

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER
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JANUARY, 1984.

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WALLOWING AT WYANBENE.

By Roger Browne and
Michelle de Vries Robbe.

Friday 16th December saw 16 people discovering the Deua National Park. Heavy rain had fallen recently, and we squelched along the track from the car park to our campsite on the Upper Shoalhaven River. "Camping within walking distance of the cars" may mean many things (since by definition it applies to every walk), but in this case it involved nothing more than a two-minute walk. The campsite was flat and grassy, marred only by some maurading bull-ants.

The Trip Info Sheet had asked everyone to bring some Christmas decorations, but most of those who read it thought that the request was only a joke. So we selected a very small gum tree that was quietly minding its own business, and decorated it with the tinsel, baubles and inflatable Santa-with-backpack brought by those who knew the leaders well enough to take their strange requests seriously.

After a bludge breakfast on Saturday we donned old clothes, torches and helmets and set off for Wyanbene Cave. The sixteen of us climbed down the entrance slope and crawled on our knees through 20 cm of water under an 80 cm high ceiling. The passage then opened out and led past the organ pipe formation to the wind tunnel, a tiny hole in the top corner of the cavern. Another group of cavers had caught up with us, so we let them wriggle through the wind tunnel while we explored the old tourist section.

Tourists were guided through this cave around the turn of the century, but they were certainly a hardier breed than the type who walk the electrically lit cement paths of caves like Jenolan today. The old tourists had to carry candles for light, and endure much mud, water and squeezing. Some iron ladders were installed for them on the unclimbable sections, and most of these are still there. We climbed up them into a cavern where tree roots grow through the roof, and bats were flying around and hanging from the ceiling.

We returned to the wind tunnel, and those who had done enough caving were taken outside. Eight remained, and we climbed the difficult slope to the wind tunnel and pushed ourselves through. Cavers describe the wriggling motion required to accomplish this as "reptating", which means behaving like a worm. We returned to the river level below by climbing down a wire ladder that we had carried into the cave. We belayed each person on a safety-rope as they climbed the seven-metre slope, but we passed a party on the way out using only a hand-line on this very slippery climb.

Wyanbene is basically a river cave, and we followed the underground river upstream past chamber after chamber of flowstone, rimstone pools, shawls, columns, helictites, stalactites, stalagmites and one formation which could only be described as a "phallictite". Two unusual obstacles were the "jail bars", a row of stalactites which we climbed through, and the "triangle squeeze", a 3-metre long wedge-shaped crevice which we wriggled along. After the triangle squeeze, we stopped for a snack before retracing our steps to reach the cave mouth after five hours in the cave.

Returning to the outside world after caving is a beautiful experience. The air becomes warm and welcoming, the smell of dust gives way to the aromas of plants, animals and moist earth, and the light appears filtered and bright

to eyes accustomed to feeble yellow torchlight reflected off muddy rocks.

As only one car was left at the cave (the other drivers having opted out at the wind tunnel), we crammed eight people plus lots of caving gear into a small Chrysler Sigma. Only one person had to ride in the boot.

Time was running out for our 11 km afternoon walk, so we had a quick lunch and wash and left the campsite at ten to five (!). The first stop was the Big Hole - 100 m deep, 40 m across and a very neat cylindrical hole. It is truly impressive. Then we joined a fire trail and headed to Marble Arch, a small cave and canyon with interesting blue and red marbling patterns in grey and white rock.

On the way back we left the fire trail and walked on the National Park boundary between farmland and the bush. We passed a kangaroo with a cute and very curious joey in its pouch, and arrived back at camp just as night fell.

On Sunday morning, eight people opted for the long walk to the Deua, while the rest selected the "soft option" of liloing, swimming, and basking in the sun.

The park has been scarred by the construction of a large network of fire trails since the map was compiled (1975). The old foot and horse trails appear to have fallen into disuse and we were not able to locate them, even though we crossed their positions on the map many times. However, one of the fire trails followed our general route for much of the way. The fire trail is 4 km shorter (at 18 km) than the old horse trail, but involved 100 m more climbing (for a total vertical of 900 m). Parts of the fire trail are extremely steep. The last 3 km follows Currumlee Creek, a delightful mountain stream which feeds the Deua River. At the Deua we found an excellent swimming hole and stopped for a swim and a short (but not hurried) lunch.

The downward trip had taken 3 hours, but the return trip took from 3 to 5 hours, depending on the walker. Fortunately, the weather was with us - the glorious sun during our swim changed to an overcast sky and the temperature dropped rapidly as we started our walk back. The general opinion was that it was a lovely spot, but with a price to pay in the climb out.

