring on 17th/18th July (could be a few days longer) in the Snowy Mountains, with Peter Downes, please contact Helen Gray, phone 86,6263, for further details.

* * * * *

CAMP AT SPLENDOUR ROCK.

by Peter Miller.

About thirty years ago I heard somebody talking about the delights of camping at Splendour Rock. On subsequent trips I had eyed off the available camping space with interest but hadn't done anything about it until the first weekend in March this year.

I had planned to go on Tony Marshall's canoe trip on Talloway Dam but at the last minute the weather looked doubtful and I decided that if I was going to get wet I would rather do it walking than sitting down. It was many years since I had done a solo trip and as everything comes to those who wait I decided on Splendour Rock.

At Carlons the parking fee is now paid at the new shop and one's name, club and destination are engraved in a book for our grandchildren to sigh over.

The nettles are pretty thick along Carlons Creek and I was glad to get to Breakfast Creek for a short spell. It was extremely hot climbing Black Horse ridge but it was very pleasant to sit on the rocky outcrop at the top admiring the view.

Lunch was at Mobb's Soak where I saw two people on horses on their way to the Cox. There was the usual horse rider's disbelief that anyone could enjoy walking . . . let alone enjoy walking solo.

Although there was plenty of water at Mobb's Soak the small soak up on top was dry. I carried water and found enough in the small rock hole on Splendour Rock to last my time there.

After making camp about thirty metres back from the rock I had the afternoon to sit and gaze at the changing scene. I was pure bliss to sit alone on the rock with a mug of Earl Grey tea and a piece of homemade baklava and listen to the lyre birds. The bird calls were in stereo as the sounds were coming up out of the valleys to the east and west.

The sun set in a cauldron of fire between Mt. Queahgong and Mt. Jenolan and dusk settled over the valleys. There was no wind and just a little cloud covered the moon.

With the alarm set for 5.30 am I went to bed early after cooking dinner and putting dry firewood in the tent. There was a very wet mist condensing in the trees and it sounded like rain dripping all night.

The sunrise was magnificent. The dam was covered in mist as was most of the Axe Head Range. Cloudmaker, Kanangra Walls and Guouogang were all clear and just the lightest gossamer mist filled the deep valleys.

A light fan-shaped cloud high up in the sky was flooded with colour as the sun rose in the east. The top of Cloudmaker and Guouogang turned deep red for an instant and then the sun gathered strength and lit up the sandstone cliffs on Mt. Moorilla and Kanangra Walls. The Cox and the

western slopes of Cloudmaker were in deep shadow while the tops changed colour and became clearer and brighter.

After breakfast it was simply a matter of packing up and following the track and the fire trail back to Carlons.

It would be possible to fit two tents on the campsite but I do recommend a solo trip for anyone thinking of camping there.

* * * * *

CARNIVAL IN SWITZERLAND.

by Margaret Reid.

Two of the many advantages of being in the Northern Hemisphere towards the end of winter, is to witness a definite change of season, and then be caught up in the Carnival celebrations. Europeans, whether living in cities or small villages, become completely involved in celebrating together for the last three days before the Lenten season begins.

After travelling by train from Zurich to Basle, our Swiss hosts introduced us to the last day of the celebrations by serving tea and "carnival cakes" - a thin pastry about the size of a dinner plate, and very crisp and sweet. We then walked about two kilometres to the old centre of Basle, where the main Carnival procession was taking place. Nearing the town centre, we could hear the regular beat of drums, and a more intermittent sound of flutes and recorders. We passed a few families returning from the parade - the youngest children wearing jackets and trousers made entirely of small, petal-shaped pieces of felt in the brightest of colours. Once in the town centre, we were surrounded by the most magnificent parade, now reaching the end of its three-day, non-stop course through the city. The whole town was involved, each group or club having spent most of the year making their own masks and costumes. Some groups had chosen traditional costumes, Chinese, Arabian or Indian style; others dressed as animals, birds or flowers. There is much rivalry throughout the town to produce even brighter and more original costumes than in previous years.

At intervals during the parade, a cart or tractor would appear laden with oranges, carrots and turnips, which the drivers would toss into the crowd. The oranges, filled with rich red juice, were eaten on the spot, and while everyone was preoccupied with sharing the fruit, they were showered with confetti. For days afterwards confetti was still being found in coat pockets and camera cases. After three days of confetti-throwing, a soft carpet of paper lay over the cobbled streets of Basle.

