

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

Established June 1931

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers, Box 4476 G.P.O. Sydney 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening from 7.30 pm at the Cahill Community Centre (Upper Hall), 34 Falcon Street, Crow's Nest. Enquiries concerning the Club should be referred to Ann Ravn, telephone 798-8607.

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PARADISE REVISITED - THE BLUE BREAKS.

by David Rostron.

I've expanded on the glories of the Blue Breaks and particularly the Axehead Range to many walkers - in fact to anyone who was patient enough to listen to the spiel. In describing the area and views I usually become quite nostalgic. I was last on the Axehead at Easter '79 so the yearning to return was becoming quite strong and I was virtually compelled to place it on the programme for the June Long Weekend, 1983.

As we headed towards Jenolan Caves on the Friday evening I wondered if we would reach Kanangra Walls, let alone the Axehead. The blizzard/snow storm started near Hampden and continued until we started the descent to Jenolan Caves. Back on top again and we were again driving in a blizzard with 5 cm of snow on the road. The odd stars which were visible encouraged us to believe the weather could improve.

We arrived at Kanangra to find Jim Percy's Mazda plastered with snow (he had arrived at 5.00 pm). We had intended to stop at the Coal Seam Cave that night but I felt my reputation as a fine weather walker could be at stake. We decided the Kanangra Cave was to be the venue, followed by an early start and breakfast at the Coal Seam Cave with Jim and Jo.

We waited at the car park for the other vehicles, to make up our party of eleven:- Wendy and Steve Hodgman, Janet Waterhouse, David Lewis, John Redfern, Spiro Hajinakitas, Malcolm Steel, John Reddel and Jim Percy and Jo Van Sommers.

The others needed no encouragement to stop at the Kanangra Cave and we edged our way there, across snow and ice. Two bodies in the cave were quickly identified as Jim and Jo who had set off across the Walls, couldn't find the track turn-off in the blizzard and returned to the Kanangra Cave.

Conditions were cool that night - Jim recorded 0°C on his gauge and there was considerable wind chill factor. However daylight saw little cloud so we were compelled to emerge from warm bags (for a few only) and struggle to get a fire going. Instead of a 7.30 am start from the Coal Seam Cave we struggled out of the Kanangra Cave at 8.15 am.

The wind was very strong on top and everyone appeared to have all their gear on - what an array of beanies, gloves and long pants! Jim reported 1°C on the tops as we tiptoed carefully across the ice and snow covered rocks in brilliant sunshine. There was a very brief photographic stop at the track junction and then a gallop to the Coal Seam Cave. What joy - pushing through the snow and ice covered casuarina scrub. It was a little warmer down off the Walls and we had a disrobing stop at the Bullhead Range track junction. The top of the range to Cabbage Spire has been burnt and the track is not always apparent. Again a very brief stop in the cool wind on top of the Spire and then a run down to the Kowmung, arriving at 11.23 am - about 2 hours behind schedule.

It was delightful sitting in the sun on the banks of the Kowmung with the temperature at an incredible 10°C. The river was at a normal level and looked magnificent as it sparkled and danced across the rocks of the rapid just below the Christie's Creek junction. After years of drought the visual experience of this area was like "Paradise Revisited".

I gave the party the option of an early lunch on the Kowmung (many had collected firewood - a not too subtle form of persuasion), or lunch on Butcher's Creek in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. They opted for the latter, and I was a bad loser in the popularity stakes when we eventually reached the creek, $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours later at almost 2.30 pm.

Over a brief lunch the next option was discussed - camping on one of the streams forming the head of Butcher's Creek or carrying water up onto the Axehead Range for a high camp. I had read of a cave 300 metres from the southern end (Gander Head), and on the eastern side, which had been used by the Kamerukas in adverse weather conditions some years before. With the temperature at lunch being 5° - 6° , and the strong westerly still blowing, the cave appealed to all so it was then a race for the Axehead, two kilometres away.

Where the road crossed the third creek, wine skins were filled and with heavy packs it was slow toil up the 200 m of Gander Head. (Our airy perch on the ridge of the Axehead provided a magnificent panorama.) The late afternoon sun highlighted the golden rocks of the Burragorang Walls with Yerranderie Peak and Bonnum Pic standing out in stark relief.

The cold westerly kept us moving and we sidled the first series of rocks on the eastern side. These were 300-500 metres from Gander Head but there was no sign of a cave. We followed the crest to the next rocks which extend over about 200 metres. Sidling was difficult on the east (the normal route is partly on the top and then the west), and the overhangs, visible from a distance, had floors which would only accommodate 1 or 2 people. When nearly to the end of this section we came upon a possible 6-person overhang. However the floor shelf was only approximately 3 m wide, to the end of a 6 m drop. Nearby were a number of places where 1 or 2 people could bed down and with some excavation the cave was made habitable.

