
THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER
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A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers,
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OUR SECOND HONORARY ACTIVE MEMBER - ALEX COLLEY.

by Jim Brown.

During 1981 the Club adopted a Constitutional Amendment creating a new category of membership - Honorary Active Member, and the Committee promptly elected Dot Butler to that status. The decision was applauded universally because Dot, in her fiftieth year of membership, and actively engaged in a range of Club activities, really seemed to represent the "spirit" of the Club.

Of course, some other long-standing members had already been invited to become "Honorary Members" under an earlier provision in the Constitution, but this class of member was not permitted to debate or vote at business meetings of the Club. Plainly such a limitation should not apply to people still playing an active and valuable role in Club affairs.

At the July meeting the Committee elected as Honorary Active Member Alex Colley - another of those people who have given long and supportive service to the Club, and one who is still enthusiastically filling a vital position in achieving the Club's objectives.

Alex first came to the Club in 1936, gaining full membership in the same year. By 1937 he was filling a position on the Committee and four years later was elected President for 1941-42. During a later tenure of the office of Magazine Editor he introduced the practice of publishing a report of the monthly General Meeting - a system followed to this day. Many of us who came later to the Club will gladly acknowledge that our thinking on Club affairs and the many conservation proposals put before our meetings was influenced by Alex's lucid and reasoned comment.

For about twenty years he has been the Club's Conservation Secretary, taking on that job at a time when S.B.W. was one of the few voices crying in the wilderness (because we believed some wilderness should be left unspoiled) and carrying through to the present when the conservation lobby is almost influential enough to make or break Governments.

In the conservation field he has been closely involved in the Colong Committee - originally established in the late 1960s to protect limestone deposits at Colong from the threat of cement miners - but continuing as a major force in other projects, notably the preservation of the Kanangra/Boyd Plateau and in more recent representations leading to the proclamation of the State's second-largest National Park....Wollemi - the Colo catchment.

Yet with all these other activities he has always remained a true walker. In a recent issue of the National Parks Association's journal he replied to a correspondent who had claimed bushwalkers were self-centred and intolerant. He wrote "I know of no other group of people with a wider range of interests and more friendly dispositions than the Club I belong to - the Sydney Bush Walkers".

It was perhaps typical of Alex that, at the July General Meeting when his election as our second Honorary Active Member was announced, he told us that, while appreciating the honour, he felt the Club owed him nothing..... rather that he owed the Club for the many good years it had given him.

BACK ON THE BANKS OF WILDERNESS ABOUND
(Of Pencil Pine Tarn, Central Plateau, Tasmania)

by Peter Harris.

Enter the Tarn

The air blew crisp and dewy at the early morning dawn,
On a freshly-fallen snow in winter guise;
With the mountains dark and awesome,
And their peaks all split and torn
From the lightning-hits of stormy grey-black skies.

There is a sheltered, stunted grove of small and twisted pine,
Where dead boughs quake and bend at every blow;
And frozen lake meets frozen land,
In steep and pained incline
Where wrens abound in snowy trees near verdant waters flow.

I Am A Rush of Life

I am the life of the lakeland.
I am the rush of rapid water churning and frothing in deep, narrow
channels from lake to lake; a relentless ever-onward, ceaseless churning
of liquid cold born high in the plateau hills; speeding, unstoppable
towards Pillans Lake. South-east ever flows my stream.

I am a strip of grey-black sand, shingle and driftwood weathered
by time where wilderness of water ceaselessly attacks wilderness of land.
Where the Red Mountain Berry hangs 'suspended above white frost and frozen
snows, a flash of colour in a monochrome postcard.

When alpine gardens are deep in snow the Pencil Pine surrounds tower
on high, competing with orange autumn leaves of the deciduous beech, Fagus.
Snow-laden branches of Honey Richea buckle beneath their own weight, lower
branches forced into ground-covering snow, beating white holes in a white
sheet.

Wrens run along the spindrift. Over rocky crags an eagle soars
on swift, cold air currents. Aerobatics on high.

Epilogue

My passion grows with a unity of lake, forest, heath, meadow,
mountain and snow. A special glory is the equanimity of my life.

How sweet to tent in the sheltered lee of a grove of twisted Pencil
Pines whilst dead sinuous branches of a burnt King Billy grope towards
nearby frozen meadows. To hear the rush of frantic water, cold above the
high-pitched whistle of gale-force winds.

At dawn I look out from the rim of my tent to the rim of my lake.
I dislodge snow which lands, without diplomacy, onto my scarved neck. A
frozen, white panorama. There is no sun. There is no heat. There is
no hope for movement today.

But there is always my lake. A unified wilderness. The core of
a larger wilderness.....

It is as it always was in the beginning.....

* * * * *

A THIRSTY BUSINESS.

by Don Cornell.

There is little doubt Ian can plan a walk to suit the weather and his January 22nd to 24th walk from "Camelot" to the Nattai River was no exception.

We set out on Saturday about 9 am at a leisurely pace along a dirt track through a typical sandstone environment with ironbark, angophora, stringybark, a good selection of wattle, persoonia and banksia plus numerous other plants all looking fresh from rain which fell during the previous week. The track narrowed beyond the turnoff and gradually descended to the valley alongside an unnamed creek. We had several good views of nearby cliffs along the way and reached the Nattai River by 11.30 am.