We greatly enjoyed the whole spectacle, and found ourselves wondering who were the people hidden behind all those grotesque masks. We were told that ten thousand Basle citizens participated in Carnival, so perhaps it was a usually neat and tidy civil servant who threw most of the confetti; maybe the Lord Mayor drove a tractor and threw oranges and turnips to the crowd - that's the sweet mystery of Swiss Carnival.

THREE PEAKS CHEATER.

by Gordon Lee.

When I joined S.B.W. in 1975 one of my ambitions was to become one of that illustrious band "The Tiger Walkers". Such names as Bruiser Butt, Fleetwing Finch, Rocket Rostron, Hopalong Hodgson, Willo' the Wisp Wallace and others too few to mention came to my notice. Some of them even then had become Peaceful Pussycats, but some thank goodness were still functioning.

Every time I got myself fit enough something happened to spoil my run and I had to wait till '81 to get my act together so when Rocket dropped the hint that there was a 3 Pks trip in the pipeline I took the matter seriously and got down to some consistent training.

On an Easter walk in the Bendethera area that year there were reminiscences and remarks on the 3 Pks. Rocket, Fleetwing, Hopalong and party had done the Cox to Cox in 14 hours some years before. A navigational error had cost them an hour or so. Other efforts were quoted.

When I aired the idea that I might attempt the walk, there were those who reckoned I could not or should not make the attempt. And when I had the temerity to say that I might even try the Cox to Cox in 24 hours the scepticism and derisive amusement was general. My knees wouldn't stand up to the downhill someone was heard to say, and another made the statement that no one over 40 could do the Cox to Cox in 24 hrs. These were the motivational "needles" I needed. I knew I could do it.

My ego received a considerable dent, when, as everybody knows, I failed to complete the course on the May walk of David's. An overtight pair of Volley High Leaps stopped me at Kanangra Ck. below Paralyser.

There wasn't a soul to go along on a second attempt in September so I had to wait till 1982 before I could try again. Bill Capon, even at that time, promised that he'd go with me when I made the attempt in May '82. I hoped that there would be others.

Not being a complete idiot (there are those who would disagree) I decided that I was going to take no chances. I would cheat my way over the 3 Pks. To know the whole course was a must. All the difficult sections navigationally would have to be "taped" i.e. mentally recorded.

With David in '81 I had gone up Kooriecone Spur to Gentle's Pass and done the scrub bash to Dex Ck, but not the navigation. I decided that I would go to the knoll above the Pass and do a beeline compass push on this section.

On a lone walk from Cloudmaker to Paralyser I had missed the P. cairn. Bill assured me that he knew this well, so I would leave that to him. Having heard of several people who had had difficulties coming down the Guouogang Buttress I thought it best that I get myself up there and con that bit. This I did and that section was taped. Was I glad that I did so, as you will hear later.

I also made the decision that I would try to make the base of Kooriecone

Spur on Friday night so that a before daylight start on the Cox to Cox could be made. This one backfired. Again, depending on our condition the intention was to start, in the classic manner, from Katoomba station. This of course adds nearly 4 miles and a fair bit of up and down to the trip.

A backup party was also required for several reasons. One was the obvious need of witness. Another was to help us by taking our sleeping gear and some food to Konangaroo Clearing. Another to get us off to a flying start on Saturday morning and last, simply to be there Sat. night when we arrived.

Thank goodness Don and Jenny Cornell said that they were willing to be part of the "backup". As it turned out they were the only and to them Bill and I will be eternally grateful. Thanks sincerely Don and Jenny.

Don't lose interest dear reader, we are getting to the meat in the sandwich.

After a hot chocolate at Aroni's (no 3 Pks should start without), Bill and I got moving at 6.00 pm or 1800 hrs for the purists. The weather was perfect, clear sky, half a moon and dry cold air. 10.30 pm (20.30 hrs) saw us at the Cox.

Holy b..... hell! The river she-oak suckers, only a few inches high last year - didn't even remember them - were now 3 to 5 feet high. After an hour it became clear that no way were we going to get to Gullallie Creek that night, so it was heads down.

I had forgotten my alarm clock and my inbuilt alarm only works on change of light, so when Bill jolted me with, "Let's get going!" it was dawn. It seemed only a few minutes down the river to the Cornell's early morning fire - they were expecting us. Breakfast, and off at 7.22 am (0722 hrs). One thing other than those already mentioned that changed hands before we left was a pint of Scotch - for medicinal purposes only.

