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 # THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER *#*
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A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers,
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JULY, 1984.

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JUST A PLEASANT SUNDAY STROLL.

by Ronald Knightley.

All of us thirty-six low quality, one-day walkers (we will never forget you, Spiro) who followed, led or deviated from Ainslie Morris on her walk down Lawson's Long Alley and up Cox's road in May had a lesson in history without tears, as well as a most enjoyable day on these two Crown Lands Office historical nature walks.

On the Mount York road just 1 km beyond its turnoff from the Great Western Highway, we assembled at the "track head" of Lawson's Long Alley. You cannot miss it as you drive along the bitumen - signposts, parking, bbqs, obelisk and no toilets. Ladies uphill and men down hill, the trees are big enough to hide behind if you are skinny.

We commenced with an introductory lecture from Ainslie, who explained that Lawson was not Larsen. In a tent near Grenfell in 1867, Peter Larsen late of Norway begat a son, Henry, who later changed his name to Lawson by deed poll. But he was not the hero of Lawson's Long Alley. He did not even write poems about it when he and not it became famous.

No; we are talking of the Lawson of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson who crossed the Blue Mountains in 1813, scrambling down Mt. York and into the Vale of Clwydd. Our Lawson was Lieut. William Lawson of the Royal Veteran Company - soldier, explorer, landed gentleman and road builder.

When the trio came back to Sydney town and reported on their western findings, L. Macquarie Esq., as the governor of the day, instigated swift follow-ups. Surveyor General George Evans - he of Evans' Lookout - was despatched to push the exploration further westward, crossing the main divide near present-day Marangaroo and reporting that beyond lay "excellent land with the best grass I have ever seen; it might be mowed, it is so long".

Based on his reports, Macquarie commissioned William Cox J.P., magistrate of Windsor, he of Cox's River fame, to build a road all the way "from Emu Plains across the Blue Mountains to the open plains west of them, lately discovered by Mr. Evans." For the purpose, Mr. Cox was allotted 30 artificers and labourers and a guard of 8 soldiers. Moreover, the governor issued a formal proclamation making it illegal for "idle people" to cross the Nepean River without his written authority while the work was in progress. He would have no weekend traffic jams developing during his roadworks, by golly.

Cox's journal makes fascinating reading, with pithy little pars like "A clear, beautiful morning. All hands at work at 5 o'clock." "The stone on the mountain is uncommon hard and flinty." "Carpenter got 100 posts split and 200 rails for fencing the road down the mountain."

"The mountain" was Mt. York; and the forcing of the road down it was two months of rain-filled misery to the builders, from mid-November 1814 to mid-January 1815. They were rewarded by reports that the 1-in-4 grade was too steep; laden carts would never get back up it.

Indeed, one Lieut. Breton later reported that going downhill "the inclination was so rapid that the carriers were in the habit of attaching to the drags a large log or billet of wood, as for example a trunk of a

tree". I had visions of Dot Butler running down Danae Brook on a Tiger walk.

Again, Macquarie wasted no time. On 25 April 1815, exactly 100 years before Gallipoli and 7 weeks before Waterloo, he was off with Mrs., numerous "gentlemen" and sundry "other people" to traverse the whole length of the new road. His journal for Sunday 7 May 1815 reads, "After breakfast, all the gentlemen and other people assembled for divine service; but previous thereto they were all mustered for the purpose of witnessing the christening of the new intended town on the beautiful spot, which I accordingly named Bathurst in honour of the noble Earl of that name, now His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies". One can almost see him genuflecting at the mere breath of his illustrious superior's name; and overlooking that Evans had called it the Bathurst Plains the year before.

At the sametime, Macquarie reported, "The Governor has here to lament that neither coals nor limestone have yet been discovered in the western country..... the want of them must be severely felt whenever the country shall be settled." He could not know of the future cement works at Portland, the coal of Lithgow nor the ubiquitous kerosene shale of the western valleys.

Lieut. Lawson waited not for the country to develop, for in December 1821, Deputy Surveyor General Meehan reported surveying "1000 acres for Wm. Lawson Esq. at Macquarie Plains on the south side of the Fish River". Unhappy at the grades on Cox's road, Lawson built an alternative down the flanks of the Mt. York ridge, taking advantage of a long narrow valley, or "alley", between it and the scarp to its north (the Darling Causeway, which carries the Mt. Victoria - Bell Road and the railway).

By 1830, commuting between Sydney and the west had reached such a volume that Governor Bourke commissioned two improvements: a more gradual road up the Lapstone hill and a third road on Mt. York. For the western detour, Major Edmund Lockyer was commissioned - that same Lockyer who saved Western Australia from settlement by the French.

But alas, poor Lockyer. That great public service innovator, unhandicapped by mock modesty, Surveyor General Sir Thomas Mitchell, happened along, called it off and attacked Mt. Victoria instead. He achieved a grade of 1-in-5. Mt. York and its roads thereupon became history, as also did the inn established by Pierce Collitts in Hartley Vale at its foot.

In May, we followed in Ainslie's footsteps down the eucalypt groves of Mt. York and through the grassy flats of the long alley. The Lands Office track, following generally on Lawson's route, is about the standard of the well-known Six-Foot Track of the Megalong and is clearly but unostentatiously marked all the way.

After our lunch at the picnic reserve in Hartley Vale, we were introduced to the old shale works and the shafts in the scarp above the remains of the township.