While the rest of the group proceeded to search for a suitable campsite, Jenny and I dipped into water half a metre deep, soon followed by Ian, Joy, Sandy and Lorraine. Meanwhile Keith had discovered a beaut pool downriver alongside a superb shady campsite. The group immediately resolved its priorities - Ken, Debbie, Jutta, Bob, Margaret and Bill erected their tents; Ian, Sandy and Joy inflated their lilos and were soon floating; Stan, Jenny, Frank and I collected firewood and got the lunch fire going. In no time we had the water bags filled and the billy on the fire. This gave us time to duck in for another swim and set the pattern for the rest of our stay.

With the temperature hovering around 38 degrees celsius it was a pleasure to pad down to the water's edge and flop in. Once sufficiently cool we would tramp back to the fire, put the billy on again and quench our thirst. With sixteen pairs of feet padding down and back we virtually wore a track into the soil.

Eventually it came time to take down tents and pack gear, finally leaving the site about 5 pm.

Somehow despite the heat I seemed to get ahead and reached the vehicles at 7 pm. I had this large bottle of orange juice. I switched on the radio for the news broadcast and poured two drinks, one for me and one for Jenny. I drank my drink as the newsman said, "It was the hottest day for", Jenny wasn't in sight so I drank her drink and poured two more. Meantime I had decided that it was such a lovely evening, why not have dinner before leaving? So I drank my drink while collecting sticks, Jenny wasn't in sight so I drank her drink and poured two more. By this time I had a good fire going while I drank my drink and I soon had the soup on and the potatoes peeled. Jenny wasn't in sight as I drank her drink, so I poured two more.

You know, a fellow can get quite thirsty on a hot weekend.

A NEW ZEALAND RAMBLE WITH GAMBLE 24 TO 30 MARCH 1982.

by Keith Docherty.

Having left Lorraine Bloomfield in Queenstown to receive treatment for badly blistered heels, there were only six of us on this ramble in the Route Burn area:- Bill Gamble (Leader), Ian Debert, Joy Hynes, John Newman, Stan Madden and Keith Docherty (prospective).

It was a fine, hazy morning when we crossed the suspension bridge over the Route Burn at the start of our walk along the famous Routeburn Track. We had been told that it was a well-maintained and clearly marked track ("a manicured track" as one American walker described it), but it was a surprise to see the first person we met was wearing open sandals. He had no problems walking the track in such footwear but we were not going to remain on the track so we wore the boots and gaiters that had proved invaluable on the Dart/Rees walk. A couple of hours of pleasant walking through the beech forest brought us to the Routeburn Flats Hut where we filled in the Intentions Book and made a brew of tea on the gas rings.

The Hut Warden advised Bill about the best route to the North Branch and at 1245 hours we were on our way. I don't think that Warden liked Australians. Following his instructions we were soon bashing our shins against moss-covered logs hidden by thick vegetation. Had we crossed the stream it would have been an easy walk across grassy flats. We determined to use an easier route when we returned. Fortunately the bad patch was soon negotiated and for a while the walking became easier. We traversed tussock, scrub and beech forest on the way to our campsite on the third flat. Holes between the clumps of tussock made walking difficult at times. On one occasion I heard an exclamation from John and turned around to see him disappear completely.

After setting up camp on the true right of the stream Bill, Stan and John decided to cross over and try to climb to a hanging valley above a spectacular waterfall. Their goal turned out to be further away than it had appeared and approaching darkness forced them to abandon the attempt. However the magnificent views made their efforts worth while.

There was plenty of wood for our campfire but it was difficult to light, didn't burn well and gave off very little heat. How we longed for some good Australian gum!

Next morning there was ice on the water buckets but the rising sun soon warmed things up. We ate our usual breakfast of "chook food" and set off for North Col at 0840 hrs. The going was rough and we stumbled through scrub and tussock and crossed and recrossed the stream until morning tea time.

The scramble up the final slopes to North Col was exciting and the view back down the North Branch improved as we climbed higher. There were large patches of snow in the couloir and fantastic caves and pillars had been formed underneath them by the thaw and the action of streams. We didn't investigate too closely for fear of the snow collapsing. Instead we scrambled across the steep scree slopes. Occasionally a rock would be dislodged and go bounding down the slope to disappear beneath the snow.

We reached the Col at 1230 hrs and ate lunch while we admired the view and watched pipits and dark brown butterflies flitting among the alpine

flowers. Bill, Stan and I ventured down the other side of the Col and climbed a hill to the west to be rewarded with views of Hidden Falls Creek and the Hollyford Valley. Our Olympus cameras were very busy.

On the return journey we met a well strung out party of high school students walking across the snow in the couloir. The fact that the snow was hollowed out beneath and a fall would have dropped them four or five metres onto rocks didn't seem to worry them. Later in the evening this school party straggled past our camp on their way to the Routeburn Flats Hut. Several hours separated the front runners from the tail-enders. We learned later that the tail-enders blundered in well after dark. All the torches were in the packs of the front runners!

Millions of sandflies were waiting for us back at camp and those of us who wanted to wash in the stream did so very hurriedly. The sandflies were so troublesome that I wore a balaclava, long trousers, long-sleeved shirt and mittens for protection while I wrote a letter. Darkness brought relief from the pests and we sat around the fire drinking Stan's hot toddy and watching satellites moving across the cloudless, star-studded sky.

The weather was fine and frosty next morning. Not only was there ice in the water buckets but the guy ropes on our tents were encased in solid icicles. Packing the tents was a cold, wet job but the first rays of sunlight striking the mountain tops gave promise of a beautiful day.

