

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 7.45 pm at ELLA COMMUNITY CENTRE, 58a Dalhousie Street,
 Haberfield (next to the Post Office).

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MARCH, 1987.

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EDITORIAL.

I have been our Magazine Editor for the past three years, since the April issue after the election in 1984. It was fortunate for me that I took over from an able and energetic Editor in Evelyn Walker, and articles were to hand already from some of our wonderful writers.

My first small task was to inveigle someone who knew lots of people in the Club to write up the Annual Reunion at Coolana. Ron Knightley whimpered a bit, but soon gave in gracefully. I suspect that he really had fun writing it up, and that our writers all do enjoy contributing and seeing their efforts in print.

The printing itself was my first big task. I was involved in the selection of a second-hand tabletop offset printing machine and platemaker and fuser. Whatever are they, you may well ask; I was soon to become informed on such technicalities. Then we needed an electric typewriter, and I hope I selected a good one; Kath Brown has become a convert to using it, and that's what matters. And so the appearance of the magazine has improved, with the full potential of the printer still to be realised by our team of Fran, Stan and Morag; good copy of photographs is our aim.

An unexpected and delightfull bonus to being Editor has been making more friends in the Club. Writers, typist, printers, collaters, business manager, all needed regular contact by me, and I soon grew to value their interest and loyalty. Along with regular bushwalking friends, they made a great group at my wedding with Mike Reynolds.

I shall be directing my efforts in editing to our historical book, "The First Sixty Years". This is one reason I am not standing for nomination as Editor of the magazine. The other reason is that I believe that a new hand at the helm can bring new ideas, as I hope that I have done.

Good luck to the new Editor! Yours in bushwalking,

AINSLIE MORRIS.

S.B.W. 60th ANNIVERSARY.DATES FOR YOUR DIARY.

- 21st October (Wednesday) - Nostalgia Night at the Club Rooms.
- 23rd October (Friday) - DINNER at Crystal Ballroom, Holiday Inn, Menzies, 14 Carrington St. Sydney
Tickets: \$30. Bookings start after Easter.
- 25th October (Sunday) - Easy DAY WALK to North Era.
- 31st October/1st November - Weekend at Coolana.
Reunion, barndance, canoeing, swimming, bushwalking.

COMMEMORATIVE PORT.

Bottles of PORT with a special S.B.W. label are being sold at \$7. Order your bottles and collect them from Barbara Bruce at the Club Rooms.



S.B.W. OFFICE BEARERS & COMMITTEE 1987.

The following office bearers and committee members as well as other Club workers were elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Club held on Wednesday, 11th March, 1987:-

President	* Barrie Murdoch	
Vice-Presidents	* Bill Holland	
	* Don Finch	
Hon. Secretary	* Lorraine Bloomfield	
Hon. Asst. Secretary	* Joy Hynes	
Hon. Treasurer	* Anita Doherty	
Hon. WALKS Secretary	* Alan Doherty	
HON. Social Secretary	* Wendy Aliano	
Hon. New Members Secretary	* Oliver Crawford	
Committee Members	* Beverly Foulds	* Belinda Mackenzie
	* Ian Debert	* Ian Wolf
Federation Delegates	* Gordon Lee	Tim Coffey
	* Spiro Haginakitas	
Hon. Conservation SEcretary	Alex Colley	
Magazine Editor	Patrick James	
" Business Manager	Stan Madden	
" Production Manager	Helen Gray	
" Printers	Fran Holland	Morag Ryder
	Stan Madden	
Search & REscue Contacts	Tony Marshall	Bob Younger
	Ray Hookway	Hans Stichter
Hon. Archivist	Phil Butt	
Hon. Solicitor	Barrie Murdoch	
Hon. Auditor	Tony Marshall	
CLUB TRUSTEES	Heather White	Gordon Redmond
	Bill Burke	
Kosciusko Huts Assn.Delegates	Ray Hookway	Jim Percy
Projectionist	Alan Doherty	

* Indicates members of Committee.

NOTE: The Club has not yet been incorporated and the old Constitution still applies for these elections.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT to draft Constitution.

The Annual General Meeting considered and passed the following:-

"That item 22(2) of the draft Constitution be changed to include the position of Membership Secretary as an office bearer of the Association."

Reason: Maintenance of the membership records of the Club is a large and time-consuming task which will assume even greater importance after Incorporation. For this reason an office bearer of the Club should have sole responsibility for this job.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS: See Page 16.

A TALE OF TWO SITES.

by Frank Rigby.

It was a pretty and comfortable campsite by anyone's standards: a small basin cradled by low rocky ledges with soft snowgrass covering the level floor. Here and there were little tarns connected by underground channels of running water. Peter Harris had led us unerringly across Tasmania's Central Plateau via the Walls of Jerusalem, the Mountains of Jupiter and what seemed like a thousand lakes. This was to be our last night on the plateau.

