
THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER
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A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers, Box 4476 G.P.O. Sydney 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening from 7.30 pm 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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THAT OLD TREE.

By Brian Holden.

"Vandals destroy 3,000 year old Tree in Tasmania". I could not read beyond the heading in the paper for a few seconds while I caught my breath.

I imagined a 1,000 year old Tree at the time of Julius Caesar, a 2,000 year old Tree at the time of the Crusades. It stood there on the same spot where it germinated so long ago, when Tasmania was only a relatively short distance away, moving up the coast.

I then remembered reading as a child about Redwoods and looking at drawings of a great Tree's increasing size when correlated to notable events in the history of Europe - but I stop here to question my attitude.

Always we seem to relate the existence of an old tree to events in human history. Is that the major interest we have in an old tree? As conservationists we claim that plants, animals and the features of the earth should be allowed to exist for their own sake, with the species supposedly made in the image of God simply co-existing with all others in a natural balance.

I will no longer see that Tree as sharing the same point in time as a particular event that I learnt about at school. Instead, I will see it as a witness to the events of its immediate environment. The many showers that wet its leaves, the sunbeams that made them shine and the breezes that made them move. None of this had anything to do with the existence of Man.

One day, in those thousands of days, may have been marked by a special event. An animal, now extinct, may have come within the influence of that Tree and lain on its fallen leaves and in its shadow. Such an event would normally be considered of no consequence in comparison to the most minor event in the social history of Man. But to those individuals who are becoming more disenchanted with the importance of their own species, it would be an event of consequence. It is the Tree's link with a past subjected only to random natural forces that should hold a fascination for us. Our own history is not involved.

Let us view that Tree in isolation from Man. He is not needed to dignify it with some vague relationship to himself. Indeed, it was the Tree's misfortune that he ever evolved.

TO BUTCHER'S CREEK AND BACK WITH SPIRO.

by Wombat.

Spiro's walk was programmed: Kanangra - Bullhead Range - Bulga Cone - Scott's Main Range - Butcher's Creek - Gingra Creek - Craft's Ridge - Kanangra. "But," said Spiro, "We might extend it to the Axehead Range." On Friday evening Geoff Wagg drove Dot Butler and me from Sydney through dense Blue Mountain mist to the campsite on the Boyd Trail near Kanangra. On pulling off the track at the campsite we found ourselves almost on top of a barely visible long low caterpillar-shaped tent, which together with its occupant we had narrowly failed to run over. Without further ado we strung up our fly and went to sleep.

In the morning I was awakened by a deafening 20 decibel kookaburra-like laugh, which was answered by a 15 decibel female kookaburra laugh, proving that Ben Esqate was on the trip and Dot Butler was out of bed. Spiro and several others, including the owner of the caterpillar tent, Morag Ryder, were up and about also. Morag's sewing skills went beyond tent-making. I particularly envied the brightly coloured pockets she had sewn on her sleeves and shorts legs; all I could boast of were bags under the eyes.

We were a party of about 10, but after a leisurely breakfast Spiro announced that we must drive on to Kanangra Walls, park the cars, and meet the others. A short distance down the trail we found George and Helen Gray cooking breakfast. At Kanangra car park we found dozens of cars and even more dozens of walkers. I was unable to sort out the S.B.W.s from the foreigners, but Spiro knew his flock and gathered them together. In perfect weather we set off across Kanangra Tops, past the coal seam cave, and down the Gingra track to the Bullhead Range. A short distance down the range Rudi Dezelin, who had driven up late, caught up with us. At 21 persons, our party was now complete; they were:- Dot Butler, Tess Carty, Rudi Dezelin, Bob Duncan, Ben Esqate, George Gray, Helen Gray, Spiro Hajinakitas, Ray Hookway, Jenny Leonard, Steve Long, Peter Miller, Jan Mohandes, Barbara Ottley, Laurie Quaken, Fazeley Read, Morag Ryder, Geoff Wagg, Evelyn Walker, Tom Wemman, and Sue Young. Tess, Jenny, and Barbara were on their first walk with the Club.

Fire has partially obscured the Bullhead track, and after a short distance we found ourselves going down a gully. "This isn't right," said Spiro, "We should be on the ridge to the right." Then Peter Miller came up and said authoritatively "We should be on the ridge to the left." "O.K.," said Spiro obediently, and we climbed to the left-hand ridge. "This still isn't right," said someone else, so we crossed another shallow gully to the next ridge again, and set off down it. However, after a short distance it became obvious that it was a short ridge and that the long ridge we wanted was the one we had crossed. The gully between the two ridges was now deep, but we crossed it anyway rather than walking back. Once on this long ridge we found the track and soon we were on Cabbage Spire.