We set out at 0835 hrs and soon had wet feet from the dew-soaked grass. As long as the water didn't come over the tops of our gaiters we could, if we stepped quickly enough, cross streams without getting wet feet, but wet grass soaked us through in no time. Our progress across the river flats and past a reedy mere was heralded by alarm calls from the ubiquitous paradise ducks. These attractive but noisy birds (always in pairs) are forever on the watch for intruders on their territory.

After a brief stop to fill in the Intentions Book at the Routeburn Flats Hut we continued on up the steep track through beech forest to the Routeburn Falls Hut. The view from this hut is magnificent and, as we were going no further that day, we had plenty of time to admire it.

Soon the tents were spread out on the grass to thaw and dry out and socks and underwear were washed and hung on lines strung between the verandah posts. Bill and Stan made an exploratory trip to the Harris Saddle while the rest of us sunbathed and talked to the Canadian, American, Japanese, English, Australian and New Zealand walkers staying at the hut. There are 20 bunks in the Routeburn Falls Hut and they were all occupied that night. After the almost deserted Dart/Rees Track the Routeburn Track was a busy thoroughfare. Canadians seemed to outnumber all other nationalities on the Routeburn Track by about three to one. After dinner John played cards with three nurses from Queenstown (he was making sure he would be well looked after if he was sick or suffered an accident on the track). Ian, Joy and I had an interesting conversation with a Canadian girl who had walked extensively in the Nelson Lakes National Park, the location of our next ramble.

We left Routeburn Falls Hut at 0728 hrs next morning and had a quick look at the falls before setting off for the Harris Saddle, which we reached

after one hour's walking. A few spots of rain fell soon after we started walking but not enough to wet us. The rest of the day it was cloudy with sunny periods.

While the others explored around the emergency shelter on the Harris Saddle, Bill, Stan and I climbed Conical Hill. It was rather hazardous climbing the very steep snow grass slopes high above Lake Harris but we reached the top without incident. What magnificent views we had when we reached the top. We looked down into the Hollyford Valley, across to the snow-capped Darran Mountains, south to Lake Gunn and north to a distant view of the Tasman Sea. From the top of Conical Hill we found a well-worn track that followed a circuitous route down to the emergency shelter. On the way down this track Bill was unfortunate enough to slip three times. His feet just shot out from under him and he landed with a jolt each time. It was fortunate this hadn't happened on the way up or he would have plunged to a watery grave in Lake Harris.

Back at the emergency shelter we had morning tea then continued on our way to Lake Mackenzie. This stretch of track must be one of the finest anywhere. It is above the tree line and high above the Hollyford Valley until it plunges down through mossy beech forest to Lake Mackenzie. We were reminded of how dangerous this area can be when we saw a plaque, set in rock just above the tree line, commemorating the deaths of two teenagers, members of a school party, who had perished there in a storm in 1963.

We arrived at the Mackenzie Hut at 1245 hrs and found it was the most luxurious hut we had seen. It has two floors, forty bunks, glass doors, a spiral staircase, running water, flush toilets, gas rings, a fuel stove and Tilley lamps. We also found it was possible to have a hot shower and share a baked dinner with the Hut Warden but only if you were a shapely South African girl.

Two Canadian girls were making popcorn when we arrived and they shared it with us and asked us about bushwalking in New South Wales. At dinner we shared a table with five Venturer Scouts from Dunedin. It turned out a rather hilarious evening. One of the boys was ribbed unmercifully when he attempted to eat his soup with a fork. They were very curious about the weird mob of Australians and they wanted to know what we all did for a living. When asked to guess one of the girls said she thought we were all farmers. John convinced them that I was a psychiatrist, Ian a geologist and Stan a millionaire. However, he failed to convince them that Joy was a brain surgeon. Their descriptions of walking on Stewart Island filled us with the desire to go there someday.

The keas arrived at the hut before dawn next morning and stole a sock that a Canadian girl had left drying on the verandah. The Venturer Scouts left very early to walk to the Divide on their way home, but before they left they gave us their surplus bread, cheese and tomatoes.

A misty drizzle was falling when we set off at 0900 hrs on a day walk to Lake Howden. The track led through beech forest that was very mossy in places. Poor visibility caused by low cloud and misty rain prevented us taking any decent photographs of the impressive Earland Falls. Fortunately the cloud lifted and the rain stopped briefly when we reach Lake Howden at 1130 hrs. Inside the Lake Howden Hut was like a steam bath. The windows

were closed and the fuel stove was going full blast. All of the bunks were occupied and an Austrian girl with a penetrating voice was talking incessantly. We remained inside only long enough to fill in the Intentions Book then returned to the fresh air and sandflies.

Light rain started to fall again soon after lunch and we found the track rather muddy in places on our way back. Footprints in the mud showed that some people were walking barefooted. Small birds were quite numerous on this day trip and the tomtits, riflemen and fantails were very tame and allowed us to approach very closely.

It wasn't exactly an intrepid party that left Mackenzie Hut at 0745 hrs next day to cross Emily Pass. The maps in the Routeburn Track huts had Emily Pass marked "For experienced alpinists only". Bill, the dour optimist, thought we had enough experience in our party, but Moir's Guide didn't inspire much confidence with - "Unlike Harris Saddle however, there is no marked track over Emily Pass, and the route is not obvious in poor visibility. The route is only suitable for those prepared to tackle untracked bush and scrub, and steep snowgrass and scree". The visibility was poor with mist and low cloud but the route past the lake and up to the pass was quite straightforward. However, care had to be taken on the scree and negotiating three patches of snow. We halted for lunch on top of the pass and a curious kea flew down to inspect us. Stan decided to try for a really close up photograph of the bird but he forgot that his wide-angle lens would make it appear further away than it actually was. We all laughed when he took his eye from the viewfinder and looked over the camera to see the kea's wickedly hooked beak only a few centimetres away from his nose.