The cave is about 1 km north of Gander Head. There were no old fire places along this section so we assumed the Kamerukas' fire had been covered by sandstone dust. We soon organised ourselves into a timber chain gang, passing pieces up the steep slope and cliff over about 15 m to the shelf. A large sleeping platform was levelled and the fire was soon roaring on the only possible location - some rocks adjoining the back wall. Because of the narrow shelf only 5 to 6 could stand around the fire at a time, so it was almost a "musical chairs" evening.

The setting sun seemed to magnify the Burragorang Walls. Although it was cold (about $2-3^{\circ}$), we had virtually no wind. From our eyrie it was delightful watching the valley being gradually enveloped in darkness. With the onset of night we witnessed a fireworks display in the Oaks-Picton area, about 50 km away.

The limited standing area around the fire encouraged many to retire early and there were soon 5 - 6 stalwarts left to warm their bodies. Spiro certainly planned his evening well. He dined early, went to bed for an hour and then joined us for a prolonged post-dinner discussion, highlighted by his Turkish coffee and an assortment of "goodies", including Judith's bun.

The pleasures of high camps are many but probably the most exquisite are sunsets and dawns. That orange glow in the sky above Burragorang Walls, at 6.20 am, was certainly one of those delights.

Jim reported a temperature of 0° at 7.00 am, but the sun soon warmed us - with heat radiating off the back wall of the cave. Early starts seem to be impossible to achieve in mid-winter and it was 8.20 am before we were away. Another 10 minutes of sidling and we were again on the ridge crest - greeted by a cool westerly.

The views to the west in the early morning light were magnificent, particularly of the Kanangra Tops and Cloudmaker. It was slow progress along the range as we soaked in the panoramas in all directions with many camera stops. I had some nostalgic moments as we passed the fireplaces of previous high camps.

We crossed Green Wattle Break, sidled Bull Island Peak and began the climb to Mt. Remorseless. Then to one of the highlights - the Causeway - 60 cm wide and 8 m long, requiring an airy traverse. Morning tea was enjoyed on the large rock shelf just to the east, where one has a 300° panorama. By this time the keen westerly had diminished so we sat back and enjoyed the sunshine and views. It was difficult to leave that fantastic location.

We continued on keeping to the northern edge of the range and then to the north-east corner where there is an easy route through the cliff line. We then headed north down the ridge towards Green Wattle Creek. A steep section required some care because of loose rocks, but then it was easy progress to the creek for lunch.

Those concerned with personal hygiene (no names!) were immediately in the creek for a brisk dip and wash. Anyway it was great to feel refreshed and virtuous amongst those other grimy souls. After a relaxing lunch (no time schedules this day) we sauntered off, found a break in the cliff lines on the other side and climbed the ridge to the low plateau of the Broken Rock Range. Visibility was limited and a compass course soon found us on the chosen ridge for the descent to Butcher's Creek.

Peter Harris had only Sunday and Monday off that weekend and said he might meet us in Butcher's Creek. Well, there he was at the foot of the ridge having arrived three minutes beforehand. Peter had walked about $\frac{1}{2}$ km upstream and reported no suitable campsites. We were then about 2 km downstream of the Grog Shop. We explored upstream first and after 300 m found the required 5-Star campsite - a level grassy expanse with ample wood. It was then 3.00 pm - an ideal time to stop for an extended social evening.

A great array of pre-dinner snacks was soon produced and devoured. We settled back for one of those memorable nights - good food, companionship, verbal sparring and much hilarity, all under a clear starlit sky.

Jim Percy reported 0° the next morning but a roaring fire soon warmed us. Following a leisurely breakfast we were away by 8.20 am ascending the ridge on the other side. We were soon on the Scott's Main Road which we followed north for $1\frac{1}{2}$ km to the ridge which leads to the Pinnacles. Some more compass work to stay on the correct ridge and we then headed west for the Kowmung, passing to the south of the Pinnacles.

It was still cool as we descended the ridge towards the river. Spiro was at this stage wearing jumper, beanie and gloves. John Redfern couldn't pass up the chance for an attack: "Spiro, you used to be tough once, but

you're nothing but a softie now!" The verbal sparring continued all the way to the river.

On the river the options were a three kilometre walk upstream and lunch at the foot of Roots Ridge or an extended lunch there at the base of Hughes Ridge followed by the ascent of the ridge. A visitor could be excused for thinking S.B.W. was a club of degenerates when the vote was for an extended lunch!

I had not been on this part of the Kowmung since February 1980. The river was then a mass of shingle banks - the aftermath of the March 1978 floods. I was surprised to see the banks were in their former delightful condition - extensive grassy flats. We are very fortunate to have a paradise like this so close to Sydney. My appreciation of this type of wilderness experience was greatly increased by having just returned from 3½ months in the U.K. and Europe.

The extended lunch in the sun was followed by a barefoot wade across the river and then a sprint (for some) up the ridge because of Peter's comments about smoking not affecting one's climbing ability. The non-smokers proved their point but were still not sure if Peter will give it up.

