
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
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DECEMBER, 1983.

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TALLOWA DAM CANOE TRIP.24/25 September 1983.

by Peter Miller.

There were six of us in two canoes on this trip which didn't quite go as per programme. Three of us went down on Friday night and camped at the dam. The wind blew all night and we also had a few spots of rain which spoiled our attempt to sleep out. The other car-load arrived on Saturday morning and we set off. In my canoe I had my son Robert and a lady called Jenny Mitchell. The other canoe had Roger Brown in the stern, Michelle De Vries Robbe in the bow and Vicki Cheeseman travelling as first class passenger.

Problems arose immediately. The wind was blowing from the west and we headed straight into it as we attempted to go up the Shoalhaven. My Canadian canoe has reasonably high sides and was handling the waves quite well. Roger had a hired canoe with rather low sides and that canoe was shipping waves over the side. The paddles which came with this canoe were not very good and their progress was rather slow. After crossing the dam I paddled into a sheltered bay and waited for the other canoe to catch up. We decided that it was too risky to continue up the Shoalhaven as in the event of a capsize there would be a lot of wet sleeping bags and spoiled food. Not being serious canoeists we did not have our gear properly water-proofed and could only safely venture out on calm waters.

We decided to travel with the wind and go along the Kangaroo River instead. The canoes went better with the wind but they still had a tendency to try to turn themselves side on to the waves which is potentially disastrous. We went up the Kangaroo River until we came to the junction of Bundanoon Creek. There was a very strong wind blowing out of the creek making the dam very choppy. We pulled in at the junction and boiled the billy for morning tea, and decided to camp there for the night.

When you camp at morning tea time it does give you plenty of time to get the tents up and gather firewood for the night.

Four of us went off in the canoes and explored Bundanoon and Sandy Creeks. It was delightful to go up Sandy Creek out of the wind. There were lots of rock orchids growing and the ferns and sandstone cliffs were very attractive in the sunlight. There were no campsites there as the shores of the creek are very steep. We had a leisurely paddle back to the campsite and then went for a walk up a dis-used fire trail to the top of the ridge.

The weather was quite cold and blustery so we had a big camp fire that night to keep us warm.

On Sunday we continued paddling along the Kangaroo River. We passed the narrow, straight rock-sided section and stopped for morning tea at the junction with the Kangaroo River fire trail. There was a very good view up to the escarpment which rises 1800 feet above the dam. We continued paddling until we came to the open farmland which flanks the dam. This is a delightful area with perfect campsites among the wattles which grow right down to the water's edge. We toyed with the idea of paddling to Coolana but by now the wind had veered to the east and it would have meant paddling into a head wind all the way, so we chose the soft option and headed back

to the dam wall and the cars. There are some good campsites around the junction with Yarrunga Creek and we stopped at one for lunch.

In the afternoon we slowly paddled back to the cars keeping the canoes close together to maintain the flow of conversation which had lasted all weekend.

Canoe trips are quite different to walking trips and are an excellent way of seeing the country. The Shoalhaven River is very dramatic with steep sides coming down to the river and cliff lines along the tops of the ridges. Next time I put the trip on I hope there won't be a westerly wind blowing and I will also ensure that all the gear is properly water-proofed.

* * * * *

BUSHFIRE CONTROL.

A TALK BY ROGER GOOD TO S.B.W. ON 19 OCTOBER 1983.

From notes by Ainslie Morris.

Spectacular sights, the flames of a wildfire and the crimson of the rare telopea wildflower; and you can't have one without the other.

Roger Good, of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, and C.S.I.R.O. in Canberra, came up here to explain the research being done by the Service into bushfires. Yes, we need them - and no, we don't. A dilemma.

Some species, such as Eucalyptus regnans and E. delegatensis, are destroyed by fire. For other species, fire can be necessary but too frequent; for example Banksia ericifolia needs fire after at least 8 years for regeneration, but if burnt every 5 years it cannot regenerate, or if it becomes senescent with 50 years of no fire, it dies out.

The main issue which concerns the Service as well as other authorities and the general public, is "prescribed burning". In relation to this issue and to wildfires, the Service has the following objectives:

1. Protection of life and property.
2. Conservation of Flora and Fauna:
 - Ecosystems
 - Species - animal and plant
 - Rare and endangered species
 - Habitats
3. Preservation of existing systems, landscapes, etc.
4. Maintenance and restoration of catchments.
5. Maintenance of Fire Options:
 - Unplanned Fires) What to do with them?
 - Planned Fires)

Of these objectives, the one which may be of most interest to bushwalkers is Number 3. A system such as a rare stand of sassafras shown on a slide taken in Geehi (Kosciusko National Park) is only one type of many we seek

and enjoy on our walks. And who enjoys a landscape of burnt black trunks; and bare ground?