We regrouped at the campsite. Roger's car had been giving trouble and had been pushed for much of the way down on Friday night. It needed considerable attention from the bush mechanics in our group before it agreed to cough in to Braidwood, where it was repaired.

The long climb out from the Deua, and the mechanical problems, meant that that it was almost midnight before the last participant was safely home, tired but happy.

* * * * *

P O E M.

by Ellen Miller.

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

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Shadowy places.

Mysterious places.

Often full of misty rain.

Light doesn't simply light this rain forest.
It slips into it like long, slanting fingers,
or filters in a lacy pattern through the tree tops.

Or glistens on patches of wet leaves.

Sometimes, a green light.

And it doesn't stay long; for darkness
comes quickly in a rain forest.

Days seem shorter here than on the open moorland.

Camping places are difficult to find, for the forest floor
is seldom flat and is littered with fallen trees
and criss-crossed by streams. One sleeps around roots,
or on a hill, or curled like a caterpillar.

And if a fire has to be lit in this rain-sodden
part of the wilderness, and the flames begin to flicker,
the darkness is black, and thick,
and filled with small sounds...

and it is so easy to imagine things.

* * * * *

TIGERS NOT EXTINCT.

by Alex Colley.

As Gordon Lee has pointed out, the Tigers did some notable walks. The original (1937) Tigers accomplished this, not by walking fast, but by starting early and walking steadily all day. There was time to enjoy the bush, take photographs, have swims and camp before dark. They were accompanied by lesser walkers known as "rabbits", a term which originated when David Stead said, as he and I left before the rest of the party after lunch on the second day of our Katoomba to Picton walk, "The rabbits check out." Female rabbits were able to keep up because the real tigers carried the tents and most of the food. I was able to catch up at meal times because I carried a light pack.

In the early days of the Club very few walks were cancelled and nearly all were completed according to programme, despite the fact that many walks were in little known country and maps often crude. One reason why walks were completed as per schedule was that, in those days, we relied almost exclusively on public transport. Trains and buses had to be caught on time, and having been conveyed to the start by public transport, we had to get back to it. It was difficult to cancel walks and almost impossible to chicken out by short-circuiting a walk, because there were no parked cars to return to.

Gordon's quotation, "This Club has become sedentary," echoes Jack Debert's ringing and oft-repeated cry that "The Club is dying on its feet." Endurance walking is a pleasure for the fit and I sympathise with Gordon if he can't find companions with whom to enjoy it. I also agree with Jim Brown's view that it is only one of the many pleasures of walking. Even the original Tigers spent lazy days, week-ends and even longer camps by the surf and the good swimming holes.

Gordon is wrong on one point. Some of the Tigers have gone - beyond, but many have not. Despite their astronomical age they are neither toothless nor decrepit. They are still bushwalking; in fact they may well be the only ones of their age who are. They lead programme walks and often do four and five day mid-week walks. The average age of five who recently climbed Mounts Gugenby and Kelly is inscribed in the book on the top of Mount Kelly as 68 years, with a rider "is it a record?" The aggregate age of seven who visited Mount Jagungal this month was 493 years. Two of them have been made honorary active members, an honour which they prize beyond anything Bob Hawke could bestow.

IT TURNED OUT FINE AGAIN (OR DON'T TRUST THE WEATHER).Being a record of Gordon Lee's walk 2,3,4 December.

by Tom Wenman.

Walk out to Coal Seam Cave on a Friday night? What ever for? However on this occasion it proved to be worthwhile. Mind you, as I stumbled along a slippery muddy path in the darkness, with a fast-fading torch, I did wonder if my journey was really necessary.

The trip by car to Kanangra had been wet for most of the way and generally a wet weekend had been indicated. It was therefore with some relief to note that it was not raining when we eventually climbed out of our vehicle and began the walk. For the most part the weather held (which was why it seemed a good idea the next morning) and the cave welcomed us with a dry floor and space to remove our wet parkas after the encounterers with wet scrub.

Gordon had led us unerringly through the dark, misty, and moonless night. At the foot of the 'short cut' descent to the cave however, obviously feeling suitably elated he attempted a sort of 'pas de seul' and disappeared with a shout into the darkness. We peered anxiously down as it appeared that Gordon had mistaken the location for his display of exuberance. All was well, however, and his descent had been brief and a four-point landing effected on the path leading to the cave.

