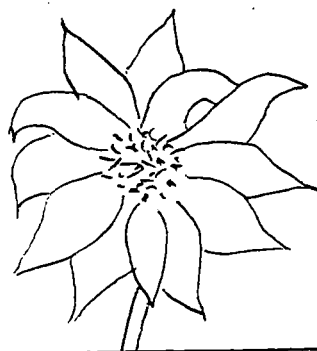


# THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

Established June 1931



A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers, Box 4476 G.P.O. Sydney, 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening from 7.30 pm at the Cahill Community Centre (Upper Hall), 34 Falcon Street, Crow's Nest.

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EDITOR: Ainslie Morris, 45 Austin Street, Lane Cove, 2066  
Telephone 428,3178

BUSINESS MANAGER: Bill Burke, 3 Coral Tree Drive, Carlingford, 2118  
Telephone 871,1207

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Helen Gray

TYPIST: Kath Brown

PRINTERS: Phil Butt and Barbara Evans

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NOVEMBER, 1984.

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THE MINI MINI REVISITED.

by Ben Esgate.

(An account of the walk of 14,15,16 September - As told to Dot Butler.)

Steak or Chicken?

The party, consisting of Dot Butler, Bill Hall, Ainslie Morris, Mike Reynolds and myself as leader, arrived at Blackheath station at 9.52 pm. A taxi took us to the camping site on the western side of the Divide at its junction with Black Range at 3,600 ft. We emerged to a rather cool atmosphere, including low cloud and drizzle. Three of us elected to camp on the concrete floor of an old shelter shed, which was rather stable, to say the least. After Dot had manufactured a bed out of an old armchair we all settled down to spasmodic sleep.