In planning prescribed burning, recreation is one important consideration of the Service which can come into conflict with the other objectives, especially protection of life and property. The aim of prescribed burning is to protect life and property from wildfires. The idea is to reduce the fuel on the ground in the form of leaf and branch litter. Research has been done on the amounts of fuel which accumulate after a fire in various vegetation systems and climates.

The amount of ground fuel must be less than 10 tons per hectare to reduce the intensity of the fire sufficiently to fight face-on. Four to five years after burning off, the fuel is back over 10 tons per hectare. Burning would be required every 2 to 3 years, which is unacceptable if the other objectives listed are to be reached. If left for more than five years, the fuel build-up is so great that it may as well be left, as any fire is too intense in heat to fight.

Where ground fuel appears to be more than in another vegetation system, it could actually be moister due to its depth and micro-climate. The heavier fuel, say 30-40 tons/hectare, has more potential energy, but a fire only dries out the top layer, leaving the moist layer with its potential energy still there below. In other words, the fire risk is the same for any amount of fuel per hectare.

The argument for prescribed burning to reduce ground fuel and so reduce wildfire risk is not borne out by research. An autumn burn with a fire intensity of 100-360 kwm^{-1} cannot remove fuel to less than 10 tons per hectare. It needs 1150-2000 kwm^{-1} , which is the heat of a wildfire, to reduce the fuel to a low level. Thus a low intensity control burn only reduces the intensity of a later wildfire - and wildfires do occur within only one year of a control burn.

This high frequency of fires is not as conducive to species diversity as is less frequent fires. Research in one area showed that, within ten years:

With one fire - Number of species increase from less than 10, to 60, after 4-12 months, with a gradual decline to 40 over the second year.

With two fires - from less than 10 to 40, then decline to 20.

With three fires - from less than 10 to less than 30, followed by decline.

The argument about fires increasing species diversity is nearly as popular for discussion as the argument about the causes of fires. Here are the figures from N.P.& W. Service:-

Causes - Escapes from burning off ("prescribed burning" included)	22%
Escapes from burning rubbish	12%
Children	12%
Smokers	10%
Lightning	9%
Sparks from vehicles, trains, etc.	8%
Campers, picnickers, bushwalkers	7%
Other	20%

Firebrands can travel 18 km from a fire and start another.

The burning question still remains - is "prescribed burning" helpful in protecting life and property adjacent to National Parks? Roger explained how the computer is assisting in mapping areas for management and deployment of fire-fighters according to their knowledge of vegetation, aspect, weather and many other relevant factors. Maps are based on information about every square km of Kosciusko, and every 200 square metres of Morton National Park. Such complexity can be rationalised and accurate predictions have been made about fire behaviour in the 1982/83 season.

The talk gave us a valuable insight into the scientific approach to bushfire management being attempted by the N.P. & W. Service which we, as bushwalkers, must surely appreciate.

(From notes by Ainslie Morris)

P O E M.

by Ellen Miller.

From THE QUIET LAND by Peter Dombrovskis (photos) and Ellen Miller (poetry), published by Peter Dombrovskis, PO Box 245 Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7005 - Reproduced by permission.

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Sometimes, in the mountains,
time has nothing to do with minutes and hours.

There are dawn and dusk,
sunset and sunrise,
and the time between them is simply day and night.

Day can start when light glimmers
through the walls of a tent.

But this can be misleading and exasperating,
for in the deep valleys dawn can be very late.

A camping place may still be in gloomy shadow - like night -
but look out, and up.....

and there is the sun, already on the mountain,
flaunting its clear, golden light, and the mists swirling away.

And even when I am ready to go the shadows may still
be in the valley, and climbing up out of them
is like climbing from night into day.....

And when I return I walk down
from day into night.

THURAT RIFT.

by Rik King.

This abseiling trip to Thurat Rift, several creeks to the north of Danae Brook, was undertaken in March 1983 in the company of two Catholic Bushwalkers, Martin Doyle and Tony Brady. Martin, a person of some versatility, not only led the trip but, en route, made comprehensive notes; these form the body of what is contained below.