Morning revealed, beneath the overhang of the cave, a wet green panorama of gum trees and shrubs with a mist drifting amongst them. This, with the sound of rain and the dripping water from the overhang suitably dampened our ardour for a somewhat desperate early morning start which had apparently been planned, and we gazed pleasantly and luxuriously at the dismal scene from the warmth of our sleeping bags.

By the time we had finished a leisurely breakfast it seemed not to be raining, and we departed with some hope along the beginning of Gingra Ridge. The ridge showed the ravages of last year's fires and a curious ceremonial clearing, probably for the Gods to descend by Air Chariot it is believed. Despite all this the bush showed strong signs of revegetation and a number of small flowers seemed to have profited by the conflagration.

Our way to the Kowmung was to be via Roots Ridge, and by the time we had begun our descent along this the day had brightened quite perceptibly. Roots, whilst affording a convenient and rapid descent to the Kowmung also provides some beautiful views of the river and the tree-clad ridges folding into the upper part of the valley.

By the time we had reached the Kowmung, apart from some puffy white clouds as a reminder of the earlier inclemency, blue sky predominated and gave us a sunny stroll along the river. It certainly looked the best I have seen it for a very long time. A steady flow covered the dry patches which have seemed so prevalent in recent years, however there was not too much flow to obscure the clarity of the water.

We stopped for a pleasant lunch in the shade of some tall old Casuarinas. All along the banks these are now re-establishing themselves at a great rate. With the noticeable absence of cattle the young trees have been allowed to grow almost unmolested and prove nearly impenetrable in places. There were signs of cattle from time to time, seemingly having been confined to small areas where the grass had been pounded into the earth, and we wondered if these resulted from efforts to round them up.

In contrast to the absence of cattle, other animals, native and non-native proliferated. Large grey kangaroos hopped lazily away at our approach and then stopped to watch us from a few feet higher up the bank. Rabbits seemed to be getting numerous again and a lone feral cat was observed. Many birds including wildfowl protested noisily at our approach.

Towards the Gingra Creek junction, the river straightens out and tranquil stretches of water are flanked by tall stately casuarina trees. At the great pile of stones where Gingra Creek debouches into the Kowmung we enjoyed a refreshing swim before heading up the Gingra to our campsite.

There was one great problem with the site however, with so much room there was considerable delay in deciding exactly where we should pitch our tents. There seems to be a sort of ruling that the length of time taken to select a tent site is inversely proportional to the restriction of the area.

The pleasant sunlight scene was soon destined to change as black clouds loomed over the near ridges. Tents were rapidly made ready and the evening meal cooked and eaten with great dispatch. The initial light drops of rain drove my companions to their tents, from which advantageous positions they did not emerge until the next morning.

I was left to myself and my thoughts. Being unwilling to retire quite so early I sought the shelter of some tall old trees by the bank of the creek, and sat down in temporary cover from the rain to sip a port and watch The Gingra in a careless turbulent mood, tumble over boulders and rush between narrow channels towards the Kowmung. A dull green light pervaded and it was a delightful contemplative experience made possible by the wilderness which surrounded us.

During the night it rained very heavily and in the morning there was some discussion as to whether we should proceed upstream in view of the increased flow. However Gordon declared that he had never been up or down the Gingra Ridge and was loath to start now. In fact there was no problem with the water level of the creek and it was a pleasure to see it running so freely.

In our progress we again disturbed numerous animals including a wombat which moved somewhat disdainfully and reluctantly out of our path. Whilst leading the party along the creek Roger was suddenly observed to be executing a highly vigorous dance (the one where you try to keep both feet in the air at once for as long as possible). He had startled a red-bellied black, which also terrified, made for the water in great haste. Unfortunately between snakey and the creek was Roger whose backward leaps whilst impressive were not quite up to snakey's speed - a realisation vividly recorded on Roger's face. His action however was a wonder to behold as he developed a sort of leaping sideways activity which got him clear and enabled snakey to gain the creek where his energy was taxed to the utmost against the current.

We lunched almost traditionally at the foot of Crafts Ridge whilst we contemplated the results of an unfortunate slaughter of an ancient casuarina and at least one gum tree. By the authorities, we wondered?

A purposeful stride up the ridge and along Kilpatrick's Causeway,

taking in the 360° views from Pages Pinnacle on the way, brought us to the Kanangra Plateau. This time it was in daylight, which gave us, in the fine weather now predominating, beautiful views over the Blue Breaks to the west whilst closer at hand Kanangra and Kalang Falls poured over into the valley in cascades of white water.

You know, I really do think I prefer to see it all in the light of day.