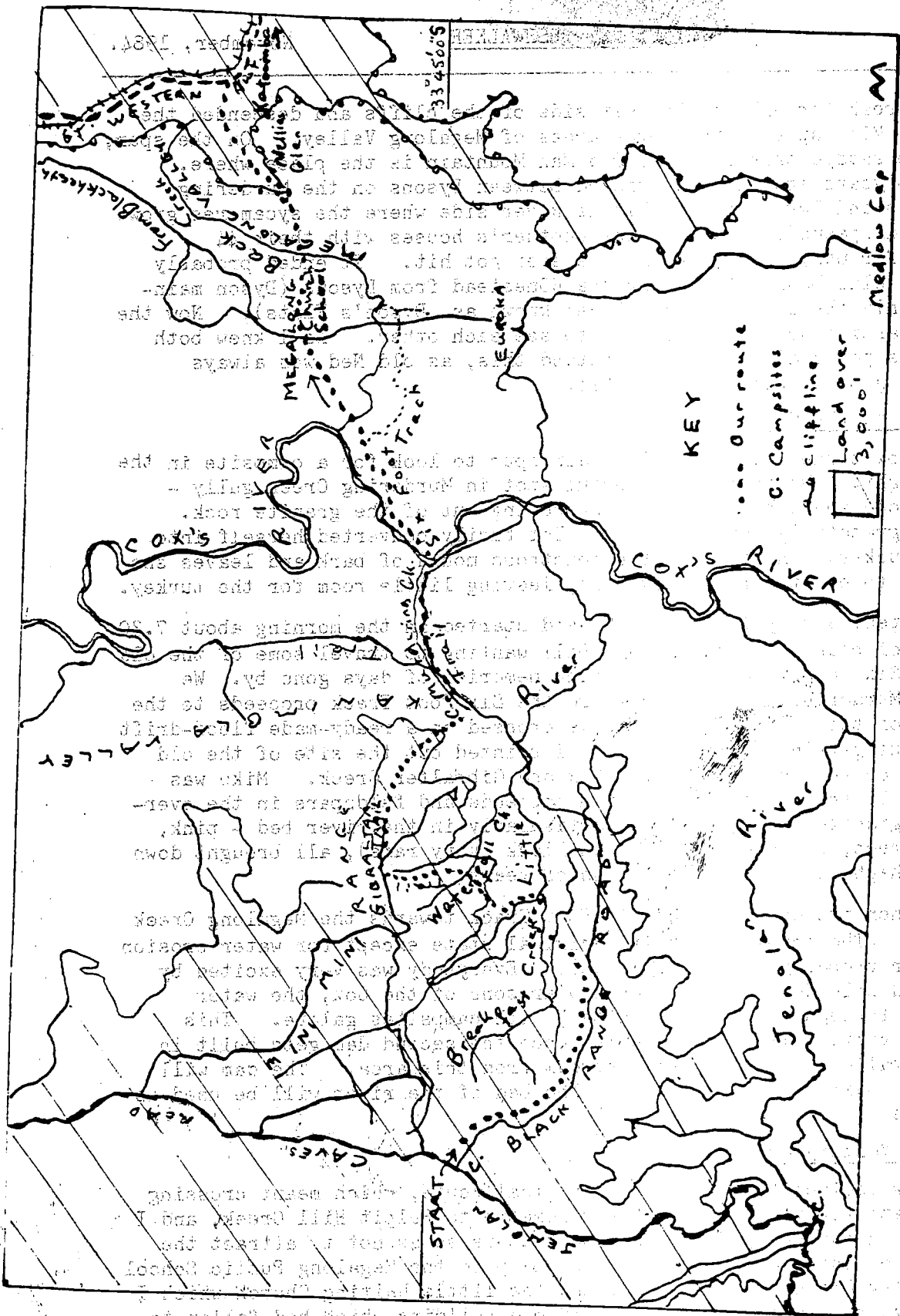
We were greeted at daylight, not by the noise of young birds, but by a very hoary frost. Without too much difficulty a fire was finally lit and breakfast disposed of. I, at this stage, decided to extend the walk by 1 km to avoid pine trees. The route involved following the main spur of the Black Range for 4 km, thence on an old fire trail in a NE direction, skirting the perimeter of Beefsteak Creek, thence into the rather deep chasm of the creek. In the early days Beefsteak Creek was known as the White Leghorn. It is believed an old fossicker had a camp at the head of this creek and had some white leghorn fowls which used to run wild in the bush and were occasionally seen by timber cutters.

We crossed Beefsteak Creek and replenished our water supply, then climbed out on to the main spur leading east, which leads to the junction of Beefsteak Creek and the upper reaches of Little River. The descent into this region was rather tortuous, down a very narrow, interesting quartzite rock spur. An abrupt halt was called from the rear as Mike had driven a rather large piece of wood into his finger, which necessitated surgical attention. However, after 20 minutes of fingers, thumbs and knives, the pressure was removed but not the splinter. Eventually the junction was reached through a canopy of southern rainforest deep in the gully. We then followed the base of Little River for another 2 km to the lowest crossing of a fire trail. We were now 10 km from our start. Now up the firetrail, over another small range (name unknown), and eventually reached Waterfall Creek. We had lunch at a rather majestic spot overlooking the main chasm of Little River and a huge face of granite rock over which the waterfall poured. At this stage we were roughly half an hour behind because of Mike's operation.

On the Table.

Lunch over, we proceeded to climb to Table Rock (or, as it is now known, South Gibraltar Rock) overlooking Kanimbla Valley. With some difficulty we climbed to the top of a small cliff face of conglomerate sandstone, and from this we obtained a wonderful panoramic view, from a different angle, from Katoomba to Kanangra Walls. The cameras were busy clicking. We had climbed since breakfast approximately 1,600 ft.