We had long been interested in the possible existence of large abseils on both Thurat Falls and Carrz-Beanga Falls and it was towards the first of these that we made our way on Friday evening. We camped on the King Pin Mountain firetrail off Kanangra Road near Bourne Soak and moved off at 6 am on Saturday along the road to Mt. Thurat and out along the North Thurat Range. We dropped into Thurat Creek via Burra Gunama Ridge.

We set out not knowing what to expect and prepared for some swims, but these proved not to be necessary. We were each carrying a 50 metre rope; it should be emphasised that for abseil No.7 (see below) 50 m ropes are indeed required - every centimetre of 50 m, plus the stretch of the rope! The best part of the trip was landing on the ledge after abseil No.7 with still 15 m to reach the bottom. Had there not been a natural rock anchor on this ledge, the outcome of the venture might have been quite different. (I am reminded of a trip down Kalang Falls led by the late Snow Brown. Snow, on reaching the ledge at the middle of the 70 m drop, exclaimed with infectious enthusiasm: "Gee, aren't we lucky this ledge is here!" This fact was, of course, more than well known to those in the party who were actually putting the ropes down.)

Map: Kanangra 1:31,680

Requirements: 3 x 50 m ropes and belay slings
1 x 20 m rope also handy

First Abseil: 45 m drop. Belay from sling around tree roots to the left (facing downstream) of the falls. Then walk about 20 metres to next abseil.

Second Abseil: 10-15 m drop. Belay from large tree to the left. Land above small pool, traverse on grassy ledge above pool to the left, to avoid swim.

Third Abseil: 2-3 m drop. Very short abseil which could possibly be done as a hand-over-hand. Belay from tree on left. Finish with a scrambling traverse of 4 m. Then scramble down to next abseil.

Fourth Abseil: 15 metres. Belay from tree to the right of the falls. This abseil could possibly be bypassed on the right-hand side.

Fifth Abseil: 25 metres. Belay from tree on left. Very open abseil. It is immediately before the bend at the bottom of the first steep pinch. Then follows good walking to the top of the second steep pinch.

Sixth Abseil: 30 metres. Belay from tree to left of falls. Abseil past one pool to land beside a second pool.

Seventh Abseil: 50 metres. Belay from tree to the right of falls. Land on very small ledge at the very end of the ropes. There is sufficient standing room for only three people.

Eighth Abseil: 15 metres. From the landing spot for the seventh abseil, use a sling around the rock bollard for a belay point to reach bottom.

The seventh and eighth abseils occur together, forming a 65 metre drop.

If the party is any larger than three people, then three ropes will be essential. Then follows a five-minute walk to the next two abseils.

Ninth Abseil: 12 metres. Belay from tree on right hand side. Abseil down to a ledge at the top of waterfalls, and sidle along this ledge to the tree on the point.

Tenth Abseil: 45 metres. Belay from sling around tree mentioned above. Abseil beside falls to land in thigh-deep pool.

Abseils 9 and 10 could possibly be avoided (with difficulty) by scrambling up and over and down (through scrub) to the right - easier to do the two abseils.

Eleventh Abseil: 30 metres. From the bottom of the tenth abseil, walk and scramble down to the top of this abseil. Belay off any one of a number of trees. At the bottom walk around to the left of the large pool in a hole, to the belay point for the next abseil.

Twelfth Abseil: 30 metres. Belay from obvious tree, and abseil down a series of steps to land beside a pool.

Thirteenth Abseil: 45 metres. Belay from tree to the left, abseil down beside a long cascade.

Walk down to junction with creek from Mukku Dhingery Pit. To continue down to Kanangra Creek would involve at least one more 10 metre abseil.

Commence climb to Golden Terrace. Climb is straight forward with no scrambling. On reaching the top, scrub is thick. Return via Mt. Thurat.

This trip is highly recommended, but would be better undertaken as a weekend one, camping, say, on Kanangra Creek on Saturday night; we were actually on the go for 11 hours and the climb up to Mt. Thurat is 800 metres (2000 feet).

I reached the car with the other two (much younger than I) with various self-congratulatory thoughts flowing through my mind: mainly along the lines of "still keeping up with the youngsters". Around Springwood on the way home I realised that I had left the little day pack (a borrowed one, of course) sitting by the tree where the car had been parked: so much for mentally claiming not to be too tired.

From Strathfield up to Kanangra and back (to get the pack) is a long drive when undertaken after a school day!

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER.

