
THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER
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FLORIDA EVERGLADES AND THE KEYS.

by Allan Wyborn.

Off to Florida.

It was at the end of August. We were staying with friends near Washington D.C. and debating how to get down to the Everglades. The shortest return trip by road to Key West is 4800 km, and time was running out. The alternative was to fly down to Miami, hire a car and use motels for a few days. Our friends have an apartment in southern Florida, and told us of the heat down there at this time of year, so Alice decided to stay with them and our Dodge motorvan until I returned. Inside half an hour the Air Florida plane was booked for the next morning, a Chevette car arranged to be at Miami Airport, and motels booked. Such is the efficiency of travelling in the United States.

The plane trip to Miami lasted two hours, and there was a brand new Chevette waiting for me. The car, although small, was fully air-conditioned, an essential feature in these latitudes; in fact I don't think I could have managed to do the trip without it. A quick look at Miami - I had been warned about the Cubans - and then across the Venetian Causeway to the island of Miami Beach. The actual beach is now 600 metres wide of very clean sand pumped back out of the Atlantic by the army, after it practically disappeared in storms. Along the ocean beach and the inner Biscayne Bay area are some 50 km long of high rise hotels and apartments. Being a Wednesday in the off-season not many people about, so back to Miami, and due west on the Tamiami Trail into a very heavy thunderstorm, which forced a roadside stoppage in stifling conditions till it passed.

"The Glades".

This Trail skirts the northern boundary of the Everglades National Park, which occupies 600,000 hectares of the southern tip of Florida, but is only a small part of the vast, complex ecological system of the Everglades, commonly called "The Glades", covering 2,800,000 hectares. Much of the Park is barely above sea level, and the lifeblood of its fauna and flora is the flow of fresh and salt water. It is unique in many ways, and because of its climate, geographical location and ocean currents, provides the United States with its only sub-tropical wilderness. From Lake Okeechobee, 110 km north of the Trail, the huge shallow sheet of shimmering water of the Everglades creeps through rushes and sawgrass to the Park.

Along the Trail at Coopertown I had my first ride in an airboat, skimming over the grass at high speed. The flat-bottomed boat had a three metre propeller and a large air rudder. I had a turn as pilot seated up high with an expansive look over the Glades. The next stop was to be the 20 km Shark Valley Tram ride to the Observation Tower, but due to the heavy wet season, the track was under water, so no tram ride. It was a pity, as there are lots of alligators in a pool at the bottom of the Tower. If you follow the Tamiami Trail west to the Gulf of Mexico you reach Everglades City in the Ten Thousand Islands area, where the Wilderness Waterway canoe trip starts, finishing at Flamingo and taking seven days. However, as I did not have the days to spare, I returned to just south of Miami and visited the palatial Vizcaya Mansion, the old home of the Duponts. Although the interior and exterior were magnificent, there was a general air of decay and pathos.

The Gumbo Limbo Trees.

On south by Highway 1 to stay that night at a beautiful air-conditioned

motel at Homestead, thankful to have a respite from the heat of 38°C. Next morning away early to enter the National Park proper at the modern Visitors Centre, where I had an orientation of the Park in the auditorium, saw the museum, obtained free materials and brochures, and browsed in the book store, which also has tapes, slides and mementoes. After leaving the Centre it was off along the 50 km road to Flamingo on the extreme south coast. There are many stops along the road, each with about a 2 km walking trail winding over the sloughs and ponds, and through shadowed hammocks (tree islands), giving an intimate view of the Park's vegetation and wildlife. At Royal Palm there is a vast storehouse of biological and scientific wonders. I took both trails here with the few people about and a ranger speaking about these things. The Anhinga Trail is over a raised boardwalk which circles across the waterways containing alligators. These reptiles are truly at home in the Park, feeding mainly on garfish, turtles, etc, but they mean life to many more than they consume, as in the dry season they keep survival holes open by thrashing with snout and tail to clear the muck and vegetation out of the larger holes in the limestone surface. Fish and birds then use these holes as a refuge. In the wet season wildlife is difficult to see as it disperses to the outer spaces, where food is plentiful. The Gumbo Limbo Trail, at a few metres higher elevation, is through dense undergrowth in which wildlife is well hidden, but there were many large colourful tree snails on the smooth barked gumbo limbo trees. Also seen here are orchids and air plants, which latter are not parasitic, but use the trees only for support, while taking their nourishment and moisture from the air.

Past the Long Pine campsite I went to Pinelands with its stands of South Florida Slash Pine. This pine is regularly fired either by man or lightning, in order to get rid of the hardwood undergrowth before it takes over, but the pine trees with their thick bark are almost fireproof. Here I saw the great white egret, blue herons and white-tail deer. Other wildlife there, but not seen, include raccoon, opossum, roseate spoonbill and bald eagle.

Pa-hay-okee (River of Grass).

A few miles further on, the road went over the Rock Reef Pass at the "high" elevation of 0.9 metres above sea level! Then to the Observation Tower at Pa-hay-okee (river of grass - Seminole Indian), with its panoramic view of the Glades - a wide expanse of sawgrass marshlands dotted with tree islands. Mahogany Hammock, at 2 metres above mean sea level, boasts the largest mahogany tree in the United States, seen from the usual boardwalk. I was fortunate to see here the famous barred owl, and high up in a tree a red-shouldered hawk waited to make its swoop. A few miles further along the road at Paurote's Pond I crept up on my first alligator, 2 metres long, and got to a metre from it for the closest photo. There were rare palms and many blue herons at this pond, and it is here that the mangrove ecosystem commences, where southward-creeping glades water meets salty water. The red and other mangroves are easily recognised by their stilt roots, and grow to 10 metres high. They act as nurseries for smaller marine animals and their leaves are the foundation for many food chains.