Now began the steep descent to the Kowmung. To avoid the mild rock climb down the top bluff Morag led us to a track which skirted the bluff on scree to the left. This was probably easier for the newcomers, but especially with the big party, it entailed some hazard from rolling rocks. The steep descent was a bit of a trial to some, and the last person did not reach the Kowmung until about 1 pm. The combination of the steep descent, hob-nail boots, and 20 years of soft living, played havoc with George Gray's knees,

but Helen assured him that the pain was due only to minute tears in tendons, and that although it might be agony he had nothing to worry or complain about.

On the grassy bank of the Kowmung, the schoolteachers and ex-schoolteachers in the party, George and Helen Gray, Fazeley, Peter Miller, and others sat in a neat line on one side of a log and ate their lunch. The rest of us sat on the other side of the log in an untidy sprawl. Despite the obvious danger from large trout below and hungry currawongs above, Laurie Quaken went skinny dipping. On the way down the Bullhead Evelyn Walker's shirt had split and fallen off her back, and now, on the Kowmung, Geoff Wagg offered her one of his, adding, lest any should think him a prude, that he was worried she might become sunburnt.

With lunch over Spiro outlined plans for the afternoon's walking. It was obvious that with hot thirsty weather, a large party, and three newcomers we would not be going to the Axehead Range. The aim therefore was simply to climb Bulga Cone, cross Scott's Main Range, and find a good campsite on Butcher's Creek. Ben Esgate had planned all along to leave us here and walk solo down the Kowmung through the Bulga-Denis Canyon to Gingra Creek. "We'll see you there tomorrow at 3 pm," said Spiro, to which Ben sagely replied, "O.K., but we won't make that a promise".

The climb up Bulga Cone is only 400 vertical metres, but it is steep, the day was now hot, and we had the sun on our backs. Tom reached the top first in 40 minutes, but it was another 45 minutes till the last person arrived. We now had no time to spare. The rest of the ridge to the Scott's Main Range was easy, and once on that we set off north along the road, hot and dehydrated. At sunset the need to make camp on water became urgent, so we turned off the road and followed an easy ridge to Butcher's Creek, where we were greeted by a chorus of frogs just on dusk. It was rocky at our arrival point, but we found a good campsite in the gathering dark a short distance downstream.

The next morning, Sunday, being Fazeley's birthday, we gathered outside her tent and woke her to the strains of "Happy Birthday". We noted with amazement that, contrary to the precepts of lightweight walking, Sue was wearing a fresh shirt. After breakfast our leader gave us the day's marching orders. We were to walk 7 miles down Butcher's Creek to its junction with Butler's Creek, and were then to leave the creek, re-cross Scott's Main Range, and regain the Kowmung, making 12 miles for the day. We set off at about 8.30 am and Spiro was confident that this would be the easiest day of the trip.

The day was even hotter than Saturday had been, but this made it just right for walking in the shady canyon of upper Butcher's Creek. Periodically we came across delightful swimming holes. Elsewhere we rock-hopped or forded in the shade of casuarinas. We seemed to maintain a fairly good pace but at lunchtime there was still no sign of the Butler's Creek junction. However Spiro thought it could not be much further - perhaps another hour or so. Rockhopping is tiring to the uninitiated and in the afternoon some of the newcomers grew very tired. There seemed no end to their travail; the Butler's Creek which they expected at every turn never arrived. At 4.30 pm we came to a creek junction which Spiro thought might be but probably wasn't Butler's. However it was obvious that some of the party were too tired to

profitably continue, and that we could not hope to make the Kowmung before dark. So we elected to make camp, have a good sleep, and leave very early next morning. To some of us it seemed, that if the present day's progress was any guide, then even with a dawn start we would be unlikely to reach Kanangra by Monday night. (What we did not know was that we had in fact done not 5 but 12 miles of creek walking this day - Spiro had not adequately allowed for twists in the creek bed.)

While we made camp Ray Hookway and Tom Wenman walked 2 or 3 miles downstream with map and compass to establish our position beyond doubt. They came back and reported that we were indeed short of Butler's Creek, but that this was no problem as the map showed a ridge leading up from our campsite that was even better than the one from Butler's Creek.

The evening was balmy and we cooked and enjoyed a hearty meal. To cap it Ray Hookway brought out a delicious birthday cake for Fazeley, which we helped her eat. Then we retired early in preparation for a dawn start. Geoff Wagg had brought neither tent nor foamy as he had decided to rely on my fly and Dot Butler's nest-making ability. The previous night he had missed out badly as all Dot had had time to collect were a few strips of bark. However tonight he won; in the creek were large drifts of casuarina needles, and soon both my fly and the Gray's tent had a foot deep carpet. However, despite the soft casuarina-needle bed, Dot was concerned about her night's comfort; probably to scare young girls away, Geoff's wife had spread a rumour that he snored. I knew that this was almost certainly untrue because I have had the same false story put out about me. However, a bad name, no matter how ill-deserved, is hard to live down. Dot had not been in her sack two minutes before she was complaining of snores, until it was proved to her that Geoff was still at the fire eating his tea, and that the noise of which she complained was the croaking of frogs. Then in the middle of the night, Helen Gray complained, although as she herself later volunteered, she had heard only a barking owl. At first light a host of people complained at a gurling sound, but this was quickly traced to a friar bird. When the night was quite over even Dot had to admit that it had in fact been uncannily quiet, but determined to have the last word, she claimed credit for this by proclaiming:

With joy the camp is a-flutter,
I have coated Geoff's tonsils with butter,
Thus reducing his snore
From a thunderous roar
To a soft oleaginous mutter.