YALWAL INSTRUCTIONAL.

by Deirdre Schofield.

In the mad mild month of November
Along with others I became a Club member;
With Bill Holland's deft skill on the map-reading drill
Grids, wiggles and squiggles we'll now remember.

Aligned our compasses from F say through to C
Never mind the missing letter by G!
Adjusted our needles and with a minus twelve not three
The arrow pointed to where to walk by degree.

With a minimum of fuss and a 12° plus,
We matched black arrow to red needle
From compass to landmark then landmark to map
We aimed to find our way without error or mishap.

Learnt of saddles, spurs, ridges, contours galore
Armed with such knowledge who could need anything more.
So on to some First-aid for curing sick and the maimed,
Bandaging knees, arms, sore heads and ankles that'd sprained.

We raw recruits so to speak practiced upon each other,
Mouth to mouth, that those lacking air might soon recover.
Hypothermia victims were in no short supply
But that cure we simply did not need to try!

Through Margaret's good grounding I think we've all passed
So on to the bludge walks, no more tests at last!
Peter packed the pack but no one was pickled
He showed us what not to buy when the weather turns fickle.

THE COOLANA PYRAMID.

by A Nonny Mouse.

You may or may not have read Episode II of the Coolana Pyramid Saga - either way it matters not. Here in this account we will find that several contentious matters have arisen in areas of mathematics, materials, manpower, method and morals.

There still seems to be some dissension as to its shape. Shape determines semantics. This in turn gives the tourist advertising media more or less meat to chew on when determining the slogan which will attract the American and Japanese loopies in their ones and twos to this the Eight Wonder of the World.

Pause for a moment and ponder. "The Pyramid of Coolana" isn't exactly the most inspiring phrase coined. "Gray's Last Edifice" could possibly be misconstrued. "Butt's Abutment" is not architecturally sound for we are not concerned with lateral thrust, though perhaps he may be.

All of this required a rethink. So red hot from the Redfern drawing board came the answer. "The Cone of Coolana"! Naturally some redesigning was necessary with the rounding of the corners. Mathematics became a little more complicated, having to do with pies and ar's squared. It is well known that squared ar'sed pies are not as rare as flat bottomed bargees. However we were sure that all of these figures and figurings would be ably handled by Miller computations.

(More complications. Big Ben who had contract4d for a Korner Kiosk in the original plan were forced to scrap their prepared ads.)

At the site meeting Builder Gray was insistent that this would not be a Kinky Kone. The base must be level. This led consulting (insulting?) engineer Butt (being very original) to promulgate the idea that we try to adhere to the old methods of the ancient Egyptians. Levelling would be done with liquid. Hydraulic consultants Cornell and Co. (a husband and wife team, well known for their close contact with the medium) suggested deuterium oxide which, being heavier than light water, would be leveller than level.

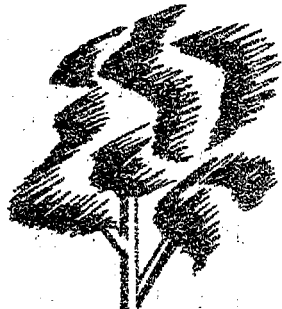
Of course, heavy water would have to come from Lucas Heights. Union rep. Lee (everybody out) insisted in no uncertain terms that Management must adhere to the Butt edict of originality. Transport of the heavy water must be manual. A Vatiliotis lightweight brainwave came up with the solution - a billy brigade. Lee held out for wet money at 2.013 x the normal rate but Paymaster Burke had his rate of 1¢ per litre per metre upheld and so the work commenced.

Worker entertainment came into conflict with Actor's Equity. Something to do with Bruce's cover exposure during the "Seven Veils" - one short I think. K.B. had to ask her writer, J.B., to revise some of her lyrics. Festival of Light rep. Jo V.S. had objected - the songs were a little too risqué.

However Entertainer Extraordinaire Sister Hookway had engaged many well known artists - The Wallace-Finch trio, admired for their close harmony, Fiona and James dance duo, their Party Der is a feature, Capon and Denham whose bottle balancing and fluid disposal are held in awe by all.

All in all, the deuteronomy team passed the billies,, with aplomb, and the first arrived on site just as the last sod was turned.