The tents went up in typical bushwalker fashion. Adrienne Shilling and Janet Waterhouse had chosen a site out in the middle for their Paddy Stormtite. George and Helen Gray put up the big old family favourite in an annexe of the main basin. Bill Burke and Ivan Brown (a last minute replacement for Joan Cooper) were to one side in a K-Mart nylon special with fly. Peter and Dick Mason had found an exclusive site behind rocks and shrubs for their tunnel-shaped snow tent. Finally, Joan and I pitched our Big W nylon special, with fly, close in to the escarpment on the windward side . . . just in case! We were all over the basin, a mixed bag of walkers with our oddball shelters scattered far and wide.

The weather was becoming colder. Storms had been hovering around the Geryon-Du Cane massif and Mt. Ossa during the afternoon and now, in the twilight, showery squalls from the south-west made us appreciate the campfire, hot food and the prospect of a warm sleeping bag. So it was into the tents at dusk because the hours of darkness at midsummer are tantalisingly short and should not be wasted by sitting up. I look forward to at least eight hours of solid sleep.

"Man proposes but God disposes", I seem to remember my mother telling me when I was a small boy. Oh, Mum, you did come up with some pearls of wisdom in your time! It seemed I had barely slept when I was hit in the face by something cold, wet and heavy, a rude awakening indeed. My first thoughts suggested a big jellyfish . . . but in the middle of Tasmania? No, no, the tent had collapsed and there was something heavy on the outside pressing it down. What the devil was going on? Struggling to get my head out the end, I soon had my answer. Snow! Falling wet snow and lots of it, too. Nothing for it but to go outside and fix things. What a horror it is leaving a cosy bag at times like that! Curses and oaths, parka and shoes on and out into the black cold night!

One end-guy had pulled its peg under the unaccustomed weight, and what a weight! Replace the peg, scrape the snow off the tent and look around. Aha, the Shilling-Waterhouse abode has also half-collapsed but the occupants are inside and silent, perhaps blissfully ignorant of what is happening to their world. So we shout "snow" and give their tent a hefty shake. There is a muffled "What next?" and "Thanks" as they dive deeper into their sleeping bags. Naturally, that was only the beginning. Some sort of alarm clock mechanism in our brains kept waking us up to dislodge the ever-gathering layers of snow from the tent. It was not our most restful night.

At some respectable time after daylight Peter called round and reported 15 to 20 centimetres of snow on the ground. It was hardly fair play for midsummer. He and Dick, encased in their hermetically-sealed rounded cocoon, had known nothing of the night's events until, on opening the tent flap, they were unbelievably confronted by a brand new world. And what a transformation had taken place! The snow lay everywhere, on pine trees, shrubs, rocks, a real picture-postcard scene reminiscent of an Old World Christmas; and with snow still falling softly, there was indeed a charm about the place which only the insensitive would deny.

But there might also be problems. Peter said we would be in no hurry to move off, if indeed we moved at all. Visibility was next to nothing and besides, some were wearing sandshoes. In the Gray tent the primus was started and Helen duly delivered hot cuppas to every tent; surely no paid waitress has ever been called on for such duties. And what is that strange-looking apparition, magnified by the veil of falling snow, which has suddenly appeared at the edge of the basin? Good Heavens, the Abominable Snowman is here already! Apologies, my mistake, it is only George out for a stroll.

I needed some activity and decided to attempt a fire. But where was last night's woodheap? Not a sign of it, but never mind. A scrap of paper, a little dry kindling, a meta tablet, part of a candle and lots of patience eventually brought rewards in the shape of hot tea, soup and

warm bodies. Damn, I forgot to cook the ritual porridge, what a blessing! But where are Bill and Ivan? Not even a stirring from their tent which is partly buried and oddly misshapen. Are they still alive? "Maybe", says Peter, "I heard a distinct growl earlier on but whether it came from a human being or a Tasmanian Devil was impossible to tell".

Peter was now faced with a tough decision. It was only about two hours walking to the plateau's edge above Du Cane Gap and a further hour's descent to the Overland Track. But could he find the way? How would the sandshoes fare? Was there a risk of hypothermia? What was the weather up to? Don't miss next month's thrilling episode Oops, I've got carried away, sorry about that. On the other hand, if we stayed, we could be here for several days waiting for Godot or his equivalent. The wind suddenly eased and the snow stopped falling (temporarily) but it was enough to tip the scales; at the meridian passage of the sun, if there was indeed such an orb above that grey blanket, we moved out of the basin.

I will not dwell on that journey, the memories are too painful; but thanks to Peter's superb whiteout navigation and some stiff upper lips we eventually reached Windy Ridge Hut on the Overland Track, only to find that sanctuary already overflowing with wet walkers and gear. Another ten bods would have buried it completely. "You'll find somewhere to camp down the track", came a cheery farewell as we departed in the pouring rain.

And so we did! It looked too good to be true: a large, grassy open flat alongside the Narcissus River. After the snow bowl of the previous night it seemed like Paradise; ah, you little beauty, now for a long night's rest without the slings and arrows of Tassie's outrageous climate to torture our tired bodies. But Bill would have none of it. Half-drowned rat that he was, he pined for dry security and decided to go on alone to Narcissus Hut. How the devil did you know, Bill?

At dawn the next morning Joan woke me, alarm in her voice: "Can you feel something moving under the tent?" It was the end, or rather it was, unfortunately, just the beginning.

