

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 any Wednesday. To advertise in this magazine please contact the Business Manager.

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JUNE 1989

	Page
While the Billy Boils	The Editor 2
Gaiter Update	2
Explorers Tree - Six Foot Track - Jenolan House - 15th April 1989	Jim Percy 3
Cycling Through History in Araluen Valley	Wal Liddle 5
Conservation - Submissions	Alex Colley 6
Famous Last Words	Bill Burke 7
The May General Meeting	Barry Wallace 11
Mailbag	Frank Rigby 12
Social Notes	Dot Butler 12
Somewhere Different - If You Are Quick	Morag Ryder 13
What is Giardia - And How Does it Affect Bushwalkers	Reg Alder 15
Coolangubra - Lost?	16
Footnotes	16
Vale Pat Wood (nee Sullivan)	16
<u>Advertisements</u>	
Canoe & Camping - Gladesville & Kogarah Bay	10
Eastwood Camping Centre	14
Belvedere Taxis - Blackheath	15

WHILE THE BILLY BOILS.

So you thought the walks programme looked a little thin this time. Not enough day walks perhaps, or enough medium overnight walks? Well, the cure is simple. Pick a weekend between 2nd September and 26th November. Then think of a walk you enjoyed and didn't find too hard. Next, pick up the phone and ring John Porter on 797.9784 at home, or 29.0355 at work. Tell him you'll put on that walk, on the weekend you've chosen. You could even drop him a line or fax him at work on 231.6237. When the next programme comes out, it will be full of great walks - including the one you liked so much!

You see, this is how a walks programme is made, except that only about 10% of our members help to make it. If we could raise the number to 20%, we would have a programme which would be the envy of every other club, and also take some of the pressure off the 'old faithfuls', who keep putting on walks for the rest of us - programme after programme after programme.

Remember how much fun you've had on walks the club has provided? Putting on your own walk occasionally is the perfect way to say 'thank you' for all the enjoyment you've had.

See you on the track

Mervyn



JULY 1, Saturday - WILDERNESS SOCIETY DANCE - begins 7.30 pm at the Sydney Town Hall - "Skewiff" performing. Come and hear some really good folk music - and support the society which supports our wilderness.

GAITER UPDATE

With the Sydney Basin rapidly filling with rainwater, our thoughts naturally turn to drier places, such as the Inland. The Inland means spinifex, and spinifex means gaiters. A quick look at what is currently offering reads as follows:

MAKER	FABRIC	CLOSURE	PRICE
Mountain Designs	Cordura	zip, rear	\$23
Flinders Camping	canvas	velcro/stud, rear	\$30
.. ..	Cordura	\$35
Kathmandu	Cordura	\$38
Macpac	canvas/Cordura	\$42
Kathmandu	Cordura/Goretex	\$50
Wilderness Equipment	canvas/Cordura	velcro/stud, front	\$50
..	Goretex	\$57
Berghaus	Strata Goretex & rubber	zip/ velcro/ stud, front	\$150

EXPLORERS TREE - SIX FOOT TRACK - JENOLAN HOUSE
15th APRIL 1989

by Jim Percy

Leader: Jan Mohandas

Participants: 11 members, 3 prospectives, 4 visitors

Weather Fine - Track Good - Cox's River in flood

Well, what an enjoyable walk! Who could have thought that 46 km in 9½ hours walking time (10 ½-hours total time) would be enjoyable? The combination of great organisation, superb weather, good company, the country looking wonderful after all the rain, the challenge of covering the distance in the time span, a delightful sunrise and an even better sunset (seen from the cars on the way to Blackheath), made a not-to-be-forgotten day.

I had spent the night at Linden and awoke to a multi-layered sunrise which behaved a day out of the ordinary. On arriving at Explorers Tree the just-suppressed excitement was catching, and the aroma of Dencorub on the crisp morning air also indicated that this was to be no ordinary day walk. A quick cup of tea, a few words of caution from Jan not to rush it early, a request for the leaders to stop every hour on the hour to allow regrouping, and we were on our way (6.36 am).

Nellie's Glen went swiftly by - it is hard to imagine horses on this section of the track even with a couple of extra loops in it.

Morning tea was enjoyed just before the Megalong Road, with everyone in fine spirits and no blisters reported yet (8.30 am).

The roar from the valley below, as we descended the trail, raised our worst fears, that we would not get across the Cox's, and we would have to back-track to Explorers Tree. "How's it look to you Jim?" (Michelle's enquiry came just as I had convinced myself that the river looked twice as wide as I had ever seen it before). "Looks OK! It often sounds loud from up here," was the non-committal reply.

We couldn't improve on the usual crossing spot, almost directly between the eastern and western sections of the trail, so, after a couple of exploratory sorties upstream, we were faced with a crossing in three distinct stages.

Stage 1 was OK with water up to the crutch and the wonder if the next step would put it over our heads.

Stage 2 was a bit trickier with very fast flowing water which appeared to be about a metre deep. A rope was stretched across this section and was very much required with almost everyone being swept off their feet.

Which brought us to Stage 3 - a 20 metre stretch of fast flowing dark brown water at least two metres deep in the centre. A couple of trial swims by the stronger swimmers and it was declared a goer. I just wondered if I could swim fast enough to make the other bank before being swept to Flaggi Clear - or even Harry's River.

After some adventures, we were across, warming ourselves in the sun and enjoying a quick snack while thanking those strong swimmers for all the help. Special thanks were due to Chris O'Neal and Ian Rannard. Ian Rannard, who a few weeks before wouldn't even enter the Woronora, because he didn't like cold water, and there he was at the Cox's, swimming over and back for the fourth or fifth time, to regain his hat!

We were on our way again by 10.30 and the next stop at 11 am was the last we were to get before lunch. A very long uphill slog, I remember it as continual up - for 2½ hours, although the section drawing will show considerable downs. The pluviometer was a very welcome lunch spot, with the last to arrive still enjoying a half hour for lunch.