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eastwood camping centre

BUSHWALKERS

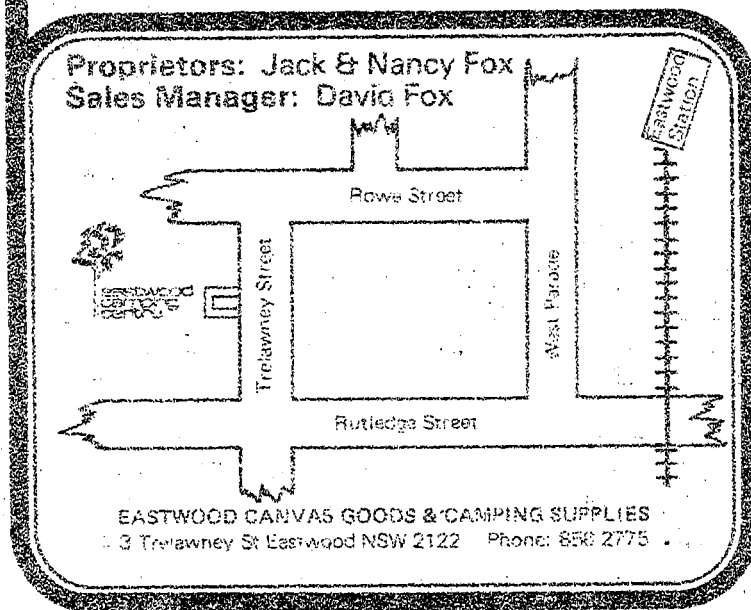
Lightweight Tents • Sleeping Bags • Rucksacks •
Climbing & Caving Gear • Maps • Clothing • Boots
• Food.

CAMPING EQUIPMENT

Large Tents • Stoves • Lamps • Folding Furniture.

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MEETING NORES.

by Barry Wallace.

THE NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING.

It was around 2010 when the President, in the chair, belaboured the unfortunate gong with what has become the traditional billet of wood and called the 15 or so members to order.

There was an apology from Denise Shaw and new members Shirley Morrow and James Rivers were welcomed in the usual way.

The MINUTES were read and received with no business arising.

Correspondence comprised letters to our new members; from N.P.W.S. acknowledging our letter ref. horses and trail bikes in Kuring-gai Chase; from Phyllis Ratcliffe, a tribute to the late David Ingram; as well as the usual magazines.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we started the month with \$3554.26 in the cookie jar, spent \$208.74, gained \$457.40 by one means or another, and ended up with a balance of \$3802.92.

The Walks Report began with the news that George Walton's Jenolan River walk of 14,15,16 October was modified somewhat due to storms and other undisclosed reasons. Nonetheless, it seems the 12 starters coped with it all. The Coolana Barn Dance that same weekend had 50 to 60 people in attendance. The ashes of George and Mary Davidson were scattered and a brief memorial was held. The dance, alas, was almost sans musicians, but the singing went on until 0300 Sunday. There was no report of Ralph Pengliss harbour walk on Sunday, but we believe there were 19 people on the trip.

The following weekend, 21,22,23 October, saw Frank Woodgate with 4 people enjoying the swimming on his Glenbrook Creek walk. Reports of the F.B.W. Search & Rescue exercise over the same weekend leave your scribe wondering how far to the next accident. There were 12 people on Ian Debert's Bonnum Pic walk but no report. Of the day walks, Jim Brown reported 18 starters and some adventure, Peter Christian started with 16, misplaced one, and got back at 2015. Jan Mohandas reported 8 participants, good weather, and hot chocolate at the finish of his Mt. Solitary ramble.

Bill Holland had 12 people on his Bungonia/Shoalhaven trip over the weekend 28,29,30 October, and John Redfern reported 18 starters on his Capertee base camp, Pantony's Crown and Tyan Pic, no extra charge, trip. Jim Laing's Narrow Neck day walk had 12 people on what appears to have been some sort of eatathon. Brian Bolton reported 24 people and 4 swims on a shortened version of his Sutherland to Bundeena trip, and Peter Christian had 7 people and good flowers on his wildflower special.

Over the weekend of 4,5,6 November Steve and Wendy Hodgman had 14 people on their Nattai bird-watching trip, and Don and Jenny Cornell reported 11 bods and a good walk for their Cox River trip. Of the two day walks there was no report of Ken Gould's Eleanora Bluff walk, but Joe Marton's Glenbrook ramble had 27 starters, 25 finishers and a long day with a gentle pace.

General Business saw a call for a volunteer for Search & Rescue contact. Kath McInnes came forward and was welcomed by the assembly.

After that it was just a matter of announcements and it was all over for another month at 2055.

HEAD DUE SOUTH.

by Carl Doherty.

(Notes by Jim Brown: This trip story was published in the magazine of August, 1960, and evidently relates to a walk carried out over the Queen's Birthday Holiday of that year.