The people who had leapt out of their sacks to complain at the first gargle of the friar bird at least ensured that we achieved an early start. By 6 am we had breakfasted, packed, and started up the ridge to Scott's Main Range. A change had arrived overnight and it was now overcast. The night's sleep, the cooler day, and the freedom from rock-hopping transformed the prospectives. They were up the admittedly easy ridge like rats up a drainpipe. In no time we were at the road, and they then skipped down this to the Kowmung River causeway, which we reached at 8.15 am!! We had caught up all our lost time; we would probably not have left there till 8.15 if we had camped there as planned. George Gray did not find the trip quite so easy; he climbed easily enough, but the descent to the Kowmung re-tenderized his downhill knees. He also acquired a blister covering most of the sole of his foot; only a

person with feet as big as George could have such a big blister. We crossed the causeway and on the concrete on the other side found a stick tripod and a message written in charcoal "Ben Esgate was here". We then walked the short distance upstream to the Gingra Creek junction.

The overcast sky now turned to misty drizzle as we stopped for morning tea. The walk was programmed to return to Kanangra via Gingra Creek and Craft's Ridge. However because of the rain, and the trouble encountered with rock-hopping the previous day, only five, Peter, Morag, Jan, Steve and Tom, went that way. The rest of us walked up Gingra Range, where the black-boys were in full bloom and made a wonderful sight. We reached the coalseam cave for lunch and while we lunched a continuous rumble of thunder and heavier rain began.

Lunch eaten, we donned parkas and set out across the tops to the cars. The rain grew heavier and heavier and then developed into a magnificent thundering hailstorm. Hail bounced off our parkas and whitened the ground. As we neared the walls walkers could be seen streaming in through the gloom as far as the eye could see. Bushwalking is certainly becoming popular. (Ben Esgate later told me he counted 80 walkers as he walked down the Kowmung.)

The Gingra Creek party reached the cars about 10 minutes before us. We now had the task of getting into the cars in the still raging hailstorm without setting them awash. We took our dry clothes from the boot and threw them into the car. Then we stripped off, threw our wet togs into the boot, and jumped into the car to dry and dress. Geoff turned the ignition key but nothing happened; one door had been left slightly ajar, and an interior light had stayed on and flattened the battery. Luckily Laurie Quaken was still there and gave us a jump start.

* * * * *

DREAMY SUMMER HOURS.

by Peter Christian.

A season of day trippers and sun-worshippers in abundance -
Ah - for the ease and complacency of dreamy summer hours;
Endless afternoons spent by the charms of Burning Palms.
Those easy walks, engaging talks, under eucalyptus bowers.

Necklace of emerald gems sparkle along Woronora River,
Bushies fling themselves with abandon into their depths
While the river flows on stealthily beneath our frivolity,
We who share these magic moments will have our unpaid debts.

No mortal (or Debert) can resist the waves caressing Werong Beach.
Anglo-Saxons parade their hard-earned tans, trying the "native look".
Seagulls fly overhead with glee, as on the sands we roast,
Sea breezes filter through hair, as pages turn in time 'n tide book.

The cool, luxurious, rainforest curbs copious sweat upon the brow.
We find solace, "breathing space", a respite from the burdening heat.
We while away the summer hours by mountain, lake, ocean and stream;
For sheer enjoyment, "escapism", the great outdoors so hard to beat.

* * * * *

WHERE HAVE ALL THE TIGERS GONE - - ANOTHER VIEW.

by Jim Brown.

In the October issue of the magazine Gordon Lee ventures the opinion that all the Club Tigers have gone to tame pussy cats.

Well, Gordon, sorry - but I can't buy that. Especially I can't swallow the idea that a walking club is not vigorous or alive unless its members are regularly tackling very long or energetic trips.

I suppose one could suggest that the S.B.W. has had two main "Tiger" eras, one in the late 1930s (the original Tigers), and another which blossomed in the middle 1950s, with at least one original Tiger (Dot Butler) staging a comeback. In subsequent years, of course, you will usually find one or two extra-long or strenuous trips on most walks programmes, such as the periodical shot at the Three Peaks, or an ambitious trip into the Blue Breaks, often at holiday week-ends. If it were true that frequent super-walks are essential to the health and strength of a walking club, then the S.B.W. life span of 56 years has known only a few brief periods of glory.