A slow pace was set deliberately for neither of us was sure of the speed for "pacing" ourselves during the marathon ahead. The beeline to Dex Creek seemed to work well. We came out as planned right on the bend of the creek at the base of ridge on which there is the well-defined track to Cloudmaker. We got there at 10.50 am (1050 hrs).

Warwick Blayden kindly supplied us with times which had been done by Butt and Rees in 1965. They had started at 0622 and arrived at Cloudmaker at 0915. At this point we were 35 mins behind their time. We had no intention of trying to equal their times but I noticed that they had rested at the top of each "up" as well as at the bottom, 17 mins on C., 25 mins on Paralyser and 12 mins on Guouogang, so I thought that if we didn't stop at the top, except to sign the books, and "rested" on the descents we could save some time.

Lunch (?) at Kanangra Creek occupied 18 mins. We took 1.45 hrs to get up P., 25 mins more than Butt/Rees. At this stage we were an hour behind their excellent time of 6 hrs.

For those fortunate people who have never clawed their way up Paralyser

I can assure them that it has been aptly named. There is no relief on the upward lift till you get almost to the top. We weren't happy with our effort on this one, even though I didn't stop on the way up. Although I wasn't carrying very much, perhaps the weight of scepticism that had been heaped on me was beginning to tell.

Bill easily located the cairn signifying the top of P. Fortunately the "Kairn Kickers" hadn't stubbed their toes on this one, nor the next which marks the "turn-off" on Nth. P. ridge where you fall down to the start of Nooroo Gable. If you "hit" the Kanangra anywhere between Nooroo Gully and Jenolan Ck. the general direction of up will take you on to the Gable.

Butt and Rees had "done" Guouogang in 1.53 so we thought anything under 2½ hrs would be good going, but we were also fully aware that daylight was fast running out and rockclimbing the last part of Nooroo in the semi-darkness would not be a profitable exercise. Nor would getting off G. on to the Buttress.

All these thoughts were in our minds as we munched our scroggin and drank the delicious Kanangra water with which we filled our wine-skins. Perhaps our "psyching up" and the fading daylight gave our feet wings for we made G. trig by 5.45 pm (1745), two hours after starting from the river. The sun was setting and there was just enough light to sign the book.

Back south to the knoll where we would drop off on to the Easterly G. Buttress. The half moon was slowly dropping towards the horizon behind us, tree cover was thick so the torches had to come out. This ridge, although not so taxing in daylight became a nightmare in the dark. God knows how many times we were on the point of collapsing in a heap and staying put till morning.

Perhaps the 3 Pks madness had got us. The galling fact that we had got to G. in 10.23 hrs (Butt/Rees 9.36) and another two hours of daylight would have seen us off this accursed ridge made us determined to get down at any cost. Time was forgotten. The further we went the worse things got. The moon was getting lower. At one time it was obscured by cloud and to make matters even worse our torches were dimming fast.

Poor Bill! I had to send him ahead when we negotiated the tricky little part past the second saddle immediately after Mt. Bullagowar. (Mt.B. was not without its problems, but that was now behind us.) Bill crashed, cursed and stumbled ahead of me as I yelled, "Left, left!" or "Right! right!" or "Turn the bloody torch to me so as I can see you," and the night wore on, our tempers wore thin and our torch batteries and ours wore out, but somehow we summoned the will to go on.

Oh! that glorious orb of wondrous light by which spooners pen their words of love and by what loons are driven loonier, praise to thee, Goddess of the night, for by thy ethereal glow we could discern the shape and horizon of the ridge we were seeking.

We knew now we were going to make it for the ridge from here on gets "easier". Some of it we walked without torches since at this stage we were

using one at a time to conserve them as much as possible for the last descent.

I led down with the only torch that shed any light. We fell, rolled, slid, screamed and laughed our way down. A sticker-outer poked me in the eye, a rock ravished my shin. I could hear Bill, using unseemly words, slipping, slashing and sliding behind me without torch, but the glorious sound of running water was getting closer.

Then - the river - WATER - $5\frac{3}{4}$ hours after leaving Guouogang. What was that? Torches and voices? Don and Jenny! Never a sight more heartening or pleasing. And - what was this? A fire and a billy on the boil at 11.30 pm (2330). We had been on the go for nearly 17 hours.