A final stroll along the Gingra Ridge took us to the Kanangra Tops. The Blue Breaks were beautifully highlighted in the clear late afternoon sunlight as we stopped for our last nostalgic views.

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THE AUGUST GENERAL MEETING.

by Barry Wallace.

The meeting began at about 2018 hours with 35 or so members present and Vice-President Ainslie Morris practising scales on the gong with a piece of scrap timber. There were apologies from Tony Marshall; and new members Carol Bruce and Stephen Long to be welcomed in the usual way.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with no matters arising.

Barrie Murdoch, fresh back from the northern hemisphere, presented Tony Marshall's Treasurer's Report. We began the month with \$2120.26, spent \$474.70, received \$1907.50, of which \$1000 was redemption of matured stock, and ended the month with \$3553.06.

Correspondence comprised letters to new members, a donation of \$200.00 from the Beswick Family Foundation and our letter of thanks, from Mr. Cleary, N.S.W. Minister for Sport and Recreation, acknowledging receipt of our letter regarding cross-country skiing facilities near Kosciusko National Park, a letter from the Federation of Tasmanian Bushwalking Clubs requesting donations toward the cost of repairs to the walkers' huts at Denny King's place at Melaleuca, and a card from Ann Brown in thanks for the many expressions of concern and best wishes, indicating that Neil is making good progress.

Business arising brought a motion that the Club donate \$200.00 towards the cost of repairs to the huts at Melaleuca. After a brief debate the motion was passed.

The Walks Report began with a Gordon Lee's "to be advised" walk over the weekend of 15,16,17 July. We are advised that there were 4 starters and they went to the Budawangs. Sandy Johnson's Jervis Bay area base camp exploratory did not go, but Spiro Hajinakitas moved his Mt. Colong walk forward by two weeks to confuse the enemy and had 12 people on a good trip, described as cold but dry. Of the day walks, Brian Bolton had some 40 plus people on his Waterfall to Engadine stroll and Meryl Watman is rumoured to have had around 12 starters on her Waterfall to Heathcote trip.

The following weekend, 22,23,24 July saw Spiro and Brian Bolton car swapping in the Budawangs. There were 24 starters and the weather was cold. Ian Debert's Hartley Vale trip was deferred one week but Frank Woodgate's Brisbane Waters day-and-a-half walk had 8 starters. John Newman reported beaut weather, 6 members and 4 prospectives on his Lilyvale to Otford day walk. Ralph Pengliss' walk that same day was cancelled.

Over the weekend 30,31 July Tony Marshall ran an Instructional Weekend at Coolana. There were 11 members, 9 prospectives and 2 visitors. They all walked up Mt. Scanzi on the Sunday to prove that it could be done, without getting lost. Ian Debert's deferred Hartley Vale trip went that weekend, with 16 starters on what was described as an easy walk. There was no report of Bob Sames' Kuring-gai Chase day walk, but Joan Cooper had 23 people, good weather and good walking on her Lower Blue Mountains walk.

The weekend of 5,6,7 August was a good one for cancellations. Gordon Lee's walk did not go, and the Tony Marshall - Don Finch car swap was abandoned in the absence of Finch. The day walks fared better. David Ingram had 7 members and 2 prospectives on his Middle Harbour Walk despite some train problems and confusion, and George Walton had 22 starters arriving back before dark (!!) after a beaut day out to Mt. Solitary. All of which brought the Walks Report to an end.

Federation Report brought the news that both the General Meeting and Annual General Meeting had been held. Among the matters covered were:- a campaign to have deposits charged on beverage containers in N.S.W., that the Yarwood Bushwalking Club has been accepted as an associate member, that Sutherland Bushwalkers are organising a bus trip to Barrington Tops over the October long weekend (50 seats @ \$35.00 ea.), and that unannounced N.P.W.S. burning off during the week is creating a hazard in the Royal National Park.

Of General Business there was none, so the meeting closed at 2113.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR OCTOBER.

by Jo Van Sommers.

* October 19 - Roger Goode, bush fire control authority, will give a talk illustrated with slides.

October 26 - Bob and Christa Younger will show slides of classical Greece and Italy.

* DINNER before the meeting at Phuoung Vietnamese Restaurant, 87 Willoughby Road, Crow's Nest. B.Y.O. 6.30 pm sharp!

The annual Barn Dance at "Coolana", the Club's property on the Kangaroo River, will be held on the Saturday night of the full moon, October 15th. Please contact GEORGE GRAY, phone 86,6263 if you require or can give transport, EARLY.