At Nine Mile Pond I was very lucky to see the scarce roseate spoonbill. With its white plumage and distinctive rose-colour on its wings it stood out against the dark green of the mangroves, but too far away for a photo. This bird has a spatula-shaped bill to strain the marine life from the water.

In the early days it was probably mistaken for a flamingo, hence the name Flamingo (Visitor Centre), where there were many roseates. At West Lake, which connects to Florida Bay via Alligator Creek and used as a canoe trail, I had been told there were several alligators about, but a quiet stalk along the Mangrove Trail revealed none. Here the fresh water alligator and the salt water crocodile are known to swim together.

At the end of the road I arrived at Flamingo, where there are full facilities including visitor centre with museum, boating marina and campground. Flamingos are very seldom seen there now, but I saw plenty of brown pelicans and "laughing" seagulls, which are there all the year round. The area was beautifully laid out with lawns, palms and gardens.

FAMOUS FLORIDA KEYS.

The return journey out of the Park that afternoon was uneventful, except for another very heavy deluge and thunderstorm, and at Homestead I turned south on highway 1 to leave the mainland and go over on to the Keys. This remarkable group of islands stretches 180 km in approximately an east-west direction, and is connected by some marvellous bridges and the Overseas Highway to Key West. To the east are the Straits of Florida (part of the Atlantic), and to the west the Gulf of Mexico.

The first big island is Key Largo, where I paid a brief visit (as it was getting late in the day) to the John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park Museum. On through Islamorada village, over the Matecumbe Keys, Long Key, Duck Key, Grassy Key etc. to reach my appointed motel in Marathon. The heat was so great that to swim in their pool was a real effort. I only did a few laps as the water was 35°C. After becoming lost in the dark, I eventually found the Castaway Seafood Restaurant down among the docks, and sampled some delicious fish. Back to the motel at midnight, to get a good sleep because of the air-conditioning.

Next morning I left the motel in the dark at 5.30 am to arrive at Key West by 8 am. This is a quaint town with old timber buildings and narrow streets, once a naval depot, now a tourist mecca. The southernmost tip of the United States, it was once called The Conch (pronounced kongk) Republic, so if you lived here you were a conch. It is only 2.4 km x 7.2 km, with a harbour full of expensive pleasure boats, as well as the fishing fleet. I made a 2-hour tour on the Conch Train to see all the sights, and went on the glass-bottomed boat to see the marine life. Its lifeline is a 60 cm waterpipe coming 200 km from Florida City on the mainland.

The journey back along the Keys in the afternoon was made with brilliant sunshine and shimmering blue water, the highlight being the Seven Mile Bridge with a high arch in the middle.

So back to Miami by 6 pm and Washington D.C. by 10 pm, well satisfied with the trip.

* * * * *

YALWAL.

by Bill Capon.

Report with Track Notes of Yalwal walk of 30,31 March & 1st AprilLeader: Bill Capon Map: Yalwal. Estimated distance: 25 km.Routes: Yalwal - Clarke Saddle - Bundundah Creek - Colley* Plateau -
Ettrema Plateau - Leyden Creek - Colley Plateau - Corroboree Spur -
Corroboree Flat - Yalwal.

Twenty people set out at 8.20 am across the Danjera Dam and up past the "orchid rock" among the burrawang palms that grow here in profusion. Clarke Saddle provides easy access south on to the un-named plateau which leads south-west to our drop off point at about 346876.

The group scattered to zig zag down a clear steep slope to the bend on Bundundah Creek at 331873, where most enjoyed a cooling dip on this warm muggy March day. After lunch we headed slightly north of west up a ridge which was very thick in places with native tobacco, full and green after the summer rain. This ridge leads to spot height 1430, but a bit of searching found breaks in the cliff line and a warm (even sweaty!) party assembled at 314880. Here we had a good view to the east.

We then walked gingerly along the faint dotted line to the break in the low cliff line of upper Leyden Creek, here easily crossed to lead us on to Ettrema Plateau. We wound round two tributaries of Leyden Creek on generally sodden rock, moss and thin soil, looking for a dry place to camp. At 297896 we camped where there was plenty of flat ground and a creek a couple of hundred metres away, with Ettrema Hill looming above us. This spot could be very exposed in wind or storm, at least until the burnt-out scrub grows thickly again - and then it could be much harder to walk along the plateau.

Tom Wenman got the fire going again at 6 am (who was the April fool?) and we set off at 7.30 am. I left my knife behind as I intend to return next year. We headed north-east for 20 minutes and dropped into a side creek. It was a bit slow and took another half hour to hit Leyden Creek at 307907. We made unexpectedly quick progress boulder scrambling in this picturesque creek. The exit creek on the east is at 312924.

We got round to the right of the waterfall at the first cliff line with the aid of a short length of rope, and after a short rest on smooth pink rocks at the top, set out north along Colley Plateau. Half an hour of looking and checking was required to give us the start of the long Corroboree Spur. A little too far to the right brought us out on a fine rocky lookout with a view back up Bundundah Creek to where we had crossed it the day before. Back a little, and an easy descent through the cliff line and so on down to Corroboree Flat for lunch.

A ridge opposite leads up to the plateau at 367905, which is a great spot from which to look over Eureka Creek towards the long very flat Colley Plateau, and behind it on the horizon Ettrema Plateau with the rounded hump of Ettrema Hill.

And so we returned along the plateau to a spot at 368895, across Clarke Saddle to pick up the track down the ridge north of Myrtle Gully, to a welcome dip in the dam overflow of Yalwal Creek.

* * * * *

* Colley Plateau - named after the Club's Hon. Conservation Secretary,
Alex Colley, O.A.M.

"SALT OF THE EARTH".

by Peter Christian.