The next 9 km, along Black Range, flashed by in one and a half hours (some of us took a little longer) which brought us to the Jenolan Road and the back-up vehicles. A very welcome sight for those who didn't want to walk on to Caves House. However most elected to carry on, a decision made a whole lot easier with the arrival of the orange juice and apples, supplied

by Bill and Fran Holland, Ian Debert, Joy Hynes and guests, who took time off from their Jenolan Caves weekend to cheer us on our way. We were off on the last section at 3.30 pm.

The first four or five kilometres on the road were a bit of a bore, although Maurie Bloom relieved the monotony by dashing off on to the forest trails beside the road, ostensibly to get away from the traffic, but how come, every time we caught sight of him through the trees, he was running?

From the Kiaora Hill cabins though it was all quite different, a great end to a great walk in the soft afternoon light. So enchanting was this section in fact, that many of us ran down the hill to finish despite protesting muscles, in legs that believed they had done enough for one day. A very exhilarating feeling!

The run down the hill that is, not the aching muscles.)

First to finish was Maurie Bloom at 4.30 pm. Then came Ian Rannard at 4.40, Jan Mohandas at 4.45 and Michelle Powell at 4.50 followed by Bert

Carter. Bert had been determined to finish in front of Michelle but lost his chance by taking a side track which took him half-way down to Carlotta's Arch.

Everyone was in by 5.30-ish and after a quick drink with Fran, Bill, Joy and Ian at Caves House we packed into the back-up vehicles for the drive back to Gardiner's Inn, Blackheath for dinner.

The back-up crew deserve a special mention along with our thanks - Kay Wasielewski, Judy McMillan, Carole Beales and Oliver Crawford.

Jan is planning an even bigger and better day walk later in the year, so if you missed this one stay tuned!

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ADVANCE NOTICE

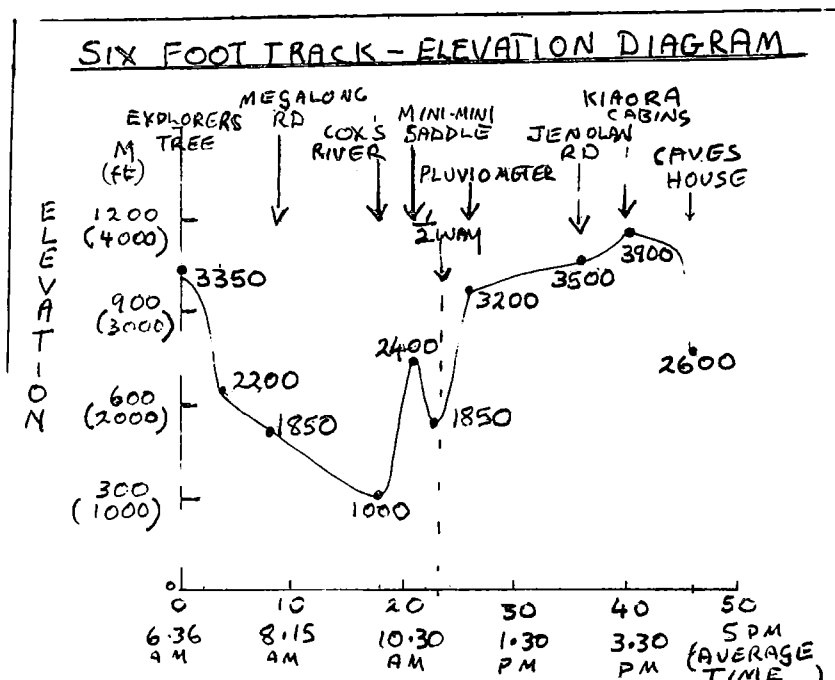
September 8/9/10

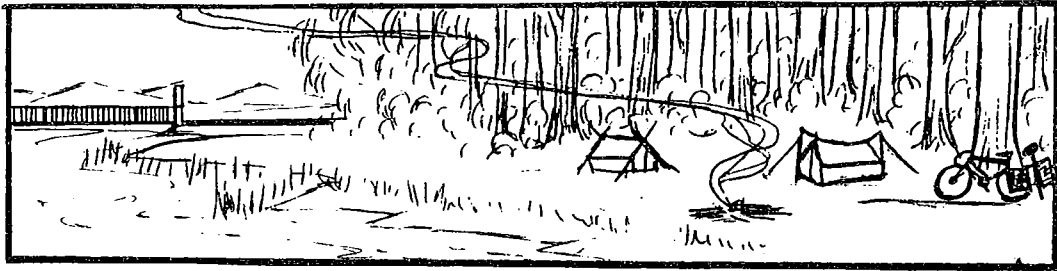
Three coordinated walks: Leaders: Jan Mohandas, George Walton, Geoff Bradley

1. Overnight walk: Kanangra Car park - Mt. Stormbreaker - Thunder bend - Kanangra Ck - Murdering Gully - Kanangra Car park (Leader: George Walton (Tel: 498-7956, before 9 pm), Grade - Medium, Distance: 28 km) **Test Walk**

2. K to K (Kanangra to Katoomba) Day Walk on Saturday 9th September (Leader: Jan Mohandas (Tel: 872-2315), Grade: Very hard, Distance: 55 km) Limit: 10. Contact Jan before September 1st to discuss about this walk.