Look, Gordon, don't think I disparage the long, long walk. They can be great fun, they provide a marvellous talking point, and the people one meets on these trips become enshrined as very special colleagues and friends. I know this because, incredible as it may seem to anyone who knows only my recent pussy-cat walking, I actually managed to get involved in a couple of the 1950s Tiger revivals. I remember ruefully that the Chronic Opera covering Geoff Wagg's 85-miler (actually I've always insisted it was barely 78½ miles) from Katoomba to Picton in April 1955 contained the words

The President was very wan

He didn't care for ale.

The only thing he wanted (on arrival at Picton)

Was a place to park his tail.

And that, of course, was sadly true. Just the same, it was good fun, once one got over the stiffened legs and abraded feet.

No, I don't accept that these long walks are the be-all and end-all of the Club. Rather, they are the spice. In the strong enduring fabric of the Club's everyday doings, what really seems to matter to me is the number of members going out for the mingled pleasures and hardships of bush walking, and there finding friends and a strange satisfaction that surpasses the sense of accomplishment one gains from most other activities. I don't think it matters very much if the trip is a long, rugged and testing one, or navigationally interesting, or just a leisurely day walk to look at our incomparable sandstone-country bush flowers. I think the great secret of S.B.W.'s undoubted success is that it provides for all of these desires.

As to those trips cancelled for want of starters, please don't assume this is something new, Gordon. It isn't. What's more, I'm not convinced that the severity of the trip does much to deter takers - I have long harboured a suspicion that the reputation and reliability of the leader has quite a deal to do with the willingness of others to join in. Then, of course, the leader with a nice kind face like a cow usually gets a quota of starters, which is probably why, over a period of 36 years and with about 200 trips on the programme, I've only once had to cancel (because of my own ill-health), although I've had to change a few walks owing to fire, flood or pestilence.

I also feel it is a very healthy state of affairs when the Club's principal office bearers (people like the President, Secretary, Walks and New Members Secretaries in particular) are joining in some reasonably vigorous trips. Well, almost all of our present Committee Officers come into that category, quite apart from being lovable citizens.

As an ageing member, I suppose I might be forgiven if I took the view that the Club is not what it used to be in the days when I was more active on the track. Instead, having an ear to the ground in a few quarters, I can only look bewildered and ask - "Not what it used to be?When?" Sure, I have often known it just as good as it now seems to me, but betterNO. To me it seems the most casually efficient organisation I have ever had the good luck to know - more importantly, the most unobtrusively friendly.

Where, then have all the Tigers gone? Within their reasonable physical capacity, I think the right answer is - "They've gone bush walking, every one".

And I wouldn't be surprised if there are a few Tiger Cubs around, too.

* * * * *

SNAKEBITE IN THE WONNANGATTA VALLEY, VIC.

by Tricia Cristofaro.

(Reprint from "Walk 1982", published by the Melbourne Bushwalkers.

With summer approaching, we appreciate the opportunity to pass on the useful information regarding recommended snake bite treatment contained in this article.)

Readers will no doubt all be conversant with the changed procedures developed by CSL (Commonwealth Serum Laboratories, Melbourne), after intensive research, for the treatment of snakebite. In the course of my work as a nursing sister, I had the opportunity to hear Struan Sutherland (CSL) first hand as he explained the principles of lymphatic compression which are the basis of this treatment. Little did I know that within six months I would be making practical application of this knowledge on my sixteen-year-old son.

My husband persuaded me to attempt the walk into Wonnangatta Homestead (Australia Day weekend 1981), and our son Nigel was pressed into service as an "extra pack horse". One condition made by me before walking was that the first aid equipment be adequate. However, as later events proved, one must take into account the height of walkers in calculating the number of crepe bandages required to bandage limbs: ours reached to the knee of our six foot son, therefore were quite inadequate.

The drama commenced on day two in the valley, and resulted from a disregard of cardinal hiking rules: (i) Wandering through a very "snakey" area (marsh with large grass tufts), without due care; and (ii) Refusal of son to wear his hiking boots - having thongs on at the time.

When he was bitten, strangely enough, a snake was not our first thought. As with most crisis situations, I guess that we all operate under the assumption that the worst would never happen to us. . . .

He walked a short distance to me, complaining loudly about the pain in his foot. Then we saw the two classic puncture marks, each surrounded by a small white swelling. Often there may be one or many puncture marks, or surrounding bruising from the force of impact. I immediately placed a dressing over the site and proceeded to bandage firmly over the area and up the leg using crepe bandages. He was sitting down at this stage. It was now that we realised the inadequacy of our bandages, but fortunately this was remedied by a nursing sister in the area.