So few take heed of nature's calling, stop to reflect upon her sighs
and whispers,
Only a handful of souls on fragile earth, care to listen, to commune
with humility
On the very basic grass roots level, with forces so much greater than
humanity.

The few drink keenly of her wisdom, with answers to questions not found
elsewhere.
Their innocence and simplicity mistaken as "lightness of head" or
endless whining,
Grandiose ideals to preserve her are scorned by those who cannot feel
past pocket lining.

So few have that genuine compassion, nurture the bush as well as their
own kin.
They sense her stress and foresee all the danger, and strive to protect
her at all cost,
Dunphy & Brown** are but two shining beacons amidst a vast swirling morass
that's lost.

Their faces etched by harsh sun, wind and dust, furrowed deeper with
hardship and pain
From a lifetime wrestle with stubborn minds, found some with hands gnarled
as she-oak root,
Skin as rough as leaf-tail ghekkos, with fair hearts meeker than a
bandicoot.

Sincere smiles there always at the ready, that touch me deeply, remind
me of home,
Their friendship held out without condition, to gradually entwine with
a grip gone wild,
Among them I feel so very much at ease, sharing by fireglow, in nature's
bosom, like a child.

Far from the wasteland of suburbia, we find a new purpose and direction
to life,
Time to regain composure, keep sanity intact, far from the lure of fickle
neon light,
The dark cloak of night is our blanket, studded with gems on their nocturnal
flight.

** Miles Dunphy, S.B.W. Hon.Member, early conservationist, his son
Milo Dunphy, bushwalker and conservationist, Bob Brown, Tasmanian Wilderness
Society.

I found them not in English tailored suits, but loved them in jeans,
parkas, old sandshoes.
I found them not in seaside villas, but in dwellings simple, unpretentious
they live,
Possess such forthright courage and conviction, think nothing of time
they easily give.

Nothing benefits man in treating symptoms, of all human stress-related
disorders,
If the last places in this precious world, in which humans can find
tranquillity
Are lost now and for following generations - anything else is an exercise
in futility.

OBITUARY - ANICE DUNCAN.

by Dot Butler.

Honorary Member and Foundation Member of the S.B.W.

Born 1899 - Died on 30th April, aged 84.

Anice and her husband Frank came to Australia from the North of England where they both belonged to walking clubs. Their first contact with bushwalking was an article in the Sydney Mail, run by Fairfax & Sons, describing a walk done by three girls in the Hawkesbury area. The girls were Marie Byles and two friends, Nell Cusac and Ernestine Anderson. They made contact, and that's how Frank and Anice got to know Marie. About the same time a letter appeared in the S. M. Herald by Jack Debert, trying to collect together people interested in a walking club for men and women. Marie arranged a combined walk, and Frank and Anice considered that was the beginning of the S.B.W. The year was 1927.

Anice was a very active walker in the early days of the Club. She had a very lively intelligence - "She was a devil for debating" - and many verbal contests took place in their holiday cabin at Jamberoo.

Anice and Frank had two sons, one of whom died as a little boy. Money donated by Club members for his hospital treatment, but unused, became the "Era Fund" which was used as the nucleus for the purchase of Coolana, as reported earlier in the Bushwalker magazine.

Anice always considered that the S.B.W. had been an important part of her life. She is survived by husband Frank, and son Barry.



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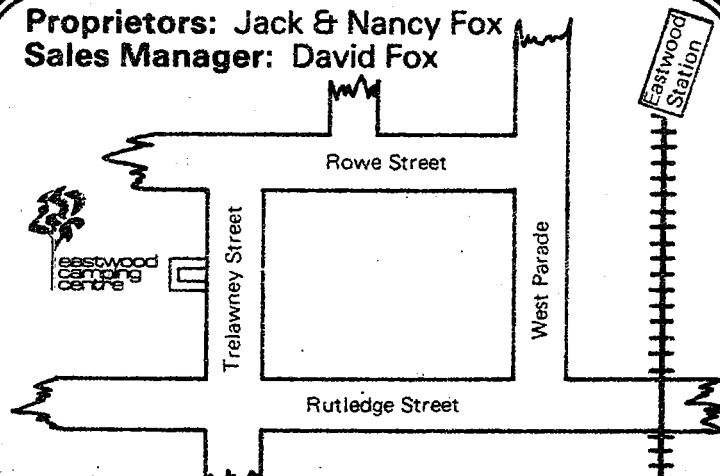
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MOON MADNESS.
or S. & R. NIGHT SHIFT.

by Gordon Lee.

There was movement up on Flagstaff
For notice had been posted
That the night search practice, S. & R., was underway.
And some tried and tested walkers
From suburbs near and far
Had met upon the hill at end of day;
For walkers like hard walking, specially at night,
In interesting country: Bell and Wollongambe -
Be sure you get your navigation right.

(Apologies Banjo!)

There we all were as darkness descended and the moon ascended waiting to be allotted our Courses, all eager? to be on our way. A motley crew - there was one, a damsel, not even slightly undersized, who hailed from up the Novocastrian side (more apologies B!) all gathered for the fray.

I teamed with a keen and extremely capable lad, Doug Whcen, who I must admit, by the merest stroke of luck, happened to have a first rate knowledge of the area where we were to do battle. From there on we would be known by our Code Name, Party 7.

"Anyone for the Diehards' Marathon?" It must have been in a fit of moonshine madness that I heard us say, "That'll do us!" Though we heard not the bell it surely was the knell of doom. And what a hell of a knell it turned out to be.

The first bit was easy. After being dropped at a hairpin bend on the Mt Wilson Road at 8 pm, we took off on what turned out to be a track down to Du Faur's Creek. And there it was, our first "blinker". Let me explain. At strategic points on our selected routes there were located small blinking lights, something like checkpoints in orienteering. On getting to one of these each party had to radio base giving the coordinates.