3. Overnight walk: Carlons Farm - Carlons Ck - Breakfast Ck - Blackhorse ridge - Mobbs Soak (camp) - Splendour Rock - Mt. Werrigal - Medlow gap - Carlons Farm (Leader: Geoff Bradley (Tel: 498-5506), Grade: Medium, Distance: 30 km)





CYCLING THROUGH HISTORY IN ARALUEN VALLEY

by Wal Liddle

Walter Liddle - Lyn Frazer (of the Bicycle Institute) - John Sutherland

It was warm with a cool breeze when we alighted from the Monaro Express at 12.15 on the 10th January and collected our heavily laden bikes from the guard's van. Donning our helmets, we rode into Queanbeyan, where we stopped for pasta, tomato sandwiches and fish and chips. We pedalled along a tarred road, our destination Captain's Flat. The road seemed never ending and a slight headwind made the flat ground seem uphill.

Every now and then we caught a glimpse of the Molonglo River as we passed through cattle country, until we came to an English-style church near the road. This was the Anglican Church of Foxlow. Climbing over a stile, we saw it was made of 'chert', an ancient mudstone formed 400 million years ago. In the graveyard we looked at inscriptions on the headstones, but without prior knowledge of the pioneer families of the district, went away ignorant.

About 5 pm we rode past a sawmill and over the Molonglo Bridge near Captains Flat. The town consisted of fibro houses set out in two or three criss-cross streets overshadowed by a huge spoil heap with remnants of mining equipment scattered about. A two-storey brick hotel (circa 1940), tea rooms and a general store were in the short main street. Opposite was the football oval, camping ground and RSL Club. After dining in the tea rooms we asked if it would be possible to have a hot shower in the toilet block in the camping grounds. The local Rotary Club had the key. Alas, the President was not prepared to drive 10 km to town to open the showers for three bike riders, so dusk saw us splashing ourselves with icy water in the river at the back of the camp site.

I awoke stiff and sore from the previous day's 45 km, and joined John and Lyn for a muesli breakfast. On the first hill out of town the gears on my bike seized, bringing me to a standstill. I found that the locking ring to the back cluster had come undone, resulting in the loss of most of the ball bearings. With John's help I put the wheel together again and cycled on with a wobbly set of cogs. A strange noise came from the back axle and the chain came off every now and then, but we managed to keep moving. The day's riding on dirt roads led us into Tallanganda State Forest and over the Great Dividing Range. I walked up a lot of the hills, while my companions cycled slowly on with their low gears.

Although it was hot, there was a cool wind and we were protected by the eucalypts which overhung the road. We enjoyed great views of the Bendoura and Berlang State Forests. In these forests are Iron Bark, Silvertop Ash, Sydney Peppermint, Turpentine, Yellow Stringybark and Spotted Coastal Grey Box with an understory of Burrawang Palms.

The further we went, the rougher the road became, with stones, water channels and corrugations. Traffic was almost non-existent. We had lunch at the Ballaba Bridge on a tributary of the Shoalhaven River. That afternoon, after a grueling 10 km of stony road, we came to Major's Creek, which consisted of a wide verandah hotel, a general store, a church and twenty houses.

At the pub we enquired the way to Araluen as our map and a signpost seemed to be showing different directions. The local drinkers told us the sign was correct but the road down the mountain was very rough and steep. In the 1800's this dirt road was used by horse-drawn vehicles, with a log tied to the back to slow them down. In those times the way was so narrow that alternate days were allocated for the up or down journey.

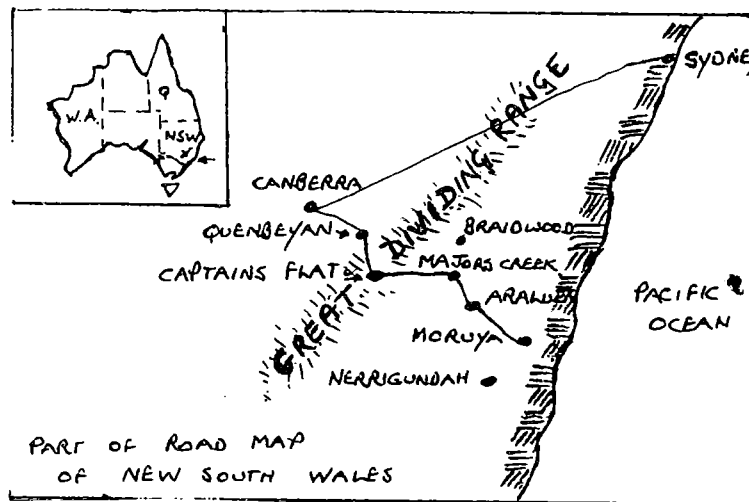
We stopped at Clarke's Lookout to admire the view over the valley. It was near this spot in 1865 that a gang of bushrangers held up the gold coach and its escort of four mounted troopers. The gang, led by Thomas Clarke, fired and told the troopers to "BAIL UP", but the escort returned their fire. One of the guards slipped away into the bush and surprised the robbers from behind, thus foiling the robbery.

In the 1850's and 60's Major's Creek, Araluen, Braidwood and Nerrigundah districts were the scene of one of Australia's biggest gold rushes. The area was very isolated and living conditions were primitive for the people living in tents and bark shanties which had stringybark roofs and dirt floors. Only bush tracks led to the settlements. From Sydney to the goldfields by bullock dray took three months.

Our journey down the mountain was 'scary' as the road's earth banks had been washed away, making the hairpin bends and steep drops to the valley floor even more alarming. We had to stop halfway down as our hands were aching from the constant pressure on the brakes. We freewheeled another two kilometres until we reached the ford at Araluen Creek. Refilling our water bottles we coasted on a flat road, past apple and peach orchards until we came to Appletree Flat. Here we camped in a beautiful grassy glade with tall gums towering overhead.

Next day we rode through the sleepy villages of Araluen North, Araluen and Araluen Lower. The main street of Araluen contained a hotel and a derelict post office with a shingle roof. It was hard to believe that the area had once supported 29 hotels.

These had featured imported German bands and dancing girls from Sydney as entertainment.



The road twisted and turned, following Deua/Moruya River with Deua National Park on one side and the Wandera State Forest on the other. We stopped for lunch at the junction of two streams and went 'skinny dipping' in the crystal water which flowed past sandy banks.