Visibility was much better on the other side of the pass and we had good views of the Routeburn Flats and the North Branch, but clouds still hid the hilltops.

The steep descent to the Routeburn Flats was an exciting experience. Most of the party chose to scramble down the right-hand side of the gut where sparse snowgrass offered a precarious handhold, but I found it easier and quicker to walk down the scree in the centre of the gut. At the bottom of the gut we climbed down a rocky drop beside a small waterfall and sidled across steep snowgrass slopes to a scrub-covered basin above the tree line. The thick, springy scrub was difficult to walk over (it was too dense to walk through, so we had to walk over it), and where it had covered boulders care was needed to avoid stepping into holes. Once into the bush the descent to the Routeburn Track was very steep but thick moss covering the tree trunks and forest floor ensured a soft landing if one slipped.

Rain began to fall soon after we arrived at the Routeburn Flats Hut at 1645 hrs. It increased in intensity and became a torrential downpour that lasted all night. We were pleased to be in the hut rather than covering in our tents in that downpour. However, that was when we discovered just how far the toilet was away from the hut.

As usual Joy organised the evening meal but Stan prepared the dessert. He took over the dessert-making duties after Joy served up a bright green, Staminade-flavoured rice pudding early on the Dart/Rees walk. Some of the packets were unlabelled and Joy had thought she was mixing lime-flavoured instant pudding with the rice. It had an interesting flavour though, and

we survived without any ill effects. After the meal I did the washing up and Ian did the drying.

Bill was up early next morning trying to light a fire in the pot-bellied stove. Gas rings were provided for cooking so the fire wasn't necessary, but Bill thought it would make for a more cheerful breakfast if the pot-bellied stove was throwing out some heat. Rain dripping down the chimney had flooded the stove and the beech wood refused to burn. Bill was determined to light that fire but even after liberal splashes of kerosene, help from Stan and the use of a gas ring he couldn't get that wood to burn. Eventually, after more than an hour of valiant efforts, he had to admit defeat.

The rain had eased by the time we left at 0855 hrs but it was still heavy enough to test our new parkas. Despite the rain we had a pleasant walk through the beech forest to reach our waiting Toyota mini-bus at Track Head at 1030 hrs.

We drove out of the rain soon after crossing the Dart River and stopped for lunch in the sunshine at Glenorchy.

Back in Queenstown we found that "Blisters" Bloomfield had prepared a feast to celebrate our return.

So ended the second ramble with Gamble.

Having failed in her attempts to trap a millionaire and with her heels healed, "Blisters" looked forward to joining us for our third and final Ramble with Gamble.

* * * * *

BUSHWALKER RECIPES - No.4 - JUDITH ROSTRON'S BUN.

In a large saucepan combine 1 cup of water, 1 cup of mixed dried fruit (or bananas or dates) and a few nuts, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar, a good sprinkle of cinnamon and powdered ginger, 1 tablespoon of margarine. Stir over low heat until margarine melts and remove from heat; add 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda and 2 cups wholemeal S.R. flour and 1 beaten egg. Put in 1 large or 2 small loaf tins and bake at 350°F for 30 minutes for small tins or 40 mins for large tin.

The Social Secretary, Jo Van Sommers advised a new address and telephone number:- 8 Gosbell Street, Paddington, 2021, phone 33 6506.

Please also note the Walks Secretary's business phone number 698 4333 Ex.36.



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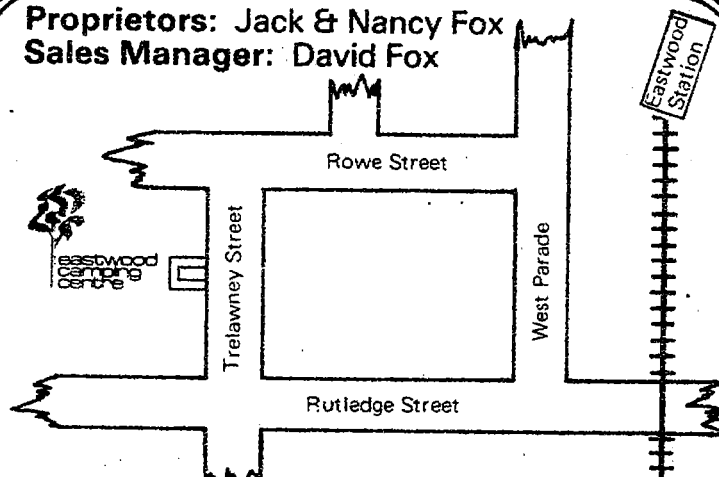
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ELEANOR BLUFFS REVISITED.

by Jim Brown.

Said Don Matthews "I was out last Sunday on the trip to Eleanor Bluffs. Except we didn't get there. That's the fourth time now."

"What's the catch?" I asked. "The bush grown up a lot?" Then I tried to be consoling, "Never mind, you'll probably make it on the fifth try."