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ADVANCE NOTICEWALK 26/12/83 - 9/1/84 - TASMANIALEADER: PETER HARRIS. Great Western Tiers and Central Plateau (2 weeks)

<u>Day</u>	<u>Geographical Points along the Route</u>	<u>Distance</u>
1.	Sydney - Devonport - Higgs Track - Lady Lake	(2 km) Uphill
2.	Lady Lake - Lake Lucy Long - Lake Nameless	(6 km)
3.	Lake Nameless - Lake Johnny - Lake Chambers - Lake Douglas - Forty Lakes Peak - Lake Nameless	(6 km) Day walk
4.	Lake Nameless - Ritters Track (Central Plateau) - Pencil Pine Tarn	(9 km)
5.	Pencil Pine Tarn - Lake Gwendy - Turrana Heights - Turrana Bluff - Mersey Crag - Pencil Pine Tarn	(15 km) Day walk
6.	Pencil Pine Tarn - Lake Butters - Ritters Track - Zion Gate - Mt. Jerusalem - Gate of the Chain - Pool of Siloam - Walls of Jerusalem	(12 km)
7.	Circuit of Walls of Jerusalem	(5 km) Day walk
8.	Pool of Siloam - Damascus Vale - Lake Ball - Lake Toorah	(9 km)
9.	Lake Toorah - Chinaman's Plains - South Ling Roth Lake	(10 km)
10.	South Ling Roth Lake - Mountains of Jupiter - Lake Payanna	(5 km)
11.	Lake Payanna - Lake Athena - Lake Pallas - Orion Lakes	(5 km)
12.	Orion Lakes - Traveller Range - Du Cane Gap - Lake Marion	(17 km)
13.	Lake Marion - Narcissus River - Lake St. Clair	(20 km approx.)
14.	Spare Day.	
15.	Lake St. Clair - Hobart - Sydney	

LEADER: Peter Harris Total Kilometres = 95
88-3637 (H) Plus Day Walk kms = 26

GRADE: Medium - Total for 2 weeks = 121
Extended walk. Average per day = 8 (15 days)

MAPS: Mersey 1:100,000 (Map No. 8114, Tas.)
Cradle Mountain - Lake St. Clair National Park Map.

- (a) All food must be carried (13 breakfasts, 14 lunches, 14 dinners).
Two food parties will function.
- (b) Members of party must be equipped to expect snow.
- (c) The plateau is mostly clear of vegetation; some heathland; some
richea scrub around some lakes, including Lake Payanna and
Mountains of Jupiter. Gaiters are advisable.
- (d) Camping areas are limited - maximum of 4 tents (8 people).
Space remaining for 5 people.
- (e) The party is democratic, but in the event of a conflict of interests
the leader's decision is final and must be abided.

A MATTER OF PERCEPTION

by Don Matthews.

Kath Brown was having a surprise birthday party. Not for me to disclose which one, but it was an event to be celebrated. Nor do I intend to describe the scene at that happy gathering at the Duncan's. I do however feel the need to record the S.B.W.'s tangible appreciation of the enormous amount of effort that Kath and Jim have put into Club affairs and of the discreet way in which they have helped new chums, both in the clubrooms and on the track. I also felt the need to add my own personal thanks for their companionship over many years by reciting a birthday ode at the party.

There are some people who can speak with elequence, dignity, and feeling at the drop of a hat, and there are some of us whose attempts at opera end up as overtures and whose best efforts at serious verse end up as doggerel. As I stood under the shower on the morning of the party washing my shirts and socks, it suddenly struck me that I had better get moving on the Ode.

The last time I wrote one it was Owen who threw out the challenge. He rang me at work at lunchtime on that occasion. "I want," he demanded, "fourteen lines of the worst drivel you've ever written. I want it by eight o'clock tonight." I was hugely flattered. "If" I replied, "I can think of something in the time it takes to eat my cheese sandwich, then O.K., but otherwise you're on your own."

Somehow the cheese sandwich worked. On this occasion, however, the white heat of inspiration was not so evident, and it took six cups of tea, but the germ of an idea had been floating around in the back of my head for some time. It was all to do with assimilation. When I went on my first day walk with the S.B.W., one of the tough lady walkers eyed me speculatively and muttered darkly, "Hmph, they'll burn you off. They're a tough lot." I wasn't unduly worried at this because I'd been around the bush for long enough to look after myself, but I was a trifle concerned when, during the following week, the tough lot declined my presence on a weekend walk of quite moderate proportions. "Oh well," I thought, "after all, they are a tough lot". Next week I tried again, and very tentatively approached the Browns about their weekend walk, whose proportions seemed much the same. No problems! I was welcomed with open arms and never looked back. So the ode for Kath is based on fact, and it is dedicated to both Kath and Jim, because I'm sure that's the way Kath would prefer it.

BIRTHDAY ODE.

Some score and ten short years ago
When some of us were young
And walking, for a pastime,
We had only just begun,
I ventured out to Coal Mine Creek
In apprehens-i-un.

I'd joined the S.B.W.
I thought I knew it all.
They looked me up and down they did
Those fellows who stood tall.
"You can't go on this walk or that,
You're far too bloomin' small!"

But then I met some wiser folks
Their name - you've guessed? - was Brown.
"Just come with us," they volunteered,
"Erase that worried frown.
Come for a walk to Coal Mine Creek
From Perry's Lookout - down!"