We continued along a spur on the firetrail to the junction of the Mini Mini firetrail, which we followed for 2 km in an easterly direction to its termination. We were then on the sandstone escarpment of Gibraltar Rocks and for about 3 km continued across an isthmus onto the main plateau through low Banksia scrub, very difficult in places. We



**MINI-MINI WALK FROM JENOLAN CAVES ROAD TO KATOOMBA.**

... and walking which had failed to ... Jenolan Caves via Mary Ann ...

found a break-through on the west side of the cliffs and descended the main Mini Mini spur to the lower areas of Megalong Valley. On the spur, where the saddle crosses on to Old Man Mountain is the place where, about 100 years ago, a feud existed between Dysons on the Murdering Creek side and Dwyers on the Little River side where the sycamores grow. They fired spasmodic shots at one another's houses with their 44 carbines for many years, but no one ever got hit. It ended probably when Butfields bought the Kiangatha Homestead from Dysons (Dyson maintaining only the area of Cox's River known as Dyson's Flats). Now the feuding parties were too far away to see each other. As I knew both the Dwyers personally I can understand this, as old Ned was always likely to get somebody into trouble.

#### Murdering to the Cox.

We now turned east from the main spur to look for a campsite in the fading light. We found a wonderful spot in Murdering Creek gully - lots of wood and a beautiful spring oozing out of the granite rock. Everyone gratefully came to rest. Dot busily converted herself into a scrub turkey. Having built a monstrous mound of bark and leaves she proceeded to erect her tent over it, leaving little room for the turkey.

We spent a very restful night and started in the morning about 7.30. A change of plan occurred through Bill wanting to travel some of the old existing Six Foot Track to bring back memories of days gone by. We followed Murdering Creek down where the Six Foot Track proceeds to the junction of the Cox. This river we crossed on a ready-made flood-drift log without getting our feet wet. I pointed out the site of the old homestead on the junction of the Cox and Gibraltar Creek. Mike was delighted by the great variety of hornblends and feldspars in the ever-changing granites of this area, particularly in the river bed - pink, red and green, brown and grey, even black (very rare), all brought down from the high country over millions of years.

We then proceeded up the Six Foot Track towards the Megalong Creek junction. The track was in its original state except for water erosion on it over probably a century of use. Everybody was very excited by the rugged splendour of that particular zone of the Cox, the water cascading through the great granites, with campsites galore. This beautiful vista will cease to exist once the second dam gets built in Kanimbla Valley several miles upstream from this area. The dam will reduce the main flow of the Cox. The bed of the river will be used as a pipeline.

#### Shades of Yesteryear.

I now decided to pick up the original route, which meant crossing some private territory for half a kilometre to Pulpit Hill Creek, and I prevailed on the party not to be too raucous so as not to attract the attention of the owners. We proceeded up to the Megalong Public School where Carley Brown used to teach, and the little Uniting Church which I built 43 years ago to replace the old mud building which had fallen to pieces (this building is mentioned in the Blackheath Historical Society's book). Everybody was feeling reasonably fit so we decided to proceed to the Back Creek, a tributary of Megalong Creek, via Mary Ann's Tableland. (Mary Ann was the great-grandmother of Mrs. Gordon Boyd, the present property owner of most of the country on the west side of the Cox towards Gibraltar Rocks. They are very wonderful people who do not frown upon sensible entry to their land.)

We had lunch on the Back Creek and it was decided to continue up the spur as originally planned to climb the Sentinel, and so out of the valley on to the tableland west of the Explorers' Tree, Katoomba. The rise was comfortable, though steep. We reached the base of the cliffs. Bill took one look at it and decided that climbing was not for him and retraced his steps to go out via Nelly's Glen. Having picked the climbing route I climbed up and was dismayed to find that the shale ledge had deteriorated through weathering and was uncomfortably dangerous. I returned down and we decided to skirt the Sentinal Point to the south side where there is a thick scrubby entrance into the Gap, roughly 30 ft wide. This little exercise, traversing the steep side, caused us 20 minutes delay. Then, under my direction, Dot went round a narrow ledge and pronounced it "cat's meat" (a New Zealand mountaineer's term meaning just too easy). So we climbed up through a narrow vertical channel to arrive at the spikes placed in the cliff face by me about 1937. It was possible to climb the cliff without spikes, but one would need no encumberances. I threw a 35 ft cord down after I had climbed up, snigged the packs up, and all climbed up with safety. Mike and Ainslie found a small notebook planted under some stones which had a couple of entries dated 1981 and 1983.