While Barbara Evans posed kodachromatically for me beside some earthworks of an old mine tramway, Ben Esgate charged up the hill to the crowning cliffs, returning with enthusiastic stories of mine shafts, angle wheels, and the breach in the cliffs formed by the old railway which once went right to the main line on the causeway above.

When Lawson's men were carving his road into the valley, they discovered a seam of what they thought was coal. Samples sent to Sydney evoked no excitement and the seam was forgotten. However, when one Henry Buckley Esq. sent a sample to the Paris Exhibition in 1854, some excitement began to gestate. And it gestated for eleven years before, in 1865, the "Kerosene Oil and Paraffine Co. Ltd." was formed. The shale was mined, not from the seam discovered by Lawson's men, but from higher grade seams across the alley and even below its floor.

The construction of Mitchell's road with its easy grades enabled the haulage of raw shale and refined products to markets in Sydney, via the railhead at Penrith. On return, the carriers backhauled materiel for the refineries which the Company was building in the Vale. The ore was rich, yielding 160 gallons of crude to the ton.

Hartley Vale, fallen into a decline since the Mt. York roads departed to Mt. Victoria, was rejuvenated under the name of Petrolea. A second company, "Western Oil Co. Ltd." commenced operations and Petrolea grew to accommodate over 600 people.

By 1868 the western railway was officially opened to Mt. Victoria, while an unopened extension had already reached Bowenfels. To reduce the costs of haulage of its shale (its refineries were in Waterloo in distant Sydney) the Western company constructed a metre-gauge railway up the slopes and through the cliffs to the main line. Because of the richness of the various strata in the hillsides, both companies started to go broke (though their directors continued to live in mansions), so in 1871 they decided to rationalise through amalgamation. From this, the "New South Wales Shale and Oil Co. Ltd." was formed.

Candles, naphtha, kerosene and miscellaneous lubricating oils were produced, reaching markets in Australia, San Francisco, India, China and Europe. The kerosene was marketed as "Comet Oil, the bottled sunshine of Australia". The original little Aussie bottler!

Shale mining ceased in 1903; and although the Commonwealth Oil Corporation (of Newnes fame) moved in in 1906, they too were gone in 1909.

A decline again set in; Petrolea reverted to Hartley Vale; and peace reigned over the glades until we arrived.

Thanks, Ainslie, it was a most pleasant interlude, even if we did have to walk back up that too-steep road pioneered by William Cox. It was quite a pleasant grade, I thought; but then, I am not a horse and cart.

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF WALK DATES.

WENTWORTH FALLS - Leader: IAN DEBERT. Changed from weekend of 10,11,12 August to 3, 4, 5 August next.

SO, WE'VE MADE IT!

by Jim Brown.

Yes, we've made it! We're in the Dictionary.

At the end of a very easy day walk, in the pale westering sunlight of a late April day, I asked new prospective member Beryl Barnes, "How did you find your first walk with the Club?" She acknowledged to being a little tired, but said it had been a lovely day.

Putting on my elder inhabitant's hat, I suggested it would be wise to start with two or three day walks on tracks to build up confidence and strength. I added, "Some of our trips go straight through the bush, you know. That makes it a bit harder. After all, we were on tracks all through today".

Beryl said, "I wondered if the Club did trips like that?" And I answered, "That's probably the real meaning of 'bush walking'. You don't always stay on formed trails". This led, quite naturally, to the comment that the term "bushwalking" first came into being when our Club in December, 1927, decided to call itself "The Sydney Bush Walkers", on a motion moved by Maurice Berry.

Before that, of course, there had been the Mountain Trails Club, and they certainly didn't do all their walking on trails. But the term "bushwalking" was coined when our Club adopted its name.

Considering how often the Australian media now refers to "bushwalkers" and "bushwalking", I began to wonder if we had yet broken into the dictionaries. I looked up my Concise Oxford, and bearing in mind that it's a Pommy production, it is really very good. It covers "bushranger" and "bushwhacker" and even gives "bushed" as the Australian and New Zealand term for being lost or baffled. But it doesn't mention "bushwalking".

Then I wondered if the Macquarie Dictionary, published a few years ago by an Australian University team, would do justice to us. I had a "Scotchman's read" of a copy of the Macquarie Dictionary in a City book shop, and there it was -

"Bush walking: The sport of making one's way on foot through the bush, often on tracks designed for this, but sometimes for longer periods through virgin terrain" not a bad definition of our game.

Well, there we are, we've made it.

No, that's not quite right. The term "bush walking" has made it.

But to my mind WE'VE HAD IT MADE for almost 57 years.

"A BUSH WALKER'S LITANY".

by John Baillie.

(Tom Herbert, who joined S.B.W. in 1929, and was President from March 1934 to March, 1936, was recently transferred to the list of Honorary Members. In addition to his activities with the Club, Tom was a foundation member and first President of the River Canoe Club of N.S.W. and an early President of the N.S.W. Federation of Bush Walking Clubs. At an early Club Reunion he discovered "THE BONE" and invested the incoming President with this Mace of Office, which has since been associated with the inauguration of S.B.W. Presidents and is on the desk at every General Meeting. Tom has expressed his "best wishes for the continued progress of a grand Club", and enclosed with his letter the following verses:-)

Forbid that I should walk
through Thy beautiful world
with unseeing eyes;

Forbid that the lure of the
market-place should ever
entirely steal my heart
away from the love of the
open acres and the green trees;

Forbid that under the low roof
of workshop or office or study
I should ever forget Thy great
over arching sky;

Forbid when all Thy creatures
are greeting the morning with songs
and shouts of joy
I alone should wear a dull
and sullen face.