I grabbed my pack, my hobnailed boots,
My bag of Terry's meal.
The leader gazed upon my load
And said, "How does it feel?
It looks a little high to me,
Adjust it to your keel.
Try sneakers too, instead of boots,
The benefits are real."

So down I went to Coal Mine Creek;
The Tigers? they were there,
But nicely held in rein by those
Who took some thought and care
And hardly ever lost a soul -
They always got them there.

So if you think the going's tough
Be patient, and you'll find
That someone has the long term view,
The proper state of mind,
And certainly will wait for you
If you are all behind.

Now let us drink a toast or two
To friends of some renown
Whose talents we should add include
The use of verb and noun -
A toast in grape or orange juice
To Kath, and to Jim, Brown!

So we drank our toasts, and listened while Kath responded with eloquence,
dignity and feeling. And this at the drop of a hat, because it was a
genuine surprise party. Wonderful!

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CITY TO SURF IN FORTY TWO MINUTES.

by Nancye Alderson.

We are standing at the top of William Street near the entrance to the Kings Cross tunnel and we can see thousands of athletes lining up at College Street to take part in the thirteenth annual Sun City to Surf race of 14 km to Bondi Beach. The runners who think they will make the distance in less than an hour are in front. The next group think they will finish in 70 minutes, and finally the people who think they will take 90 minutes or more. The favourite runner today is Zephaniah Ncube from Zimbabwe. A crowd is waiting for the athletes to go past and there is a sense of anticipation and excitement. It is a brilliant day and the sun is warm on our backs. The Hare Krishna wearing their pale pink flowing robes are playing their shrill instruments on the side of the road.

It is 9.55 am, only 5 minutes to go before the race starts. Far away in the distance I can hear a pipe band playing. Two minutes to go now. Here they come, they are off and running down William Street and what a pace! A sea of people is moving like a great wave and the crowd behind me are pushing to get a better view. Now the athletes are coming up the hill and whistles and a horn are blowing. The police cars, the Sun car and trucks carrying the gear belonging to people in the race are just cruising past us. Here are the athletes stepping it out up the hill, the majority are men of all ages and they look pretty fit to me. Dressed in red, white, green, blue or gold shorts and tops it is an amazing sight. Several men running past are wearing earphones. As they go through the King's Cross tunnel the athletes are calling out and there is an echo of calls and whistles.

I can't believe it, they are still coming by in thousands. What a kaleidoscope of colour and people, large and small, young and old, we can't see the end of the group from Town Hall yet. They are running, jogging, ambling, cruising, wheeling, pushing and walking. There aren't too many girls, just a sprinkling. Two young men are passing in wheelchairs, it is a mighty effort for them coming up this hill. A group of six men and women is just going past carrying a cloth poster reading "HCF Budget Cover" and another poster says "G'Day Sydney".

Each athlete has a number pinned to the front of his or her chest and number 25,003 has just passed. A fee of \$4 has been paid by entrants and the Spastic Centre receives part of the proceeds. A few girls are walking here, I expect the hill is too much for them. I feel dizzy watching the crowd as they move up and down. And still they come. One man has his girl friend on his shoulders and he is jogging along energetically. The girls are coming now, they are in the group which will take more than 90 minutes. The road is littered with plastic garbage bags and T-shirts which people have worn in the race until they warm up and then thrown onto the roadway. There's a black and white dog on a lead and he has a number too. A man has a trolley with a cattle dog on it and he is blowing a horn, there is a sign attached to the trolley and it says "Spirit of Australia". Number 27,000 has just passed us. Here comes a group called "Sedgwick" and they have a red banner.

The tail end is coming up now and there are another two dogs on leads, they are basset hounds. Two ladies with pushers are going past and I see there are quite a few baby entrants. There goes an army man with his rifle, he is racing along. Now the ambulances are driving past, four of them, and

a few mini buses including the Spastic Centre bus. Suddenly it is all quiet, everyone has gone through the tunnel, in 15 minutes the athletes have all passed us. Well, it's over at this end. What a marvellous spectacle..... wait a minute, an English taxi is coming along and it has a sign which reads, "Follow me to health and fitness".

Here we are at the finishing line and the athletes are looking rather different to when they first started. There is a lot of perspiration and tiredness showing as they come around a bend in the road to the finishing line. What amazes me is that everyone is still keeping up a very steady pace at the end of 14 km. A man is going past wheeling two little children in a pusher and there goes the man pushing his lawn mower with his lady friend sitting on top of it. A partially blind man, number 7,290 is just passing and also the man piggy-backing his girl friend, he still is running energetically. He has done well, he has been running 1 hour 45 minutes carrying a person weighing about 8 stone on his shoulders. I can tell by the expressions on faces there are people feeling exhausted. Three little boys about 6 years old and two boys on roller skates are going past. An alsatian with his number on his back is passing and so is the HCF Budget group. Numbers 28,970, 29,218, and 29,466 are just going by. A man dressed as a nun is running along, he looks a bit silly dressed in that outfit and wearing a pair of sandshoes.