"Oh, I've been there once, a good while ago. But I've never managed to get back again." Then, answering my first question, "The bush? Yes, I suppose it may be a bit thicker. But the main trouble is lack of persistence. They won't keep on long enough."

"Ah, well," I said, trying to sound knowledgeable and (what's the "in" word?) "pragmatic", "Ah, well, when you know you've got to come back the same way, there's a big incentive to call it a day and retreat."

"Yes," he agreed, "And when it gets around to one o'clock....." and trailed off.

I pondered and said, "It's a long time since I was out along that ridge."

"Oh!" exclaimed Don, "and we found a metal plaque on a rock, a sort of memorial to a woman member from another Club. It dated back to 1948, I think."

"Maybe that puts a date on my last trip out," I told him. "I don't remember any memorial plates."

"Not necessarily," with a shake of the head. "It wasn't in a very obvious place. We just happened to see it."

After we drifted apart in the Clubroom, I found myself wondering - when did I last go out along that ridge east from Cowan to Cole Trig, Edwards Trig, Cliff Trig and Eleanor Bluffs - and of course Gunyah Bay, the sandy cove just south of Gunyah Point? A long time, surely. But there was one trip out there that is indelibly imprinted in my mind, just as "Calais" was said to be engraved on the heart of Queen Mary (the one that preceded Elizabeth I).

It was my first walk with the Club after I became a full member. In those deplorable days we used to meet on Friday evenings - the very worst day for bushwalkers - and so, after a prospective membership in which I had contrived about twenty Friday night starts, I had to stay in town to front up to the Committee. It was 6th June, 1947, three years to the day after the opening of the Second Front in Europe - not that that has anything to do with it - and as I had to miss a Friday night start, I did my first day walk with the Club on Sunday, 8th June, two days after admission to membership.

At this length of time a lot of the details escape me. However, I think we went out past the three trig points and dropped down to the Hawkesbury Estuary at Gunyah Bay. On the way back one of the members left her pack behind when we halted briefly at Edwards Trig, and some of us scuttled back to retrieve it. This didn't really come as a surprise to me - the same member had somehow managed to walk away from a 30 lb. pack at the top of Cascade Spur in the Snowy Mountains just over two months previously.

In the train on the way home one of the "old hands" (as they seemed to me then) asked me, "Now you've got your badge, I suppose you'll give up

walking with the Club?" I replied, firmly but peaceably, I think, that I hoped to go on walking for a couple of years yet. Later I realised that the question was probably asked as a gag: on the same trip was Alex Colley who, as current magazine editor, had been making some critical remarks about "badge hunters" who gained membership of a Club never to be seen again. I seem to recall that the question was asked with a raised eyebrow in the direction of Alex. I also have a recollection that someone asked Alex if he felt that the trip should be graded as a test walk. In fairly typical Colley fashion, he thought and replied, "I think enough blood was drawn to justify it."

I think it must have been two or three years later that I conducted an Instructional Weekend at Gunyah Bay, going out with weekend packs on the Saturday afternoon and returning on the Sunday with some practice in bush navigation for the prospectives present. Two memories remain from that weekend. In one disgraceful episode one of the cooking fires "got away" in grassy growth behind the sand dune. Our fresh water had been brought with considerable effort from the small, almost dry gully behind the beach, and there was a patent reluctance to toss the contents of the water buckets on to the conflagration. Finally the blaze was put out without much damage, apart from the leader's equilibrium, and the last embers were thoroughly quenched with sea water.

The other incident of the weekend was a protracted discussion around the Saturday night camp-fire, describing how muddy water could be purified by straining it through the legs of a pair of drill trousers. Unfortunately, the water under notice must have been very dirty, so that it had to be strained several times, and the process was explained in infinite detail. After this we woke up the prospectives to tell them that muddy water was quite O.K. for extinguishing bush fires - you didn't have to strain it first.

Do you know, I can't recall having gone out along that Gunyah Bay ridge since that time. Except that, having remembered all this, I did go out there on 10th June this year - - the nearest date I could manage to the original 8th June journey 35 years before.

No, Don, I didn't get to Eleanor Bluffs this time either. In fact, I didn't get quite as far as Edwards Trig. But then, I started from Cowan at 10.0 am and I wanted to be back early that afternoon.

The bush is somewhat grown up, Don. At least, I think so. Maybe it's just anno domini, which makes the contours get closer together and the rivers get colder. Anyway, as I had the foresight to say, "When you know you've got to come back the same way....."

Never mind, I'll try again, with more time up my sleeve and perhaps long trousers over my shins. Have no fear, Don, like Brideshead, Eleanor Bluffs WILL BE REVISITED.

* * * * *

SKIING - AUSTRALIA AND U.S.A.

by Dorothy Stitt.

The Skiing Season 1982!!? April brought the first snowfalls of the year - a promise of greater things to come? A little more in May and a little less in early June, with almost drought conditions by the end of the month.

Having made the usual Kandahar Lodge bookings some months before, Bill Burke with the "first week in July" mob in tow, arrived in Perisher Valley to find conditions somewhat less than ideal for skiing. Perhaps it would be possible to do a bit of crosscountry skiing? Saturday afternoon was spent testing non-waxed and waxed skis (some purists among us) by walking, or rather picking our way, up Back Perisher and stumbling down again, more greenery than snow. With a party comprising Don Finch, Bob Hodgson, Phil Butt, Barry Wallace, Jim Vatiliotis, George Gray, Denise Dalton, two Rostrons, two Stitts, Uncle Tom Cobbly and all, it was obvious we would seek greener pastures or preferably whiter slopes. Our crafty leader had honourably sustained a slightly sprained ankle BEFORE leaving Sydney, and was heard to murmur, "Someone up there must love me, providing a reason to be inactive and so not cranky about the lack of snow!"