#### Over the Top to Katoomba.

By now we were on top of the main cliff line. We ascended a small spur of about 200 ft. Dot, on arrival, decided to weed out some seedling pines that were growing in the sand. I pointed out that she may have to stop here for some time as we were on the edge of a pine forest consisting of about a million trees, which had failed completely. Hopefully the native bush will regenerate as there are some beautiful stands of white mountain ash (Eucalyptus Oreades) along the southern escarpment of this plateau. These trees only grow in the Blue Mountains and this is only one of the very few which had withstood the onslaughts of man and fire. Fire destroys them very easily.

We then proceeded to Katoomba, travelling along the old single track railway line. An effort was being made to catch the earlier train. There was only one successful finisher. You can have a guess who it was. She ended up at Wahroonga 1½ hours earlier than she otherwise would have done. Bill was also on the train, but Dot caught it just as it was about to move out, and promptly went to sleep and didn't see him. The train had gone through Central and out into Pitt Street before she woke up.

Ainslie, Mike and I went for a snack at Papadino's, but my mouth was far too dry to masticate my food, so that was that. However, we joined the next train and parted at Central with me en route to Dot's place to pick up my MIGHTY Mouse to travel home, as trains are infrequent on my line. All agreed we had had a very successful and enjoyable trip, involving a distance of 45 km and 4,500 ft of climbing.

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MANY THANKS to Frances Longfoot, a new member, who was very helpful in producing last month's magazine.

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THE FLOWER PEOPLE.

by Jim Brown.

No, this has nothing to do with Hippies or Alternative Life Style folk, who opted out of the Rat Race from the 1960s onward.....

Instead it has to do with pillars of the Establishment who managed to get their names immortalised in the numerous Genera of Australian bush flowers. People like George, Marquis of Blandford ("a patron of botany in the early 19th Century" according to Sulman) who gave his name to the Christmas Bells (Blandfordia). Or Baron von Hake, a German 18th Century enthusiast, who is remembered in the Hakeas. Since about 16 out of the 25 Hakeas recorded in Eastern Australia have thorny vegetation (many of them have common names including the words "needle bush" or "dagger bush") one wonders if the botanist Schrader who applied the Baron's name had found his patron to be a prickly customer. One may also speculate whether botanist Stearn, who named the Hardenbergia with its wealth of purple pea blossoms for his sister, the Countess of Hardenberg in Saxony - whether he considered her a clinging vine.

It does appear, however, that between about 1800 and 1850 there were three main ways in which to have a newly found Genus of Australian wild flowers named after you:-

1. The Easy Way.

To be an aristocrat, and an amateur botanist, like George of Blandford, Baron Hake or the Countess of Hardenberg. You then financed, sponsored or supported a tame botanist who went out to Australia and did some of the first bush walking. Most of these enthusiastic amateurs themselves took care to stay in Europe, but one notable exception was Colonel William Paterson, for whom the Purple Flag Iris (Patersonia) was named. This is almost certainly the same Colonel Paterson who was the senior military officer in the fledgling colony of N.S.W. at the time Governor Bligh was deposed, and who then became the de facto Lieutenant Governor until Lachlan Macquarie was appointed. Since Paterson was commandant of the N.S.W. Corps (The Rum Corps), perhaps his deepest regret was that the various native plants he examined were quite unsuitable for distillation into fermented liquor.

2. The Middle Path.

Be a keen practising botanist or a well-known writer on the subject - someone that the field botanist would either respect or wish to cultivate. The following catalogue takes account of just a few of the species that borrowed the names of people in this category:

Persoonia (The Geebung) - named for English botanist C.H. Persoon (we pass over Don Matthews' observation that he was a "Persoonia non grata").