Much talk, food, tea and lots of medicine. God! that Scotch was good. I had at least four or five Bill Burke "Happy Hours" and went to bed, dead.

Bill and I had done it. Two old bastards (Bill says, "Less of the old!") had done the Cox to Cox in 24 hrs. No wonder I slept the sleep of the righteous or should that be the inebritious.

The rest was anticlimax. After a marvellous breakfast of Scotch and Bacon and Egg and Scotch and Toast and Tea we sort of sauntered off at 9.30 (0930) for Yellow Pup and Mob's Soak Cave, where we had an executive lunch. It was then we realised that we had to be at Katoomba Station before 6.00 pm (1800).

At the Golden Stairs we met Tom Wenman, said G'day and Hurray! We made the station at 5.50 pm (1750). A change of clothes, a couple of deelisheus schooners and we retired to the Pizza Palace for a feed, washed down with a special claret supplied by Bill for this special occasion.

So that was that!

Footnote: Before the week before the walk I did that high protein low carbohydrate (3/4 days) and high c. low p. (3/4 days) and it appears to work for I ate virtually nothing on the Cox to Cox bit except several handfuls of mixed fruit and chocolate. Also I didn't suffer cramps or muscular spreness nearly as badly as I had previously after a really strenuous walk.

Fitnote: I would not advise anyone to follow my regimen but for those foolish enough to ask - I eat meat, loads of sugar and salt, keep late hours, get up early, don't jog, drink beer and have lately acquired a taste for single malt scotches, love butter and the only exercise I get is walking during which I like to walk up hills as fast as I can. I work as a builder's labourer so that I should relax at the weekends, but why should I?

Footnote: This time I wore KT 26s previously broken in.

Appendix: For those who do not know what the 3 Pks is all about my advice is - remain ignorant.

Here are some facts and figures:-

Route and Height differences:

Katoomba Station (3336 ft.), Cox's River via all or part of Narrow Neck, Cox's River (450 ft.) to CLOUDMAKER 3,819 ft. (1). There are several ways. We chose Kooriecone Spur. Kanangra Creek (1000 ft.) to PARALYSER 3,795 ft. (2). Kanangra River (1000 ft.), Nooroo Gable, GUOUGANG 4,232 ft. (3), Cox's River (600 ft.). Again several choices, G. Buttress is one. Route from Cox's back to Katoomba depends on previous choice. Ours was Yellow Pup, Narrow Neck, Katoomba.

Distance (as the crow flies) - 96 km or 60 miles.

Time of the Year: During winter solstice May/June or July/August so that humidity is at a bearable level. Hence the hard fact that you really have only 12 hours of daylight.

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BUSHWALKER RECIPES - NO. 2.Judith Rostron's TOASTED MUESLI.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5 cups quick cooking oats | 1. Mix dry ingredients together. |
| 1 cup each: wheat germ | 2. Blend 1 cup HONEY |
| powdered skim milk | and 1 cup OIL |
| coconut | with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Hot Water if honey |
| unprocessed bran | is hard |
| soy flour | 3. Mix with dry ingredients. |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ cup each: sunflower seeds | 4. Bake about 350°F or 150°C |
| sesame seeds | for half an hour |
| chopped nuts | 5. Turning meanwhile every 15 mins |
| | until brown. |

The advantage of this recipe, with its powdered milk, is that on a bushwalk only water need be added.

SEQUEL TO THE 3-PEAKS TRIP BET.

by Dot Butler.

Fresh (very) from his overseas trip Bill Burke arrived back at the Clubroom for the May General Meeting to be met by the news that the 3-Peaks trip had been done by Gordon Lee and Bill Capon (both over 40) and that he would have to cash up the \$100 he bet that it couldn't be done in under 24 hours by over 40's. "I never renege on my bets," said Bill, ruefully forking out. "That'll teach me not to make bets when I'm full."

The money was passed over by Gordon to the Coolana Committee. Now we have to think of some permanent and fitting object at Coolana to perpetuate the Bill Burke rash bet.

Our thanks to Bill Burke and to the winners of the bet, Gordon Lee and Bill Capon.