A sunny Sunday morning, clear blue sky, transport to Charlotte Pass, and we were away to a flying start, on snow, up the summit road. Our party had grown to 15 with the addition of Di and Ian Chung, Tim Henderson and Michael Palmer, all from Technology Lodge. Leaving the road short of the saddle below Seaman's Hut we had a gentle run and climb to Mt. Clarke, and then on to the base of Mt. Northcote. Lunch was quickly consumed as the temperature did not invite lingering. Without more ado we climbed to the summit of Northcote and headed along the way of the ridge top trail with turns being practised on the run towards Mt. Lee. There were turns intentional and otherwise - some even Telemarks! Finally we all congregated at the trig on Mt. Carruthers - took photos, admired the beauty of the Main Range, watched the clouds rising in billows from Lady Northcote's Canyon and then turned our attention to the aim of the day. That long, gentle, beautiful run down Carruthers to the Snowy. It was all of that, only the last kilometre or less was a bit bushy and grassy and necessitated some quick manoeuvres to avoid disaster. Jim had an argument with a rock, and didn't win. In fact, we did not have to remove skis until we had crossed the Snowy below Charlotte Pass.

The weather continued fine and clear for another 24 hours and the slopes became browner. Today is Tuesday 6th July, we sit and wait for the lightly falling snow to increase in quality and quantity, hoping for a day or two of downhill before the week's end. This seems an appropriate time to tell of other skiing experiences further afield. As you are probably aware, the Duncans - Bob and Rosslyn with children Emma and Michael - are spending 12 months in Boulder, Colorado, U.S.A. Corresponding with Rosslyn since their arrival in Boulder last October, I have been regaled with descriptions of seemingly endless skiing trips, which you might like to read about:-

4.11.81 - "Today I went for a bushwalk with a group of women who regularly go walking on Wednesday, and it was a really good day. They are all about my age and a really interesting group. We walked up to about 10,250 ft, there was some snow on the ground, but not much. Last Sunday we went for a drive to case four of the ski areas. There are 26 ski areas within a 200 mile range of Boulder. Two of those we visited were operating already -

they looked really great. The tows start at 10,000 ft. According to the locals it is too early to ski yet, they are waiting for fresh powder!"

20.11.81 - "I went walking again with the girls last Wednesday, ten of us went. It was cold and windy and we walked in snow all the way. We climbed a thing called Estes Cone, elevation a bit over 10,500 ft. The top was bare of trees and rocky and the wind so strong I thought I'd be blown away. Pretty soon they'll start ski touring, I'm not sure how I'll go at that! We went skiing last weekend to Keystone which is 80 miles from here. There hasn't been much natural snow there yet, so the snow we were skiing was mostly artificial. The elevation at the base of the lower of the two chair lifts we went on was 9,300 ft, and the top of the higher one was at 11,600 ft. The adult lift tickets should have been \$18/day, but we paid \$9 using discount coupons which apply to off-season times. Otherwise you can get discounts by buying your lift tickets at a local supermarket in Boulder. The queue system was incredibly good - no queue jumping and the wait never more than 6 minutes, mostly much less. The longest run at Keystone is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles."

16.1.82 - "The weather here hasn't been too bad except for the Chinook (snow eater) winds which gust sometimes to 135 mph - not very pleasant. They are winds that sweep down over the mountains from the west and can be remarkably warm, hence the name. The lowest maximum we've had so far is about 19°F at 7 am today! Last Saturday we went skiing to Eldora and the queues were awful, it was very windy and we were cold. Today at Eldora it was windy again, so much so that the chairlift was closed at 11.30 am. We were having a lovely time as there was fresh snow everywhere and no queues - temperature at the top 16°F - however, we were given four complimentary tickets for use another day!"

3.2.82 - "We are finally getting some real winter weather - the temperature was -1°F at 6 pm. We have been skiing every weekend since our San Diego trip at Christmas. Two weeks ago we went to Copper Mountain - the skiing was superb. It was 0°F at the top of the mountain with a posted warning to "beware of frostbite". We were skiing an intermediate/expert area with a vertical drop of 2,500 ft. It took 20 minutes on two chairlifts to reach the top and 8 minutes of hard skiing to get to the bottom. It was really marvellous. The weekend after next is a four-day long weekend, so we are going to Aspen - it is much too far to go there for the day. There are three mountains to ski there - Snowmass is 12 miles away and the tickets are interchangeable. The area is vast and the vertical drop at all three places is well over 3,000 ft. There is a shuttle bus between the areas and the organisation is really something."