The snake had not been sighted; this, according to Struan Sutherland, is quite a common situation. We knew that both tiger and black snakes frequented the area, and judged by the distance between the puncture marks that it could have been a fairly large one. The problem of not knowing the actual type of snake involved means that: (i) One does not know how soon respiratory or other symptoms may occur/develop, although this is also dependant on dose of venom, and proximity of large blood vessels; and (ii) Subsequent choice of a specific anti-venene is complicated. However, in this new treatment the puncture site is not wiped clean, and samples of venom can be collected from the skin for laboratory analysis in the larger centres.

Fortunately for us, there was a large number of four-wheel-drives in the area, and we were taken out by one of these, CB radio being used to alert the Heyfield hospital of our imminent arrival. We attempted to keep the victim as still as possible, (difficult in a short wheel base vehicle on the Wonnangatta Track with a six foot patient; bandaging the legs together is recommended). Efforts to allay anxiety in him were very successful; however inwardly I was having anticipatory horrors about coping with a respiratory arrest under such conditions.

It took five hours from bite to arrival at the hospital, and we were somewhat nonplussed to be greeted with the news that the two sisters knew nothing about snakebite but had been reading up the literature! The local doctor, however, was quite experienced, and treated Nigel very carefully. The bandage was released only over the site and the punctures inspected. The patient stayed in overnight with the upper bandage still in place, having regular observations of vital signs and urine tests for blood. An important point with this new treatment is that the bandages must not be released until the patient is under medical supervision, and preferably with an intravenous infusion in position, as there can be a sudden surge of venom into the system. Nigel did well without further treatment though his leg was very swollen.

On replacing the thong next day, we found that the rubber strap exactly covered the punctures. We are assuming that the snake must have hit this and perforated it, thereby perhaps giving a lower actual dose of venom with limited penetration of the skin. . . . All in all, we were very lucky!

The following snakebite treatment has been reprinted from Walk 1980 and was prepared by L. E. Kitchener.

1. WASH THE WOUND. (However, see also comments towards the end of article)
Rationale: Usually, the snake doesn't get a good bite. Clothes interfere, and he's in an awful hurry, being as horrified by the confrontation as the person being bitten. Venom is often sprayed onto the skin surrounding the punctures. This venom, not injected at the time of the bite, may seep into the wound.

2. APPLY PRESSURE.
Rationale: In the first instance, the venom enters into the smallest blood

vessels, which are microscopic, and have very thin walls. Pressure easily closes these vessels, so that the venom cannot enter.

Method: Place a pad over the puncture marks, and apply pressure as you would for a haemorrhage. Strap the pad on firmly, as the pressure for strapping a sprained ankle.

3. IMMOBILIZE THE PART.

Rationale: One of the most important factors influencing the return of the blood in the veins, back to the heart, is the intermittent squashing of the veins by muscles, during exercise.

Method: Splint the limb as you would for a broken bone, including the joint above the injury in the operation.

N.B. THE USE OF BOTH PRESSURE AND IMMOBILIZATION MUST BE USED.
AUTHORITIES DO NOT CONSIDER EITHER/OR TO BE SATISFACTORY.

4. KEEP THE PATIENT QUIET AND AT REST.

Rationale: Movement will aid the return of blood to the heart, and from there into the general circulation, as mentioned above. Movement might also loosen the bandage. This must be guarded against, conscientiously. Authorities believe that some of the deaths from snake-bite (and there are not many) result from shock, rather than venom.

Method: Rest the patient, lying flat, with a pillow under the head, for comfort. Reassure him/her that someone has gone for help, that the snake was only a little one - whatever.

5. OBSERVE THE VICTIM FOR BREATHING DIFFICULTIES AND ASSIST WITH BREATHING IF NECESSARY.

6. CONTINUE WITH 2, 3, 4, and 5 until the patient is in the hands of that someone with the life support systems and anti-venene, neither of which will be used unless the patient's condition requires them. Better be sure than sorry.

Some remarks by the editor (of "Walk"):

There appears, from comparison of various snake-bite treatments, to be some inconsistency as to whether or not the wound should be washed. The Commonwealth Serum Laboratories have advised that the procedure depends on the circumstances. If the bite has caused a large wound, or has occurred near another wound, the site should certainly be washed. A sample of the venom could be obtained by wiping with a separate piece of fabric.

In any case, priority should be given to pressure on the site, and to immobilization of the patient. The latter is particularly important in the event of there being no immediate means of rescue (such as four-wheel-drives).