Lambertia ("Honey Flower" or "Blue Mountain Devil") - for A.B. Lambert, a 19th Century English botanist.

Sprengelia (The Swamp Heaths) - for C. K. Sprengel, a German botanist who did some of the early work on pollination of flowers by insects.

Hibbertia (The Guinea Flowers) - for Dr. George Hibbert, Superintendent of Clapham Gardens in the early 19th Century.

Pultenea (Various yellow or red-and-yellow pea flowers - well over 100 different species in Eastern Australia alone)

Dilwynnia - and named for D. Pulteney, Rev. H. Davies and L. W. Dilwynn, all British botanists or botanical writers of the early 19th Century

Kennedya (The Coral Peas - fairly large red or pink flowers, something like those of the Coral Tree, but growing on creepers with leaves of three lobes) - named for M. Kennedy, a London nursery proprietor in the mid 19th Century who was one of the first Europeans to introduce Australian bush flora.

Darwinia (The Scent Myrtles) - and named, of course, for that notorious iconoclast, Charles Darwin.

### 3. The Hard Way (Do it Yourself).

The most distinguished of this group was unquestionably Sir Joseph Banks, who accompanied James Cook on the voyage of the Endeavour, visiting the East Coast of Australia in 1770, and took back to Europe specimens of a wholly new range of plants. It is perhaps worth noting that they came to "Botany Bay" at the end of April, a time when few of our bush flowers are in bloom, but many of the Banksias are, including both the "Hairpin Banksias" (*B. Ericifolia* and *B. Spinulosa*), the Coast Honeysuckle (*B. Integrifolia*), the little *Banksia Marginata*, and even a few residual flowers of the Grand-daddy *Banksia* (*B. Serrata*).

Banks had the satisfaction of having the genus named for him by the Great Maestro C. von Linne (Linnaeus), the Swedish botanist who devised the whole of the modern system of classifying plants.

Strangely, Banks' colleague on the voyage, the Swedish botanist Solander, does not have any Australian genus named for him, although one of the headlands near Botany Bay is Cape Solander.

Apart from having to spend a couple of years on the Endeavour Bark, Banks probably didn't have it all that hard compared with the Bauer brothers, Franz and Ferdinand, who were German botanical illustrators and shipped with Matthew Flinders on the Investigator voyage around Australia. Their names live in the "Dog Rose" (*Bauera*), the pink-flowered shrub of moist places. It is not known whether they ever fought their way through the almost impenetrable *Bauera* thickets of Tasmania, or what they had to say if they did.

Saddest of all of the "do-it-yourself" bunch was probably Boissier-Lamartiniere, a companion of the French explorer La Perouse. Assuming he was on La Perouse's last voyage he would have lost his life when their ship vanished with all hands, apparently in the Solomon Islands. However, there is an abundance of odd-looking red-yellow pea flowers which thrive from autumn to spring along our East Coast. Many have sparse leaves, some are virtually leafless, and they go by the Generic name "*Bossiaea*".

Of course, there are always some scandalous stories, too. I would not wish to be held accountable for the accuracy of the following - but our glorious *Boronias* are named for Francisco Borone, an Italian botanist who died "whilst collecting plant specimens in Greece." However, one version has it that Francisco found the Grecian wines too strong, and died of a broken neck after falling from the balcony of a Greek taverna whilst in his cups.

Then there is the Hon. C. F. Greville, an English gentleman and botanical enthusiast who, I am informed, took his favourite flower called Emma with him when he went out to Italy to assist his uncle, who was British Ambassador to the Court of Naples. On arrival, Emma, with an eye to the better chance, married the uncle, Sir William Hamilton. Later a British naval squadron visited Naples in pursuit of the French fleet which had gone to Egypt, and Emma transferred her affections to the commodore, one Admiral Horatio Nelson. If this outrageous tale be true, the Hon. C. F. Greville has two claims to historical fame. Since our marvellous "Spider Flowers" and "Toothbrush Flowers" (*Grevillea*) are named for him, I know which fame I would have preferred if I had been in his shoes.