Now we are near the finishing line with its photo finish camera and the runners' check. Gold banners add to the colour and spirit of the day and the officials stand alongside the finishing line which is crowded with men and women. We are to be given the names of the finalists who arrived long before we did. Andrew Lloyd a 23 year old man has won the race in 42 minutes. Second is Zephaniah Ncube from Zimbabwe and third is David Forbes, Fourth is Rhonda Mallinder and fifth is Moira Karie.

A little 3 year old is just crossing the finishing line and his dad is pushing the empty pusher so that he can walk to the finish of the race. Here come all the clothes on a trolley and there are also champagne bottles and glasses so that the runners can celebrate after the race. Two men are pushing a lady in a wheelchair and she is enjoying it all. Michael Cleary, Minister for Sport, says: "What a wonderful success this race has been. We must give credit to the Sun who organised it and handles an extra 8,000 entrants this year."

Andrew Lloyd who ran a wonderful race is receiving a large cup and trophy with an athlete on it. Andrew says, "I would like to thank everyone involved today, it was fantastic to share in the race. I hope you enjoyed yourself, I did." Zephaniah Ncube from Zimbabwe says, "I have been in races in the past and I enjoyed this one. I have competed in the Commonwealth Games. Congratulations to those who participated." David Forbes says, "It is not where you start it is where you finish." A young man is running past us with a flag which reads: "I am going to finish dead last," and he is the last athlete in the City to Surf race with 33,708 official athletes taking part.

Several members of Sydney Bush Walkers took part in the race and they included Barbara Holmes and Evelyn Walker walking, Jo Van Sommers, Owen Marks (number 18,032), Bob Hodgson, Jim Percy and others unknown. Mrs. Marks and Owen invited members of Sydney Bush Walkers who ran in the race or who were onlookers, to their home after the race and a good time was had by all. A special welcome was given there to Jenny Hodgson, the new baby daughter of Margaret and Bob.

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eastwood camping centre

BUSHWALKERS

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• Food.

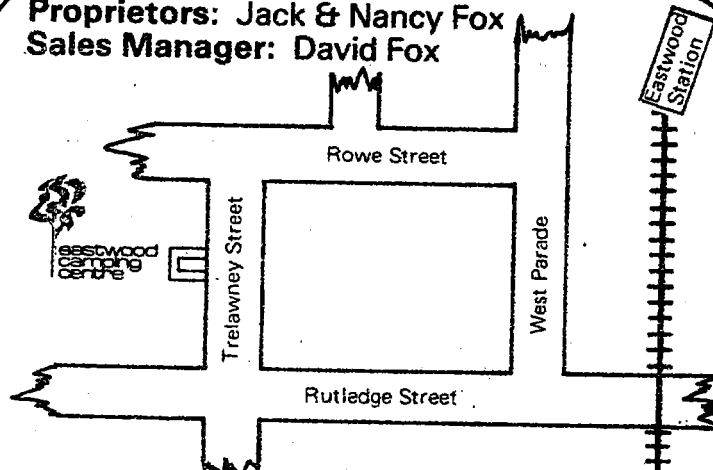
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ARTHUR AND US - PART 11.

by Bill Gamble.

In March, 1983, a Club walk on the autumn programme went to Arthurs Pass National Park in New Zealand. Two members (Brian Holden and Bronwyn Stow) and a visitor (Steve Tremont) flew from Sydney to join the leader (Bill Gamble) for nine days of walking in the park. The introduction to the park and the first days of the walking are contained in the article which appeared in the August issue of the magazine. This article covers the programmed walk in the Poulter Valley and beyond.

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It was shortly before 10.00 am by the time we got away from Andrews Shelter, at the beginning of the track which goes up to Casey Saddle, 777 metres, and then down into the Poulter Valley. After a quiet night at Hawdon Shelter, we had moved ourselves by car to the starting point by 8.30 am, but by the time the vehicle was taken back (we expected to finish the walk there) and Bill and Brian returned on foot it was well after 9.30 am. In short, we did not save so much in time as in the effort of carrying full packs for forty-five minutes. The track up to the saddle is steep initially but after awhile settles into a steady climb and then a sidle which eventually descends into the long meadow that is the feature of the saddle. We could have walked up Andrews Stream. The gentle saddle between the Waimahariri and Poulter Valleys is deceptive, more like walking a river flat than the semi-alpine meadow it is. Thick forest sharply defines the limits of the meadow and climbs on up the slopes on either side for another 5-600 metres. In the lee of a now chilly breeze we dropped into the warm tussock alongside Andrews Stream, just below the saddle, and shared our lunch break with sufficient numbers of sandflies to keep us from lingering too long.