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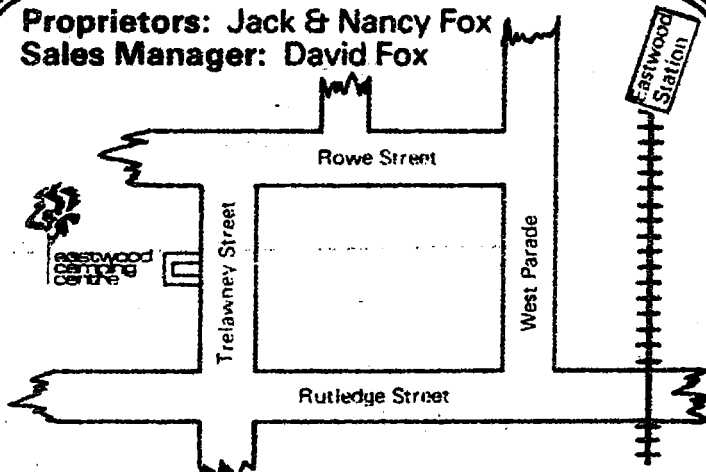
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KANANGRA.

by Malcolm Steele.

This trip was undertaken on the Anzac Weekend, 24-26 April 1982, by Jim Percy (Leader), Jo Van Sommers, Ted Kelly, Paul Davies and Malcolm Steele. Commencing at about 9 am on Saturday morning, we walked across the windswept Kanangra plateau with its awesome view over Kanangra Deep, through which we would be walking on the last day. We descended from the plateau through the rock crevice and onto Craft's Walls, and took the trail around the eastern side of the walls through an obstacle course of fallen trees, slippery terrain and fairly thick vegetation.

On reaching the end of Craft's Walls we removed our packs and once relieved of our heavy burdens deviated from the main trail and headed south-east for a quarter of a mile to Page's Pinnacle. The climb onto the rocky peak was well rewarded by its sweeping views over the surrounding wilderness country visible to the horizon and spanning a full 360 degrees.

We returned to our packs and followed the main trail to a point on the high cliffs just before Mount Berry where we stopped for lunch and an uninterrupted view of Kanangra Walls, Thurat Walls and Thurat Spires. That afternoon we continued along the trail over Mount Berry, down to Gabe's Gap and up the long climb to Mount High and Mighty (2.30 pm), then onto Mount Stormbreaker (3 pm), Rip, Rack, Roar and Rumble and onto the summit of Mount Cloudmaker (4.10 pm). From this point the track is indistinguishable and we followed a bearing of 14 degrees for a distance of 1 mile to Dex Creek campsite where we pitched our tents for the first night.

Unfortunately one member rolled his sleeping bag out over a bull-ant nest. At first the bull-ants exercised great restraint and it was not until around midnight that they launched a concentrated effort to regain their territory. Realizing that he was outnumbered the bushwalker hastily retreated to safer ground.

We departed Dex Creek campsite about 8.30 am Sunday morning and travelled via Mount Moorila Maloo, Mount Amarina and Mount Strongleg, then down the steep descent to Konangaroo Clearing. A refreshing swim in Kanangra Creek was a welcome relief from the dusty descent from Mount Strongleg. After lunch we walked upstream through Kanangra Creek until about 4 pm when we found an ideal campsite on a grassy bank high above the creek.

That night after several brief showers the clouds passed to reveal the Milky Way and surrounding stars glowing brightly. The following day was clear and the morning sun lit up the valley and creek as an orchestra from the birdlife filled the area with different sounds. We got away to an early start at 8 am and continued upstream through Thunder Bend and onto the foot of Mount Berry where we paused for lunch.

During the afternoon we continued upstream to the foot of Murdering Gully where we arrived at 4 pm and made the steep and tough climb out to the base of Kanangra Walls, through the saddle and back to the cars at Echo Head in time to witness the sunset over the Kanangra region, and to reflect upon the past few days' walking with its contrast of ridge tops and valley creeks.

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WEEKEND WALK - KANANGRA - 23/24/25 July - Leader: GEORGE WALTON. Tel.498-7956 (H)
(Phone number shown in Walks Programme not correct)

HISTORY OF "COOLANA"S.B.W. PROPERTY IN KANGAROO VALLEY.

by Dot Butler.

Many new members would like to know how the Club came to be possessor of 120 acres of bushland and steep escarpment on the Kangaroo River, so I have been asked to tell its history.