Would members please let the Secretaay know of any change of address or phone number for inclusion in the 1984 List of Members, as this list must be prepared by the end of January 1984.

BARBARA BRUCE.
Hon. Secretary.
Phone 546-6570.



eastwood camping centre

BUSHWALKERS

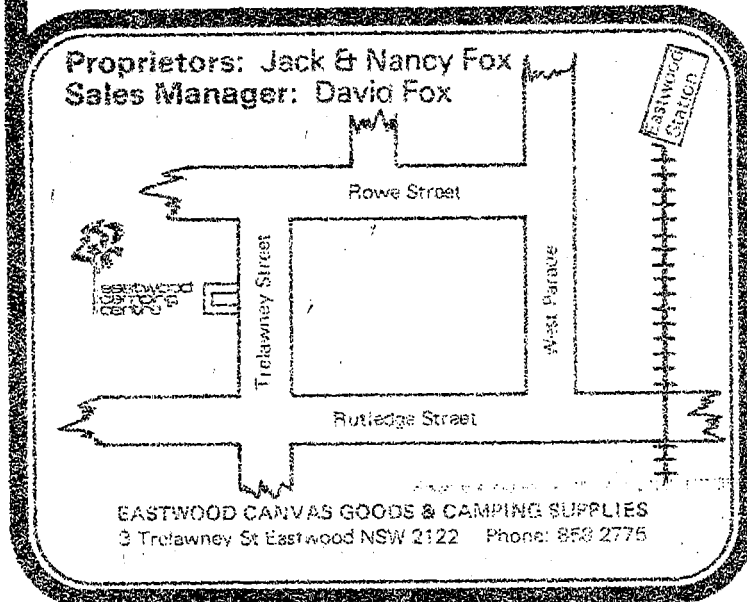
Lightweight Tents • Sleeping Bags • Rucksacks •
Climbing & Caving Gear • Maps • Clothing • Boots
• Food.

CAMPING EQUIPMENT

Large Tents • Stoves • Lamps • Folding Furniture.

DISTRIBUTORS OF:

Paddy made • Karrimor • Berghaus • Hallmark •
Bergans • Caribee • Fairydown • Silva • Primus •
Companion • and all leading brands.



ALTERED TRAIN TIMETABLES.

by Jim Brown.

On 27th November new rail timetables were introduced. Since many day walks still use rail transport, these notes relating to the new timings are provided.

NOTE ESPECIALLY that the times apply only to SUNDAYS, and mainly to those hours when walkers are likely to be travelling. All City departures are from Central Station.

ILLAWARRA (South Coast) LINE.

AM: Similar to timetable operating previously.

Trains to ROYAL NATIONAL PARK station depart Central at 7.41, 8.36, 9.36 am (10 minutes earlier than before).

WATERFALL electric trains depart at 7.11, 8.6, 9.6, 10.6 am (same as before) and serve Engadine and Heathcote en route. Country train serving Waterfall and stations beyond (Helensburgh, Lilyvale, Otford, Stanwell Park) depart at 8.32 am (same as before).

CRONULLA electric trains depart 7.26, 7.56, 8.26, 8.56, 9.26 am. Connection to Bundeena ferry off 7.26, 8.26, 9.26 trains.

PM: Return. Similar to previous timetable, with electric trains from Waterfall at 3.6, 4.6, 5.6, 6.8, 7.22 pm (Heathcote 5 mins later, Engadine 8 mins later). Some country trains also serve Waterfall.

Some minor changes have been made to South Coast trains from stations south of Waterfall. Times for these return trips should be checked out - details were not available at the time of writing.

WESTERN LINE (Blue Mountains).

AM: 7.10 am (to Springwood, serving all stations after Penrith); 8.12 am (to Lithgow, serving all Blue Mt. stations - previously 8.10 am); 9.10 am (to Lithgow, serving only selected Blue Mt. stations, Glenbrook, Springwood, Lawson, Wentworth Falls, Katoomba, Blackheath).

PM: Return. Train times CHANGED - check details. Most journeys are about 25 mins. earlier than before. Includes one train making selected stops only, including Springwood at 5.6 pm, then Glenbrook at 5.18 pm.

NORTHERN LINE.

North Shore - AM: To Hornsby, 7.9, 7.39, 8.9, 8.24 am then every 15 minutes - (Trains departing at 8.9, 8.39, 9.9, 10.9 am continue to COWAN serving Mt. Kuring-gai and Berowra en route).