24.2.82 - "Now to tell you about Aspen. It was just marvellous - if you come to the States for skiing that is where to go. Four ski areas if you count Buttermilk (a beginner/intermediate area) and we skied them all. They are all linked by free shuttle buses which run every 15 minutes. We stayed at a very nice hotel at Aspen Highlands, 10 minutes from Aspen Town, with the ski area just across the road. I was a bit nervous about skiing at Aspen because it lists 75% of the areas as most difficult and 25% less difficult - actually it was superb. The most difficult runs are the steeply moguled sections - the rest is beautifully groomed, some steep, some not so, and the tows start right where the town finishes. An old mining town, it is full of lovely Victorian wooden and brick buildings with lots of stained glass,

old-fashioned street lamps, horse-drawn sleighs and hansom cabs, and the shops are full of marvellous things. Last Wednesday I went to Winter Park with friends - it was pretty there but the runs were not very long and there were a lot of flat areas which you had to pole across. Last Saturday we went to Arapahoe Basin which is 70-odd miles from here. The top is 12,500 ft and well above the tree line. Again marvellous views. - Here there was a great variety of skiing - moguls, groomed slopes, cornices, a long traverse around one wall of the basin before a steep fast run back to the tow. We had discount coupons, so it was only \$9 for Bob and me and \$5 each for the kids. About the clothing - the advice given is to wear layers of loose clothing in very cold weather. You really do need them too - the down parkas have nice wide sleeves so everything fits easily underneath. The parkas here are much more padded than the ones at home. Two caps make a big difference in really cold weather too. O^oF is a lot different from O^oC!"

31.3.82 - "Since I last wrote we have had a weekend at Vail, but Aspen is still far and away our favourite. To appreciate Vail we should have gone there first. We spent the Saturday skiing Vail - it is a very large area so we didn't cover anything like all the runs. These seem to be mostly easy or rather difficult, with not much in between. On Sunday we went to Beaver Creek, a new area 10 miles away and run by the same people as Vail. We liked it a lot better than Vail, but it was bitterly cold. To get to the very top (a rise of 3,340 ft) takes three chair lifts and 40 minutes. By the second time up, Bob had a frost-bitten nose and I was frozen through despite all my thick clothes. We came down to the bottom of the topmost lift where there is a restaurant, had lunch and thawed out. That day was far and away the coldest we have had skiing. Vail village is only 20 years old. It has been built after the style of an Austrian village and is very attractive, but to our way of thinking can't compare with a genuine 100-year-old mining town as Aspen is.

"Some other skiing items:- At Arapahoe Basin which is the highest skiing area in the U.S.A., there are some very steep runs. There are various signs such as "Warning - unmarked obstacles", but the one I really liked said "Caution - Cliffs!" Needless to say, I didn't go anywhere near there. At another area, Breckenridge, we skied the steepest slope I've ever been on - fortunately the snow conditions were perfect, no ice, no moguls. A sign at the top had a skull and crossbones and then "Dangerous Terrain - Expert Skiers Only". Well, down we went and it was great - it was so steep that little snow balls went rolling away from under our skis all the way down and it was a long slope. As for moguls - we found one run at Copper Mountain with the worst mogul slope I've ever been on - 2,000 vertical feet of it. It is cold enough here for the moguls to get really hard and carved and stay that way. These were wedge-shaped with the lower edges vertical or undercut. The only way to handle them, it seems, is to jump down them, several at a go. Not one of us stayed the course. The ski season ends on 11th or 18th April depending on the area - so the season is not that long. Arapahoe Basin being so high sometimes stays open until June."

18.5.82 - "We go skiing for the last time next weekend. Last week there was very heavy snow in the mountains and when we went skiing on Saturday there was more snow than there has been all winter. It was very beautiful. It is nowhere near as cold skiing now, in fact much like skiing in Australia. Now we are planning a two-week trip in mid-June to Yellowstone and hopefully

across to Seattle - the distances are very great. The long weekend coming up we are going to Dinosaur National Park in the N.W. corner of Colorado. The trees are greening up, everything looks so different now. I went walking last Tuesday with a group from the Y.W.C.A. It was good to get out again."

3.6.82 - "We went skiing for the last time on May 23rd, although there is still a lot of snow up there. We have just had a four-day-long weekend in the Black Hills and Badlands of South Dakota. There had been a lot of rain in the previous three weeks so the countryside was incredibly green. There were masses of wild flowers too, including wild irises which are as big as the garden varieties, with narrower petals. We took the obligatory photos of the Presidents' Heads at Mt. Rushmore - actually they are pretty impressive. The scenic drives in that area are quite something. We saw wild buffalo in the Custer State Park near there. Across to the Badlands National Park 80 miles east - this is erosion on a grand scale. Because the grass was so green round about and the eroded parts are striped red, it was very colourful. Next weekend we are leaving for our trip to Yellowstone National Park. We are going to cross the Rockies by the Trail Ridge Road, which was only cleared of snow last weekend. It is above 10,000 ft for about 20 miles and is supposed to be one of the most scenic roads in the world. We are really looking forward to it."

By October we will be welcoming the Duncans back to Sydney and look forward to seeing their photos and hearing more stories of their 12 months in the U.S.A.

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PUBLIC LECTURE BY SIR EDMUND HILARY.

Using colour slides and some dramatic film footage Sir Edmund Hilary will share with us some of the memorable moments of his adventure packed life - his 1953 Everest climb, his subsequent climbing, yeti hunting and expeditions in the Himalayas, his journey to the South Pole in converted farm tractors, and his recent journey through Tibet with an American expedition attempting the formidable Kangshung face of Everest. Another highlight of the evening will be the screening of the international award winning film "Beyond Everest" which features some of the recent activities of Sir Edmund and his son Peter in the Everest region. There will be time to ask Sir Edmund questions at the end of the lecture. Part of the proceeds of the evening will go towards the Himalayan Trust's schoolbuilding and other activities in Nepal.

Sydney Town Hall, Saturday Sept. 18th at 8 pm. Tickets \$9 adults, \$7.50 students and pensioners. Further information contact Mile Dillon 76 9554.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER

by Jo Van Sommers.