We were over the saddle before we really knew it - most interesting and easy to miss - and well worth a second look. Soon we had dropped into Surprise Stream (which joins Casey Stream lower down) and the last of the meadow before picking up the track marker for a sidle down the true right to the Poulter Valley. The track stayed fairly high with a steep drop last and came out in a generous meadow a few hundred metres from Casey Hut. Consistent with the intentions of the walk we only passed through on this fine late afternoon, taking sufficient time to make an entry in the hut log book before crossing Casey Stream to find a very pleasant campsite a little way upstream on the true left. Contrary to previous experiences in New Zealand, the campfire was the first of three which gave off plenty of heat for cooking, and warmth to sit around and talk into the evening under a cloudless night sky. It felt like a bushwalk out of Sydney, only for the tumbling stream and the volume of water which reminded us that we were in another place.

The fine weather continued right through the following day as we walked up the Poulter Valley and on to Lake Minchin where we camped for two days.

The route from Casey Stream up the Poulter Valley is badly affected at first by windfalls and a change in a main channel of the river. These factors and a misplaced reluctance to get our feet wet led us into an unnecessary scrub-bash, taking about an hour to make 2-300 metres to reach the river flats where travelling is easy. Having emerged from this maze of windfalls and scrub, we wandered up to the Poulter Hut (built in the more traditional style

of New Zealand tramping huts and which stood back, well maintained, in the shelter of the tree line well away from the main river channels). Then it was a long, diagonal crossing of the Poulter River to reach the confluence of the river and Minchin Stream - it took the best part of an hour.

We found the track marker after a bit of a search, then settled down to lunch in the forest, well-covered to minimise the predations of the sandflies. Our "wilderness experience" was interrupted for a few minutes by a helicopter which landed on the river flats nearby to enable one of the crew to read a rain gauge. It was a quiet walk through the forest, uphill to Lake Minchin, 760 metres. We opted for a campsite on a tussock-covered point which extended into the lake. In the mid-afternoon sun we all, to some extent, freshened up in the cold waters of the lake. Brian fully immersed himself for all of one second - no one else was prepared to break his record whatever the inducements. Mountain peaks plunged right down to the edge of the lake and this meant that we were soon in deep shade even though the afternoon was not late and a good three to four hours remained before dark. There was plenty of time to collect wood for another fire which provided good heat for cooking and to sit around afterwards. Another helicopter flew overhead just on sunset; otherwise we were left to our own devices. The sandflies retreated and the trout rose in the lake. The night was cold and clear.

The next day offered fine weather for our day walk to Minchin Pass, 1082 metres, although by late morning Steve had concluded that a weather change was imminent. But apart from being a rather chilly day on the pass it was not until the early hours of the following morning before the change affected us.

Our exact route to Minchin Pass was not always obvious, but we made good time once we had all decided that getting our feet wet was unavoidable. Until the first plunge we did all sorts of things to try and keep feet dry. There was a reasonable track around the edge of the lake to the gravel flats beyond; and on the far side, where the Minchin Stream issues from a gorge, we crossed it to reach a marked track which climbs high and steep, up and over the bluffs on the true right. From there we chose a rock hop up the stream to Minchin bivy (a recently repaired/painted galvanised iron shelter with room for two trampers and packs) then traversed a newly cut stretch of track through 2-300 hundred metres of nasty scrub before sidling up through snowgrass to the pass.

We had thoughts of retreating from the pass to a sheltered place lower down to have lunch, but Steve found a good place on the west slope above the pass which provided shelter and views. We enjoyed a lengthy lunch break free from sandflies and warmed for the most part by the sun. The view across the main divide of the Southern Alps towards the West Coast indicated some pretty rough country and emphasised that our walking had placed us in a position to enjoy an alpine area of rare beauty. We returned to Minchin Lake by the same route and got back dragging as much downed wood as possible for our campfire. We also had company nearby - Pete Williamson from Christchurch who had been tailing us by a day since leaving Hawdon Shelter. We figured that we were the only walkers in the Poulter Valley, which is quite an area for five people to have to themselves. We left a warm campfire and a starry night to awake in the morning to a grey, misty day which would get a lot worse by nightfall.

Our plan was to linger awhile at Minchin Lake and then walk down to the Poulter River, cross it and be camped by mid-afternoon near Worsley bivy in readiness for the scramble over Trudge Col the following day into the Hawdon Valley. The rain closing in at Minchin Lake moved us out earlier than planned to seek the shelter of the forest, and the showers while we re-crossed the Poulter River did nothing to slow the pace. Uncertain of the weather, we had lunch inside the bivy and left any decision to pitch tents until later. The sandflies both within and outside the bivy were legend.