Let the energy and vigour
which in Thy wisdom
Thou has infused into every
living thing stir today
within my being that I
may not be among
Thy creatures a sluggard
and a drone;

And above all give me grace
to use these beauties of earth
and this eager stirring of life
within me as means whereby
my soul may rise
from creature to creator
and from nature to nature's God.

* * * * *

SNAPSHOTS.

by Geof Wagg.

(These are my snapshots of Barry Wallace's trip of 11/12/13 May from Kanangra, over Cloudmaker and Tiwilla and up Gingra Ridge.)

1. This is Wendy and Don and me in the car on Friday night, going back down Kanangra Road looking for the rest of the party. Don has got his map out and put on his glasses. Wendy is trying to look interested and stifling a yawn. We had just decided to introduce a bit of fact into the debate.
2. Here we are at Budthingaroo on Saturday morning and you can see it's a bit nippy. Barry is bustling around in shorts and goose pimples setting a good example. That's David (a visitor) packing up his marvellous, but heavy, tent which Barry persuaded him to leave behind. Morag and I are balancing billies on the fire while Don ponders the eternal problem of whether to make tea in his egg water and while Wendy ponders the eternal problem of getting the loose feathers back into her sleeping bag. The reason David is looking slightly perplexed is because someone has just asked him if his previous walks were with a club or with friends!?! Above all you can ~~see~~ the sky is miraculously clear.
3. This is our whole party together at last and out on Kanangra Plateau. John Newman and his nephew Ron, whose pack is even taller than he is, whom we met at the Kanangra car park. Then there's Don (Tiger) Matthews; Barry calls this trio the Don, John, Ron Show. Then there's Morag Rider in complete bushwalking attire, David our visitor in rather new looking boots. "But broken in," he says. Then Wendy Aliano in regulation geology department issue field hat complete with flannel flower badge still gleaming with newness. Next our leader, Barry Wallace, smiling into his beard and accepting due credit for choosing such a magnificent morning and then me. Behind us you can see Kanangra and Kalang Falls glinting in their gullies.
4. And here looking the other way you see our route set out, each stage defined by distance but crystal clear. Beyond Kanangra Plateau, Crafts Walls dipping to Gabes Gap, then up the High and Mighty to Cloudmaker with the cliffs of Tiwilla Plateau crowding in on the right hand. Beyond again lies the sea of mist rising out of the Kowmung and Cox river valleys. Nearer to us on the Kanangra side, long fingers of the low sunlight stream through dips in the ridge line to lie as gently as a lover's hand on the curving flanks of the mountain. That scuffle going on in the foreground is Barry saving Wendy from worrying about keeping her new white sandshoes clean; by coating them with mud, naturally.
5. Here we are sitting in Gabes Gap by that old fireplace and the yellow everlasting daisies, doing a patch up job on David's first blister. Ron is doing the work, Morag is advising and Barry is supervising. The rest of us are just soaking up sunshine.
6. This was a coincidence. We arrived at Cloudmaker trig just as the Three Peaks party was moving off. Jim Percy, Tom Wenman, Jim Laing and Ian Rannard look fit and rearing to go as you can see but were missing David Rostron and Spiro who had returned with a companion who was taken ill.

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7. Here we are on Tiwilla immersed in scratchiness from the waist down as we skirt the northern edge of the plateau. Wendy, whose shin is still tender from her Easter 'trip' is contemplating walking in cricket pads. Don, whose shirt suffered lacerations in an earlier scrub patch and was consoled by Morag with offers to sew him back into it, is now having similar trouble with his shorts!?!
 8. Now here we are grappling with the climbing aids in Compagnoni's Pass. Barry, Wendy, Morag and David have grappled and are safely down. Don, whose head is disappearing below is grappling and is muttering uncomplimentary things about the lack of facilities for left-handed climbers. John, Ron and I are waiting above feeling glad we're right-handed.
 9. Here you see us in the scrub at the foot of the pass. It is clear that our beautiful and gentle day is fading fast and there's a lot of ridge between us and Gingra Creek. We might be looking a bit hangdog but when our leader suggested we might like to camp on the ridge we took the hint and put our best feet forward.
 10. This is our camp on Gingra Creek, with magical moonbeams radiating down from a mystical moon, mingling in the tops of the silhouetted river oaks with the quantities of steam and smoke given off by the rather damp wood on our fire. It makes the trees seem even more gigantic than they are and certainly gives the place a lot of atmosphere. Barry has reached the port stage, Wendy is into the Baileys and has just made Don's evening by sharing some with him. David has astonished us by producing an enormous pair of Ugh boots from his pack and is now lounging in them by the fire. Morag is sitting with her feet tucked up looking as neat and contented as a cat. John and Ron, however, are still labouring with their cuisine. It must be the 24 herbs and spices.
 11. This was next morning at the foot of the Gingra Ridge. You can see it's another perfect morning, clear and bright. That long pool on the upstream side of the ridge is returning immaculate image reflections of the casuarinas on its brink, and by that log you can just make out a pair of ducks. Over there the photographers are jostling each other for the best positions but it's hard for yours truly being the photogenic foreground. "Stand up!" "Sit down!" "Lie down!" "No, go forward six feet!" That would put me waist deep in the Kwung.
 12. This is us climbing Gingra Ridge. It's hot and still and sweat is running off the end of my nose like water over Kanangra Falls. Barry is out of sight in front with David (whose blisters don't seem to slow him down) glued to his heels. You can just glimpse the two girls between the trees, going like rockets with Morag religiously counting the bumps on the ridge and ticking them off on her map. Just a little further back comes the Don, John, Ron Show.
 13. Here we are at our well earned 'slightly after lunch break' on the cliffs above the Coal Seam Cave at Storm Stallion Point. It is the most languorous moment of a languid, golden afternoon. The rest of the world seems so far away it's hard to believe it exists. Just this group of friends, this rock, this sunshine, these ridges going on forever into the sky..... Then the billy boiled and brought us back to earth.