Here Doug's knowledge came in handy in knowing how to negotiate the creek crossing. This was to be the first of many hand over hand rope descents and ascents we were going to make that night.

Having got down we had to get up. We picked our way through a small blockup. It looked a sheer impossibility to get directly up the other side. Doug knew it could be done. A leg up to a narrow ledge, a sidle, a convenient sapling and we were up and on our way. Remember all this was done by moonlight and torchlight.

Then a tricky little bit of navigation and we were coming up on a spot height. Again Doug's intuition proved to be correct. "I'll bet there's a blinker on that spot height!" We came up on what we thought was the spot - no light. Got to keep going till the ridge drops away to be absolutely certain. You see at this stage we were on a ridge top marked only by a single contour. This meant the top could vary up to 20 metres (65'6"). Slightly down then up and there it was - a crimson blinking "egg". (Contemplate the confused controntation in an Emu household.) We had some doubts as to position and thought the last bump we had crossed was really spot 912, for not far beyond our present position the ridge fell

away. (It was confirmed on our return that we were right. We were sure after we emerged from Bell Creek for then, in daylight, we could look across at the ridge and see for ourselves what should have been the correct position of the "egg".)

We radioed base. As it happened, that was the last contact for some time. Time also for a break. Nothing like a glass of wine, some chocolate and jelly babies to revive the troops. Time to take stock. Doubts as to position caused trouble because our course changed direction from this point. We chose to turn from the light and kept strict line from by "leading through". We worked our way through minor cliff lines till -

"How in the hell are we supposed to get down there?" A drop in front of us - Bell. Blackness and the sound of falls to the right and to the left a sheer cliff line. The drop directly in front of us was broken by a ledge about 25' (7.5 m) below. With us we had one sling and breakbar and 60' of Bluewater. On closer examination of the face we decided that we could climb back without rope. So down to the ledge.

Just as we were searching out the possibilities, lights appeared across the canyon. A call, then "You won't get down there! There's about 150' of cliff". Morale took a nosedive. But by luck we survived, for growing alongside the cliff was a very helpful tree. Only by getting into the upper branches could we get low enough to get our rope to reach bottom. First time I've ever abseiled from the branches of a tree - at eleven o'clock at night. Luck held again and we were able to get on down to creek level without rope.

It's one thing to get down and in, another to get up and out. We didn't bother to look downstream having seen (not quite the right word) the blackness from above and heard the noise of falling water. So upstream it was, examining every option. Under or up and over huge blocks. Rockhopping by torchlight - not exactly a quiet Saturday night's diversion. And of course we were out of radio contact.

One likely re-entry was searched at length. Two waterfalls up, no go. Then the dreaded - a pool. At one o'clock a.m. it wasn't exactly my idea of an invigorating wallow, enjoying every splash. There was no alternative. So, unpack, proof, strip and, stark bolicky, trip tippytoe into the icy waters of the Bell.

Just the other side a dry sandy bend with an overhang. There, a pair of sylphs flitting about in the diffused moonglow, gathering wood for a warming and cooking fire, would have delighted the most purist nudist.

Then dress for dinner - prawns, dry toast (my marg. was still in the fridge at home and Doug's in the car) and tea. We thought it an hour well spent.

Away again. With some relief the walls appeared to be lowering. A possible exit? The balloon burst. The damn thing closed up tight and - you guessed! - another pool. A deep one, but there were underwater ledges both sides. Up to the armpits but toes still making contact. Out and there it was! A creek entrance, but with one of those nasty smooth 8' corners.

Standing on an 18' (500 mm) ledge as dawn was breaking, shivering,

bracing a pair of sandshoed feet while staring up at a bare white bum, certainly could not be compared to the ethereal experience of gazing in awe at the Taj Mahal by moonlight. But it was a "goer", which Doug determined while I struggled into a dry singlet and shirt.

There in the picci..inny daylight, in the comfort once again of dry clothes, we were certain we were out. Four hours in that blasted canyon. Space of course has not permitted me to recount the number of times we boosted up a problem climb necessitating the unpacking of the rope for pack hauling and assistance. All of this added up to the hours mentioned.

On the plateau top we radioed in and were requested to make base by "the most expeditious (direct) route". "Over and out". No way!! After all we'd been through, the Diehard Marathoneers would complete the course! Unfortunately the satisfaction of gathering the blinkers would be denied us for another party was picking these up on their way back. This information was gleaned by eavesdropping.

Maps out. Beaut! We were right on course. And so the rest is history. Into and up the 'Gambe. 2 km and out, up and over and down once more to that damned Bell. Another abseil, then up and off to Flagstaff. Then the road, to be picked up. We'd done it!! We had been on the go for 14 hours. I must say that some of the troops weren't overjoyed at the delaying of debriefing until our arrival.

All of this demonstrates that our S.&R. unit has the personnel, expertise, physical capability and determination to enable us to move at night in very difficult country.

This could mean our earlier contact with a distressed person or party, giving greater opportunity for lifesaving.

Perhaps a more extreme test, that of moving on a "dark" night, could be tried at some future date??

* * * * *

EDITOR'S QUIZ QUESTION.

What is the origin of the word "BILLY",

Choose from:

1. Scottish dialect BALLY - a milkpail.
2. French "boeuf bouilli", a label on meat tins used as billies, thus "bully tin".
3. A man's name.
4. "BILLA", the aboriginal word for water or river.

All are possible derivations, but (4) is the likeliest. The billy was improvised about 1850 when, mainly because of its wire handle and lid, it largely superseded the quart pot. (THE AUSTRALIAN ENCYCLOPEDIA Vol.1, 1977).

ANSWER.