Let me recap. The rain had finally given up while we pitched camp and as I snuggled down into the warm bag I was already half-asleep. But the other half did not come for at that very moment Tasmania struck again. The heavens reopened and I lay awake for seeming hours listening to the rain and worrying about the river. I slept, I woke up and worried, slept again, woke up and worried. Enough! Damn it, I would lay this ghost once and for all! Peering out of the tent, nothing was any different. High and dry we were, no worries, mate. So back to sleep in a jiffy, mind now completely at rest

Only twenty minutes later came that awful alarm: "Can you feel something moving under the tent?" I could, like something cold and mobile. We looked through the window and were appalled to see a sheet of water now flooding across our part of the flat. The river had finally broken its banks. Joan is good in a crisis and was already stowing her sleeping bag. Not me. "No need to panic," I reassured her in a daze, "We have a waterproof tent top and bottom". But I had forgotten the hole in one corner, where wall meets floor. Even as I spoke the rising flood had found this hole and now in a panic I tried to stop the inflow with a towel and get out of the bag at the same time. I might as well have been King Canute trying to roll back the ocean tide. I deserved the taunts I was handed later: "Imagine Frank trying to stop the mighty Narcissus with a towel!"

Now out of the flooding tent, Joan rescued my sandshoes which were just then floating away and called to the others some little distance off. But it was obvious by all the shouting that they were in the same boat as ourselves. (Actually, a boat would have proved handy just then.) In the growing light the growing horror impinged upon the minds and bodies of all, each according to his or her circumstances and personality.

Peter and Dick, in their watertight container, opened the flap to see what all the noise was about and were greeted by an intruding tide. Sleeping bags were saturated in seconds. A usually reliable source reported later that Adrienne, clad in sleeping bag, was sitting calmly on her rucksack asking "What should I do now?" and "What should I wear?" as the flood swept through the tent. In defence it must be said that she had suffered a rude and sudden awakening. Ivan, sleeping alone, thought the Grays were calling him to come over and cuddle up for warmth, even as he felt the cold water seeping around his feet - it must have been a confusing moment.

George, refusing to be flapped, calmly retrieved floating billies and sunken cutlery from the now 30 centimetre-deep lake. I have a mental picture of Peter, with a whole tunnel tent draped across his shoulders, wading in search of dry land; and so it was confusion and chaos all round. It is a miracle that a pair of binoculars was the only item lost, but water was still being drained from two cameras some hours later. Dry clothing was especially scarce. As we prepared to move off, I reflected that this was by far our earliest start of the trip; and it struck me forcibly that snow and floods produce two quite opposite effects on bushwalkers: the former makes them want to stay in bed while the latter makes them want to get up in an awful hurry. Strange thing, but that's life. Anyway, some would say that it's an ill wind . . . because there was no porridge two mornings in a row. Yahoo!

As the nine drowned rats staggered into Narcissus Hut they were greeted by a hollow laugh emanating from a dry sleeping bag on a dry floor. We will never forgive you for that, Bill. The party mood was now most definite - no more desire to walk in the bush on the final day (another wet one, of course), only to reach civilisation as quickly as possible. So it was on to the speedboat which plies Lake St. Clair on demand and a quick, merciful arrival at Cynthia Bay and its home comforts.

Ah yes, how well I remember them! The cabin with a roof and a dry floor, a roaring fire, hot hamburgers and cold drinks, warm showers and clean, dry clothes, a bunk that could not be flooded and snow on the peaks where it belonged; and in the evening a three-course dinner at the Derwent Bridge Hotel, replete with fancy drinks from the bar, the best wines and coffee, after-dinner mints, in fact the works.

Civilisation was so welcome I began to wonder why we had so wanted to abandon it two weeks before. BUT then, if we had not abandoned it we would not have appreciated . . . oh dear, my rambling thoughts were going round in ever-decreasing circles. As I climbed into bed in a dreamy haze I figured I would probably go bushwalking again some time, may be in Death Valley or the Simpson Desert where it's always hot and never, never snows or rains.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS.

Please add the following names to your List of Members:-

DOUGLAS, Claudia, 58 Paget Street, Richmond, 2753	Phone (045) 78 4857
FLOYD, Christine, 9/60 Carabella Street, KIRribilli, 2061	929 4170
GROVE, Peter, 41 Lavender Street, Lavender Bay, 2061	929 4436
HESSELYN, Ruth, 2/20 Walker Street, North Sydney, 2060	92 0876
MILLER, Michelle, 1/15 Cambridge Street, Cammeray, 2062	922 1471
WALTON, Elaine, 45 Kiparra Street, Pymble, 2073	498 7956

Just a minute . .

MAITLAND BAY. Miss Byles brought before the meeting the desirability of the beaches in the vicinity of Maitland Bay, and requested that the Club move towards their reservation. Mr. Dunphy also spoke on the matter and undertook to report back to the next meeting. Committee Meeting on Friday, 1st December, 1933.

CONSERVATION CORNER (continued from Page 7).

SUGGESTIONS. 3. Visit places which provide information - The Total Environment Centre at 18 Argyle Place, The Rocks, and The Wilderness Society's beautiful shop at 57 Liverpool Street, Sydney.

4. Buy calendars and books on wilderness or on our conservationists. e.g. "Selected Writing of Myles J. Dunphy" - they make great presents and help to spread the word.

5. Donate money - even a little helps - to funds which give publicity to our side of the picture. e.g. Australian Conservation Foundation.

6. Join a conservation society and help it as a volunteer.

Conservation Corner

AIMS.

by Ainslie Morris.

The aims of this page in our monthly magazine are threefold:

- ° To sum up major current single issues in conservation.
- ° To present important general issues e.g. The Wilderness Act of N.S.W.
- ° To encourage bushwalkers to be well informed and support pro-Conservation bodies (societies and governments).

REASONS. The reasons for presenting on this page what is already available in "The Colong Bulletin" and "Wilderness News", as well as the media such as "The Sydney Morning Herald", are several.

Firstly, it is human nature to get very excited about local threats to one's well-being; would you rush out to stop woodchipping in the Blue Mountains? As a National Park, it is still not protected from logging, mining for coal or sandstone or limestone, from roads and hotels. ON the other hand, a call to protest about logging in Tasmania's National Estate forests, woodchipping extending into Victoria's Gippsland, or sandmining in Queensland's Shelburne Bay, is harder for us to respond to.

Secondly, not all of you belong to and receive conservation newsletters, but all of you hear, see and read the publicity of well-funded government and union and private company lobbies for exploitation of our scarce remaining natural resources.

Thirdly, most bushwalkers grow to love the natural environment and want to care for it. Twenty years ago, individuals felt helpless to protect bushland and rivers and rainforest when it was destroyed. It was then that our conservation movement used the principle that unity is strength, and saved many threatened areas, showing how needless their exploitation would have been, for example, Colong Caves and the Boyd Plateau.

WHY? Why is it so important to concern ourselves with conserving our 6% or 7% of remaining forest wilderness in Australia?

THE GLOBAL VIEW. I think the answer lies in considering the danger that our whole planet Earth is in. A global view is harder to comprehend than a local one, but to reach it we can start with our own bushwalking. We have, in the past sixty years, learned to leave our axes and guns at home and tread the bushland as privileged guests. We have taken positive action to save Blue Gum Forest, Era, Bouddi and now Coolana in Kangaroo Valley. The next step in developing our conservation conscience is to be equally concerned with saving areas we may have never visited, such as the forests of South-east N.S.W. near Eden, or the Carbine Tableland.

THE TIME PERSPECTIVE. The Carbine is part of the Greater Daintree region and part of the area recommended by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (I.U.C.N.) for World Heritage Listing. This is because it is a "rainforest refuge", having survived climatic changes over 2 million years and having a high concentration of ancient plant and animal species, some found only on the Carbine. It is in line for logging.

This is a good example of an area which can give us not only a global perspective of conservation, but a time perspective. Our planet has been developing complex and varied life forms for quite a while, and we could keep them, or we could wipe them out. And they won't come back. It is a trick used by developers who want an area for making money to degrade it (send in a bulldozer to demolish a heritage - listed building, or to knock over trees). Then they say it's not worth preserving. Are we doing this to the whole planet Earth?

We know, as bushwalkers, that our natural wilderness is a joy to behold. Our Club, and its magazine, can help to keep it that way.

SUGGESTIONS. 1. Write an article for our magazine about places you visit which are past or present conservation battle fronts. e.g. The Lemonthyme Forest in Tasmania.
2. Visit a "conservation issue" area on your next holidays. e.g. Border Ranges (what did we save?) or Coolangubra (what can we save?)

KIANDRA TO GUTHEGAPART 2.

by Oliver Crawford.

Day 6 (Wednesday) 31st December - New Year's Eve.

Our first overcast day, quite cool and windy. Setting off at the usual time, we passed Mail Box Hill on our left and headed through the gap at the north end of the Brassy Mountains. In this gap were two trees literally blown horizontal and still thriving, both very healthy specimens. Following the lee side (east) of North Brassy we passed above a large drift of snow and came to Big Brassy, which we climbed and stopped in a sheltered spot for morning tea, looking out over the Burrungubrugge Valley. From there the route led us to Tin Hut, where we had lunch. Again, this hut was in excellent order, being maintained by a Canberra club.

A semi-circular route from Tin Hut formed our approach to the Gungarten Range, which had many large drifts of snow on the eastern, protected side, where we were walking. Soon we were on the peak of Gungarten, just under the cloud cover, with the wind whistling about us. We spent little time there - it was such a contrast with the summit of Jagungal only the previous day.

From there it was as rapid a descent down to the road near Schlink Pass. In parts that descent was steep and scratchy. The still, warm air at the bottom was in total contrast to that on the mountain top. Ascending the road to Schlink Pass we turned left up to the Rolling Grounds where the rain really began to get serious. After a slight hesitation and some swamp bashing, we made camp in the cold, wind-driven rain behind a clump of trees.

This was New Year's Eve though, and not even old Hughie was going to spoil it! Bob and his assistants worked wonders with the firewood (and the Shellite) and soon everybody was standing around sharing the goodies. Rum and lemon barley was made and it sure did taste good! To drive the rain away, we started singing sunshine type songs and lo - Hughie answered with a clap of thunder, followed by more claps, rather like a dog barking when it knows it's beaten, and about 8 o'clock the rain finally stopped.

That was when Helmut and Annette emerged from their tent saying what a wonderful sleep they had had. YOU two don't really expect us to believe that, do you? Anyway, my maiden performance with the mouth organ (sorry, harmonica) was performed, accompanying those doing a 'strip-the-willow', then we settled down to some more singing, limerick telling and a terrific rendition of Mike's new song with another verse attached. It was all capped off with Auld Lang Syne (albeit a little early) and we all went to bed.

Day 7 (Thursday) 1st January - New Year's Day.

We awoke to another cloudy, overcast day, but at least it was not raining. Breakfast was made and consumed, camp was struck, and we set off at roughly the usual hour, circling back and to our left to gain the height of the Rolling Grounds. Very shortly the sun appeared with great cumulus clouds about 50% cover, making this day a photographer's paradise, with all the snow, rocks, grass and the peaks of the Main Range in the background.

Morning tea was enjoyed in a beautiful location looking over to Mt. Tate and the Main Range, with Little Twynam, Twynam and Watson's Crag all heavily coated with 'icing'. Reluctantly we pushed on to lunch, where a division in the party occurred. About eight of us wanted to remain till the last possible moment in the hills, while others pushed on, supposedly to the beer and skittles at the bottom. Alas, it was to be a case of the gold at the end of the rainbow! Those of us who remained had a sumptuous feast of all the remaining goodies, washed down by tea brewed by Mike.

At last the inevitable hour arrived and we set off down the ridge to Guthega, where we arrived with time to spare before the bus arrived.

The bus arrived on time, our packs were all loaded on the trailer, we climbed aboard and away we went, soon to be well refreshed with wine and savouries specially organised for this occasion. On reaching Adaminaby we saw all our vehicles lined up, nicely washed by the bus proprietor, our packs and persons eventually were transhipped and we all drove down to Angler's Rock for the night.

MT TATE

LITTLE
TWINNAM

TWINNAM

WATSON'S
CLAGS

After setting up camp and cleaning up we all tucked into a delicious meal of smoked trout salad organized by Maurie, a really fitting finale to the week's adventure.

Day 8 (Friday) 2nd January.

A rather hot day was promising, and trying to come back to reality slowly, several of us decided to lengthen our trip home in as pleasant a manner as possible.

The suggestion was to have lunch at Williamsdale, down by the Murrumbidgee on the Tharwa Road. This is only 4 km off the main road and we found a pleasant spot under a small tree. Peter agreed this would be a good spot from which to begin a canoe trip.

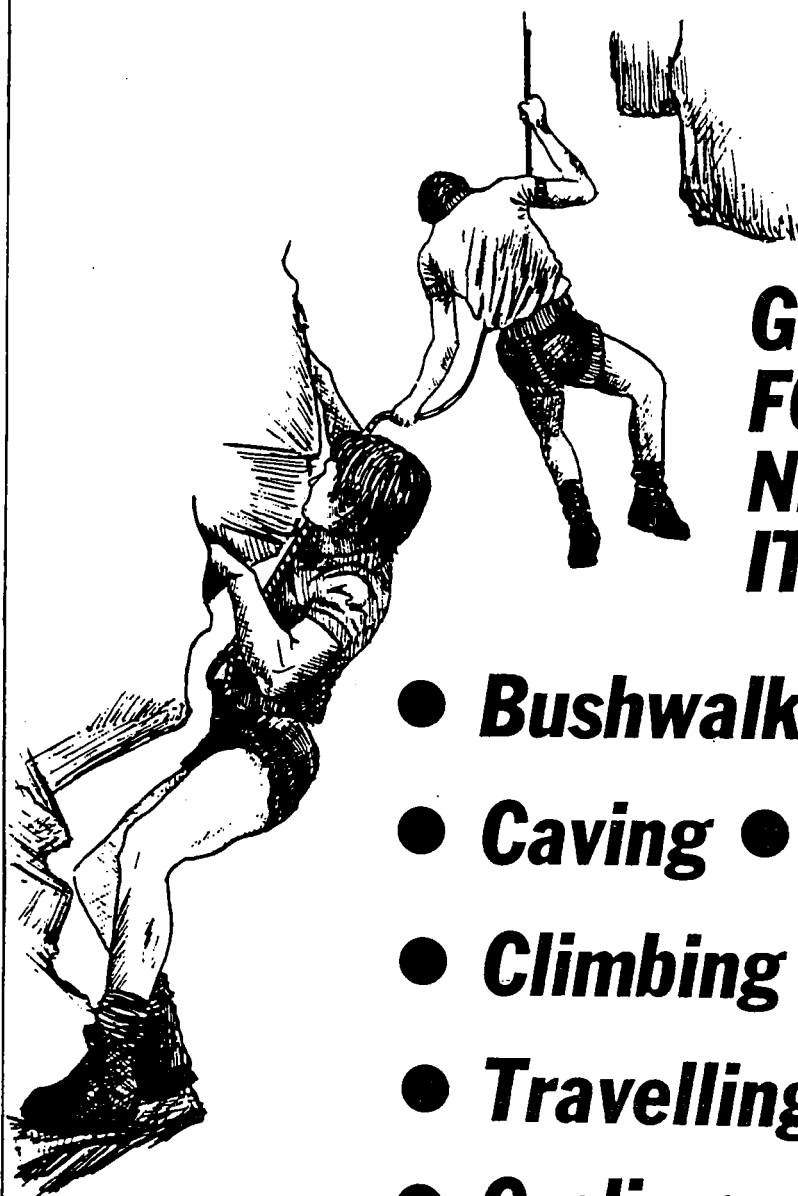
Leaving there we also called in at the Molonglo Gorge, which reminded me of a childhood experience of travelling to Canberra by train behind a 36 class locomotive, as we could see the railway line traversing the sides of the gorge. However we had not the time to dally and the day was hot, so turning our backs we set off on the long haul home, to arrive around 6 pm.

If I haven't said it before, I say it now. Thank you, Maurie, for a terrific trip. When is the next one?

* * * * *

WALKS NOTICE.

TEST WALK on May 31st from Heathcote to Waterfall led by Errol Sheedy was not marked correctly; it is a test walk. Please inform any interested Prospective Members, as they do not get the magazine.



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DAY TEST WALK, 12th OCTOBER 1986.

by Errol Sheedy.

Waterfall - Goomera Ridge - Hacking River - Bola Gully - Garie Tops - Era - Burning Palms
- Otford.

Twenty-seven walkers, including a perfect number of seven Prospectives, assembled at Waterfall Railway Station for this test walk.

There had been two interesting aspects of the planning stage of this walk. The first was that I had anticipated, when I initially explored the section between Waterfall Oval and Waterfall Flat, that I would encounter quite thick scrub on the way down to the picnic area; and so, having been prepared for the worst, I was pleasantly surprised to find the going easy, the bush quite open, and the descent on 140° a comfortable stroll through sandstone ledges. The second notable thing (which was also remarked upon by members during the test walk) was that along Goomera Ridge were encountered the remains of an old fence which we followed along the spine of the ridge for about a kilometre. Some hardwood posts were still standing but most of the posts and the rusted fencing wire strands were lying on the ground. This fence apparently marked the boundary of the National Park and private property before the latter was acquired by the Park Trust. Bill Hall suggested that the fence could be more than a hundred years old. As the (Royal) National Park was created in 1879 it seems probable that more recent acquisitions could have been made subsequent to that date. Perhaps, in view of the fact that my great-grandfather, William Augustus Sheedy, was one of the first chief rangers of the National Park I really should stir me stumps and do historical research into these matters.

We had morning tea on top of Goomera Ridge (where the leader, for the benefit of the Prospectives briefly dissertated on the orientating of the map), lunch under the palms in Bola Gully, and afternoon tea - well, that, alas, fell victim to the pressing demands of covering kilometres with sufficient celerity to catch the 5.38 train ex Otford. (This was despite the leader's earlier over-optimistic suggestion that some walkers might wish to have a swim at Burning Palms!)

In the event, nineteen people hurtled on to Otford, and did catch the prescribed train, while the leader and several others brought up the tail. At this stage I would like to say that although one member of the rearguard did suffer cramps and exhaustion after lunch, it was definitely not the leader (on this occasion!).

I would like to thank Derek Wilson and former prospective Ron Smythe for their help when, being concerned that the last two of us had not appeared, they returned around the rocks from South Era Beach to North Era to see if we needed assistance. Unfortunately, as they did this we were heading over the grassy hill, between the two beaches, in the opposite direction, and so they missed us then, but retracing their steps, finally caught up with us in Palm Jungle after having walked an extra five kilometres.

I would also like to thank Len Berlin and the other members who ably guided the advance group to Otford. It is comforting for a leader to know that if the party does become divided in well-tracked territory there are capable helpers who can assist in this way.

The tail of the party encountered heavy coastal showers along the beaches, and was rewarded with the sight of a caribou (?) aircraft heading, very low, in close, up the coast to the air show. The advance group climbing the Burgh Ridge to the cliff track walked through quite a heavy hail storm.

The last eight of us made our way through Otford Gap and mist towards the last glimmering rays of sunset to reach Otford Station in time for the 7.01 train.

* * * * *

APPRECIATION.

The art work (commercial) for the 60th Anniversary Commemorative Port labels and the commemorative T-shirts was prepared from a design by Morag Ryder by LYNETTE MAWER, a non-member, but the daughter of George Mawer. Many thanks, Lynette.

C
&
C



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WALKERS' GEAR.

by Joan Rigby.

(Joan's ruminations were born of her wallowing in a wet weekend on the Colo, and an even wetter Tassie trip.)

I have never been what a bushwalking friend calls a gear freak. The latest product in the shops does not attract me if what I have is still serviceable. But I always try to buy good stuff - gear that will do the job it is meant for and which, with proper care, can be relied on when conditions are hard.

Last weekend as I unfolded my day-old Culoul 1:25000 map and found I was now walking over a damp white smudged area - devoid of the lovely detail and interesting contours that had impressed me when I first spread the map out at home - I began to consider where bushwalking equipment was heading these days and how far I had already been diverted from the principles I believe should be applied to its purchase.

For the moment I thankfully consulted my 1955, inch to the mile, St. Albans sheet, the legible and well-preserved veteran of numerous Colo trips in the 1960's, located my position and continued downstream. That night I thought more about the gear changes I had seen over the years and what they really meant to bushwalkers' safety, comfort and pleasure.

Maps of course came first to mind for they entice me into planning trips and remind me of good walks done. For this the new large scale maps are great, a wonderful improvement on small scale, sketch and provisional maps of the past. But, even on a dry weekend, despite careful attention to folding and handling, I am left with a split and limp sheet with details blurred, while if it rains the paper and printing just disappear, leaving me high if not dry.

What about packs? So many changes over the years, surely the modern ones are a vast improvement on anything before. I remember the pleasure of moving from A-frame to H-frame with better balance and easier carrying. Good packs they were, with plenty of room, simple of access, strong and capable of keeping gear dry even in wet conditions. Modern packs, made of 'miracle' cloth and designed to take weight off the shoulders sound wonderful - there are so many to choose from, the popularity must arise from their quality. Well, mine is comfortable. It is a pity that the non-slip buckles need continual adjustment - and strange that I should be told by the agents that the large top pocket isn't meant to hold much unless the whole pack is chokka and that my habit of liking maps, first-aid and scroggin readily accessible in an external pocket is odd and should be changed. Perhaps the urgent need to get weight off my shoulders stopped me paying enough attention to the comments about waterproofing. I don't expect material to be as impervious as vinyl sheeting, but that the whole contents should be soaked after a couple of hours of light rain came as a shock. So did the solution offered of a pack-cover: through the Colo scrub? "I wouldn't know, I walk on tracks." said the salesman. "Try a canyon bag, it's only the seams that leak." But I'm looking for lightness and convenience, not another complication.

The final blow - the pack base alone is watertight, so everything sloshes around in an inch of water. Oh well, I can save weight by cutting off some of the many straps for holding climbing, skiing and ice gear in place. Of course I removed one strap too many - across the chest - and the shoulder straps started slipping. Back went the sternum band and now, every time I sit down with pack on, I risk garrotting. And all I wanted was a basic bushwalker's sack!

Tents have changed beyond recognition to beautiful engineer-designed curves in wonderful breathing fabrics, with annexes for cooking and gear stowage and clever flip-together tent poles. For snow camping there is nothing better. But those who own these complexities then use them where once we saw only little Japara tents. Now those simple shelters, which, supported by bush sticks, open to the bush airs, pitched on rough or smooth ground, skilfully sited for view or protection, are unique to Australian bushwalking, seem headed for extinction, along with that other native design, the Japara waterbucket.

I remember when wet weather saw us wrapped in cape-groundsheets. We cursed them as we climbed Carlons Chains, clasped them tightly down as winds whistled across the Narrow Necks, huddled under them to eat quick lunches in driving rain and held them high over damp kindling till the fire caught. Sometime in the fifties Dorothy passed a New Zealand parka pattern around the Club, and, with Japara from a Drummoyne sailmaker, and strange concoctions from the Club chemists, we fitted ourselves out for the Southwest.

Soon oilskins began to replace the homemades and, if treated right, worked fairly well. Then the changes came fast. Gortex and Drycoat polycottons now dominate the market. Their proof is only found in usage, some work, some don't. "Did you wear it in the bush?" one complaining Gortex-owner was asked. My second-time-out Drycoat left me soaked in light summer rain - luckily in country where I could take risks. Designed no longer for the walker but for the skier and motorised outdoor man, few have shoulder capes, pockets are too small for maps, storm flaps couldn't resist a summer shower and lengths indicate they are meant for use with overpants.

So, what is the answer? Are we the receivers of the surplus products from other more fashionable, more universal, activities? Have novelty and technology blunted our critical assessment of what we buy? Do we get what we deserve? Once there was a slogan - "DESIGNED FOR AUSTRALIAN CONDITIONS BY AUSTRALIAN WALKERS." Now there are many who sell but are there any who consider the Australian Bushwalker market worth the trouble of specialised design?

What do you think?

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THE FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING.

by Barry Wallace.

It was around 2008 when the President, from the chair, called the 20 or so members who happened to be present, to order, and began the meeting with an apology from our Secretary, Greta Davis. New members Louise Potts, Kay Williams, David Tucker, Helen Panter, Christina Zingarelli and Jan Szarek were called for welcome but only the latter three were actually present at the meeting.

The Minutes of the January meeting were read and received with no business arising except a comment that there remains more work to be done at Coolana and a March working bee will be arranged.

Correspondence brought one letter, from Kath McInnes regarding the updating of the S. & R. call-out list.

Of Treasurer's Report there was none. The accounts are all in for audit.

The Walks Report began with Les Powell's Shoalhaven area walk which attracted five people on a hot weekend, on what was described as a good walk. The leader may well have had his doubts, he was bitten by an eel whilst cooling in one of the pools. Peter Miller reported a large party on his Wollangambe Canyon li-lo trip. They queued with all the other parties who were going through that day. Jan Mohandas had 21 people on his Glenbrook walk which we are told involved lots of non-compulsory swimming. Of Ken Gould's 20,21,22 January canoe trip from Coolana there was no report.

On the following weekend, Australia Day Weekend, 23,24,25,26 January, Bob Hodgson's Wollangambe wilderness trip was cancelled, but Don Finch reported 8 starters on his Colo River li-lo trip. Ian Debert's River Island Nature Retreat trip went as programmed with 15 or so starters. Jo Van Sommer's day walk attracted 22 starters on the 25th.

Peter Christian's Du Fours Creek li-lo trip on the 1st February had 15 starters and was reported to be wet. Malcolm Boadle's Sassafras Creek walk attracted 17 people on a hot day.

On the following weekend 6,7,8 February, Peter Christian's Bell Creek li-lo trip had four starters and Don Finch reported 11 people on his Kowmung River walk. Laurie Quaken's West Head walk reported 13 starters in a party which disintegrated somewhat after lunch.

Federation Report brought news of the proposed Leadership Course.

The 60th Anniversary Committee reported that the T-shirt design is now final, that the anniversary Port is available and that the various celebratory functions are still on. Tickets for the Dinner are being printed, and to prove that democracy is alive and well and living in the meeting was given the opportunity^{of} choosing the colour of the tickets. There was some inconclusive discussion about name-tags for attendees and we were advised that material for the

historical booklet is being prepared.

General Business brought mention of an intention to print a Membership Card for use when claiming discounts at stores or calming rangers. The meeting resolved to not proceed with printing of these cards, as the present issued receipts appear to do the job quite well.

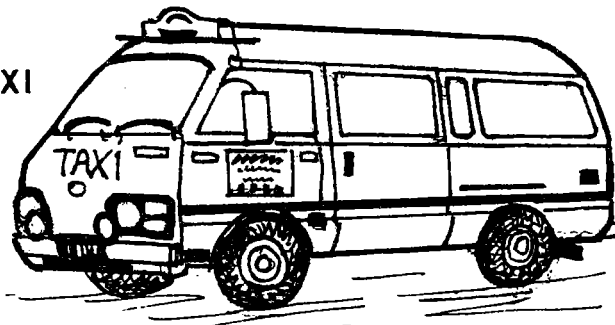
The meeting also resolved that the Club Auction be held July or August and that proceeds go to the 60th Anniversary fund.

After that it was what our brethren of the media refer to as a quiet news day, but at length it was all laid to rest by the announcements, and after, the closure at 2056.

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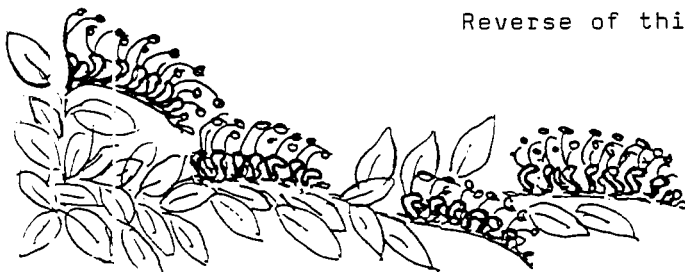
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SOCIAL NOTES FOR APRIL.

by Narelle Lovell.

April kicks off with the usual Committee Meeting - the first for the new Committee, on the 1st and a General Meeting on the 8th. On 15th April, after dinner at the Mekong, 64 Dalhousie Street (Vietnamese cooking) there will be a planning night for Easter walks. (Tell your new Social Secretary if you intend dining - see list of new Committee members, Page 3). Audio-Visual Peter Christian's "From the Snowys to Fraser Island" will be shown on April 22nd.

An exhibition of paintings by local artists, some of them club members, is planned for April 29th. Ray Dargan, Vivien Scheffer and Nadeen Lovell have already promised paintings and there may be others. This looks like a very interesting month, so do give it your support.

STOP PRESS: March 25th - Instead of the guest speaker from R.L.S.S we will be having a Member's Slide Night - Kanangra (or other) - what you will. "THE SCRUB BASHERS", going since 197-, is our very own musical group of singers: Ailsa Hocking as female vocalist, Gordon Lee and Tom Wenman as male vocalists, as well as Len Newland on guitar for rhythm and Bob Hodgson on mouth organ for the tune. All are fine performers and rehearsed regularly for some time to put on a great night on Wednesday, 25th February, to an audience of 40-50. We enjoyed old favourites - "Click Go the Shears" and so on, humorous renditions from Gordon and even a Bob Dylan song.

"The Scrub Bashers" welcome more musicians who like bush songs to join them; ring Gordon on 74 1824. And next time they're on the program - come along and support our own music group!

COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT 4.3.87.

A photograph album of large format has been donated by Bill and Fran Holland. Club members are invited to contribute their special bushwalking photographs to it. It is kept in the cupboard.

At Coolana there have been objections raised by the Water Board Ranger to our use of the "flats". This is Water Board land adjacent to our land, but we have a legal document dated 12.12.1974 stating the Board's INTENTION to grant us a licence for use and access for recreation.

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