Some of the other stories reprinted in the magazine in recent months have covered exploratory walks, while others have told of journeys affected by rough weather. This tale, on the other hand, is a "fun story" pure and simple, with walkers doing the thing that gives them pleasure in happy company. You can tell it was a happy company because of the outrageous things said about the leader and other members.

Several of the people mentioned, including the author, are no longer with the Club, but present members will readily identify the leader, Bob Duncan; also George Gray, Helen Gray (then Barrett), Dot Butler and daughter Rona, and Heather White. It sounds as though it was a thoroughly memorable walk for those taking part.)

Following Snow Brown losing his party on the Wolgan last year the requests for another such trip were so great that it was agreed to make it an annual event. This year the "Let's get lost on the Wolgan" was led by that master of incompetence and bungling, one Robert A. Duncan. A harbinger of things to come occurred the preceding Wednesday night when Duncan took an hour to arrange the seating of eleven people in three cars. He did however give us a detailed briefing, the main points being - a total distance of 30-35 miles, days' distances to .025 of a mile, a constant pace would be set, walking would commence at 6.am and if necessary he would use force to maintain the schedule.

We reached Newnes at 1 am, and the trouble started. My four "lady" passengers thought it unnecessary to pitch the tent and were debating who would sleep in the car and who would sleep under the tent. As it may have lasted all night and they were not considering accommodating me either in the car or the tent I solved their problem - I locked the tent in the boot and took possession of the back seat leaving them to choose a suitable tree for shelter. First light found our illustrious leader ringing an electric bell in our ears. The effect on Helen Barrett was to cause her to say "Answer that phone, someone" revolve once, and continue her slumber.

At eight, somewhat behind schedule, the leader headed downstream whilst George Gray headed upstream. These differences of opinion with respect to navigation became the prime feature of our attempts to get lost. That the party led by Snow had only reached Annie Rowan's Clearing on the first day, a distance of four miles, was to quote the Duncan - "Not only disgusting but absurd also. I'll see that my party reaches Bullring Creek by dusk". By nine the ruins were reached and a pleasant hour was spent playing boats and sunbaking in an open tank on the roof of the candle factory. Eventually we moved on but we covered barely half a mile when we came upon a bushfire. With a little encouragement from Heather, our conservation spirit pervaded us, so we downed packs and set to. All our efforts to extinguish one tree were in vain until Dot threw earth over it. What a predicament - contrary to the Club's rule we had extinguished a fire with dirt. Should we waive the rule or set all on fire again? Fortunately our problem was solved by Snow bringing a bucket of water from the creek. Eleven thirty saw the fire and our schedule out so we pressed on. The delay was obviously causing the leader great concern for upon reaching the mine he promptly dropped his pack and led off down the

down the tunnel. Our inspection took but half an hour and thereafter we had great difficulty restraining Bob from roaming off towards every likely looking ruin.

Even before lunch it was obvious to all that Lyndsey's leg injury was causing her considerable trouble and subsequently the party's speed would have to be reduced. A fine effort was made by all but due to our inspecting, exploring, sunbaking, fire-fighting, ambling and rambling we managed to reach Annie Rowan's in time to camp, thus giving a repeat performance of Snow's trip. The spirits of most were high and humour was not lacking, in fact Heather's remarks were rather astounding. Late in the evening Snow, from his sleeping bag, suggested a brew but the water buckets were empty. As usual the girls looked to the male members who to a man refused the task on the grounds that the women were lighter on their feet, thus more surefooted in the dark, and it would be safer for them to go. Even Heather's eloquence though ambiguous failed to inspire the men and finally Lola took up the challenge.

On Sunday morning Bob decided to curtail the walk somewhat by leading up the first likely creek downstream. On the assurance of Snow and another authority that "once above the cliff line the plateau beyond is as flat as a table", Lyndsey was encouraged to continue. The creek turned into a chimney and the view from the top was spectacular both down the valley and over the "plateau". In fact the plateau was not quite as flat as had been described - as far as the eye could see it was dissected by deep ravines and canyons which seemed to follow no set drainage pattern. We walked along a dry and uninteresting ridge until we reached a swamp at an opportune time for lunch. Heather, Snow, George and myself took the rearguard that afternoon and soon dropped well behind owing to Snow and George insisting on leading off down side spurs, and their peculiar habit of stopping every now and again to eat waratah seeds. The Mount Cameron track was located after much meandering along the ridge and we overhauled the main party at dusk.