(FOOTNOTE: In case any purist or perfectionist may happen to read this. It is intended as an "entertainment" - to quote Graham Greene - and should NOT be taken too seriously. The names of the various Genera of plants, and the names of the people who are remembered by them are correct as given by books in my possession. The rest of the essay contains a good deal of conjecture, hearsay and plain old-fashioned garbage.)

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LOTS BETTER THAN WE'D PLANNED.

by Barbara Evans.

"There's a cave at the foot of the cliff-line." A cheerful voice rang across Kanuka Brook. There was rustling among the saplings and a smiling Roger Browne stepped into view. "We can have our fire at the rocky end and at the other there's a flat sandy floor big enough to sleep eight." A quick check on our fingers confirmed that we were seven. Big enough. The alternatives were a very small spit of sand by the creek, and a few scattered stony spots.

We filled waterbags and scrambled a hundred feet or so up through thick scrub. Wood was plentiful and in minutes flames were illuminating the golden honeycomb roof. There were cups of tea and nibbles all round; then Roger went out to climb the ridge above, while the rest of us lazed and chatted and chuckled (and sometimes winced) at Simon Parkin's punning wit. Opposite us the country had a remarkably vertical look about it, and as we contemplated it, I, a somewhat un-trepid leader, tried not to worry about the morrow.

You see, we were in the WRONG PLACE. My original idea had been to saunter along St. Helena Ridge from the Duckhole and camp in the volcanic neck. However, St. Helena has been spoiled by frequent pony camps, and when Brian Bolton (in the clubroom) had mentioned a beautiful camp spot in Kanuka Brook, I happily altered our proposed route. Brian pointed on the map to the junction of Kanuka Brook and Goonaroi Rill. He had described a cave, a beach and a grassy flat for the tents. The next day, he'd explained, we would climb the ridge, go a bit to the left and find an exit slot in the cliffs. It sounded pretty straightforward.

All confidence, we set out from the Duckhole, enjoying the walk past the deep clear pools and pale beaches of Kanuka Brook. Shortly after lunch we came to a looping north/south bend. At the top of the bend sat a party of Mt. Druitt walkers. They were in a cave by a beach, on the opposite bank their tents stood on a grassy flat. It was exactly as Brian had described - except that there was no creek junction. Could there be two such perfect campsites? You guessed! The country grew more precipitous, and an hour later, at the junction of Goonaroi Rill, there was no site to speak of, and as for an exit route, the ridges were composed entirely of overhangs which, with the aid of a plumbline, had been placed precisely one above the other.

Next morning Bill Hall pored over the map with me. In his nearly fifty years with S.B.W. Bill has acquired an immense knowledge of the bush which is almost intuitive. Together we worked out what seemed to be our only chance, and shortly after breakfast our party pushed through a thicket into Goonaroi Rill. Great boulders and fallen trees slowed our progress and in half an hour we had gone half a kilometre. A tributary came in from the north. To reach it we wriggled through a spinney of vine-tangled casuarina and gum. Here the going was steep. Mossy rocks filled the dim, green gully. We climbed higher past sparkling little cascades until confronted by a smooth rock wall. Bill headed into the thicket on the steep west bank, stamping down a track with his big boots, pushing aside fallen branches. Between cliff and waterfall our feet slipped and slithered on the treacherously narrow ledge. As soon as was possible we returned to the relative safety of the creek bed. We climbed up into sunshine, and gradually the rocks



became smaller and the slope less steep. There were flowers growing on the banks and leaf-strewn pools rippled with plump tadpoles. The ridge to the right was still impassable, and a growth of saplings, dense after the bushfires, made the left ridge uninviting. The creek floor was now smooth and we stayed with it until there was no dry rock left to walk on.