14. This is us sitting in Rene's Pizza Palace in Katoomba Street, all crammed round one table and half filling the dining area. We're eating communal pizzas with utmost relish. The reason Don has that strange look on his face is that he thinks he's just lost the cap off his tooth and he is trying to find out if he's swallowed it. We gave him a reduction on account of the handicap.

Oh well, that's all - perhaps next walk I'll remember to take my camera.

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THE PADDY PALLIN FOUNDATION.
1984 GRANTS

Robert Pallin, Trustee.

This year a large number of applications were received, most for worthwhile causes. The committee considered two points should be made in reference to applications.

1. The Foundation is not a welfare organisation.
2. The Foundation's main aim is to encourage the rucksack sports. It is seen by the committee that the main contribution the Foundation can make is to supply funds for the preservation of areas where the rucksack sports are carried out and to encourage the spread of knowledge of our wilderness areas.

This year the committee allocated funds to the following organisations. Funds are made available as either grants or loans. Loans are considered to be unsecured and interest free. The committee considers loans to be a better use of funds and therefore gives preference to applications for loans. Some projects will not generate funds to repay a loan and this is taken into account.

AUSTRALIAN TRUST FOR CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

Grant \$1000

This organisation supplies teams of volunteers to landholders for conservation work that is not economically viable. This money will purchase most of the supplies needed for one team.

THE COLONG COMMITTEE

Loan \$2000

Publication of a book "How the Rauiforest was Saved". It is hoped this publication will help other conservationists in planning campaigns.

THE TASMANIAN CANOEISTS ASSN. & PEDAL POWER

Loan \$2000

A loan was approved to help publish "Canoeists's Guide to Tasmania" and "Cyclists's Guide to Tasmania". It is intended that one be published in June and the other in September.

FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS (N.S.W.)

Grant \$ 500

To print a leaflet "Ethics of Bushwalking"

NATIONAL PARKS ASSN. (N.S.W.)

Grant \$1000

To publish a leaflet on proposed extensions to Barrington National Park.

TASMANIAN WILDERNESS SOCIETY (ALBURY-WODONGA)

Grant \$ 500

Portable display equipment for a campaign for a Victorian Alpine National Park.

TASMANIAN WILDERNESS SOCIETY (TAS.)

Grant \$1000

Production of a professional quality audio-visual presentation for the Daintree area.

FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS (N.S.W.) S. & R. SECTION

Grant \$1500

To enable S. & R. to print:

1. A calendar and safety pamphlet.
2. A call-out manual.
3. A trip preparation safety leaflet.

THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY (N.S.W.)

Loan \$5000

National Campaign for Wilderness.

To help cover pre-production costs of a T.V. series "Places of Space and Quiet".

Grant \$1000

Audio-Visual production for the campaign to save the Daintree rainforest area.

The committee would like to thank all applicants and wish all well in their projects whether we were able to supply funds or not.

MCDONNELL RANGES - 1984.

by David Rostron.

Following publication of Frank Rigby's and Henry Gold's fascinating book, I had the urge to experience the Ranges myself. This desire was heightened by the tales of those members who have also visited the area. However, the recommended walking period, from May to August/September, coincides with the ski season and I could never seem to get myself organised to have both experiences in the one year.

One of my 1984 resolutions was to cease procrastination. As a result 1/6/84 found 10 of us at Mascot Airport, bound for Alice Springs. The party was as follows:

Heather Finch, Wendy Lippiat, Fusae Dargan, Ray Dargan, Bob Duncan, Tom Wenman, Spiro Hajinakitas, Ray Hookway, Bill Caskey (visitor) David Rostron (leader).

We had previously decided to have an exploratory type trip in the area between Standley Chasm and Hugh Gorge, to the west. This is the area favoured by previous parties, as opposed to the west end of the range around Mts. Giles and Sonder. Another trek considered was from Ormiston Gorge to Mt. Giles and then east along the Chewings Range to Hugh Gorge, finishing at Standley Chasm. However, in the mid section, over about 30 km, there is some doubt about water and the terrain is less interesting.

We arrived at Alice Springs on schedule at 12.25 pm - a pleasant, windy day with a temperature of 25°C. We dropped off our minor luggage at the Telford Motel in the centre of Alice Springs and then proceeded by mini-bus (Arura Safaris) to the drop off point on Namitjira Drive, about 40 minutes travelling time from Alice Springs. We had a charming bus driver, Del, who was sorely tempted to abandon the vehicle and join us.

We headed up a dry creek bed, through a gap in the Heavitree Range and then across the plain towards the Chewings Range and the west end of Mt. Conway. We walked 6-7 kms, stopping after about 2 hours at a gap between Mt. Conway and a small pinnacle to the west. There were three pools of water in the creek bed at the gap, although we had carried water for a possible dry camp. As it was then 4.30 pm, and we were suffering from first day heavy packs, it was an appropriate time to stop.