THE DON FINCH MOVEABLE RE-UNION, 1984.

by Dot Butler.

(In the Church Calendar, Easter is a Moveable Feast. On Don's Easter trip there were 40 walkers, including presidents past and present, so it could be called a Moveable Re-union.)

7.70 Thursday night.

As I dashed out the door to Geoff Wagg's car through a heavy downpour the radio announcer was intoning "Scattered showers.....clearing....." Wendy Aliano was aboard. We picked up Don Matthews and headed for Braidwood where Wendy naively suggested that a bedroom in the local pub would be nice in all this rain, but Geoffo is made of sterner stuff and pushed on. Around midnight we spotted John Redfern's car parked by the roadside and his occupants hastily sneaking into an empty shed, but there was no room for us. Eventually car lights at the Deua National Park campground showed we had arrived. The place was inches deep in water. Wendy decided the car seat would do her but we three others squelched up to a bit of higher ground near Joe's tent, put up a fly, crept in and hoped for the best. Others arrived all through the early hours, the Butt carload having left Sydney around 2 am in time to kick Finchy out of bed at 6.30.

Friday.

Morning revealed a grey drizzling overcast, but at least it was not raining as we drove along the road to the Gundillion cemetery where all cars were to assemble. All present and counted, and the convey of cars moved off towards the Shoalhaven. Spirits were somewhat low when Don reported the river uncrossable, but the resourceful Finch found us a deserted house where the whole party crammed in to await the subsiding of the flood. Between showers we went for a 9.5 km walk through open country, fire trails and ridges, but most spent the time in odd corners and sheds catching up on lost sleep. Phil got to work with an axe, and as the wood was tossed over the fence Don worked flat out loading the carriers. Phil managed to keep up the supply of chopped wood and the carriers came in with armloads of firewood for our two grates. The hardy ones got a fire going out in the wind and wild weather and so we got our evening meal cooked. Then off to sleep, hoping the weather might clear by the morrow.

Saturday, morning.

Don's measuring stick in the river showed the water was down enough for us to attempt the crossing. Linked together in groups we waded to the other side. Meanwhile the drivers had taken their cars three km down the road to Emu Flat for our return on Monday. They soon rejoined the party and we set out on our 13 km walk. For 5 km we followed a fire trail, then a climb of 260 metres through bush to the top of the ridge. At the highest point, Turks Head, we collected around our navigator, Phil Butt. Everything was shut in by trees. Assorted fmoans "Where's the view?" "Don't bring your complaints to me," says Phil, "I'm only the navigator. I only do as I'm told." Now came a very steep 620 m descent through cliffs to Appletree Creek, and here we encamped about 3.30 pm on a grassy flat by the creek.

To the accompaniment of muted hisses and boos Barry Murdoch produced an axe he had been carrying and constructed a bed - a triangular piece each end supporting something resembling a stretcher with side poles and strong plastic bags between; all this inside his tent. It was pronounced a success but whisper has it that he dismantled it for the second night.

Dot and Geoff on a heap of bark under an open fly declared their method superior and warmer.

At least six campfires gleamed through the darkness. "MOVING OFF IN 13 HOURS!" - "MOVING OFF IN 12 HOURS!" - the calls came regularly through the night. We got used to it. Some sort of a tic.

A big log fire brought everyone together. The songbirds were in good voice - Barbara Bruce, the Duncans, Geoff Wagg, Morag Ryder, and a new find, Mike Reynolds. When they all got steamed up the singing was really super. "MOVING OFF AT 7.30!" shouted the leader as we sought our tents.

Sunday.

Daybreak. A wan sun gleamed through the mists. "MOVING OFF IN HALF AN HOUR!" - "MOVING OFF IN TEN MINUTES!" - "MOVING OFF!!!" and on the first pip of 7.30 Don and Phil and their campfire followers shouldered packs and sped away, causing the laggards to choke over the last spoonful of breakfast while they crammed parkas and lunch into packs. To-day's walk was to bring us back to the same campsite so packs were light. First we must cross Apple Tree Creek, and it looked cold. Then a steep ridge climb of 260 metres through scrub for most of the morning to Cooranbene Mountain and a steep descent to the Deua River near Wolla and lunch at the junction of a side creek. Those of us brave enough to have a dip noted the fierce flow of the Deua.

After lunch this had to be crossed. Phil went across to demonstrate that it was only thigh deep, but for the smaller femmes it was up to our waists, so it was a case of off with the pants. "There should be a song about this," said Geoffo, and the next thing we see Mike with paper and pencil; and with much chuckling he produced this masterpiece, which was sung to a catchy tune at the campfire that night:

We are the Bare-Bum Walkers, we sing this song with pride,
Arm in arm together across the foaming tide.
Wearing very little but a smile upon our lips
The water it was deep enough to come up to our hips
(for the short ones)
knees (for the tall ones).

The Deua makes several great loops and considerable time would be saved by cutting across them. "FOUR MORE CROSSINGS!" yelled our leader. They got deeper each one. All safely crossed..... Did I say all? Well -

The Deua was a raging flood, but daunted we were not.
The cameras were all lined up, each waiting for a shot
And I was there among them, but much to my chagrin
I wasn't bloody looking when Tom Wenman tumbled in.

The next 10 km were along firetrails for the first half, and easy creek banks for the second half. It had been a long day - 23 km walking, with climbing of 760 m ascent and descent. As we crossed the grassy paddock to our tents the sun was setting and the last ones homed in just on dark. The young Duncans did very well, and as we prepared dinner the irrepressible young Ivan Brown came hopping from group to group as the East Bunny, distributing chocolate Easter eggs. Spiro's famous coffee revived the tired ones.

When Spiro makes the coffee, it's thick and strong and black.

Use any that you cannot drink to waterproof your pack.