Bill crunched a path to the top of a flowery ridge, leaving about a kilometre to go before we would reach the St. Helena trail almost at the junction of the spur. Suddenly Bill paused. "There's a friend waiting here." he said. He was standing very still. "Is it an S-N-A-eek?" Vicky Cheeseman had guessed at once. Across the path lay a fine five foot snake watching us with golden eyes, tongue flickering. After a long minute it decided that it was too early for lunch and slipped out of sight into the bushes. (Such is the mystique of snakes that, even though it had gone away, each of us stepped carefully around the place it had lain.)

The remainder of the walk went according to programme: lunch in St. Helena; magnificent views at Bunyan Lookout; a scratchy slither through mountain holly down to Glenbrook Creek and the rock of the twentythird psalm. A pleasant track took us to Western Creek for afternoon tea. Roger and Simon swam here, but Bill, Vicky and I were content to join Cathy and Judy Longfoot in a well earned rest on a shady rock. Shortly after 3.30 pm we recrossed Glenbrook Creek and continued along the track, branching right at the Perch Ponds for a brisk walk up the gentle incline of Magdala Creek to Springwood.

Had the walk gone as planned we would have enjoyed one of those heavenly weekends, so lazy that they are a bit embarrassing to talk about. As it was we altered the schedule, went to the wrong place, and providentially had an excellent walk - in fact it was LOTS BETTER THAN WE'D PLANNED.

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#### NEW MEMBERS & ADDRESSES.

Please add the following names to your Membership List:-

	<u>Phone</u>
DAVIS, Greta, 4A/8 Bligh Place, Randwick, 2031	398,4053
MAXWELL, Stuart, 8/8 Munro Street, Berry's Bay, 2060	922,5075
PAYNE, Carol, Bush House, 21B Baldwin Street, East Gordon 2072	498,8995
SCHEMBRI, John, 8 Hamel Crescent, Earlwood, 2206	55,3611
SIMANKEVICIUS, Almis, 10 Vista Street, Greenwich, 2065	439,7812
SOMMER, Libby, 2/63 Muston Street, MOsman, 2088	969, 1283
VERSCHUER, Anne, 243 Norton Street, Leichhardt, 2040	560,1773

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# eastwood camping centre

## BUSHWALKERS

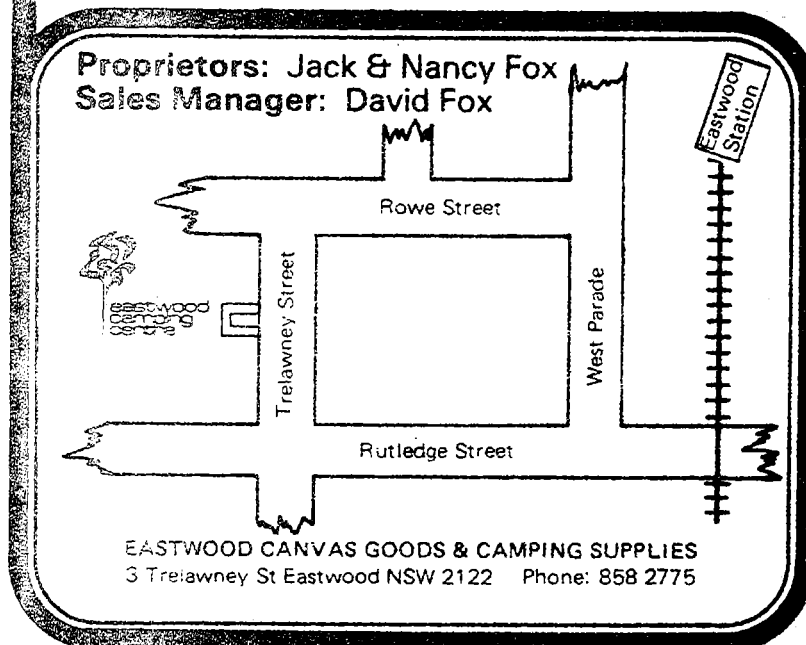
Lightweight Tents • Sleeping Bags • Rucksacks •  
Climbing & Caving Gear • Maps • Clothing • Boots  
• Food.