The camp site turned out to be typical of those we had for the trip - on the sand of the creek/river beds with the party members selecting a variety of scattered locations. One of the delights of the McDonnell Ranges in June is the weather - deep blue skies and glorious starry nights with no dew. On only two days/nights did we have cloud and there was never any likelihood of rain. As a result, the flies we took were never put up. In any event, erection would have required many rocks to secure the guys.

For the first night we had the dinner delight of chicken a la Hajinakitas and boiled new potatoes. Heather insisted on climbing the pinnacle (about 100 m in height) for a sunset dinner and she was joined by most of the party.

I had expected scenes similar to those in Frank and Henry's book -

with reds, golds and browns dominating. However, in the last year, the area had three heavy falls of rain - from 10" to 16" at a time - and the locals now call it the Green (instead of Red) Centre. It had last rained in about February and although the red rock is adominant landscape feature, the remainder comprised shades of green and some light yellow - grass drying off. The scene for the sunset dinner was magical as the rocks of the Heavitree Range to the south changed from a sun-bleached red to a dull glow.

The next morning set the pattern for the trip. Spiro was first up at first light (6.30 am) and had a fire going in a minute. A leisurely breakfast of porridge and sultanas followed and then we were usually away by about 9.00 am. (As this was a holiday for all, we set no definite starting-finishing times, except on the 9th day.)

We headed north through the gap into the east-west valley beyond and then east for 2 km to a canyon we had sighted from the pinnacle on the previous evening.

The gorges and small canyons are the jewels of this area. The spinifex tends to discourage one from climbing the ridges, summits and faces, and the easiest travelling is usually in the creek and river beds. As a result, most canyons we sighted were explored. Invariably the waterfalls were dry and the mainly rough quartzite provided excellent foot and hand holds for scrambling. There is a great variety of vegetation in these canyons and many of the small bedrock pools contained water.

Our first canyon was quite steep, with only two dry falls and two small pools. This took us out onto the tops with views of Mt. Conway and the Hogs Back. Then it was over two low saddles to the base of Jerry's Canyon (named after a Club member, Jerry Zinzig). Two waterfalls in the lower section cannot be negotiated with packs and a high sidle on the northern ridge took us back into the canyon. Shortly afterwards we encountered another dry waterfall with an overhanging chockstone. We managed to shoulder Spiro up and after he determined there were no more camp sites in the next 500 m, we called it a day, at 3.15 pm.

Sleeping spots were scratched out in the sand and gravel of the canyon. The more enthusiastic filled their beds with leaves and grass. We then enjoyed a leisurely "happy hour", primed by a rum and lemon drink and then a great night of dining, repartee (the jokes were shockers) and singing followed. We were fortunate to have two good singers, Bob and Tom, with us.

The next day we negotiated the most interesting part of Jerry's Canyon - four small dry waterfalls - and then ^{one} of about 20 m. The route up the face of this fall was straightforward. The north east branch of the canyon led us onto the south ridge of the Hogs Back. Views from the summit to the east and north were expansive, with the peaks near Alice Springs (50 km) being visible. A steep descent to the north took us into a western valley, which we followed for about 2 km to the foot of a canyon we had sighted. There was a spring at valley level. We hoped the canyon would provide access to the hanging valley which appeared to run along the southern side of Brinkley Bluff (3,932 feet and the high peak of the area).

The canyon was an absolute delight - about nine dry waterfalls, quite enclosed and narrow - a cross between Galong Creek and Claustal Canyon. It was negotiated without too much difficulty and we headed west again, carrying water. From the top of the Hogs Back it had appeared as though the canyon and hanging valley drained the entire south side of Brinkley Bluff. We had hoped to cross the west saddle and descend to the river at Stuarts Pass. However, we then found there are three hanging valleys and of course, three saddles to cross. The canyon draining the second valley was another gem. Some of us descended four falls to the top of a 50' fall - slippery slide.

With heavy packs, we began to tire in the third hanging valley but there was no suitable camp site so we pressed on to Stuarts Pass - a further 2 km and a drop of about 1,000 feet. There were large pools of water in the sandy river bed and as it had been a warm afternoon, no one could resist plunging in. The river was not flowing but the water quality was good.

The next morning we saw our first dingoes - three came within about 80 metres, scrutinised us carefully and then retreated with dignity. We headed west along the river flats, passing many corkwood trees (hakea) in bloom and one received full photographic attention. A Major Mitchell parrot objected to our presence at the morning tea stop below a large river gum. The bird life on the plains, adjacent to the range, was generally prolific, with a great variety of finches and parrots.

Further west we entered an unnamed north-south gorge which cuts almost through the range. Here the vegetation was similar to N.S.W. with melaluca, cyprus, gums, etc in the river bed. From the northern end, we took a west valley to a saddle and then descended a very scrubby gully over about 2 km to Spencer's Gorge. A few delightful pools encouraged some to swim. Spiro made a magnificent damper that night - to celebrate his birthday on the following day.

The next morning, Tom was the only one brave enough to swim the last two pools in the gorge to gain access to the southern plains. He claimed the water was "warm" but we were not convinced.

We headed north in Spencer's Gorge and then followed two east-west valleys to Hugh Gorge - one of the highlights. This is 3-4 km in length with the northern end comprised of red rock walls about 800 feet in height, rising straight from the water. The gorge here was 10' to 30' wide with some deep pools. The water was definitely icy and there was only some very brief swimming - almost walking on water.