1969 was an eventful year. For one thing, we had the youngest President ever. At the Annual General Meeting, in a spirit of exuberance, a couple of us feeling that it was time for a change from the "father figure" had nominated young Don Finch for President. "You've gotta be joking!" said Finchy when asked by the chairman whether he was willing to stand. As this was a positive sentence - not a negative word in it anywhere - the Club put the broad interpretation on it that he was willing, and half a minute later an astounded Finch found that he was, like Julius Caesar, ruler of the then known world (bushwalking). He was only 20. The year was also significant in that I had realised a life's ambition of organising a mountaineering expedition to one of the highest mountain ranges in the world - the Andes of Peru. We needed \$20,000 to cover expedition expenses, and it was great to see how willingly people donated to a worthy cause. This "fund raising confidence" came in handy very soon, as you will see.

1969. Our President was urging everyone to look for a new venue for a Reunion site, so I went down to Kangaroo Valley to visit Warwick Deacock's newly established "Camp Chakola" to see what might be offering there. I wandered a few miles further downstream and came across what looked ideal for our purposes - lovely grassy flats among Casuarinas flanking the clean flowing Kangaroo River and bush-covered hillsides surmounted by a fantastic rock escarpment. As the owner wasn't around I wasn't able to ask questions, so merely noted the place as a likely Reunion site. Shortly afterwards my neighbours Hanna and Rudi Lemberg (ex-bushwalkers) asked me to go with them to look at some land for sale on the Kangaroo River which the Quakers hoped to purchase. Imagine my surprise to find it was the identical spot I had visited earlier. Mr. Chambers, the owner, was home and we discussed price. He was asking \$10,000 for the 190 acres.

On the way home we discussed ways and means. Rudi was sure the Quakers would not be able to raise more than \$5,000. Suddenly the bright thought came to me that the S.B.W. might be able to go halves in the deal; after all, there was the Era Fund money awaiting investment in just such a scheme. I could hardly wait to get home to ring up Donnie Finch. With Presidential authority I raced off a circular calling an Extraordinary General Meeting. Club members seemed willing to consider the project if I made myself chief fund raiser. The Era Fund amounted to \$1,500. The Club could add another \$1,000 held in a Special Fund, and it was left to me to try to raise the balance of \$2,500.....and only six weeks to do it in!

I got my brother Harold, who is an Estate Agent, to bargain with the owner (a thing Quakers will NOT do), and he achieved a drop in price to \$9,000 cash. "Cash" is the magical word in land deals. By mutual agreement the Quakers were to take 100 acres at \$5,000, and the Bushwalkers 90 acres at \$4,000. Things began to look promising; it shouldn't be impossible to raise \$1,500 from Club members, notorious tight-wads though they be. I prepared a couple of hundred circulars which were handed out at meetings or posted to absent members, asking them to pay or promise what they could afford, and, to cut the story short, the week I was due to leave for Peru the total of \$1,500

was reached. When I returned a year later it was a "fait accompli". The Bushies, together with the wallabies, wombats, echidnas, bandicoots, lyre birds, ducks, parrots, etc. now had their own 90 acres of Australia, and the responsibility of protecting this bit of the environment for all time. The name "Coolana" (Happy Meeting Place) was chosen and a Coolana Committee elected to manage its affairs and raise funds to pay the rates.

With the construction downstream of the Tallowa Dam, the river level rose considerably. The Water Board resumed about 14 acres of our river flat and recompensed us with \$700 plus another 40 acre block adjacent. This western block is extremely steep creek and gorge terrain - useless from the point of view of the Lands Department, but marvellous for wallabies, wombats and bushwalkers. We are allowed to use the river flats as we did previously.

In 1975 at a General Meeting \$700 was voted for the construction of a picnic shelter with an indoor fireplace to be used when fire bans precluded outdoor fires. George Gray was appointed Construction Engineer, and it would have been impossible to find a more able person. The saga of the hut building deserves a story of its own, which you may read in a future "Bushwalker".

Willing hands and working bees performed incredible feats, and the hut materialised. When the final coat of paint had been applied, we decided a celebration was in order, and George suggested that we hold a barn dance. This proved such an enormous success, it has become an annual event - a sort of mini reunion. The musical team of the Club performs into the wee small hours, the dancers expend kilojoules of energy, and the watchers recline around the periphery of the dance floor on lilos or mattresses - the double inner-spring George brought down from Woodhill to accommodate the whole Gray family; the special one that materialised for Owen because of his bad back; the C.S.I.R.O. woollsacks that Dot machined up into palliasses covers and the young girls Kathleen Susan and Clare had a good time stuffing with dry meadow grass - and Dot nearly lost a little finger when she plunged a hand into a tussock of dry grass and encountered a set rabbit trap. But the one with the best story was the one Marie Byles donated from her Buddhist "House of the Happy Omen".