The campsite was in a shallow saddle well sheltered and with no chance of anyone drowning as there was no water within a mile. Rona and Dot devoured their leg of mutton - I do not say devoured without justification. Their method, which is rather unique, consists of ramming a stake through a pre-cooked leg and throwing it in the fire until it gets hot or you get impatient. Having removed it from the fire it is held by the stake and the thin end of the leg and revolved until a section appears which looks hot enough, smells all right or can be torn apart without the nose obstructing the work of devouring it. It is passed from one to the other and heated as frequently as required. Another innovation was a Mellah-making competition which for coagulation was won by Gwen Seach and for flavour by Heather. In order to get a flying start the following morning we rolled in rather early.

The flying start wasn't even a flutter as it was seven before anyone stirred. According to Duncan's ten miles to the inch, 250' contoured, "Guess where you are" map it was a good fifteen miles walk and with no improvement in Lyndsey it showed promise of being quite a day. Lyndsey decided to leave early and asked Bob for directions. Bob looked at the map, looked to the heavens, looked at Lyndsey and said - "Follow the track till you reach the pine forest and then head due South". Away went Lyndsey and ten minutes later Helen received the same instructions and followed. She was soon pursued by Gwen and Lola, twenty minutes later Bob and the Butlers set off, and another twenty saw the rearguard under way. Along the track

a few miles we came upon a recently vacated campsite which we assumed to be that of several stockmen we had met the previous day. We reached a road junction at the edge of the pine forest as Duncan's group were disappearing over a crest in a southerly direction. On the road was scratched the message "Party 3" and an arrow indicating the south road. There was some doubt as to whether this meant Bob's party or the third party, Gwen and Lola, but as all recent footprints had gone that way Snow was quick to take the opportunity to make an original move so he immediately led off at right angles. Fifteen minutes later we reached the old railway.* The lack of footprints was evidence that the rearguard was now the vanguard and this fact afforded Snow considerable amusement. Just then, limping around the railway loop, came Lyndsey, Gwen and Lola. A quick check indicated that Helen had strayed. (Note from J.B. - After a good deal of backing and filling, the party came up with the stockmen again, and it was realised that Helen was away ahead - "still travelling south at a fair turn of speed towards the Lithgow slag heap".)

One of the stockmen and a couple of dogs took off to round up Helen, while the others were given correct directions to find Newnes. More barking from the dogs in the timber, more yelling from us and round the hill came Duncan and the Butlers so we waited a little longer. Helen came trotting around the hill. She stumbled up to the group and looking Duncan straight in the face said, "It just goes to prove that you cannot estimate a person's intelligence". Everyone laughed but upon enquiry I discovered that no one was quite sure whether she was referring to Duncan or herself. To the indignant questions as to why he had ordered a south route instead of a westerly one he replied: "With you girls wanting to go running off before bird chirp you can't expect a man to have full command of his faculties. At that hour a slight error was permissible".

The order of march was now reversed - the idea being to reach Newnes, bring the cars up and so save Lyndsey the last four miles walk. On Dot's request a member of the Catholic Bushwalkers, who had his car at the tunnel, drove back and brought Lyndsey down to inspect the tunnel after which he drove her out to Bell. We lunched on the valley side of the tunnel and then walked down the railway line until we reached the road leading to the farm. Dot demonstrated her maternal responsibility in an unusual way. From the time we left the pine forest she clearly marked our way with large arrows, muttering as she drew them, "You can't trust Duncan, he'd go astray anywhere". Curiosity gaining the upper hand we asked why her interest in Bob. "Well," answered Dot, constructing a great timber arrow pointing towards the valley, "Rona is with him and I don't want her to miss school tomorrow".

A lift to the pub spared us the last four miles roadbash also and speeded up our move out. With the exception of my car taking a rest on the steepest part of the road out and holding up half a dozen cars, the run to Katoomba was uneventful.

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* (Note: The "old railway" mentioned is the line built about 1907 to carry shale oil products from Newnes to the western line at Newnes Junction about 10 miles east of Lithgow. The railway ceased operating in the 1930s, but the formation, including the famous "Glow Worm Tunnel" still exists. J.B.)

"OF SHIPS AND SHOES AND SEALING WAX....."

by Jim Brown.

I don't know why I pay so much heed to what Don Matthews says, unless it's because he so often says the same thing I am thinking. Indeed, perhaps, he's the best argument I know for astrology, that notoriously unscientific cult. You see, he was born under the sign of Cancer (20 June - 20 July approx) which is designated by the sign of the Crab, and is presumably a lot better than being a Capricorn (sign of the Goat) or an Aries (the Ram). I mean, where else except in a Crab would you find a gentle, retiring and normally rather shy person who will still get up at a Reunion campfire and cheerfully play the Goat (though NOT a Capricorn)? I don't know the answer to that, because I, too, was born under the sign of the Crab.