Heather and I managed to sidle along these walls for a further 200 m but as the next section was of fingernail climbing standard, we retreated. Tom, Spiro and Wendy tried the same sidle but at the first bend, involving some awkward manoeuvring, Tom took an involuntary plunge in deep water - for his third wash of the day. This discouraged the others and we retreated to a good campsite about 1 km to the south. The setting, with this part of the valley being partly ringed by red cliff lines, up to 1,000 feet above us, was magnificent.

That night, at about midnight, we were treated to our first dingo howls. To be woken to a high pitched, piercing wail (almost human) which

continued for 1-2 minutes, was one of the most eerie experiences of my life. Heather was heard to say, "Oh, my God". Ray Hookway responded, "I feel sick. Will we light the fire?" However, they remained in their sleeping bags. The howling and some grunting continued on and off during the night, with some dingoes coming within about 30 metres. Understandably, some of the party didn't sleep too well that night.

Ray, in fact, did have a stomach wog the next morning and we did not move off until about 11.00 am, heading south. The gorge was a series of pools and dry river bed sections. Lunch was enjoyed on a sandy pool beach and then 5 minutes later, we came upon a superb campsite, near the southern exit. A sandy flat, river gums, pool and red rock wall on the other side created one of nature's masterpieces and could not be passed.

To make amends for the 5 minute walk after lunch, most of the party ascended 1,000 feet to a ridge and pinnacle, which provided extensive views south, over the Alice Valley, to the Heavitree Range. Four of us, at Heather's insistence (and how can one say "No" to a woman), dropped down a steep face and ridge to another creek and explored a small canyon we had sighted. Here the waterfalls were running. We ascended about 200 feet up a number of waterfalls to a hanging valley beyond the canyon and then returned to the creek (more running water) and camp.

That evening, a number of dingoes came to within about 30 metres of the camp fire and we were again treated to a night of howling, although they were not as vocal as on the previous night.

The next morning we were off onto the southern plain. This was the only location where a fireplace or some evidence of a previous camp was sighted. We now headed east, back towards Standley Chasm. After about 1½ km we stopped to explore another canyon. This also contained running waterfalls and we went into it for about 500 m to a hanging valley. Then it was east again for lunch at the south end of Spencer's Gorge. Tom, Bill and Bob were the only ones with the necessary fortitude to swim the pools at the southern end, whilst the weak spirited (or old or sensible or something) struggled over the first ridge and dropped into the gorge upstream of the pools.

This was the only section of the trip where we retraced our steps - we headed north in Spencer's Gorge to gain access to the northern plain. We had another delightful campsite in the gorge with the only howl that evening being Bob's imitation of a dingo. A strong wind blew up and I awoke early in the morning to see our first clouds for the trip (eighth day). We headed out to the southern plain and from a saddle had great views of Brinkley Bluff and the range to the east. In the morning light, all the purple shades so evident in Namitjira's painting were apparent.

The cloud cleared but it remained cool and windy - a maximum temperature of about 17° C that day. We made good time along numerous horse trails (brumbies are in abundance on the plains and open valleys). We reached Stuarts Pass for lunch and then returned to our campsite of a few days beforehand. There was no swimming that day as strong winds gusted through the pass.

The next morning saw our earliest start - 8.00 am - for the climb

of Brinkley Bluff. On this morning we found a spring with a considerable flow of water near the base of the north-west ridge. Six of the party climbed this ridge (about 2,000' vertical) whilst four of us climbed the adjacent canyon/gully. This involved some great scrambling and it was necessary to leave the gully at times to sidle chockstones and some verticals. However, most of the dry waterfalls provided exhilarating climbing and we emerged onto the face about 200' below the summit.

It had been 2° C - 3° C that morning and a cool south-west wind confronted us on the summit. This discouraged a lengthy stop and then we began the traverse of the summit ridge to the east. This was about 4 km in length. Views in all directions were fantastic. Lunch was enjoyed just below the ridge top, out of the wind, and after almost reaching the saddle below the Hogs Back we dropped down a steep northern ridge to a gully and began searching for campsites. The only suitable one was below Surprise Waterfall (dry) where Frank Rigby has camped before.

The cool south-west wind with some high cirrus cloud continued for the next two days. Overnight temperatures were 2° C - 3° C, and maximums about 17° C - delightful walking weather. We were within 5 km of our finishing point and spent the next day exploring the complex system of ridges and valleys in that area, ending up at Standley Chasm and wading through the chest deep pool to the tourist area. Ray Hookway was the only one with money and ventured to the kiosk, returning with Chery Ripes for the girls. We never did learn of his reward.

On our last day, eight of the party ascended to a ridge we had not traversed before and followed this for 5 - 6 km to finish on the road south of Standley Chasm. Bill and Ray took the valley route to finish with wades through the pools. Civilisation was a rude shock after eleven days of a wilderness experience. However, in the motel that night, the mood mellowed, with some great wining and dining, which for some seemed to turn into an eating competition. The most ardent Pritikin fan, Ray Dargan, ate the most rubbish.

It was a sad group which parted company at Mascot the next night.