On the day I drove Marie and her mattress down to Kangaroo Valley, I broke the journey at a Country Club en route so that she could have a rest. I laid her mattress out on the Golf Course and settled the frail little 80-year-old lady thereon. While she slept I took a swift drive back to a garage for petrol. Meanwhile the manager drove out from the Clubhouse. On seeing the unusual sight on his Golf Course, he got such a shock that he drove the car over a 4 ft. culvert. I returned to a scene of some commotion. A tractor had been summoned to drag the car out. Various men were milling about. The housekeeper was hurrying across the green with a thermos of coffee - - - and Marie slept on, innocent as a babe.

The Coolana Committee believes that the property has become a focal point for many Club activities, and that it is the "Happy Meeting Place" that inspired its name.

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BUNDANOON YOUTH HOSTEL WEEKEND - August 7/8th - LEADER: AINSLIE MORRIS.

Bookings in advance are essential. Please send \$5 per head to cover one night's accommodation at the Hostel to Ainslie by 21st July. Teenagers should contact leader for transport. Non Y.H.A. members are welcome.

ENQUIRIES: Phone 428,3178. *****

CONSERVATION FINANCE.

by Alex Colley.

At the May General Meeting I moved, and got approval for, the creation of a Conservation Investment Fund. The immediate purpose of the fund was to make appropriate and sustained use of Joe Turner's gift to the Club, but it is quite likely that other old, or not so old, members may be similarly motivated, and some explanation of what I had in mind may be in order.

The Club has five objects, three of which aim to bring us together to enjoy bushwalking. Our annual subscriptions adequately cover these three objects, and spending more on them wouldn't do much for us or have any lasting benefit, unless, perhaps we could finance our own club room, a dream we have entertained. Other clubs such as golf clubs, bowls clubs, R.S.L.s etc. do it, but only if they charge high fees or have lots of poker machines, and if their activities take place in or near the club room, whereas ours are out in the bush. We would need a huge sum to buy a club room, and, because we would use it only once a week, we would have to sub-let, which would probably mean management costs.

Our other two objects are "To establish a definite regard for the welfare and preservation of the wild life and natural beauty of this country" and "To help others appreciate these natural gifts". We have done pretty well in the past using the money available from fees, and donations for special projects; such as Blue Gum, Garrawarra, Era and Coolana, but there is a constant demand for funds to fight the major conservation battles. In the past two years, for instance, we have given \$200 to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society, \$100 to the Federation for the Bird's Rock Colliery challenge to the Electricity Commission, \$25 to the South-West Tasmania Committee, and \$100 to the National Trust Rainforest Campaign. Our opponents in these campaigns have usually been large corporations, trade associations or public authorities with large staffs and enormous resources to promote their cause. There is a limit to the amount of research, publicity, administration, legal work, etc., which can be done voluntarily, and that limit has been exceeded by the larger conservation organisations, which now employ directors, executive secretaries, project officers, clerks, typists and many others.

There are a number of organisations working for the preservation of natural areas - e.g. the Total Environment Centre, The Australian Conservation Foundation, the National Parks Association, The National Trust and the Nature Conservation Council, but they cover a much wider field than "the preservation of wildlife and natural beauty" so that funds donated to them would largely be spent on objects beyond our interests as bushwalkers, such as historic buildings, resource conservation, animal liberation and anti-uranium campaigns. There are two organisations which do come wholly within our province. These are The Federation of Bushwalking Clubs, and the Colong Committee, which is a national wilderness society. Financially a donation to the Colong Committee Investment Fund is the most effective way of helping the cause, because of certain taxation and investment advantages which I, as Hon. Secretary, would be pleased to explain to anyone feeling generous. But gifts such as Joe Turner's are inspired by strong sentimental attachment to the Club. They are made because the donor is confident that, in

the hands of the S.B.W., they will be used wisely by those he trusts, and it is to be hoped that others will follow his example.

Only the interest from an investment fund can be spent. What it will be spent on depends on the views of members. I would favour preference being given to our very own projects, in particular Coolana, or other S.B.W. conservation areas if we have any. If it is not needed for our own projects, or Federation projects, it would be used to help other organisations fighting for the preservation of the natural environment.

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THE MAY GENERAL MEETING.

by Barry Wallace.