That coffee is amazing stuff, it really is the best -

It puts a twinkle in your eye and hair upon your chest.

Another good sing-song that night.

Monday.

An 8 o'clock start, but first repairs must be made to John Redfern's shoes, which were rapidly disintegrating. Donnie did an effective job with knife and string and the shoes lasted the distance. Today we have 14 km to go with a 460 metre ascent. The lower section of Moodong Creek was easy walking along cattle pads. A small herd of beasts was ahead of us, and as the farmer did not want them driven miles up the creek, Donnie raced ahead while his large party stayed concealed part way up the slope. Soon the animals were turned and came racing back down creek to the open grasslands. We came to a fine waterfall/cascade, which, however, was unnamed. Perhaps it only has water after heavy rain.

Progressing from Moodong Creek to Reedy Creek, the terrain got rougher and steeper till eventually we were rock-hopping and scrambling up the river bed. The lunch site was in a very spectacular rocky gorge. The programme after lunch involved a 250 metre climb up a steep ridge, then a short walk across to a fire trail and a 4 km walk to the cars. It would appear that we had the game sewn up.

But at the very last step out of the creek bed Wendy trod on a slippery rock and slipped into the water, striking her left shin with tremendous force on a sharp submerged rock. She could not bend her knee, and was in great pain. Phil and those ahead up the ridge were shouted at to stop; a council of war was held and with great speed a stretcher was constructed of two saplings (cut with Barry's jeered-at axe) and two H-frames. The girls were all despatched up the ridge carrying packs (their own and the men's), the injured lass was piggybacked up the steep side of the ridge on Phil's back with Don harnessed in front like a horse pulling him, till they reached the stretcher. Here the men were manpowered as stretcher-bearers, 6 or 8 to a side, front ones out on ropes pulling the bearers, tail-enders pushing and supporting the back bearers.

The slope was so great the front men had to lower their arms to ground level while the back ones often had their arms above their shoulders, and Wendy sailed up the steep incline like the Great White Queen of the Congo, but so doped with Pethadrine she couldn't enjoy the experience. Victor Gosbell, the only one with a 4-wheel drive, and Bob Duncan raced ahead to bring it back along the fire trail. When they had not arrived Jim Percy ran back to see if they had been unable to cross the flooded Shoalhaven, in which case the stretcher would have to be carried on. Young Ivan Brown, who had done three trips up and down the ridge, pack carrying, and Michael Duncan lit a fire, water was fetched and tea was brewed, and as the bearers hove in sight, tea was waiting for them.

Then the waggon arrived. Wendy was carefully placed inside with Joan Cooper to comfort her, and so back to Emu Flat. Here the patient was transferred to Spiro's station waggon, there was a re-shuffle of passengers, the cars were pushed out over the wet grass to the road and one by one headed for home.

The whole trip was a great experience in comradeship and co-operation. The problem of accounting for 40 was lessened by making each car-driver responsible for his passengers, and only counting the drivers. Phil Butt went ahead as navigator. There were incredible sidles and compass course so accurate the mob came out exactly on target with no wasted time. Gordon Lee, Geoff Wagg and Bob Younger were whippers-in, and Donnie raced up and down the line like a young and eager pup in charge of a travelling flock. It was pretty to watch. This note of confidence was ably expressed by our Poet Laureate:

When Donnie Finch is leading we have no need to fear,
In order to enjoy the view he leads us from the rear.
If you are a prospective, you'd better watch your step,-
He took six out on his last walk and we haven't found them yet!

Having been on most of the Finch Easter trips I have come to expect faultless leadership, and this one was no exception.....lots of laughter, beautiful scenery, lovely people. and (after day 1) fine weather with blue skies and clean invigorating air. Need one ask why Bushwalkers bushwalk?

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TRACK NOTES

EASTER TRIP 1984.

by Don Finch.

(Brief description of route taken. Distances and grid references are all metric: heights as shown on face of maps: Reference maps KAIN, KRAWAREE and BURRUMBELA; contours on KAIN are shown in feet; on KRAWAREE and BURRUMBELA in metres.)

Friday, April 20.

Meeting place Gundillion Cemetery, ref KAIN 385432. Drove to old house marked "ruin" ref KRAWAREE 394397. Walked west via road junction ref 386397, grassy hill 377403 to unmarked fire trail 373405. Along fire trail to saddle KAIN 411366, along ridge to 367418, back to road to 370426, down ridge on magnetic east bearing to 380423, thence straight back to "ruin" house.

Saturday, April 21.

Crossed ford at KRAWAREE 396401, walked along unmarked road to 416404, continued on road to saddle KAIN 424409 and on to creek at KRAWAREE 436 398, then via Mulway Ridge to Turks Head (463384). Lunch at creek ref 466378, down ridge to Appletree Creek (477372) and back to campsite at 484378.

Sunday, April 22.

Along ridge bearing magnetic south to KRAWAREE 479362, and continue along ridge 485357 and to Cooranbene Mountain ref BURRUMBELA 495356. Further along ridge to 505355 and to spot height 387 (522363). To creek junction 528362 (lunch), crossed river on to lmarked track and followed track to Woolla (538365). Continued along track to Moodong Creek (547399) and up creek to road at 530394. Along road to 523382, and along unmarked road to 501384. Back to campsite over grassland, passing south of spot height 288 at 488381.

Monday, April 23.

From camp site over to Moodong Creek at KRAWAREE 480390, up creek on to KAIN map, to waterfall/cascade at 438421. Continue up creek to junction of Reedy Creek and Mulwelya Creek at 434426, and up Reedy Creek to lunch 432427. Up ridge to 429429, then to road at 425432. Along road to ford at 390422 and along road to cars at 388427.

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SOCIAL NOTES FOR JULY.

by Roger Browne.