At any rate Don recently told me he had been on Roy Braithwaite's day walk of 8th January. This occurred at a time when the State Rail Authority had shut down the South Coast Line between Waterfall and Thirroul to press ahead with the Port Kembla electrification, including digging out the floors of a couple of tunnels to make the roofs higher, so that double-deck carriages could go through, with still enough room for the overhead wiring. Don confirmed that they had to transfer at Waterfall to buses which then went through Helensburgh township - a good two to three kilometres from the station of that name. "It was," he said, "one of the most interesting parts of the trip. I'd never been through Helensburgh town before."

(This, in turn, reminds me of a story dating back to the War years. A blacked-out train pulls into a blacked-out station. "Say," says an American serviceman, "What burg is this?" To which Bob Younger replies, "Oh, I guess it's Helen's.")

Actually, I had a fair idea what was afoot at Helensburgh. I had been down there a few days earlier, passing through the shopping centre on a rail-bus: had seen Otford Station as two platforms with a great trench (and no rails) in between; had walked back to Lilyvale along the tracks, chatting to some of the surveyors, shovel-men and drivers of bull-dozers and other exotic machinery. I had observed the shortened "Up" platform at Lilyvale reduced to a facade of brickwork, just about wide enough for skinny people like Don Matthews and myself to stand on without being wiped off by a passing train, and then walked on through Lilyvale tunnel before getting tired of having my toes stubbed by the ballast, and turning down on a side track to the Hacking River.

As a result I had phoned Roy and told him that, in the absence of any road trafficable to buses, he was unlikely to be able to start from Lilyvale Station, but could get to Otford by devious ways and railway buses. Evidently, this is what he did, with a party of 14 people. One of them, Joe Marton, drove his car along the road from the Upper Causeway to the Karingal Picnic Ground, just across the Hacking River from Lilyvale Station site, and waited there for trains that never came in. Finally he walked to Burning Palms and met up with the party.

Well, you may say, what's all this scribbling in aid of? I have to admit, nothing in particular. After all, I did call it, quoting the Alice in Wonderland nonsense "of ships and shoes and sealing wax.....and cabbages and kings". But when Don Matthews said, "The buses went through Helensburgh town" I almost interrupted him to add, "And I bet you found that one of the most interesting parts of the day". Then he said just that.

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WALKING'S A PLEASURE - IT'S NEW - IT'S OFFICIAL.

News release from the Premier's Department, December 1983.
Supplied by Alex Colley.

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A new activity called "Walking for Pleasure" will be launched state-side during Senior Citizens' week 1984.

"Walking for Pleasure" is a joint promotion for the Departments of Health and Leisure, Sport and Tourism. Mr. Wran said that in New South Wales - where one in seven people was now 60 years of age or over - the promotion aimed to encourage walking as an enjoyable, no-cost exercise which contributed to a healthy lifestyle.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR FEBRUARY, 1984.

by Jo Van Sommers.

- February 1 - Committee Meeting.
 - 8 - General Meeting.
 - 15 - Members Slide Night. "Christmas Trips". All members are invited to bring their slides and prints.
 - 22 - Magazine Wrapping Night. An experiment in doing the magazine at the Club night - join the hitherto secret rites - get stuck into the wrapping and labelling.
 - 29 - Double Header Slide Night:- Keith Docherty's bushwalking scenes, insects and flowers. Colin Barnes calls his similar subject "Walking With Your Eyes".
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LETTER TO THE CLUB FROM THE LANE COVE CUB & SCOUT TROOP.

I am writing as a concerned parent on behalf of the 1st Lane Cove Cub & Scout Troop to ask whether any of your members would be interested in becoming a Warranted Cub Leader. 1st Lane Cove, the oldest troop in Lane Cove, desperately needs more leaders (we have one but need three) and faces dissolution if none is forthcoming. What the Cubs are missing most at the moment are opportunities for bushwalking and camping.

If any of your membership is interested, he/she can contact Cub President, Joe Berry, 38 Cope Street, Lane Cove, 428-4820 for further information.

Thank you. ANN P. NIXON.

TRIP DATE CHANGE.

Morong Deep trip programmed for 10,11,12 February has been changed to 17,18,19 February. LEADER: DAVID ROSTRON, 451-7943.

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