The hut log book had nothing good to say about the Trudge Col route into the Hawdon Valley and it seemed that much depended upon the weather which was beyond our control. However, we did take the opportunity of walking up Trudge Stream for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours to determine what sort of route it offered to the tops. The first hour was good travelling but then it became a gorge and only the low level of the stream (low level by New Zealand standards) allowed reasonable progress. It sure looked like being an interesting day to reach the col. In the event, the weather determined which route we would take. As we returned to Worsley bivy the rain came in again, heavier and persistent, and it continued throughout the night to raise water levels, probably about 20 cm. The outlook to the tops was bleak, low cloud and gale force winds. We stayed in the bivy overnight as a refuge from the weather.

It was a small A-frame hut with a sleeping platform which took four people and gear comfortably. Bronwyn, who did not go on the trip up Trudge Stream, had spent part of the time cleaning it out and the bivy was in top shape for our stay. It was left to Steve and, belatedly, Bill to try (unsuccessfully) to clear out the hundreds of sandflies around windows. Outside, they numbered in their thousands, so our comfort inside really had to be measured relative to the alternative.

Assisted by a tailwind we were buffeted along on our walk back down the Poulter River, the Trudge Col route abandoned in the face of the weather. There was no way of crossing the channels with dry feet and very soon we were crossing and re-crossing them without much thought as to whether they could be avoided. We made good time and called in at Poulter Hut for morning tea. Intermittent rain squalls followed us all the way to Casey Hut. We did not repeat our scrub-bash this time and at Bronwyn's prompting opted for a double crossing of one of the main channels of the river - what had taken us an hour before was covered in less than ten minutes. For the first time it was felt necessary to link arms to give more stability against the swift current. We beat the heavy rain into Casey Hut and that pretty well determined our staying there for the night as a refuge from the weather. As the afternoon wore on the weather became worse (a radio call to Park HQ elicited a pretty flexible forecast of more rain and wind, probably clearing) and by the time we climbed into our bunks for the night an electrical storm was under way. In all, it looked rather doubtful as to whether we would be moving very far from the hut the following day.

It was still raining in the morning, but there was sufficient lightness in the sky to push ahead with plans and walk back over the Casey Saddle. Protected under the canopy of the forest we were only vaguely aware of a slow deterioration in the weather as we climbed. Certainly it was becoming cool - our thoughts and efforts, however, seemed to be directed more to keeping our

footing on a route which had become a watercourse rather than a track. At the beginning of the saddle, we left the protection of the forest and felt the full effect of the wet and cold as we scurried on to find the bivy on the saddle. Crammed into this drafty, dirty and dilapidated shack, we slowly thawed and put on most every piece of foul-weather gear we could muster. Obviously the weather gods were impressed for as soon as we moved off across the saddle, the rain and wind ceased. Within the hour the clouds were breaking and we stopped for lunch alongside a tumbling stream in the beech forest.

It was a sunny and warm descent to Andrews Shelter with sweeping views into the Waimakariri Valley, and we needed to wear only the minimum of gear for a decidedly warm walk back to our starting point at the Hawdon Shelter. Over this last stretch we spread, either talking or lost in our own thoughts. Thereupon we repaired to the tearooms and general store at Arthurs Pass - thirty minutes away by car - for an orgy of junk food, ice cream and milk shakes before returning to camp for the night. The early evening quiet in the shelter by the fire was shattered by the arrival of Friday evening trampers from Christchurch and eventually we retired shaken but still intact to our tents.

Our last day which had been reserved in case of bad weather delays was spent in a day walk up the Hawdon Valley as far as the comfortable hut located on the true right about 30 minutes walk past the East Branch fork. There were many people moving along the route. The volume of water flowing in the river made us give our crossings a little thought each time we approached the main channel. We linked arms once. By the time we reached the hut, the day was wet and cold and we appreciated the refuge which the hut provided for lunch break. Perhaps we all were not quite so enthusiastic about the numbers of trampers which crammed into the place - someone counted over twenty at one stage. Walking back down the valley we seemed to keep a few minutes ahead of worsening conditions spreading across the main divide from the west. We shared the Hawdon Shelter with two deerstalkers who had found the weather in the upper basin of the East Branch unenjoyable and had come down for the night. Late afternoon and early evening was a time to tidy gear in preparation for the return to Christchurch the next morning. A warm fire and protection from the wind and rain contributed to a relaxed evening. But overnight conditions worsened and we were faced with having to dry tents and Brian's sleeping bag in front of the fire before leaving shortly after 8.00 am.

The weather improved by the kilometre and by the time we reached the tearooms-cum-general store at Springfield for ice creams etc, it had become a warm, autumn day. Christchurch was breezy and very warm and was probably experiencing higher temperatures than Sydney with its change to wet weather. It was a good day to do some washing. The leader left his party heading for shower and laundry block at Addington Motor Camp, while he did much the same a little later at a friend's home in nearby Spreydon.

Bill caught the evening Qantas flight to Sydney and was home at Bondi by 10.00 pm. Brian, Bronwyn and Steve went on the next day to Abel Tasman National Park, which is another story.

(Map references: Arthurs Pass National Park, NZMS 273, 1:80000, 1st edition; Otira, NZMS 1, S59, inch to the mile series.)