- July 4 - Committee Meeting.
- July 11 - Slides by Anton Gillezeau from his five month trip through Asia, including a trek to Everest Base Camp.
- July 18 - A Singalong night. Learn some new songs, have a good time, and collect a free copy of a booklet of bushwalking songs to take with you on future walks.
DINNER before this meeting at the Casa de Sol Mexican Restaurant, 97 Willoughby Road. Meet outside at 6.30 pm. Late arrivals ask for the "Sydney Bushwalkers" table. BYO.
- July 25 - Arts and Crafts night. Bring samples of your art and craft work to show to others. You may offer them for sale if you wish, with 10% commission to the Club. There will also be a demonstrations of craft techniques. So bring your paintings, sculptures, T-shirt designs, creative photography, and (YES!) your home-made or modified bushwalking gear.

5TH AUSTRALIAN ROGAINING CHAMPIONSHIPS - AUGUST 11/12 '84.

STARTS: 1.00 pm. WHERE: Southern Tablelands of N.S.W. - about 2-3 hours drive.

TEAMS: 2,3 or 4 people. TRANSPORT: Private car or train or bus.

THE AREA is 30% grazing land, 70% open forest Topography is moderately complex, but relief is typically 100 metres.

FEES: \$12 per entrant (includes map and food for weekend)

ENTRY FORMS: Apply to Joan Cooper in the Clubroom, or ROGAINING, 5 Ellen Street, Randwick.2031.

ADVERTISEMENT.SHARE HOUSE - Own Room.

Lady wanted to share a house in beautiful Birchgrove overlooking the Oval. Must be a non-smoker. Rent \$50 per week.

Phone PETER MILLER - 818,1990.

PART-TIME WORK WANTED.

I am looking for part-time work as a handyman. Locks fitted, painting inside and outside (max. height 4 metres), paper hanging, carpentry, general house maintenance etc. Week-end work preferred.

Phone PETER MILLER - 818,1990.

GETTING OVER.

by Jim Brown.

One of the trips programmed for the King-sized Easter/Anzac holiday of 1984 was Peter Miller's walk from Mittagong to Katoomba via Mt. Colong, Axehead Range, and most points north. However in the deluge rains of Thursday and Good Friday the Wollondilly River flooded to about 3.5 metres, and the original project had to be abandoned. By all accounts the party managed to do some interesting alternative things, including a look at Beloon Pass, a.k.a. (also known as) Travis' Pass or The Getover.

Back about 1937 - some ten years before I became enslaved by S.B.W. - I bought my first copy of the Blue Mountains/Burraborang Tourist map and brooded spellbound over it. At that time the primitive black and white map drawn to a scale of 2 miles to the inch, was the only passably accurate diagram of most of the huge area between Oberon and the Nepean River, and from Bell's Line of Road to Wombeyan Caves. Later I was to learn that the dotted lines indicating "negotiable routes" had been added from the knowledge of early bushwalkers, supplemented by some information from farmers and other local bushmen.

Since my early walking had included some trips into the Burraborang Valley I was especially intrigued to see a "negotiable route" through the cliffs between the Wollondilly and Nattai Rivers, about a mile south of the trig point named "Beloon". I immediately wanted to investigate it, but it was only after I had leagued myself with the Club that I became bold enough to try it. In a way, I trapped myself into it, when one of my closest Club friends became Walks Secretary, and I volunteered to lead a trip reading "Mittagong - Burnt Flat Creek - Wollondilly River -" here I paused and in a moment of inspiration added - "Beloon Pass - Nattai River - Little River - Couridjah".

I was not to know at the time that some earlier S.B.W. had gone that way, and had provisionally called the gap in the cliffline "Travis Pass" after Jean Travis, one of the party. If you look at the Nattai 1:31680 map, first published about 1963-4, you'll find the creek leading down from the gap to the Nattai River is shown as "Travis Gully". Nor did I know at the time that locals called it "The Get-over". The name I used "Beloon Pass" was something plucked out of the air simply to identify the gap for the Walks Programme.

Having once put the trip on the programme, I had to do something about finding the pass on the ground. I enquired at Paddy's shop and in his archives he had some photographs showing what it looked like from the Nattai side. Next I organised a private reconnaissance walk and went off with five friends one bleak August weekend in 1947, taking a car out from Picton to the top of the road down Sheehy's Creek. We prowled up the Nattai and climbed into the various ridges and water courses and eventually became convinced we were on the right path, but with insufficient daylight left on the Saturday to go on up to the divide. Our tents had been left back along the Nattai, so we retreated.

Most of my nearest Club cronies were studying Diploma Courses at Technical Colleges and were unlikely to be walking in September/October/November during the hectic run-up to the annual examinations. Furthermore,

I had had the last of my natural teeth extracted and had to wait about a month before the false fangs would be available: a good time to shun human company it seemed. I decided to be ruthless with myself as well as toothless, and walked out from Picton one Friday night in September, reaching the Nattai River at Sheehy's Creek about midnight.

Saturday's stage was up the Nattai, into the ridges we had explored a few weeks earlier - and - a piece of cake - at 11.15 am I was on the gap. There was an empty brandy bottle right on the pass proving that someone had been there before. Then down to the Wollondilly for a toothless lunch of bread and milk, and that night a toothless dinner of stew in a tumbledown hut at Burnt Flat. Sunday's stage was the ascent of Burnt Flat Creek, then the trail across the paddocks to the Wombeyan Caves Road, and a weary 15-mile roadbash into Mittagong.