The meeting began at around 2009 with about 25 members present and the President in the chair.

There was an apology from Sheila Binns and the only new member, Keith Docherty, kept us all waiting until the end of the meeting before he was present to be welcomed into membership.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received. The only business arising was the deferred decision on the \$500 donation from Joe Turner. After some discussion it was decided that the money should be invested, with the proceeds to be devoted to conservation.

Correspondence brought an unexpected letter of thanks for the ladders on Pigeon House peak. This was referred to Vic Lewin who supplied and installed the ladders. There was also a letter approving the Club's constitutional amendments, a letter of thanks to Joe Turner and a letter to the new member.

The Treasurer's Report brought news that we began the month with \$1499.47, showed an income of \$1080.00 (\$500.00 of which was a donation), spent \$422.03 to end up with \$2157.44. The Coolana Account had a closing balance of \$46.66.

Federation Report told of an enquiry about membership from the Shoalhaven Bushwalkers, that Bluegum's 50th Anniversary as a reserve is about due, that S. & R. first aid kits are a steal at \$19.95 each, there will be a "Safety in the Bush" weekend in June, and that the Kamerukas Club is to check the safety of the chains at Splendour Rock. The problems of access via or to the Six Foot Track continue to plague us and F.B.W. is still trying to sort that out. There has also been a complaint alleging that bushwalkers have been littering and causing noise at the Strathfield rendezvous spot - - - does any still meet there??

The Walks Report lapsed back into tradition this month by commencing with a non-report; for Gordon Lee's walk of 16,17,18 April. Don and Jenny Cornell's Nattai River walk that same weekend started by shedding 5 out of the 9 potential starters first thing Saturday. It seems they had ver-ry heavy rain overnight and some people couldn't keep their powder dry. Apart from not making it onto Surveyor's Crag the walk went well from then on.

There was no report for Ralph Pengliss' harbour walk, but Derek Wilson was able to report overgrown tracks and 12 starters for his Royal National Park Sunday walk. There was no report of Peter Christian's Waterfall to Heathcote walk for the same day.

For the Anzac weekend Bill Capon led a party of 5 in "good country" on his Budawangs trip. Peter Miller's Kanangra trip was led by Jim Percy and attracted 5 starters. Bill Hall's day walk on the 25th had about 25 people on an unseasonably warm day.

The weekend of 30th April, 1, 2 May saw the Don Finch, David Rostron Colo area trip with 6 starters, all running to keep up with each other, down one side of each gorge and up the other - - - who said people don't normally walk normal to the track? Of George Walton's Kanangra trip there was no report. Gordon Lee went one better for Bill Burke's \$100.00 by completing his Three Peaks trip Cox to Cox in under 24 hours. There was one other person on the walk with Don and Jenny Cornell operating as support party.

Jim Brown had 12 people on an easy trip in beautiful weather for the Sunday, and Sandy Johnson had 15 members and 13 prospectives on his Marra Marra National Park walk described as a "gentle stroll". He rather spoilt the effect by acknowledging that they finished the walk by moonlight.

On the weekend of 7, 8, 9 May Ian Debert had 8 members and 11 prospectives on his Blackhorse Range walk and Jim Laing had 12 plus 1 person enjoying numerous morning teas on his Budawang's walk. Gordon Lee enjoyed a change of face by leading a party of 4 (2 of ours, 2 displaced N.P.A. members) on his Heathcote to Heathcote walk on the Sunday. The same day Hans Stichter led a party of 21 through Glenbrook Gorge on what was described as a pleasant day walk. What a way to end the Walks Report.

General Business brought rumblings of discontent about apparent variations in size and sole composition in recently purchased sandals. Gordon Lee is to draft a letter of complaint to the manufacturers.

So then it was just a matter of announcements and it was all over again at 2102. The President gonged the gong and unleashed the ravening hordes on the coffee and biscuits.

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SOCIAL NOTES FOR JULY.

by Jo van Sommers.

- July 21 Exhibition by Reg Alder, who joined S.B.W. in 1938, of black and white photographs of bushwalking in the 30s and 40s, including a record of the first walk down the Kowmung; and colour slides dating from 1940. DINNER before the meeting at Chehades Lebanese Restaurant.
- July 28 Musical evening with the Blue Grass Band. Anyone who would like to contribute is urged to bring along their instrument, voice or whatever. Some old-time dance records will be played in the intervals. Those who cannot play or sing will be expected to MOVE!