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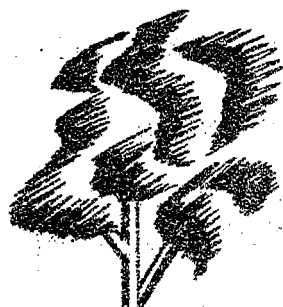
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWER (See last month's magazine) - PUNCH.



eastwood camping centre

BUSHWALKERS

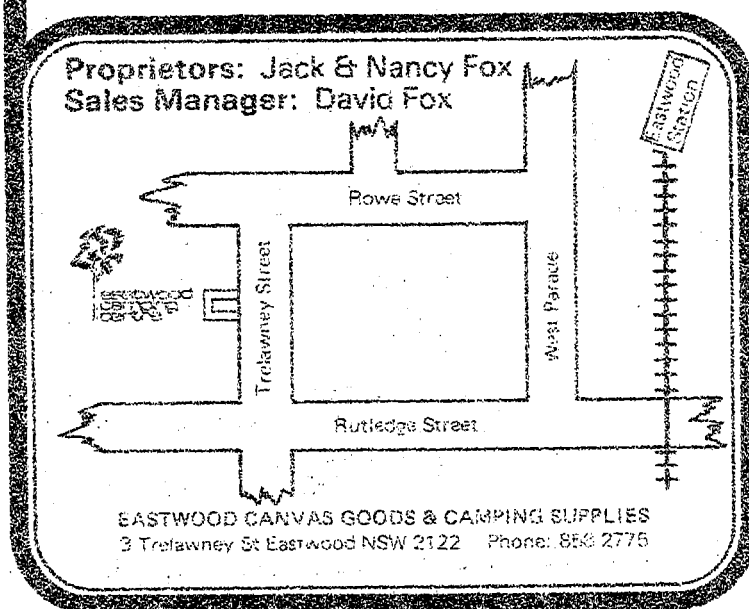
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MEETING NOTES FOR SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER.

by Barry Wallace.

THE HALF-YEARLY (SEPTEMBER) G.M.

The meeting began at around 2020 with some 30 or so members present and the President in the chair.

There were no apologies so we went straight on to welcome Margaret Wood and Owen Stanley as new members. Susan Young and Karl Conning were also called but were not present.

The Minutes of the August meeting were read and received with no business arising.

Correspondence comprised a letter of thanks from the family of George Davidson, the minutes of the most recent Coolana Committee Meeting, details of the Paddy Pallin Awards for 1983 and outgoing letters to new members and to Mr. Roger Good of C.S.I.R.O. confirming details of a talk which he is to present during one of the social nights in October.

So then it was on, on, at a heady pace to the Walks Reports. Over the weekend of August 12,13,14 Steve and Wendy Hodgman's Kanangra to Cloudmaker walk went, but not to programme. No other details were available. Peter Christian's day walk from Becketts Forest (long trousers recommended) attracted 6 members and 2 prospectives. It seems they ran short of time and arrived back in the dark. Margaret Conley had 17 people out on her Dharug National Park walk. It was a pleasant day, despite some problems with the punt (?).

The following weekend, 19,20,21 August Alan Pike led 10 people on a good walk in the Megalong. Ian Debert had a party of 13 on his Mt. Solitary walk. It seems they mislaid (or was that misplaced) two people and reached Kedumba Creek rather late on Saturday. Meanwhile, away from the ranch, Bill Holland's Sunday test walk to Tootie Creek had 24 people enjoying a lovely day. George Mawer reported 24 people on his rather fire burnt ramble to Eleanor Bluffs, and Jim Brown had another 24 on his Royal National Park walk.

Over the extended weekend 26th to 29th August George Walton led 17 people on a Kanangra to Katoomba stroll. For those without the extra day Bob Hodgson led Tony Marshall's 2 to 3 starters on a Mt. Cameron exploratory, and Barry Wallace led 8 people on his wine and cheese walk in the Megalong. Of the day walks, John Newman's coastal walk had no report and Hans Stichter's Sassafras Gully walk went, led by a substitute.

The weekend of 2,3,4 September saw Ian Debert and 22 stalwarts battling the rain and leeches of Morton National Park. Of Sandy Johnson's Jervis Bay area walk there was no report. Rudy Dezelin led a party of 15 on an enjoyable wildflower day walk in Kuringai Chase and Peter Christian had 7 starters on his, also in Kuringai Chase.

Lynne McDonald's ski touring trip over the weekend 9,10,11 September had 4 starters. They returned early due to wet conditions. There was no report of the other weekend trip, Joan Cooper's Morton National Park walk. Peter Miller had 8 starters on his Benowie Track walk but of Jan Mohandas' Royal National Park walk there was no report.

Federation Report brought news that the Blue Mountains City Council

does not intend to completely ban rock climbing on the Three Sisters and that Lilyvale railway station is only being remodelled, not demolished. as may appear to be the case.

The Coolana Committee has indicated that a memorial for George Davidson will be conducted at Coolana during the weekend of the Annual Barn Dance.

The only General Business saw Spiro elected as Re-union Convenor for the 1984 Annual Re-union at Coolana.