PM: Return. Electric trains from COWAN at 3.12, 4.12, 5.42, 6.26 pm plus one from BEROWRA at 4.46 pm - all operate via North Shore line. Certain country trains also serve Cowan and Berowra but travel via main line through Epping and Strathfield.

COUNTRY TRAINS - Extensive changes.

AM: Trains to Hawkesbury River, then all stations to Gosford (including WONDABYNE) at 7.15 am and 9.15 am. Additional train at 8.00 am serving Woy Woy and Gosford only.

PM: Return. From Gosford at 3.32, 5.32, 7.32 pm, serving all stations to Cowan (WONDABYNE 3.51, 5.51, 7.51 pm). Also from Gosford at 4.38 and 6.38 pm serving only Woy Woy and Hawkesbury River.

NORTHERN SUBURBAN via Epping.

AM: To Cowan 7.18 am. To Hornsby 8.1, 8.28, 8.58, 9.28 am. (Trains at 8.28 and 9.28 connect at Hornsby with trains to Mt. Kuring-gai, Berowra, Cowan.)

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DOWN IN THE DUMPS.

by "Mulga" (Don Matthews)

(This is a re-print, with a couple of minor amendments, of an article originally published in the magazine of May 1956. Because of the flooding of the lower part of the Shoalhaven Gorge and lower Kangaroo River after construction of the Tallowa Dam, it is no longer practicable to do this trip as it was by a party at Easter 1956. In the article only the first names of the party are given, but as most of them are still associated with the Club, it seems reasonable to identify them by their surnames - including in three cases their present surnames.)

Pat and Ian Wood from Canberra were to join our Easter Shoalhaven Gorge trip, but the last minute news that they couldn't make it didn't reach Geoff (Wagg) in time, so we waited at Tallong railway station in a fine morning drizzle until 9.30, when all hope of their coming had faded, then moved off leisurely towards Badgery's.

The plan was either to follow the gorge to the Kangaroo junction then out to Kangaroo Valley, or to cross the Tolwong tableland to the Ettrema Gorge if the river was high enough to be dangerous for frequent crossings. (There had been a spell of heavy rain during the lead-up to Easter 1956.) I thought it might be possible to subtly change the programme to a loaf on Lake Louise, but the miserable weather and promise of more to come hinted that other self-inflicted torments might take our minds off the obvious, and after all, one of us needed the exercise to fit him for Colin Putt's 55-miler, so - to the Gorge.

The fifteen miles from Badgery's to the Kangaroo junction are normally one-mile-per-hour variety, a continued scramble over rocks and boulders, and in and out of tangled vegetation, broken now and then by shingle and steep sandy strips which have suffered much in recent floods.

As opposite banks are always easier, Grace (Wagg) and Tine (Matthews) insisted on crossing about a mile downstream in a fairly deep but slowly flowing pool (well, they said it was slow) and when Joan (Rigby) took to the water there was nothing for us two fine specimens to do but plunge in and hope. "Waterproof inner bags adjusted? Right, in we go". But somehow the pack was floating up at the back of my neck. "Maybe if I do up the belly band it will help." Back to the bank. "Yes, that's better." Off again with a casual breaststoke. "Heck, this is hard work!" "That's funny, I'm not moving - except downstream. Oh well, I'm bound to hit a snag and stop sooner or later." Then a girlish treble floated across the water, "Are you all right, dear?" "No... glug.... glug... I'm not!" "Help! Help!" So in she came with a branch in hand, and I grabbed it as I drifted past and swung in a semi-circle to touch bottom and lurch to safety on the shingle. Phew!

Then came Geoff, and he wasn't doing much better. He was fighting magnificently against the torrent, swimming like an excited frog, and helplessly drifting. His anguish was pitiful to behold. "Put your feet down!" cried Grace, and when he did we saw the water was right up to his knees. "Goodness, pull him out quickly." We two looked at each other

~~mute and shaken, and the look plainly said that we were sticking to this bank until the junction. And in truth we did (against some opposition) and we found a spot, wide and shingle stream, where we could wade across to the comparative security of the Kangaroo River. But more of that later.~~

There's a fine camp spot at Transport Creek, a few hundred yards upstream from the Tallowal Creek junction on the south bank of the river, and at 3 o'clock (how's that, you white ants?) we managed to convince ourselves that there couldn't possibly be another spot this side of the Kangaroo that would hold a tent in one plane. As it happened we found one or two good spots to the mile, mostly on high well-grassed sandy banks.