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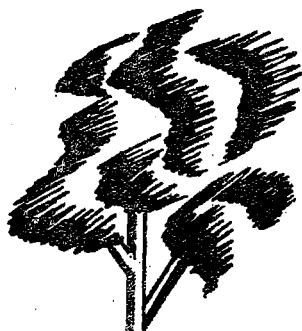
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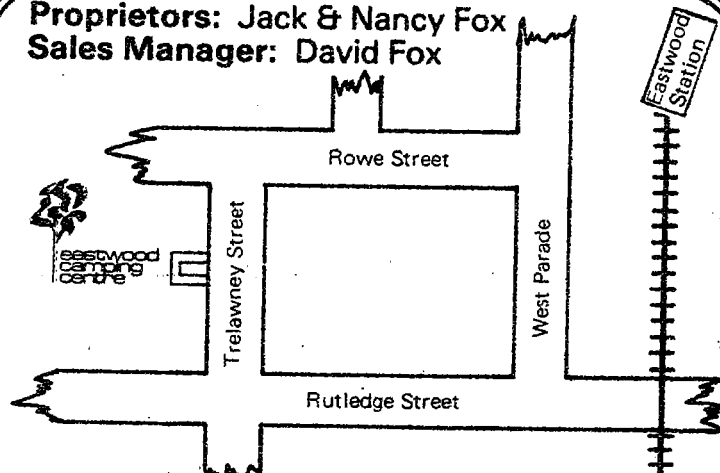
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THE JUNE GENERAL MEETING. by Barry Wallace.

(These meeting notes were posted in Perisher Valley and came with a covering letter saying "..... I am presently held prisoner in a ski lodge, with poor ski-ing cond tions and a crew of extroverts, trainee drunks and card sharps. Best wishes, Barry Wallace." Thanks, Barry.)

The meeting began at around 2015 with some 30 or so members present and the President in the chair. There was one apology, from Spiro Hajinakitas. New members Timothy Rannard, Ian Rannard, Laurie Bore and Michael Reynolds were welcomed with constitution, badge and applause.

The Minutes were read and received with no business arising. Correspondence brought a letter to Tom Herbert advising his transfer to Honorary Membership, and from the responsible Minister, T. Sheehan, regarding membership of Advisory Committees for National Parks.

Then it was the Treasurer's turn to regale us with tales of monetary splendour. It seems we began the quarter with \$2532.04, had expenditures of \$2103.88, income of \$3402.20, and ended up with \$3830.36.

All of which brought us to the Walks Report. Although only the May walks were reported at the meeting, this report includes the March and April walks.

The Reunion has been more fully reported in an earlier issue, but just for the record it was held over the 16,17,18 March with 70 to 80 people in attendance and Spiro won the damper competition again. Ralph Pengliss led one of his Sydney Harbour walks that same weekend. It was reported as a pleasant walk with 5 members, 2 visitors and 3 prospectives.

The following weekend, 24,25,26 March saw some cancellations due to some rather wet weather. Peter Miller and Frank Woodgate owned up, but of George Walton's Kanangra walk there was no report. The two day trips, Brian Bolton's Bundeena to Sutherland with a party of 20, and Roy Braithwaite's Cowan to Brooklyn with an unspecified party size, reported rains and mud.

Peter Harris had 12 starters on his Wollangambe Crater walk over the 31 March-1 April weekend. They reported scrub, gullies and ants. There was no mention of happy hours, but they did say that it was a good weekend. Bill Capon reported 20 people plus (?) Vic Lewin on his Yalwal trip over 30,31 March, 1 April. Of the All Fools Day walks, Jim Brown's Springwood/ Glenbrook Creek walk had 17 members, 2 visitors, and 8 prospectives on a beautiful walk, and Peter Christian reported 6 members, 1 visitor, "and a good time was had by all".

Peter Miller cancelled his Megalong Valley walk for 6,7,8 April, but John Redfern led his Goulburn River National Park trip with a party of 13. Sandy Johnson had a party of 20 people and a long walk in the rain around Erskine Creek on the 8th of April. George Mawer had 13 people and a rainy but beautiful walk in Grand Canyon, Blackheath the same day.

The weekend of 13,14,15 April saw Joan Cooper with 15 people on a great walk in the Budawangs. Peter Christian's walk brought no report. Paul Mawhinney led 12 people on his Otford to Waterfall walk on Sunday,

.....

15th April. John Newman probably led his Bundeena to Otford walk on 15th April and there were probably around 15 people on it in fine, sunny weather.

The Easter weekend started with heavy rain. Don Finch's Shoalhaven River walk saw the 40 starters having some early problems with excess water and some late problems with injury. Peter Miller had 9 people on his Mittagong to Mittagong via Aroneys - Classic Flood Special. Vic Lewin's Budawang's base camp had 8 residents and their weather fined up on Friday. They also did some day walks but it is unclear whether they arrived back before dark.

The following weekend, 27,28,29 April, saw Ainslie Morris leading a party of 15 up The Castle in perfect weather. There was no report of Errol Sheedy's Waterfall to Heathcote ramble, but Jim Brown had 27 people on his Helensburgh to Otford walk which was described as an easy day.

Bill Capon led a party of 16 on his Kanangra walk of 4,5,6 May. It was an eventful walk, they lost one person with ankle problems, had a narrow miss involving a loose rock, Bill Capon and David Rostron. They also reported some nettles, but this is surely insignificant! Ian Debert, on that same weekend, lost all 18 starters on his Bonnum Pic Birthday walk. It all had something to do with Ian scouting ahead for the Saturday evening camp site. Hans Stichter's party of 10 cut short the Mount Solitary day walk by going out up the Golden Stairs in fairly atrocious weather. There was no report of Peter Christian's Marra Marra Creek trip that same day - - perhaps there were no survivors.