## CAMPING EQUIPMENT

Large Tents • Stoves • Lamps • Folding Furniture.

## DISTRIBUTORS OF:

Paddy made • Karrimor • Berghaus • Hallmark •  
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Companion • and all leading brands.



THE CHANGING SOLE OF SKI TOURING.

by Tom Wenman.

Alas, the language of the ski tourer will never be the same again. The question, "What wax are you using?" no longer forms part of the traditional greetings which cross-country skiers exchange when they meet. The development of the waxless ski has in fact eliminated a whole topic from the ski tourer's conversation. No longer in the various mountain huts of the Snowy's or in small clusters of tents perched in sheltered spots are the merits of the day's performances analysed in such demanding terms, and the strengths and weaknesses of particular waxes or the method of their application discussed with such fervour. The no-wax ski has done away with all this and the serrated roar of waxless soles scraping over the snow can be heard all over the mountains.

Some years ago when I first ventured into the mountain environment as a climber, the change from nailed boot to composition 'commando type' sole was in progress. In a similar way to the application of wax on skis, the variation of nail patterns was something of an individual choice. The 'commando type' sole put an end to all that, and once and for all established a standard pattern for everyone - well all that is except those hardy tigers who from stocking feet drifted off into very technical composition soles which relied entirely on friction. One beautiful day I remember watching and listening to the then Chief Guide of England's Lake District leading a client up a climb. The poetry of motion, as without a pause he selected each hand and foot hold, was matched by the steady click of nail on rock, and a more perfect combination for all the senses could not be imagined.

With the composition-sole boot, no longer do we have the discussion on the relative merits and placing of ring clinkers, tricounis and so on. Similarly with the advent of the waxless ski part of the mystique of the sport had gone. However, on turning back the pages of ski touring history even further, we find that skiers once made their own wax. Here is one such recipe: 13 ozs of Stockholm tar, 1 oz Beeswax, 2 ozs Resin and (wait for it!)  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz of MELTED GRAMOPHONE RECORD!

Now theirs was a mystique indeed with an even more esoteric topic of conversation for those early devotees of the sport. I suppose they in their turn could also have looked somewhat critically at someone who purchased ready-made ski wax with instructions on its use!

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OBITUARY.

We have learned that Mr. Peter Price, an active member of this Club in the late 1940's and early 1950's, died suddenly in August. On Saturday 27th October, in a private ceremony attended by his immediate family and his closest bushwalking friends, his ashes were scattered over the Grose River valley from Anvil Rock.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR DECEMBER

by Roger Browne.

- December 5 - Committee Meeting.
- December 12 - General Meeting.  
DINNER before this meeting at Cheezie's Carvery, upstairs at 116 Willoughby Road, Crow's Nest. Meet outside at 6.30 pm sharp. Late arrivals ask for the Sydney Bush Walkers. BYO. \$6 fixed price includes roast and salads.
- December 19 - CHRISTMAS PARTY. Bring a plate of party food. The Club supplies cask wine, beer and fruit juice.
- December 26 - Clubroom closed.
- January 2 - Clubroom closed.

- - - - -

REMINDER FROM COMMITTEE.

The President brings to your attention that IT IS ESSENTIAL to notify the leader of DAY WALKS as well as weekend walks if you wish to go on the walk.

Large numbers have turned up on some recent day walks without notification and this is NOT TO OCCUR. Please phone the leader as requested.

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CLUB AUCTION.

The Club Auction, held on 10th October, raised \$221 for Club funds.

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LOST BY KEN GOULD.

Lost 1 litre Al. "SIGG" flask. Finder please phone 498-4467.

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