Two months later, now complete with teeth, I led the official walk. Since many of my mates were still examination-bound, we were a small party of four, and a taxi spared us the trudge along the Wombeyan Caves Road. Saturday saw us bolting down the Wollondilly, to make the top of the Getover from the western side at about 4.00 pm, and we camped that night as soon as we reached the Nattai. To get back to what passes as civilization we walked up Little River and Blue Gum Creek to Picton Lakes - this was a bit longer than the Sheehy's Creek route from the Nattai and compensated to some degree for our taxi ride on the Friday night.

Having now "got over" from both sides, I still found the pass beckoning me, and in August 1950 with another party of four came down from Couridjah, up the Nattai and over the pass. This was a more modest journey, however, and we were content to go down to Upper Burragorang to catch the Sunday afternoon bus back to Camden.

I now gave The Getover a rest for a few years, but in 1961, after the flooding of Burragorang, could not resist the temptation to see if it was still there. This time it formed part of a trip involving a certain amount of trespass, so I went solo and walked a lot of the distance on bush roads by a summer full moon. For the crossing of the Getover I left the Wollondilly at 5.00 am to "get over" before the February day heated up.

Shortly afterwards the new 1:31680 maps of the region became available, and I was startled to see the name "Beloon Pass" on the Nattai sheet. It looked as though the name I had coined had stuck. Not far away on the Nattai River also appeared "Colley's Flat" and "Brown's Flat". Well, I suppose Colley's Flat could be named for our Alex, but I'm pretty sure Brown's Flat has nothing to do with me - never even camped there. Of course, there are too many Browns, aren't there? But then, if you think about the late "Snow" Brown, his wife Clarrie; his brother John (Charlie) and wife Margaret; and more recently our new Social Secretary, Roger Browne, why maybe we really haven't had too many of 'em.

The next time to the Getover was Trip Number 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ - the half because I approached the pass along the divide between the Wollondilly and Nattai valleys, and dropped down on the western side only. I remember the date - October, 1966, because it was the weekend U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson visited Australia and the then P.M. invented the slogan "All the Way with L.B.J.".

Finally I went over the gap in February 1981. I won't tell you where I had been, because I shouldn't have been there. This time I crossed from the Wollondilly side, and had great bother in finding the pass. You'd think that, knowing what it looks like, one shouldn't have much trouble, but the notes on my Nattai map read "Wollondilly 12.45 pm - Getover 3.30 pm (hell, 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours!) - Nattai River 5.15 pm". I remember floundering around in quite dense scrub just below the cliff line for almost an hour before I spotted the gap - which was just where it ought to be just where it always has been..... just where it still is.....

So I'm not entirely surprised that the Easter 1984 contingent, without a detailed map of the locality, were not quite sure if they'd found Beloon Pass, a.k.a. Travis' Pass or THE GETOVER.

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NEWS OF NEIL SCHAFER.

A recent issue of a C.S.I.R.O. "Home Journal" contained the following news item:-

"MR. NEIL SCHAFER of the Division of Fossil Fuels in Sydney, recently won the men's over 56 years division of the Asia-Pacific Orienteering Championships held in the South Island of New Zealand. He defeated runners from Finland, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand. Move over Cliff Young."

Neil Schafer joined S.B.W. in 1951, and was very active over the ensuing 8 to 10 years. He is now a non-active member of the Club.

In an exclusive interview with our reporter he told us the New Zealand competition was held at a place called Naseby, near Dunedin. Neil said part of the course was over ground which had been mined in past years and was now covered with a heavy secondary pine forest. He had been delayed in negotiating this area and had believed he had lost all chance of completing the course in fast time, but apparently the other competitors had similar difficulties. Neil will leave Australia shortly to take part in orienteering contests in Europe, culminating in Sweden, the home of orienteering, where the last major championship produced 25,000 competitors, aged from 10 to over 70.

CONGRATULATIONS.

Tony Marshall and Marsha Durham have announced their engagement and will be getting married in September. Congratulations!

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THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

"FOR SERVICES TO CONSERVATION" - ALEX COLLEY, O.A.M.

In this year's Queen's Birthday Honours, our Conservation Secretary (and one of our two Honorary Active Members) Alex Colley was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (O.A.M.)

Of course, those who know Alex will be well aware that for more than 40 years he has given much time and effort to the cause of conservation, quite apart from the work he has put into his office with our Club.

NOTES ON COMMITTEE MEETING 6.6.84.

Two motions were passed by the meeting: "That this Committee recommend to the General Meeting that this Club purchase a second-hand offset printer, platemaker and fuser." "That this Committee recommend to the General Meeting that this Club accept the quotation of Redson Graphics dated 29.5.84."

The following new members were welcomed - please add to your List of Members:-

RANNARD, Ian, 56 Eastern Valley Way, Northbridge, 2063.	Tel. 958,1514
RANNARD, Timothy, " " " " " "	" "
REYNOLDS, Michael, 27/90 Cambridge Street, Stanmore, 2048	560,0291
BORE, Laurie, 6 James Street, Ingleburn, 2565	605,9368

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AT THE GENERAL MEETING, 13.6.84.

At the General Meeting it was resolved to purchase a reconditioned offset printer, plus platemaking equipment (copier and fuser) as offered by Redson Supplies at \$2,800.

ADVANTAGES OF OFFSET PRINTER.

1. Replaces a worn out duplicator which uses an out-of-date printing process.
2. Our paper needs to be re-ordered shortly and standard sizes will be available to us at cheaper rates.
3. Photos, line drawings, maps etc. are possible.
4. Using these photos etc a better magazine presentation is possible.
5. The proposed package gives a chance to make corrections and effect layout changes at plate making.
6. Improved paper quality is possible.
7. Repeated runs can be held on metal plates.
8. One time runs are to be done on paper "throw away" plates at about 35c each.
9. Printing our own covers is possible.
10. Standardisation of covers and content of magazine, walks programmes and other reports to post office requirements means a cheaper postage rate is possible.