It was near here that the Jubilee Inn had stood, a favourite haunt of the bushrangers, who were able to survey the road from vantage points overlooking the valley. We reached Moruya late that afternoon, after pedalling 65 km, and booked into the luxury of the local caravan park, hot showers and all. That evening, in a local restaurant, we paid for our return to Sydney via Pioneer Bus, \$24 each plus \$10 for each bike.

* * * * *

CONSERVATION

SUBMISSIONS

In addition to the Kanangra-Boyd Submission detailed last month, Alex Colley has written asking that Wheeh Park in the Warrumbungle area be declared a part of the wilderness area there. It has vegetation which is uncommon in most of our parks, cypress pine and bloodwood, typical of the western plains.

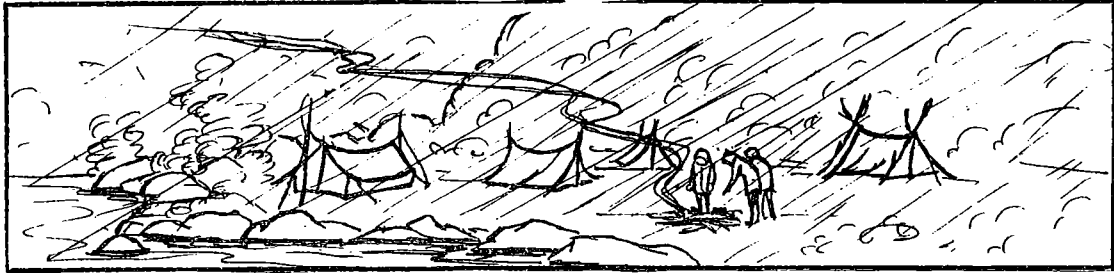
In the Border Ranges National Park, the Lost World area has been nominated as wilderness. At present it is virtually untouched, a truly pristine rain-forest, and declaring it wilderness will keep it so.

Alex Colley has also completed a submission to the Blue Mountains Environment Plan, tendered by the Katoomba Council. The submission details guidelines for proper future development in the Blue Mountains. Hopefully, it will convince the council to resist applications for 'rim development' - whereby every valley is rimmed with buildings, built as close as possible to the edge of every escarpment.

It's an ill wind that doesn't blow anyone any good. That \$80 increase in our water rates is helping to pay for improvements and extensions in the Blue Mountains sewerage system. \$83 million will be spent building a tunnel from Hazelbrook to Faulconbridge to take sewage from as far away as Blackheath to the Winmalee treatment works. Perhaps that will remove the stench from around Leura Falls.

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

by Bill Burke



(First published in the magazine January 1977)

Chris rang on Thursday to check up that the trip was going - "There's been a bit of rain." "Not to worry," says I, "not nearly enough to stop this trip." And so a party of ten spread over three cars set out on an ordinary routine easy weekend walk.

Advance car (mine) arrived at Goodman's Ford at 10 pm. The weather was fine but a few spots of rain shortly afterwards hastened the erection of our tents and soon to bed to be lulled to sleep by the steady drum of rain on the tent. Faintly heard some of the others arrive and had a momentary twinge of sympathy over thoughts of putting up tents in the rain before slumber reclaimed me.

Morning dawned with the rain continuing in a steady stream, the ground soggy and running with water, but memories of a pile of driftwood from a previous trip proved accurate and I soon had a pile of dry firewood. A quick look at the Wollondilly River - low and clear showed that all was well.

Breakfasted to the accompaniment of steady rain and then into the cars and on our way to Barrallier, only to have a flat tyre and then second thoughts about the possible condition of the road. Second thoughts were best and so we left the cars high and reasonably dry near the old stone house. Lucky, as we would never have made it over the grassy road, and even if we had the road was subsequently cut by flooding and a fall of large boulders.

No trouble at the river crossing at Barrallier - only knee deep - dropped in on the Cousins who now occupy Tony Carlon's old house, to extend the usual courtesies walkers should always observe when passing through private property, then off up Murruin Creek. Bindook Creek for lunch and Wattle Hollow at 4 pm for the night camp.

Wet rocks slowed some of the party and these together with cold saturated feet from the numerous creek crossings allied with the continual rain made conditions generally unpleasant and cold. Stops were only long enough to enable the tail-enders to catch up. No opportunity to laze and yarn and enjoy the many green grassy flats that are such a feature of Murruin Creek in sunny weather.

Lunch was to be a 20 minute stand and eat; a fire would have taken too long and it was too cold and miserable to stand around. Revived memories of a similar lunch break at the junction of Christy's Creek and the Kowmung many years ago. It was a Finch-Wyborn trip. We had traversed the Tonalli Range and had seen nothing but mist and driving rain for 2½ days on that occasion.

I was half-way through my lunch when the tail-enders arrived. Two soaked and shivering with gear totally unsuitable for wet weather, and the third to quote "I'm freezing." He looked it, and it didn't take long to realise that another three hours up the ridge to arrive at a soaking wet campsite on the highlands just on dusk was out of the question. We promptly suspended lunch, got a fire going, and put our freezing member to bed.

It was an unfriendly, wet afternoon. Some slept and the remainder spent their time collecting firewood and standing around a fire built to withstand any amount of rain. A half-hour break in the rain gave us an opportunity to dry out wet groundsheets and other gear. Plans were made by the more energetic for a 7 am start to complete the trip as per program. Tea was cooked in the rain and eaten standing up in the rain. Dark closed in with the rain, and bodies rapidly disappeared into the green, gold and red tents dotting the grassy flat.

Murruin Creek was still shallow and clear and Bindook Creek still hidden beneath the boulders lining its mouth.

Stacked some wet wood between some sheets of old iron on the fire, and so, after 6 hours standing round in the rain, Chris and I - the last two - wished each other a cheery goodnight and off to bed. Not for long, however. My drying system worked only too well, and within half an hour the wood was not only dry but burning brightly. A hurried dash to scatter the burning wood in all directions and then stand on one of the burning sticks, before restacking the precious morning firewood.

Awoke to the sound of roaring water down the creek. Other noises around the fireplace indicated that some at least were prepared to move off at 7 am as planned. Some remaining coals and the dry wood made firelighting easy; soon all were up bright and energetic, even if not brimming over with enthusiasm. Laurie had spent most of the night in a soaking wet bag due to the heavy rain. Murruin Creek was now a muddy torrent and Bindook had well and truly swallowed up the boulders at the mouth. Beyond, the junction was a wide yellow river covering the valley floor.

I had hoped to send the tail-enders back down the creek, but one look was enough to raise doubts as to the wisdom of attempting to cross Murruin Creek at the Wollondilly junction, so decided to cross here and follow the right bank all the way down. Pat, Dick and Mal called for volunteers to continue on, and finding none decided to go anyway.

Trip back was uneventful. Rain had stopped but a waist-deep crossing of the first side creek, together with constant contact with wet bushes and the numerous sidlings soon had the party soaked again. We did actually have a dry (overhead) lunch break.

Arriving back at the Cousins home to be greeted with, "You look a miserable lot. You won't be able to cross the Wollondilly - the river is 5 feet over the bridge." "Have an old shed down there where we used to live; you are welcome to that - has a stove and there is plenty of firewood." There really are some lovely people on the fringes of our walking country. Walkers should never forget this and rally to their support in the occasional dispute with the ultra pure environmentalists. Sensible land use both for recreational use and to earn a living is the best we can expect unless we are all prepared to go and jump immediately into the hereafter.

Inspection revealed a palace; carpet on the floor, two stoves, a pot-belly and a cooker no less, and with the assistance of Mr. Cousins the party was soon settled in; fires were going, wet gear draped round and the inevitable cup of tea in the making. Time passed, numerous phone calls were made to acquaint all at home about our late arrival, and we wondered about Pat and his party. The creek was checked and looked none too promising. Mr. Cousins had mentioned the possibility of using his boat. And lo! there they were; had crossed and were on their way to the bridge when the Cousins directed them down to the shed.



Roll call on the provision front revealed that we had enough for at least one meal. Two heavy-weights produced a loaf of vogel bread each, and others contributed an assortment of riso-rica, a potato, peas, soups and dried fruit, all of which ended up in a first class stew. Mr. Cousins offered us chops and biscuits which we declined, and on another visit fresh milk, weetbix and biscuits for breakfast, which we accepted with pleasure. John Redfern went up to the house to collect the goodies and numerous cups of tea, cakes, scones, jam and cream; later returned to describe all this to us with great gusto.

Both Chris and Pat were anxious to get back to work and so a dawn start was planned in the hopes that the river would have dropped sufficiently to allow a crossing. Breakfast was a cold affair and we hurried away without even disturbing the dogs - they had more sense. A check of our river marker revealed that the bridge would be still under water and so it proved to be. No sign even of the guide posts at either end.

Cup of tea was declared - marvellous thing, a cup of tea - whilst we considered our position. Was soon consumed and as the rain started to sprinkle again I decided to head for the verandah of the Jock Creek Hut, information by courtesy of Mr. Cousins, whilst the others stayed to wish the river down. Was soon comfortable in a cane armchair midst the cow dung and other assorted paraphernalia. The rain continued and one by one the others drifted in. Dick was the last and finding all chairs occupied did a little further exploration to find an open room with - wonder of wonders - a double bed complete with mattress. A proposal by him and Pat that all should head for Wombeyan Caves receiving little support, he promptly retired to bed for several hours.

The weather was getting bleaker and colder and my burnt foot was starting to make its presence felt, so I slipped into my sleeping bag and made myself even more comfortable in the armchair. A trick I learnt in the army; if you have no place to go, then lie back and enjoy what you can of the situation.

And so the morning passed. The ever restless Chris and Pat decided to head for Wombeyan Caves without packs and bring back taxis; made a further lengthy inspection of the river, reported a Police Car and much waving of arms and shouting which indicated that a lengthy wait was in progress, and then changed their minds and headed back to Barrallier for news via the phone. Laurie Quaken - wandering in circles - was cajoled into lighting a fire for another cuppa. Mal, John and Alan Fall rechecked the river.

Lunch was served. One sweet bixie, one dry bixie and one very small piece of cheese per person.

Come 3 pm, even I got restless and the whole party proceeded to the river to perform obtuse mathematical calculations as to the rate of fall and other probabilities or possibilities. The top half of the guide posts were now visible and an obvious pressure wave had formed over the bridge. Dick, the ever ambitious - the crossing of Murrumbidgee Creek must have gone to his head - contemplated swimming the river. As we had no wish to lose a good friend this was vetoed. Back to the fire to wonder over the fate of our restless duo who raced in at 6 pm more intent on regaling us with stories of sago biscuits thick with butter and cheese, tea with milk and sugar, etc, than with the information that the river would not fall at least before Wednesday and possibly not before Saturday.

Decision made, we threw on our parkas and raced off the ten or so miles to Wombeyan Caves. The first party consisting of Pat, Dick, Mal, Alan and myself arrived at 9.45 pm and the remainder half an hour later. The manager of the kiosk remained guardedly behind his fly-screen door and who can blame him. The arrival of five dirty, smelly, dripping bodies encased in parkas out of the dusk would be enough to scare anyone.

No, there was no local transport available. No, he didn't think we could ring Goulburn, the exchange was closed. "You people certainly get yourselves in a mess, don't you?" Yes, he would try to ring Goulburn - the atmosphere was thawing all the time - didn't we want to know the cost? Yes, he would open up the kiosk and let us buy some food. The flydoor actually opened. A slight delay and then the taxis were on the way, kiosk opened, food purchased between much talk and laughter and then a friendly, affable soul raced off down the road to open up a public shelter shed complete with electric light and water hot enough to make the inevitable tea and this time, coffee.

Had barely finished eating and cleaning up when the taxis arrived and we were off to Goulburn. The driver was friendly and talkative, the others dozed off to sleep and I was regaled with stories of the odd types of men and women who hire taxis. He was dubious about getting down to the Wollondilly on the other side, but after I mentioned the police car, promptly replied, "Where the 'fuzz' can go, we can go." A brief stopover at the all-night B.P. garage in Goulburn whilst the drivers reported to base and then we were on our way again. By 2 am we were back at our cars. A hurried whip around to raise the necessary cash, equally hurried start up of motors and we were on our way for a 5.30 am homecoming - some to work and others to catch up on lost sleep.

In retrospect, a lovely extended weekend with an extra ten mile walk, a 130 mile taxi drive and \$14 per head must go on record as the longest, costliest crossing of the Wollondilly ever.

* * * * *

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



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THE MAY GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

The meeting began at around 2014 with about 25 members present, the President in the chair and no new members for welcome. There were apologies from Denise Shaw, Maurie Bloom, Geoff Bridger, Carol Bruce and Dot Butler.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with no matters arising.

Correspondence was next. We had a letter from Reg Alder advising of his attendance, on our behalf, at the recent Giardia Conference in Canberra. Reg has also written the main points of the conference up as an article exclusive to this magazine (see Page 15). There were letters of resignation from Mark Dabbs and Phyllis Ratcliffe and a letter from NPWS seeking photographs and other details of the 7½-mile bridge on the old northern road up Gosford way. Outgoing correspondence comprised a letter of thanks to Reg Alder.

Next came the Treasurer to regale us with details of monetary splendour. It seems we spent \$313.75, received \$1605 and closed with a balance of \$3110.99.

The Walks Report began on the weekend of 14,15,16 April with the John Porter-led multiple-birthday celebration extravaganza in the Budawang. There were 9 starters. Alan Mewett's day walk from Mangrove Creek had fine, sunny conditions and a party of 19 arriving back at the cars just before last light. There was a written report of Paul Mawhinney's ENGadine to Waterfall walk, but the Walks SEcretary had left it....somewhere, so we are none the wiser. Jan Mohandas' Saturday Six-Foot-Track sprint, deferred from the previous weekend due to flooding, had 16 starters experiencing some difficulties with flooding in the Cox River.

Over the Anzac extended weekend Ian Woolfe led John and Carol's walk in the Coolangubra and Tantawangalo area. It seems it involved a long drive to get there and then, once they had shuffled cars and started to walk, it rained. There were 9 people and numerous leeches on the trip and they, the people at least, were prohibited from entering portions of the State Forest by fierce notices. Presumably this is in the interests of national security. The Club has resolved to write and enquire.

Maurie Bloom's walk in Morton National Park had 22 starters who ran into rainy conditions and abandoned the walk after two days of this. There are doubts about Bill Capon's scheduled Yalwal walk but no firm details. Of the day walk, Jim Callaway had his 16 starters out on his National Park Station to Waterfall trip walking for 5.25 hours on April 23rd.

Over the weekend 20,29,30 April Oliver Crawford led 5 people on his Glen Davis Trig walk in reverse. Ainslie Morris' Bouddi National Park day walk was cancelled due to the heavy rain. It is reported that the leader managed to accomplish all this without actually leaving bed. There was no report of Errol Sheedy's Waterfall to Heathcote walk.

The weekend of 5,6,7 May saw Don Finch leading a party of 9 on his Glen Davis to Girrabung Airstrip walk. Oliver Crawford had a party of 6 on his Wollongambe trip and Alan Mewett, on his Dharug National Park day walk, reported 9 starters most of whom were also concerned navigators, fine dry weather and an enjoyable walk. Ralph Pengliss, walking in the vastness of Sydney Harbour National Park reported 22 starters, track heavy, weather fine.

There was a Federation Report. It was covered in last month's magazine.

The Conservation Secretary advised that various mentions have been made of the track markers along the Nattai and possible courses of action are under consideration. There is hope that the NSW Government will use part of the recently imposed pollution levy to clean up and forestall the problems of sewage contamination in Blue Mountain streams. (There was some difficulty throughout all this in seeing our own gentle Alex as one of the "scheming power hungry radicals who now seek self-aggrandisement through conservation" as recently denounced by one Hugh Morgan, but there you go, still waters run deep.)

General Business saw a motion congratulating Paddy and May Pallin on their 60th Wedding Anniversary passed by acclamation.

So then it was just a matter of the announcements and the President released us all from the meeting's bonds.

* * * * *

M A I L B A G

From Frank Rigby

(Due to lack of space, Frank's letter had to be shortened a trifle. However, all the essential questions are there. ED.)



Good on you, Helen Gray, for writing up the 1989 Annual Reunion in such a questioning way. It is time our attention was drawn to the sorry state into which SBW Reunions have sunk.

The time is overdue when everyone, oldies and newies alike, should put on their thinking caps and make a contribution. I don't think for one moment that the Reunion should be dumped, it's far too good a tradition. Instead, it should be REVIVED. Numbers are not everything but they are important, so the 90% of the members who didn't attend the recent reunion probably had the most to contribute. So why have reunions gone steadily downhill?

MENTAL ATTITUDE: We have to eradicate the idea, especially among the younger group, that reunions are boring and intended only for the oldies to greet their old and decrepit walking companions once a year. Reunions ought to be the golden opportunity for EVERYONE to get together.

PREPARATION: I suspect that reunions are just allowed to happen these days. Once, a Convener and several additional members were elected weeks beforehand to run the reunion. One person would drum up campfire items; he/she would contact and encourage a wide cross-section of members to prepare a sketch, to sing a song or two etc. Nowadays, we would have barely anything if it wasn't for Jim Brown. Well, Jim needs lots more support. Especially needed are good singers (and we do have them), the campfire singing has become woeful.

SITE: Do members like Coolana? Goodness knows. It is only a small oasis of bushland surrounded by farmland, and the Kangaroo River is a bit punk in my opinion. Is it too far from Sydney, is the presence of the shed too much a reminder of civilisation? It's our own land, but is that the problem? Maybe we need something new, but where? I preferred places like Wood's Creek, alongside the beautiful Grose River, but do such places exist today?

NUMBERS: There's no doubt that Reunions are a classic case of 'the more the merrier'. If we could get back to that 205 who attended the 1960 Reunion, the difference would be dramatic; with more fun, more diversity, more unpredictability, more things happening. To get the reunion back on its feet a few good salespersons should ring around the members (with the cost borne by the Club), a week or two beforehand to get members keyed up to the idea of coming.

INITIATION OF NEW MEMBERS: Despite some criticism, these hilarious antics were a lot of fun. Handled with discretion, they used to generate loads of expectancy, but first you must get the new members to the reunion.

At its best, the SBW reunion was a top event and the envy of other clubs. Please don't let it die of old age.

"Okay members - now YOU tell ME - just why did you stay away from the last Reunion?" ED.)

SOCIAL NOTES

by Dot Butler



- July 19 - Trekking in Papua New Guinea & Indonesia.
A slide and film night presented by Clive Baker.
- " 26 - Mid-Winter Feast. Bring a plate (and some goodies on it).
The Club will supply the drinks. A great opportunity to get up-to-date with all the gossip etc of your friends. The recent ABC TAPE "Bushwalking" can also be heard.

SOMEWHERE DIFFERENT - IF YOU ARE QUICK

by Morag Ryder

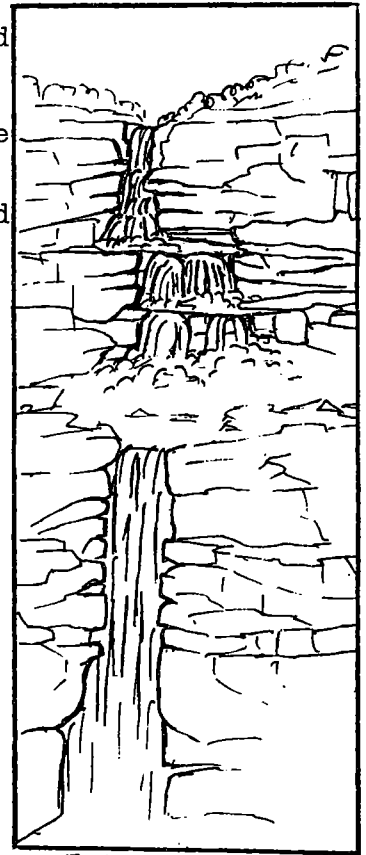
The Mitchell Plateau is located in the Kimberleys, north of Wyndham. The easiest way in is by chartered plane, although there is a 4WD road. The airfield was installed by a mining company, which is mining the rich laterite capping which overlays the sandstone in the area.

The massif is 60 km long by 350 metres high, flanked on one side with the Mitchell River and on the other, the coast. The coast has mud flats and mangrove forests, good fishing and rich littoral wildlife, including saltwater crocodiles!

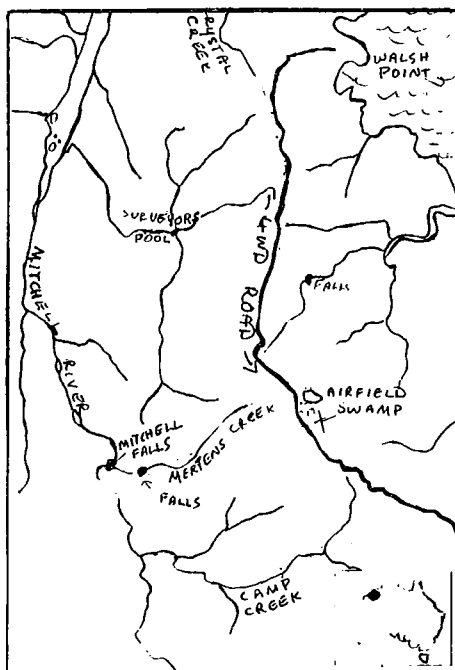
Due to high rainfall over an extended period, major creeks run during the dry season. They are alive with herons, black ducks and a small freshwater crayfish called 'cherabin'. Rainbow birds nest in the banks and broilgas inhabit the numerous small swamps.

There is a lot of pandanus and melaluca scrub, and tracts of thick cane grass. These provide cover for a small wallaroo called a 'walrabi' and the native cat. Although the scrub can be thick it is not swampy in the dry season, the water is all underground. Mosquitos, however, can be bad along the creeks.

Birdlife abounds, and includes black cockatoos, rosellas and the tawny frogmouth. In the larger pools, such as Surveyors Pool, the small, harmless Johnsons River crocodile is in evidence. Surveyors is an excellent campsite, with a gravel beach for camping, high cliffs for diving, and Aboriginal sites with rock paintings and flint quarries.



MITCHELL FALLS



MITCHELL PLATEAU

The little side gullies are best avoided, as they are full of vine thickets and thorny creepers - just about impassable without a bulldozer. The Lone Dingo area near Walsh Point is undoubtedly the worst. There is a washed-out track down to Walsh Point which is impassable for vehicles. On the beach are many shell middens, up to 50 metres long by 1 metre high. If you like mud crabs, they are plentiful here.

Camp Creek has an abundance of excellent Aboriginal rock paintings, and all the major waterfalls are worth a visit. The largest is, of course, Mitchell Falls. Even in the dry it is spectacular, and it would be almost worth braving 'the wet' to see the torrents that must surely pour over the rocks.

Unfortunately, much of the plateau is under title to mining companies. So if you are ever going to see it in its original state - you had better hurry.

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WHAT IS GIARDIA - AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT BUSHWALKERS

from Reg Alder

Giardia is called 'Backpackers Disease' in North America, as mountain streams there are known to be infected. The cysts survive best in cold water and die rapidly with increased water temperature. Although water may be a source of contamination, tests carried out on domestic water in the ACT have not been able to find any source of disease in the water. A survey will be carried out on the streams in an alpine National Park.

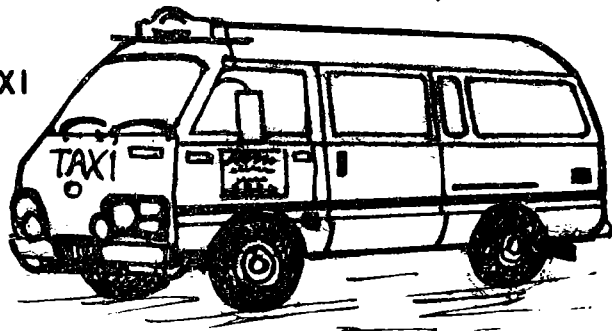
Giardia is a microscopic parasite which lives in the upper intestine and produces cysts which are shed in the faeces. These are extremely infective and Giardiasis is most often contracted by hand to mouth. The disease is not life threatening, but is debilitating; causing diarrhoea, fatigue, dehydration, weight loss, cramps and abdominal pains. Giardia takes about four days to make the victim unhappy and many doctors prefer to wait ten days before treating giardia as the cause. Drugs used are Metronidazole (Flagyl), Tinadazole (Fasigyn), Foroxone and Furazolidone.

What to do when bushwalking: Practice careful hygiene (that means wash your hands), bury all faeces, wash well away from streams. Boil or purify all water, the iodine-solution method is recommended, as it kills ALL viruses and micro-organisms, including cysts.

In a small, leak-proof glass bottle place 4-8 grams of Crystalline USP-grade, Resublimed Iodine. Fill with water, shake for 30 seconds, allow crystals to settle. Pour 12.5 cc of the solution (not crystals) into a litre of water. At 25° Celcius it will be purified in 15 minutes. Measure the amount held by the bottle cap, this will make a handy measure in the bush. The bottle can be refilled about 1,000 before the crystals are all dissolved. Highly recommended for places like Nepal!

* * * * *

DAY WALK RE-ROUTED. JULY 9, Margaret Reid's Sunday walk. Due to a washed-out track, this walk will now start from Hazelbrook, not Woodford. Phone 94.2630 for further details.

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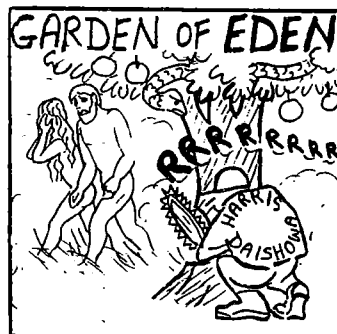
COOLANGUBRA - LOST?

A newsletter from the Minister for the Environment dated March 1989 states unequivocally:

"The State Government's rejection of the wilderness nomination of Coolangubra State Forest reflects its long-standing commitment to maintain the forest industries in the south-east....the Coolangubra area does not qualify as wilderness in accordance with the accepted definitions."

Hardly surprising, considering that the Forestry Dept. has spent months frantically bulldozing logging roads into every nook and cranny of Coolangubra so it can never again be classed as wilderness. Tantawangalo is still in the balance, for the newsletter states:

"No significant logging will be undertaken in the Tantawangalo Catchment area until a detailed hydrological study has been completed and assessed,"



Local landholders around Eden have been submitting such studies to the State Government for years, in an effort to preserve this catchment area. What the State Government means by 'significant' logging remains to be seen.

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES

° Do you have any old photos of Clare's Bridge (10½ Mile Bridge) which is 10½ miles north of Wiseman's Ferry? and about half a mile north of a NPWS campsite. This is an old convict-built bridge which the NPWS are trying to repair. Any photo prior to 1988 would help them in their task of repairing the bridge's partial collapse. Naturally, all photos will be returned. Send them to The Director, NPWS, PO Box 1393, Gosford South 2250.

° SOUND THE TRUMPETS, BEAT THE DRUMS!

Dot Butler (who else?) has been nominated by Dick Smith as Adventurer of 1988. On June 3rd Dot was presented with a gold medallion for having been an adventurer all her life. Colin Putt made a speech at the ceremony, as he was awarded the Adventurers' medal for 1987. An article on Col's award appeared in Australian Geo No.8, and an article on his adventurous life in No.10 - complete with a photo of the famous Puttmobile. Further details of Dot's award will arrive in time for the July magazine, and we look forward to reading about it in a future edition of Australian Geo. Thanks to Alex Colley for telling us about this exciting event.

° Congratulations to Vivienne and Peter Christian on the birth of their daughter, Lisa, on Saturday May 13th. A bushwalker to be?

° On May 31st, a very cold early winter evening, Ben Esgate gave an interesting talk with slides to 50 SBW members. He showed slides of fires in the bush and then slides of familiar mountain scenery describing the potential risk of fire in the bushfire season. He made some telling points about how to cope if threatened by bushfire. It is hoped a full article making these points will be written for the magazine in time to be published before next summer.

VALE PAT WOOD (nee SULLIVAN)

It is with sadness that we have heard of the death on 4th June in Christchurch after a long illness of Pat Wood who was an enthusiastic member of SBW in the 1950s. After her marriage to Ian Wood they lived in New Zealand but she still retained contact with her SBW friends. The Club's sympathies are extended to Ian and her relatives.