Saturday was Gorge day - eight hours to cover ten long miles through the aforementioned maze, broken by the thrill (?) of taking to the water to skirt a formidable outcrop which would probably be waded round in normal times. "Can you see around the rock, Grace? How close are the rapids?" No, Grace couldn't see because she wasn't too keen to launch into mid-stream in case she found the rapids were nearer than expected. So we joined Geoff's fifty feet of rope to my thirty feet of sashcord, tied one end to Grace and told her to get going. Then, all of a sudden, there was no more rope. "Hey, Grace, are you all right?" The only answer was a very muffled squark from around the corner. We looked at each other. "What did she say?" "Dunno, try again." The reply was still masked by roaring water. "Oh, let the rope go. She'll be O.K." And fortunately she was.

A few miles on Sunday morning, a concentrated male stand against crossing to greener pastures, and the south bank developed river flats and sheep pads. And, wonder of wonder, the sun shone for a few hours on the muddy water and the sandstone cliffs above and we thought how wonderful it was to be alive - until we started up the northern bank of the Kangaroo.

The banks were steep and muddy. "Let's go on to those grassy slopes further in". Then followed a succession of muffled oaths as the nettles won the day and we gladly took to the mud again. At Bundanoon Creek most of the party wisely swam across to the other bank and only one stubborn landlubber cursed and swore and slipped and slithered whilst the wiser trotted on a pleasant pad. The only good camp site at the Kangaroo-Yarrunga junction was high on the north side, just off the path which leads to the 12-mile road to Kangaroo Valley. As we cooked, dark clouds covered the erstwhile clear sky and as the last course was taken off the fire, down came the rain. We lay in our tents and slapped the mosquitoes we could see at each flash of lightning, and then we just slapped because you couldn't miss. Neither could the mossies, in that number. Exhaustion finally gave us a few hours slumber, and the mosquitoes buzzed contentedly on.

Morning dawned dull; the river was now even muddier and several feet higher. An awful yellow muddy mess. The road bash came as a relief until the miles mounted and the muscles creaked. Geoff took off and soon Grace and Joan were further and further away at each corner as the flyweights drooped from their lack of condition. Gradually the valley opened and farms became more frequent until - "Hey, what's this? Pitt Street?" - around the corner came a tram-car, only it wasn't coming, it was stripped and stationary, and there were half a dozen of these wrecks near a sawmill. Once workers' quarters, perhaps. And then a gentle slope down to the Moss Vale road, a vision splendid of the mail coach, fresh bread from the store, and a delightful lunch spot surrounded by motorists, and adjacent to the camping ground rubbish heap. In fact, "Down in the dumps".

A SONG FOR THE S.B.W.

by Jim Brown.

I have a song to sing O! (Sing me your song O!)

It's a song of youth, and the long in tooth
 Who escape from the madding throng-O.
 Who find their joy on the stony tracks,
 With tucker and sleeping bags on their backs,
 Who shed their cares as they don their packs
 And go where the walkers are going.

Colong, Morong.....

Curracorrang, Cullenbenbong.....

They shed their cares as they don their packs,
 And go where the rivers are flowing.

I have a song to sing O! (Sing me your song O!)

It's the song of a Club
 That takes to the scrub
 On trips that are short or long-O.
 These sweet fools walk by a storm-toss'd moon,
 In rain and sleet or the glare of noon,
 In spring and summer, May or June,
 And they sweat and they strive and they shiver.

Corang, Kalang.....

Burraborang, Talaterang.....

Then once a year they rest and re-une
 On the banks of the Kangaroo River.

CLUB AUCTION.

The Club Auction was held on 16th November and was a most successful affair, both socially and financially. About 70 people came along to hear our lively Auctioneer Charlie Brown cajole or bully them into buying all sorts of strange as well as useful goods. Many packs, boots, billies, a tent, and other items of camping gear went for very reasonable prices, and also 2 cameras, a tripod, a radio and various household utensils. Bottles of wine and jars of honey sold well. Books, jewellery, parkas (padded and unpadded), skis, a cardigan, etc. etc. - All together an amount of \$244.65 was raised for Club funds.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR JANUARY.

by Jo Van Sommers.

- January 4th, 1984 - Clubroom closed.
 11th - General Meeting.
 18th - "Overseas Holidays" night. All members are invited to bring their slides and prints.
 25th - Slides of Fraser Island by Tim Coffey and Paul Howard, with uninterrupted dialogue by Dot Butler and Alex Colley.

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