There was no report of George Walton's 11th to 16th May Kanangra area walk, but over the weekend 11,12,13 May Barry Wallace led a party of 8 people on his Cloudmaker walk in near perfect weather. Which was all very well for them, but rather warm for David Rostron and his 5 member Three Peaks trip party. There were two who successfully completed the walk. Of the day walks that weekend there was no report of Paul Mawhinry's Waterfall to Heathcote ramble. Bill Holland, however, had 25 people, an early start and beautiful views on his Bluegum Forest walk.

The 18,19,20 May saw Barrie Murdoch with a party of 3 on his Kanangra/Kowmung trip, and Peter Harris with 23 people on his Tullyangela Labyrinth trip. Peter Miller led a party of 12 people on his Bluegum Sunday trip and Ainslie Morris reported a party of 37, with an age range of 10 months to 70 years, on her Mt. York historical ramble.

Hans Stichter reported 12 people and a pleasant walk for his 25,26, 27 May Cox River trip and Frank Taeker had 19 starters on his Budawang's test walk. Of the day walks, Ralph Penglis had 8 or so people on his Bundeena to Otford trip, Joe Marton had an unknown party size but the walk, from Waterfall to Otford went O.K. anyway. Errol Sheedy had 13 people on his Heathcote to Waterfall trip. The area must have been somewhat crowded! Tony Marshall's Coolana instructional weekend was postponed.

The weekend of 1,2,3 June saw Lyn McDonald's Kanangra to Katoomba walk, sans Lyn, with a party of three. The view of the city from Kanangra indicated that our smog umbrella had been briefly dissipated. John Reddel led a party of 14 people on his Colo River Saturday start

walk in near perfect weather. There was no report of Rudy Dezelin's Blue-gum day walk but Jan Mohanas reported 12 plus 1 plus 1 people on his Waterfall to Bundeena trip.

The Queen's Birthday weekend 8,9,10,11 June saw a total of 6 walks programmed. Peter Harris' Dorrigo trip had 4 starters; they visited 3 parks in 3 days and drove close to 4 others. Ian Debert's Yerranderie base camp saw 14 people enjoying day trips to Yerranderie Peak, Church Creek and the Axehead Range. Bill Capon led a party of 9 people on his BUDawangs walk. They reported good viewing conditions from The Castle and took numerous photos to prove the point. Gordon Lee's Axehead Range trip had a large, but unspecified, number of starters. Roger Browne's snowshoe trip attracted 4 starters, was described as easy, and featured a magnificent sunset from Mt. Kosciuszko summit. Carol Bruce led 31 people on her day walk, Waterfall to Engadine, with a minimum of fuss; to bring the Walks Reports to a conclusion.

Federation Report brought news of the F.B.W. Reunion, 42 in attendance, and that the Mount Druitt bushwalkers club is now to be known as Mount Druitt Bushwalkers, not Western Suburbs Bushwalkers.

General Business, after a long discussion, saw a decision to purchase a used offset printer, copier, and fuser for use in production of the Club magazine.

So then it was just a matter of the announcements and the meeting closed at 2190 and it was all over again for another quarter.

* * * * *

SOCIAL NOTES FOR AUGUST.

by Roger Browne.

August 1 - Committee Meeting.

August 8 - Members' Slide Night. The theme is People. So put together a few slides showing people bushwalking, people you have met on your travels, etc.

DINNER before this meeting at Cheezies Carvery Upstairs, which is at 116 Willoughby Road, Crows Nest. Meet outside at 6.30 pm, late arrivals ask for the "Sydney Bushwalkers" table. Australian food, fixed price includes main course and unlimited salads, bread, etc. BYO.

August 15 - Bush Dance with Caller. All dances taught and called. Loads of fun - but it can be hot work, so it might be a good idea to bring something to drink.

August 22 - A production session for the August issue of the magazine. Help with the collating, stapling, wrapping and sorting.

August 29 - Did you know that in Alaska during summer, when the sun never sets, they still have daylight saving? Alan Dixon of C.M.W. spent three weeks last year walking around Bering Strait and Brooks Range, and has some interesting slides to show.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION for consideration at the Half Yearly General Meeting on 12th September, or any other matters that members wish to have included in the agenda for discussion at that meeting, should be submitted to the Secretary by no later than Wednesday, 8th August.

BARRIE MURDOCH. Hon. Secretary.

THE HUME AND HOVELL WALKING TRACK.

The Crown Lands Office proposes to construct an identified track that will retrace as closely as practical the route of the 1824 expedition. Interested walkers are asked to fill in a questionnaire. This, with a coloured brochure, may be obtained at the Club room from Joan Cooper or Barrie Murdoch, or from the Crown Lands Office, 22-23 Bridge Street (tel.20579).

EDITOR'S QUIZ QUESTION.

Who said - "I have played similar games in the mountains longing for a rest but determined not to be the first to suggest it. In the hills a camera provides a useful excuse for a rest with honour - must stop to get a picture!"

- (a) Spiro Hajinakitas, Olympian god and camera buff.
- (b) The Editor - frequently.
- (c) Chris Bonington, Himalayan climber and author of books on Everest.
- (d) Bill Capon, when the knee guard doesn't look so convincing.

NEW MEMBER - Tom Fischhof, 13 Lytton Street, Cammeray, 2062. Tel.922,1170.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Errol Sheedy, 5 Kungar Road, Caringbah, 2229. Tel.525,0316.

TEST WALK August 5 - Leader: Jeff Bridger. CORRECT Tel.number - 411,3948

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(c) in "Quest for Adventure" - a great book for armchair adventurers.
But (a), (b) and (d) are acceptable, if not entirely accurate, answers.

ANSWER TO QUIZ: