

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

Established June 1931

GARIE BEACH

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers Incorporated, Box 4476 GPO, Sydney, 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening from 7.45 pm at the Ella Community Centre, 58a Dalhousie Street, Haberfield (next to the Post Office). Prospective members and visitors are invited to visit the Club on any Wednesday. To advertise in this magazine please contact the Business Manager.

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JANUARY 1989

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Deadline for March Issue - Articles 22 February, Notes 1 March 1989



EDITORIAL

SPITTING CHIPS

It really gets up my nose the seemingly total lack of coordination within and between our governments. It doesn't matter too much what your politics are; red, blue or purple, what I'm referring to is the latest round of environmental bashing.

Somewhere there is a Commission for the Future, and lobby groups promoting research into the Greenhouse effect, the depletion of the Ozone layer, logging, no logging, wood chipping, no wood chipping, dams, no dams and a Senate inquiry into tourism. Are they so busy talking no one has time to listen?

We are told that the Greenhouse effect is a real threat and if nothing is done then within some decades the world will be in trouble. A small but significant rise in ambient temperature will raise the ocean water level and raise the snow line. Who cares? We should. How do you stop/halt the Greenhouse effect? Apparently by preserving existing forests and by replacing destroyed forests. Simple solution but requiring considerable reafforestation. What you don't do is cut down more forest. But what of the Tasmanian and Eden-Bega proposed or planned arboricide.

If we are to have a timber industry now and in the future then plan and implement the regeneration of the resource now not later. Plant trees now, before not after. Don't clear fell, it may be efficient but it cannot do the environment any good. Export finished paper not woodchips, at least Australia then gets the benefit of the added value. And while we're doing things right for a change have this Australian resource worked by an Australian enterprise.

Maybe there will be a future to have a Commission for.

* * * * *

JOURNEY TO BUNGLEBOORI CREEK - A PROSPECTIVE'S PERSPECTIVE

by Art Stolz

The walk looked innocuous enough when I glanced at the map spread out in the foyer of the Ella Centre. Contours well separated with the exception of the Wollangambe crossing. Plenty of green though, but I didn't give this a further thought. I was more concerned about not having carried a moderately heavy pack for some years. "And bring some gaiters" were Oliver Crawford's last words when he called to say that the walk was definitely on.

It was somewhere between 35°-40°C when I drove through Richmond on the Friday evening of the walk. The car didn't enjoy the heat much either. Not good weather for walking, I thought. Finding the post office at Mt Wilson where we'd agreed to meet proved troublesome. I had forgotten how puny the place was having been there only once before and well over 20 years ago. Also by this time it was pitch dark. The post office turned out to be a PMG mailbox and phone booth close together. Didn't have to wait too long for Oliver, Jim Rivers and Neil, another prospective. Peter Caldwell and Malcolm Steele arrived about an hour after the acceptable waiting period had lapsed. That night we camped by a track on a ridge above the Wollangambe, lulled to sleep by the flapping of mosquitos. Or were they bats?

George Mawer joined us in the morning. After a leisurely breakfast we saddled up and moved off. It was scrub from the word go and I complimented myself for having invested in some gaiters. Fortunately, yesterday's heatwave had subsided. Indeed, the day was overcast and pleasantly cool. Pack seemed to feel all right and we made good time down the spur leading to the Wollangambe. Shoes off, on again and up the escarpment on the other side. More scrub at the top. Oliver and Jim navigated by compass and pacing and a good job they did too. Beginning to feel my back. Was I walking with my face on the ground or was my mind playing tricks? Everybody else seemed to look comfortable.

We stopped in a saddle for a belated morning tea. Felt like taking off and flying without that load on my back. Scaled a small rock face with the pack on. Quite pleased with myself. Still more scrub as we moved on. We had practically swum through the confounded stuff for about four hours. Rain was threatening. Would we make the campsite before this settled in? Jim, losing concentration for a moment, hit the ground with an ominous thud, spraining his ankle. "Nothing", he said, after lying on the ground and moaning for a while.

It was well after noon and we hadn't yet stopped for lunch. But by this time the campsite was in our sights and on down and down a long and steep hill we pressed towards it. There was water. We breathed a collective sigh of relief. The rain had settled in and we hurriedly pitched our humpys (tents, fly sheets and even an old bit of tarpaulin!). We were tired to the very man. No matter; Oliver and those who felt like it departed on an exploratory. After all, this was what Oliver had come for. There simply was no time to be wasted finding a way down to Bungleboori Creek. The rest rested, washed and got a rip-roaring fire going. Several hours later, the explorers returned looking wet and dejected.

Nothing like a warm fire and billy tea to lift the spirits. Rum and lemon-barley to ward off the mosquitos. Everyone talkative and in a philosophical mood. Strange, yesterday we didn't know each other but today we were almost friends. Good to get away from the city. So glad I came. I thought. Slept peacefully that night listening to a mopoke as I dropped off.

Currawongs chimed us awake in the morning. Discovered some new muscles as I turned. Neil was already up and about muttering something about everybody snoring and a sleepless night. I was rather dejected to see eggs and even a tomato appear for breakfast. Someone grilled a chop. I had rationed my meals with portability in mind. Well, next time I'll know. Fascinated by George operating his coathanger, cum toaster, cum billy rest.

Bloody impossible to get down there was my first impression as I looked over the line of cliffs! Surely, 50 m down. We moved along the cliff line searching for a gap. Jim pointed to a possible break. Oliver, started to descend without a moment's hesitation. I joined him in this madness. Down and sometimes sideways we scrambled from one rock to the next. I reminded Oliver that we had to come back up but he seemed unperturbed. Didn't take that long to make it down and we hollered signalling that we were there.

What a stream! The Water was crystal clear and clean. There were rapids and deep pools. My casting arm kept twitching. Might there be fish? Pity we couldn't stay to find out. We surveyed the cliff face on the other side. Nothing but sheer rock faces. I pitied the early Australian explorers while Oliver lamented having left his camera at home. Surprisingly, the ascent was a pushover.

No, not a detour and downhill to boot! No one spoke up. Soon we rested at a lookout point with Bungleboori Creek far below. Through my field glasses I spied a huge goanna preening himself on a beach. Now, we panted all the way up to the plateau we'd left the day before. More swimming through more scrub but at least my pack felt lighter and I believe my back was straight.

Ropes came out at the saddle. Is this what is called rockhopping? Oops, the wrong spur into the Wollangambe. It took a second iteration to get the right one. We followed a new route down along a dried out but thickly overgrown creek bed; not a good one, in retrospect.

Oliver and Jim bounced up the escarpment like kid mountain goats with Malcolm not far behind. My pack got heavier and heavier. That I was not the last up made me feel a little better. A final bit of scrub-bashing and we were back at the cars. It was 5 pm. We were ahead of time. Oliver's reputation was shattered.

Italian food at the Do Drop Inn, Windsor. Good way to finish off a walk. Everybody pleasantly tired but cheerful. We departed company, hoping to walk together again some day.

* * * * *



FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS NSW - Report of December Meeting - by Spiro Ajinakis

New Premises: The Federation will be meeting at 39 George Street, The Rocks in 1989.

Phil Venn (Marrawood) and Brian Walker (CMW) have accepted the positions of FBW delegates to Nature Conservation Council.

Pam Eisner of the Environment Centre was presented with a small gift in appreciation of her many years with the Centre and the assistance she has given to FBW.

New Club: Andre Blaker (Sutherland Bushwalkers) has started a club for family walks with young children under 10.

Conservation: The Minister, Tim Moore, says there will be no mining in National Parks under the Greiner Government. New cabins will be built in Thredbo area, but not in National Park.

Search & Rescue: First aid courses next year will be held on 3rd weekend in May and 4th weekend in October. S & R Radio Operator, Nick Eichhorn is leaving Sydney and a replacement is needed. Paramedics S & R training deferred. Barrington Search - trying to narrow down possibilities. S & R Group may be established in the Tamworth area by local interested groups.

Insurance & Incorporation Committee is going through various policies and rewriting clauses in plain simple language to meet our requirements and will report to FBW at February Meeting. Will also report on necessary steps to achieve incorporation.

Bush Dance & Ball 1989: Bush Dance will be held at Lane Cove Town Hall on 12th May and FBW Ball on 22nd September at Petersham Town Hall.

Membership of FBW: Federation now has 24 affiliated clubs and 4 associates. Six clubs have not paid their affiliation fees and therefore their membership has lapsed as of December.

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"ILLAWONG: AFTER THE SNOW IS OVER"

by Jeff Niven

The week started with us all skiing in on Saturday with packs to Illawong Lodge - situated approximately two kilometres up the Snowy River from Guthega Ski Resort. After a cup of tea and lunch, we commissioned the Lodge, which entailed filling the water tank in the roof, lighting the water heater, choosing bunks, going through fire drill and sorting through food and clothing, and later, starting the generator to charge the batteries.

Soon we were on the slope out front doing a few warm-up telemarks, unencumbered by the heavy packs we had skied in with. After a late decision, Pat, Barrie and I skied up to Little Twynam in time to see a beautiful sunset. The ski back whetted our appetites for the week ahead.

It had been arranged that Wayne Steele and Wendy Lippiat were to ski from Perisher, where they were staying, to Illawong, and join us for a day ski-tour on the Monday. We started by crossing the footbridge over the Snowy River at 9 am in perfect, clear, still weather. Shozaburo, Fusae's brother, on holiday from Japan, only had alpine skis with skins which proved unsuitable for long day tours, so he decided to leave us and stay at Mt. Twynam for the day. Skiing solo didn't bother him, he told us that he had on his own climbed and skied up and down the 100 highest mountains in Japan.

For the rest of us it was up to Little Twynam and then Mt. Twynam, where we stopped for a snack, photos and time to enjoy the view. We then skied towards Carruther's Peak where the view over Watson's Crags, Mt. Sentinel and country further west was sensational.

After an early lunch break on Carruther's Peak, we skied on to Mount Kosciuszko where we had another snack and view stop. After some good telemarking off Kosciuszko, we headed along the Summit Road, past Seaman's Hut down to Charlotte Pass Village and had hot chips and drinks, before the last leg down the road and along Spencer's Creek to arrive back at the Lodge about 6 pm (yes, in the dark).

The skiing for the remainder of the week was varied - consisting of a trip up Guthega Trig to the Rolling Grounds and back via Conset Stephen's Pass, a ski across to Perisher, then Blue Cow, where we bought and shared a 50 km lift ticket for downhill - a very windy trip to Blue Lake where we sheltered for lunch, and watched a group of ice climbers, very brave to attempt ice climbing in the conditions, we thought.

Saturday, our last morning, was spent cleaning up and de-commissioning the Lodge.

Illawong Lodge's charm and character along with its ideal position giving fast access to the Main Range added up to make a most enjoyable skiing holiday.

July 30 to August 6.

The party: Patrick McBride (leader), Roy Hall, Jenny and Steve Brown, Barrie Murdock, Fusae Dargan, Shozaburo Fujino and Jeff Niven.

(Remember six months ago when it was cold and dry? EDITOR)

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WALKING IN ENGLAND & WALESPART 4by Ainslie Morris
& Mike ReynoldsTHE DALES WAY & THE PENNINE WAY (cont.)Walking up the River Wharfe

As we went upstream, the wide and fertile valley narrowed, and we left behind the history of England that depends on wealth, and entered the more rugged land with its alternative history. Here are the little villages of hardy stone cottages - Appletreewick, Burnsall, Grassington - Norse villages famed in medieval times for their great pony, cattle and sheep markets. The bridge, the grammar school and church at Burnsall were all built or repaired by Dick Whittington (Sir William Craven).

As we left Grassington, which began as an Iron Age Settlement (pre-Roman), we left the river to the trout fishermen and climbed the smooth green pastures on to high hills, criss-crossed by innumerable grey-white stone walls. The limestone scars (cliffs) were used in prehistoric times as added protection to hill forts. For us, they added grandeur to a scene with splendid views of Wharfedale. Beyond Kettlewell ("Ketel" - a bubbling spring) there is little habitation as the hills close in, and we headed up a source tributary of the Wharfe after our third camp. This was a "free" camp using water from a spring from the limestone which we judged clean; we never trusted the river water anywhere because of the ubiquitous sheep.

We saw no one at all as we climbed, crossing little gills (side creeks) and passing by a tall gloomy greystone house like Wuthering Heights itself, called Swarthgill. Soon we crossed the watershed at 1260 feet and crossed a stream which would end up in the Irish Sea. If you want to buy a bleak farm, Cam Houses is up for sale. We were glad its bunkhouse had been left unlocked as we scurried in out of the rain and wind to eat a bite of morning tea, later designated as lunch.

At Cam End, below Cam Fell (fells are side slopes of moors), we turned onto the Pennine Way, and struck people and mud. After a six hour trudge in the rain, we dropped off the moors to Horton-in-Ribblesdale, the fell-walkers' heaven. The charming Crown Inn looked even better from the inside than the outside, and as the dripping walkers poured in, the pile of raincoats and boots in the tiny entrance porch grew. They were all dried out after dinner in the kitchen, ready to get wet again on the morrow as we climbed Pen-Y-Ghent Hill (694 metres).

This is pot-holing country, a delight to cavers as well as walkers. Fountains Fell at 680 metres provided a challenge of mist and mud; it belonged to Fountains Abbey, founded in 1098 by the Cistercian Order. Although far away, the Abbey was given vast acres of land by landowners seeking favour with God. We descended to Malham Tarn, first clear evidence we'd had of glaciation in the last Ice Age. It was still showery as we pushed on over the Water Sinks, watery meadows crossed by yet more remarkable drystone walls, to Malham Cove.

We picked our way gingerly over the limestone pavement, slippery after the rain, carefully avoiding the gaps two or three feet deep and a few inches across. Ferns and other specialised plants grow in these sheltered slots dividing flat aquares about three to four feet across. We were careful not to go close to the edge of the Cove; they say that if a river flowed over the cliff it would be greater than Niagara Falls. But it's dry, and the rock climbers would have it no other way. Out of its base a cold stream gushes, and this we followed down to Malham to share our last campsite on a farm with many other walkers on the Pennine Way.

On the last day we had intended to walk along the lovely River Aire to Gargrave, but a heavy shower arrived at the same time as the once-a-day bus, so we hopped on it. We took it to Skipton, where we were transformed from walkers into tourists by dumping our packs and exploring Skipton Castle. Built by our old lady friend, Anne Pembroke, it is still in excellent condition and great fun on a rainy day.

We left this bustling little market town on the bus which took us back to Ilkley and Leeds.

* * * * *

THE DECEMBER GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

There were 30 or so members present at around 2013 when the President called the meeting to order and called for apologies. These there were from Alan and Anita Doherty, Mike Reynolds and Patrick James.

When new members were called Robert Webb and Michele Powell were present to be welcomed in the customary manner.

The Minutes of last month's meeting were read and received, with the only matter arising being the news that Tim Moore did make it to the Club last month.

Correspondence brought a letter of resignation from Sandra Bardwell on the grounds that she will be moving to Scotland in the near future, an invitation to join the Family Bushwalking Club, advice from The Wilderness Society of a proposed walk in Tasmania, FBW Minutes of their November meeting, a letter from Stewart Brooks advising details of a proposed book about the Hume and Hovell track and a letter from Kath Brown foreshadowing a motion to the effect that the Club continues the use of the Haberfield premises.

Business arising from correspondence saw the meeting vote to donate \$50.00 towards the production of the Hume and Hovell Track book.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we spent \$365, acquired income of \$564 and closed with a balance of \$9858 in round figures. If that balance looks high it's because we still have \$5,500 of Coolana account money sitting in there.

The Walks Report began on the weekend of November 11,12,13 with Carol Bruce leading a party of 13 on her Pagoda Rocks ramble, and David Rostron and his party of 6 deciding that maybe the Colo wasn't all it was cracked up to be. Errol Sheedy had 13 starters, enjoying the swimming on his Waterfall to Heathcote day trip.

The following weekend, November 18,19,20 saw Les Powell's Mt. Colong gallop cancelled and Barry Wallace leading 6 souls on his Tomat Falls the-long-way trip. It seems the river rose a metre or so while they were on the other side and only the kindly intervention of the local farmer, with a boat, saved them from having to swim for it. Jan Mohandas had 20 (or was it 21) on his Tootie Creek natural spa trip, which was reported as being O.K. Joe Marton's Waterfall to Otford trip had 7 starters. There were leeches in Frewe's Gully, ticks and leeches at Burning Palms, and it threatened rain all day. Other than that it was just another day walk.

November 25,26,27 saw Kenn Clacher with a party of 11 on his Galloping Jim's Route trip, pressing on through scrub and drizzle on the Saturday and rain and cold conditions on the Sunday. They said that what they saw of the countryside looked pleasant. The party of 11 on Ian Debert's Yalwal trip enjoyed similar weather and reported strange structures, which they called donkey tables, in the vicinity of Mission Point. There was no report of Derek Wilson's Waterfall to Heathcote trip but despite the Walks Sec. losing the submitted report we do know that Alan Mewett had 13 people and fine weather on his Wondabyne to Woy Woy trip. Their punctuality or otherwise is not recorded.

Wendy Aliano's extended Snowy Areea trip went with one other starter and some typically foul mountain weather. They did report, however, that the recent restorations carried out to the hut toilets was a great comfort in the prevailing inclement conditions.

There was no report of Jim Oxley's Cloudmaker trip but Oliver Crawford had 6 people and car problems on his Wollemi Li-lo trip. There was no report of Rudi Dezelin's coastal walk. Laurie Quaken's Ku-Ring-Gai Chase trip did not go and Errol Sheedy reported 12 starters and significant regeneration of the burnt-over areas of Royal National Park on his Bundeena to Bundeena walk.

Over the weekend of December 9,10,11 David McIntosh had the 12 starters on his dual canyons trip split up into two separate parties with the idea that each party would do a different canyon on each day. Heavy rain on the Saturday night brought it all to a halt, so they retreated to the fleshpots (tearooms) of Mt. Victoria on the Sunday. Ian Debert reported 17 at the combined paint-in and dance-by-any-other-name weekend at Coolana, and there were 5 on Alan Mewett's Brisbane Waters trip. George Mawer had 6 or 7 on his Campfire Creek trip enduring cold conditions with a late burst of warm sunshine.

The Walks Reports were followed by slides of a recent walk.

Federation matters are usually covered elsewhere in the magazine.

Conservation Report brought news that the Point Piper to Marulan transmission line will not now pass across national parks area. It seems the acceptance of this by the government Minister concerned was most reluctant. Proposed logging in the Mt. Yengo area appears to not be proceeding and the Ettrema and Mann areas are to be declared as wilderness areas.

General business brought the foreshadowed motion to the effect that the Club remain at the Haberfield premises. After some debate and extensive explanations the motion was passed.

Then it was only a matter of announcements, and the meeting closed at 2205.

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BUS SERVICES TO THE HABERFIELD AREA - EVENING PERIOD, WEEK DAYS.

FROM THE CITY - ROUTE 438 (Circular Quay to ABBOTSFORD) via George Street, Railway Square, Broadway, Parramatta Road, Norton Street, Marion Street, Ramsay Road to HABERFIELD: then continuing via Five Dock to Abbotsford.

Journeys depart Circular Quay (Opera House) at 6.41 pm, 6.56 pm, 7.11 pm, 7.26 pm, 7.41 pm, 7.56 pm.

Pass Town Hall Station in George Street 7 minutes after leaving Circular Quay,

" through Railway Square 12 minutes after leaving Circular Quay.

Due Dalhousie Street, HABERFIELD, 33 minutes after leaving Circular Quay, i.e. 7.14 pm, 7.29 pm, 7.44 pm, 7.59 pm, 8.14 pm, 8.29 pm.

Return Journeys depart HABERFIELD (in Ramsay Road, just east of Dalhousie Street) at 8.37 pm, 8.57 pm, 9.17 pm, 9.37 pm, 9.57 pm, 10.17 pm - Due at Circular Quay at 9.07 pm, 9.27 pm, 9.47 pm, 10.07 pm, 10.27 pm, 10.47 pm.

FROM RYDE, RHODES, STRATHFIELD - ROUTE 459 (Ryde to Town Hall City) via Church Street, Concord Road, Parramatta Road, Pyrmont Bridge Road. (All evening journeys divert from Concord Road to Rhodes Railway Station and to the Repatriation Hospital: and from Parramatta Road to Strathfield Station.)

For the Clubroom alight in Parramatta Road at Dalhousie Street, opposite Ashfield Park - 500 metres walk to the Clubroom.

Journeys depart Ryde (Civic Centre) at 6.40 pm, 7.20 pm, 7.50 pm, 8.20 pm,

Pass Rhodes Railway Station 7 minutes after leaving Ryde.

" Strathfield Railway Station 19 minutes after leaving Ryde.

Due Dalhousie Street, HABERFIELD, about 26 minutes after leaving Ryde, i.e. 7.06 pm, 7.46 pm, 8.16 pm, 8.46 pm.

Return Journeys depart HABERFIELD (Dalhousie Street) about 8.42 pm, 9.12 pm, 9.42 pm, 10.12 pm and 10.42 pm, and are due at Ryde at 9.11 pm, 9.41 pm, 10.11 pm, 10.41 pm and 11.11 pm - (Diverting to Strathfield and Rhodes en route)

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ROUTE 472 (Rockdale Station - Rodd Point) via Bexley, Canterbury, Ashfield and Haberfield is of limited use, as this service is discontinued after about 8.00 pm. The only journey that may be helpful passes ASHFIELD STATION (in Brown Street) at 7.14 pm and arrives HABERFIELD (in Dalhousie Street) at 7.20 pm.

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NOTE: It is hoped that in 1989 a TRANSPORT OFFICER will be appointed who will attempt to arrange lifts home by car for members using public transport for the forward journey.

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?TWO APOCRYPHAL CASES

by Jim Brown

In this series of short essays titled "What's In A Name?" I have so far told the truth, if not the whole truth, with the idea that others may care to develop my theme. However the two following examples of place names are, in my opinion, damned lies - although I have heard them quoted as true.

1. Around about 1820 a surveying party was working on the ridges west from Mittagong, in the vicinity of the Wollondilly and Wingecarribee Rivers. At one stage the expedition's base camp was set up on the long ridge between the rivers.

The leader of the party returned from an exhausting day's walking and measuring and asked testily of the camp crew: "Doesn't anyone else do anything? Has anyone had a look down into the valley yet? There looks to be a big tributary stream coming in from the west. What is it?"

The major domo of the camp, a North-Counties Englishman, explained "Naw. Naw. I've b'n awful busy getting in wood 'n water. Er...er...but t' cook b'n doon."

And thus the Cookbundoon River was named.

2. A few years earlier perhaps, a group of soldiers was returning towards Sydney from the Signal Station recently established at Pennant Hills (and that's how Pennant Hills got its name). They had a rough sketch map which showed that they should go around the very head of Lane Cove River, then turn south.

Coming to a patch of bare rock the sergeant in charge produced the sketch and compared its marking with some of the ridges visible to them. An Irish recruit approached and asked, a little forcefully "Whare are we?" The sergeant gestured towards the landmarks and headed south. Unbeknown to them, an aboriginal of the local tribe and his son were observing them from behind the boulders and listening to their discourse.

The years passed and the aboriginal youth grew into a mature man who was presently engaged by a European who had ideas of obtaining a grant of land. Dismounting from his horse the white man asked "What name this place, Jacky?" at the same time gesturing in a manner reminiscent of the redcoats.

"Warraweet" said Jacky.

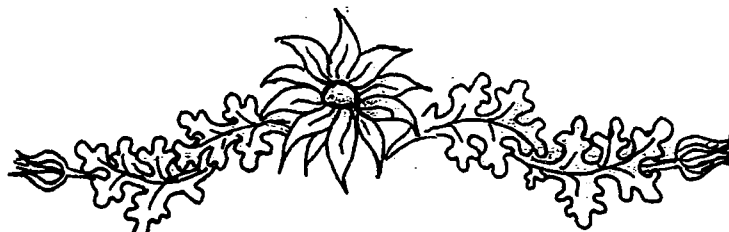
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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Congratulations on the DECEMBER issue; the magazine is improving with every issue. Morag Ryder's cartoon article was superb and the overseas stories about England and Marquesas made interesting reading.

In the past I have contributed stories to the Bushwalker. As you say, I "got my start" in journalism through the magazine and have gone on to publications in commercial magazines here and overseas.

WAL LIDDLE.



BUSHWALKERS BLIGHT - LYME DISEASE IN AUSTRALIADepartment of Bacteriology, Westmead Hospital

by Matthew Dryden

Bushwalking like many outdoor pursuits has its dangers. Fortunately most of the dangers of hiking in the bush can with foresight, common sense and experience be minimised. One danger which may often be overlooked and which is quite difficult to prevent is being bitten by arthropods. As most bushwalkers know from experience, these include a variety of tick species and flying insects, and some of these may transmit infections.

A recently recognized infection transmitted by the bite of ticks is Lyme disease. Evidence suggests that Lyme disease is on the increase in Australia, although the exact incidence and distribution of the disease is unknown. The general public and indeed the medical profession are not very familiar with the condition and some cases may go undiagnosed.

Lyme disease was first recognised in Connecticut USA in 1975 but the causative organism, a spiral bacterium Borrelia burgdorferi, was not identified until 1981. In three villages on the banks of the Connecticut river, Lyme, Old Lyme and East Haddam it was found that the incidence of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis was far greater than in the general population. An exhaustive investigation revealed that the arthritis was part of an infectious process. The infection was transmitted by ticks and the reservoir in the wild was the white tailed deer. In recent years the population of deer had increased dramatically following conservation methods, so too had the number of ticks. The disease in humans was probably not a new one but transmission to humans in such numbers had precipitated its discovery.

Since then the disease has been discovered in several areas in Europe, USSR and now Australia. Strains of the Borrelia organism may vary geographically in terms of the severity of disease which they cause. The complications of the infection in Europe are often not as severe as in the USA.

Infection begins following the bite of an infected tick. Its first manifestation is a spreading red rash called erythema chronicum migrans (ECM). This may occur from 3-30 days following the bite. Multiple similar skin lesions may then appear elsewhere on the body and at the same time the person may feel generally unwell with symptoms such as fatigue, headache, muscle aches, joint pains and stiff neck. This may last for several weeks.

Weeks to months later victims may develop neurological abnormalities (such as encephalitis, paralysis or palsy) or cardiac problems (such as palpitations). Months to years following the initial bite, swelling and pain in the large joints, especially the knees may occur, and recur for many years.

At present Lyme disease seems to be uncommon in Australia and confined to the eastern seaboard. It was first diagnosed in Australia in 1983 in a patient from the Hunter Valley. Since then almost 50 cases have been diagnosed by blood tests in Queensland and New South Wales. There are no confirmed reports from other states yet. Within New South Wales cases have been diagnosed from a number of areas including the Buladelah State Forest, Gosford region, Kanagaroo Valley, the Bowral region and the Royal National Park.

The disease can be treated successfully with antibiotics. Early diagnosis and treatment prevents development of later complications. The diagnosis can be made on a blood sample or if the rash is still present by a small biopsy of the edge of the rash.

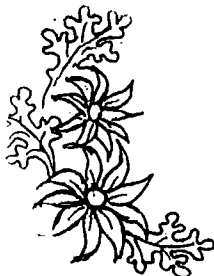
Research into Lyme disease is being carried out in the bacteriology department at Westmead Hospital. If any ticks are encountered by bushwalkers, we would be most grateful to receive them, dead or alive. They can be collected in an empty film cannister. Your tick may make medical history, by being the first to yield the Borrelia organism in Australia. Should any bushwalkers feel that they might have contracted Lyme disease, then a blood sample taken by their local doctor or pathology laboratory and sent to our department can be tested.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the author (Dr. Matthew Dryden) at Westmead Hospital (Tel. 633 6255). Address: Department of Bacteriology, Westmead Hospital, Westmead, NSW, 2145.

(NOTE: Some areas that we frequent do have ticks. There is even a suggestion that there are ticks at Coolana. To check for ticks - remove all clothing, check all parts of the body, especially the hairy areas. Ask a friend to check the parts of your body which you cannot see. Return the compliment to your friend. Naked bushwalkers running their hands over each other means they are just checking for TICKS!!)

Then contact Dr. Dryden.

EDITOR.

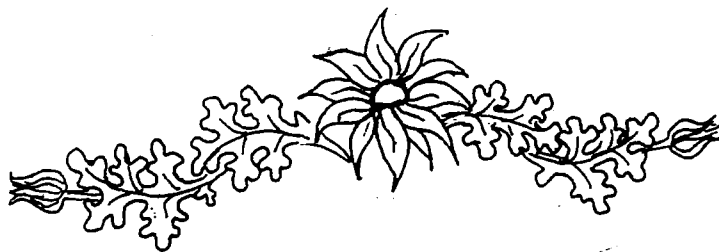


SBW CLUBROOM

At the General Meeting held on 14th December 1988 the following motion was carried:

"That SBW Incorporated continue to use the Ella Community Centre at Haberfield as their Clubroom and efforts be made to improve access to the hall for members."

CAROL BRUCE, Hon. Secretary.



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FOOTNOTES

° This month looks like a thin month for articles and notes. We cannot have a bumper issue every issue, and think of the trees we save!

° WHAT YOU MISSED: 1. The Club Christmas Party on Wednesday 21 December was excellent. For some reason attendance was very high, about 70 to 80 members. All, as suggested last month, scrubbed, polished and dressed-up and filled with cheer and best wishes. Plenty of food, sufficient drink and enough time.

The President managed to restrict his speech to simply "Happy Christmas". A well organised finale of the Social Secretary's activities for 1988.

° WHAT YOU MISSED: 2. The December General Meeting voted to stay at the present Clubrooms. So now there's every reason to visit the rooms. That's the reason we've included public transport details in this issue. At the meeting there was discussion on some system of organising car lifts. More of this next month.

° The MEMBERSHIP LIST will be published soon. Now is the time to send in corrections and/or alterations, spelling errors, that new surname or change of telephone number. Send the details to the Membership Secretary, at GPO Box 4476, Sydney, 2001.

° And talking of membership apparently the National Parks Association is looking for new blood.

° SBW TASMANIAN BRANCH (?) is now centred around Wynyard (in Tasmania 7325). Barbara Evans has moved camp from Hobart to Wynyard and is now close to Heather and John White at Bridport (Tasmania 7254). The three SBW have found each other again. We are expecting a half page report on the meeting for the next issue.



° WHAT YOU MISSED: 3. Or if we're lucky you're in time. On 2FC at 1.30 pm on Saturday 14 January a report on bushwalking in the 1930s. The report will feature some of our well known oldies.