And then it was just a matter of announcements, and the meeting closed at 2056 hours.

THE OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING.

The meeting began at around 2010 hours with some 20 or so members present and the President in the chair. There were no apologies so we moved on to the welcoming of new members. Of those called, Marsha Durham and Jeff Stitt were present to be welcomed with badge, constitution and membership list, but Bill Regan, Jodius Rubijono and Sue Capon were no-shows.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with no business arising. Correspondence was made up of letters to the new members, to C.M.W. acknowledging their recent letter and advising that it had been passed to the Coolana Committee for consideration, to Picton High School re unauthorised entry on to Coolana, a reply for Picton High indicating that they had used Coolana as part of an orienteering course, and a letter from Kath Brown proposing changes to meetings and procedures.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we began the month with \$2927.30, had an income of \$1957.75, \$1000 of which was by way of stock redemption, spent \$1330.79 and ended the month with \$3554.26.

The Walks Reports began with a non-report of Bill Holland's Colo River-Tootie Creek ramble of 17,18 September. It is generally believed that the walk did go. On a somewhat firmer note Bill Capon's Kanangra Creek walk of 16,17,18 September went, although not exactly to programme, and there were 12 to 15 people on the walk at various times. Ainslie Morris reported 42 starters, a lovely day, and good views on her Brisbane Waters wildflower day walk, and Jack Gentle led a party of 20 on his Waterfall-Kingfisher Pool-Giromba Creek-Heathcote walk.

Over the weekend of 23,24,25 September Peter Miller led a fleet of two Canadians, each with a crew of 3, on an exploration by canoe of the Kangaroo River. Despite buffeting by contrary winds they reported an enjoyable trip. Gordon Lee's instructional weekend saw 2 to 3 starters for rock-climbing and 8 or so for abseiling on the Sunday. Tony Marshall's Yalwal walk attracted 17 people. They reported a good walk, with fine, cool weather, but quite forgot to mention the profusion of beautiful creamy rock orchids. Of the day walks that weekend, Meryl Watman led 17 people on her waratah-crowded Heathcote to Heathcote walk, Errol Sheedy's walk went but there was no report, and of Ralph Penglis' walk there was no report of any description.

Over the October long weekend Spiro Hajinakitas had 21 people and some prospectives' problems on his Blue Breaks walk, Bill Capon had 12 to 15 people and a totally confused report (No, Virginia, I don't believe either Bill or

Gordon are Santa Claus, so go back to sleep!). George Walton's Solitary day walk saw 14 people enjoying a pleasant day on and around Narrow Neck plateau.

Jim Laing's famous Red Rocks special was postponed and Peter Miller's firetrail, li-lo, rock scramble, li-lo, clash/fixture had no starters. On the 9th October, however, Peter Chriwtian led 18 people on his Kuringai Chase wildflower special. Gem Gagne led a good housewarming on the Saturday but for some reason her Lower Blue Mountains Sunday walk did not go. Ralph Pengliss led 33 people on his reversed-from-programme coastal walk. It seems the party was rent with factionalism, one party caught the early train, one party caught the later train. All of which ended the Walks Report for this month.

In Business Arising it was resolved to write to N.P.W.S. advising them of the level of trail bike activity in Kuringai Chase Park and asking that they take action against offending riders.

The Federation Report brought news that N.P.A. will attempt to have beaches in National Parks freed of vehicles, that the F.B.W. Ball was its usual successful self and that there are reports of commercial tour vehicles being allowed access to Medlow Gap and Narrow Neck.

There was no General Business so, after walks and social announcements, the meeting closed at 2049. Gong!

BOOK REVIEW - "WILD PLACES".

by Jim Brown.

On the last page of "The Sydney Bushwalker" for October appeared a notice advertising publications on sale by the Colong Committee. One item read:

WILD PLACES. A beautifully produced hardbound edition of 288 pages, featuring an extensively researched text by Peter Prineas, former Director of the National Parks Association of N.S.W., and 110 large format duotone photographs by Henry Gold. The book also contains more than 20 detailed maps, an index and is extensively referenced. The book covers 22 wilderness areas in N.S.W., and these include most of the best walking country. It draws extensively on the Sydney Bush Walker Magazine in its description of pioneering trips. Price \$24.95, including postage, and available from the Colong Committee, 18 Argyle Street, Sydney: or Alex Colley will deliver to the Club Room to save you 95 cents postage.

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Those might be described as the vital statistics of "Wild Places". It doesn't really tell you a great deal of the excellence of the book, which I have recently had a chance to read carefully. My first reaction was that there has been a need for this book for some time. In the last couple of years in particular, the attention of people concerned with wilderness conservation has been focussed largely on events and places in other States, especially the South West of Tasmania. Emotive phrases like "the last Wild River" have perhaps tended to distract our interest from the good things at our own back door, to

diminish our realisation that we have in New South Wales some of the most wonderful primitive or semi-primitive country in this continent. "Wild Places" goes a long way towards redressing this concept.