Sept.15 - Anne Sheahan will take us through the complex story of tracing ancestors, beginning in the deserted goldfields of Victoria. DINNER before the meeting will be at a New Venue at the Malaya Restaurant, 73 Mount Street, North Sydney, within walking distance of North Sydney station. Malayan, Chinese and Indonesian dishes, licensed.

Sept.22 - Films from Austrian Consulate, titles depending on availability.

Sept.29 - David Cotton, photographic exhibition.

THE JULY GENERAL MEETING.

by Barry Wallace.

The meeting began at about 2015 with 30 or so members present. There were apologies from Sandra Hynes, Elwyn Morris, Jutta Dubiel, Denise Shaw and Roy Franklin.

A total of 7 new members were listed for welcome. Of these Judy McMillan, Scott Crawford, Karen Holland and Malcolm Steele were present; Jutta Dubiel, Sandra Hynes and Roy Franklin must wait for another day.

In a departure from the usual routine we then had some announcements. Christine Jorm, from Uni. of N.S.W., had come to the meeting, with committee's approval, to ask members to fill in survey forms on first-aid and injuries on bushwalks. Committee have conferred Honorary Active Membership on Alex Colley and this has been accepted. Sheila Binns has resigned as Secretary for health reasons, and a presentation was made to Sheila in thanks for her extensive service to the Club. Barbara Bruce, the Assistant Secretary, indicated she was willing to carry on as Secretary and was elected to that position.

The Minutes were read and received. Correspondence brought advice of letters from Sheila Binns and Christine Jorm and letters to our 7 new members, to Alex Colley, to the W.I.A. advising them that we have vacated the premises in Atchison Street, and to North Sydney Council requesting additional storage space in the new premises. There was also a reply letter from Alex Colley.

The Treasurer's Report advised that we started the period with \$3502.10, spent \$1043.18, gained \$423.00 and closed the month with a balance of \$2881.92. The Coolana Account showed a closing balance of \$99.53.

There was no Federation Report for this month.

The Walks Report began with a no-go report for Gordon Lee's ski-touring trip of 18,19,20 June - something to do with inadequate snow. There was no report on Len Newland's Bluegum walk but Frank Tasker did have 11 starters on his Budawangs trip, although this shrank to 8 with some dropouts. Of the two day walks John Newman reported 32 people on his Lilyvale walk. The weather held up until lunch, and then the rains came. Despite that they all caught the train O.K. Steve and Wendy Hodgman had 14 riders on their Woodford to Glenbrook bike trip.

Jim Percy's Cloudmaker trip scheduled for 25,26,27 June did not go. Bill Capon, that same weekend, had an unknown number of people on his Budawangs walk which was described as a good trip. George Walton had an average of 6 people on his Mt. Solitary day walk and Ralph Penglis had 39 starters on his Bundeena to Audley walk that same day.

The following weekend, 2,3,4 July, Bill Holland led 10 people on his Victoria Falls/Bluegum walk in fine weather. Steve and Wendy Hodgman's bike trip did not go but John Redfern had 13 people on his Airly walk. There was no report of Derek Wilson's Waterfall to Otford day walk, but David Ingram had 25 people on his Waterfall to Waterfall trip.

Ian Debert led 11 people on his Mt. Carrialoo exploratory trip over the weekend of July 9,10,11. Ainslie Morris had 15 starters on her Bluegum walk on the Sunday and Jim Laing reported 11 people and no navigation

problems on his Ruined Castle walk the same day. All of which ended the Walks Report.

Dot Butler then presented the report of the latest Coolana Committee meeting.

In General Business Gordon Lee presented a draft of a letter of complaint to a manufacturer of sporting footwear. The meeting resolved that the Secretary re-draft the letter before mailing.

A motion that the Club obtain gear for hire to prespectives was defeated on the voices. The meeting resolved that the Club adopt the present hall as its permanent home and there was a vote of thanks to Denise Shaw for her efforts in obtaining use of the premises.

A motion of a vote of thanks to Sheila Binns was passed by acclamation.

So then it was just a matter of announcements and it was all over at 2119.

ALTERATION TO WALK FOR 27,28,29 AUGUST - LEADER: IAN DEBERT - 982,2615 (H)

The exploratory trip shown for this date will now be replaced by:-
CLARENCE - Glowworm Tunnel - Newnes - Wolgan River and return. 20 km -
Medium - Map: Glen Alice 1:50,000

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LET'S PUT OUR DANCING SHOES ON & GET TOGETHER FOR -

THE ANNUAL N.S.W. FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKERS BALL!

Date: FRIDAY - SEPTEMBER 24th, 1982.

Venue: LANE COVE TOWN HALL (Upper)
Longueville Road, Entrance in Phoenix Street (Council car
park at rear and in Little Street)

Time: 8.00 pm - 1.00 am

Cost: \$6.00 Single - BYO + Plate

Dress: Casual or Semi-formal (whatever you fancy!)

We would like S.B.W. to be represented by a large, lively, funloving group this year. You don't need a partner - just come along and join our table! See DENISE SHAW for tickets on sale in Clubroom or phone bookings on 922-6093 (H) or BARBARA BRUCE (after August 23) 669-0514 (Bus.) and 546-6570 (H).

There's no Fancy Dress theme this year, but there is a prize for the best decorated table. So let us have your ideas!

CONGRATULATIONS to Margaret and Hans Stichter on the birth of their second son EVAN on 6th July last.

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