Each of the 22 chapters covering individual regions (these include long sections on near-at-hand areas - "Kanangra", "Colo", "Ettrema", "The Budawangs") gives first a broad outline of the geology and vegetative cover, followed by a rather more detailed history of occupancy - by aboriginal tribes, early exploration and settlement by Europeans - or the reasons why the area was happily NOT developed. I found these historical notes thoroughly fascinating. From the story of the early exploration of the Colo region, for instance, I learned for the first time of William Parr, whose name is still represented in some local features; and of Benjamin Singleton who is perpetuated by the Hunter Valley township. Also, surprise!.. surprise!.. that the settlement of Putty bears a name of aboriginal origin - something like "Pootie".

The text written by Peter Prineas is full of such informative (even amusing) gems - indeed so good that I scarcely believed it when I read that one of the early bushwalker explorers in the Kanangra country is named as "Frank Debert". I still wonder if this was a printer's error, and the text should have read "Craft's Walls, named after Frank Craft, and Debert's Knob (Jack Debert)". Even this explanation is hardly acceptable, since the text is singularly free of the typographical errors or mis-spelled place names one sometimes finds in such publications. In any event, a minor fault in such a thoroughly researched and edited account.

Since the photographer is our own Henry Gold, I feel it would be presumptuous to comment on the illustrations. Indeed it would be somewhat equivalent to the music critic who wrote of Beethoven's First Piano Concerto that it was "the outrageous outburst of a young man's effrontery". The photographs are simply magnificent. Of course, in a few cases, including scenes near Kanangra and along the Colo Gorge, it is pretty obvious that a telephoto lens was used, or there has been a great deal of enlargement of the most imposing portion of the original photograph. The result is not quite as the human eye sees it, but who would quibble over this when the effect is so dramatic? (To continue the Beethoven analogy, who disputes the interpretations in recordings under conductor Herbert von Karajan because they extract the utmost drama and passion of a symphony?)

Two quotes from the Introductory portion of "Wild Places" -

1. "Wilderness still survives in eastern N.S.W. and this book is a window on its past, its present and its future".
2. "People living in N.S.W. and particularly in Sydney are lucky to have access to so much good bush walking country - space to move about in, to become lost in, wild places that help to make our way of life distinctive and enjoyable....."

To an unrepentant chauvinist who once said at a slide showing at Sydney Bush Walkers that Sydney was the only City in the only Country in the world where a superannuated bush walker could possibly wish to live, "Wild Places" offers much solace, as well as a great deal of delightful reading.

ANOTHER ITEM OF EARLY S.B.W. HISTORY.

by Dorothy Lawry.

As you all know, The Sydney Bush Walkers was formed in October, 1927, but you newer members may not know many details of the doings of those first members, so - - -

In the very early days some of the men members, when planning trips for long weekends or their annual fortnight's holidays, would say:-

"I've got a gun. I'll bring it and shoot rabbits, so we can take less food, and that will keep the weight of our rucksacks down!"

For the first year or two this was what they did but by 1930 they had found that the bunnies were so quick at diving into their burrows as soon as a human appeared that few were shot even though as we rounded a bend the hillside would be covered with rabbits.

This disillusioned those men for they had to carry the guns and ammunition from start to end of the trip without losing any of their weight! A full supply of food was a much better idea.

About the last time any of the men carried their guns was when they arranged a special shooting trip at the flat at the foot of Starlight's Track on the Nattai River. This flat had been swarming with rabbits at Easter so it was expected to provide good shooting on that June 1930 weekend. Bill Chown did not have a gun so he bought one specially for that trip! One of the younger members (I cannot remember whether it was Johnnie Woods or Norm Saill, they were both still in their teens) was keen to go although he had no gun. He had a catapult so he took that and they all set off in high spirits.

When they got to the Nattai ALAS! What a flop! During the previous week the rabbit trappers had worked that flat!!!

There was hardly a bunny seen that whole weekend and the only one the whole party managed to kill was brought down by the catapult!

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SOCIAL NOTES FOR DECEMBER.

by Jo Van Sommers.

CHRISTMAS PARTY - Wednesday, 21st December, 1983.

A plate of food gets you in the door - the Club provides beer, wine and juice. Bring your own glass. Come and indulge yourself with bushwalkers' other favourite occupations besides walking - talking, eating and drinking.

Please note - the Clubroom will be closed on 28th December and 4th January next.

TASMANIA WALK - FEBRUARY, 1984.4th to 12th February.Cradle Mountain to Lake St. Clair - 7 days walking.LEADER: GEORGE WALTON - 498,7956.

If interested please contact George before 15th December.

Transport, food, etc. to be arranged during January.
