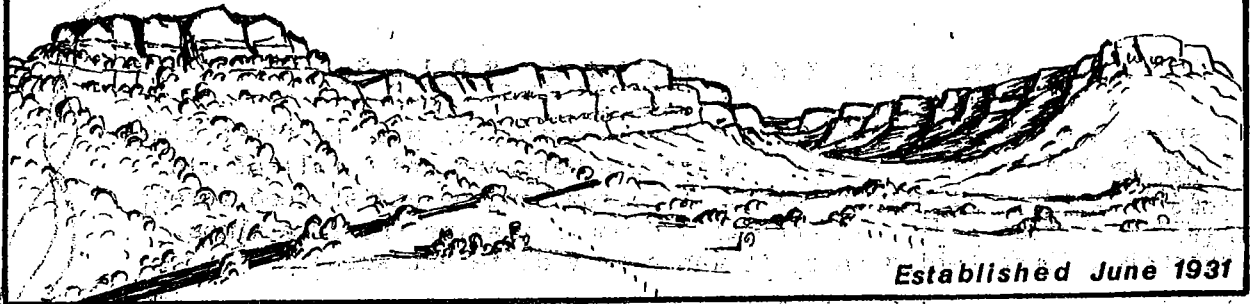


# THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



Established June 1931

## WIDDEN VALLEY

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 door to the Post Office). Prospective members and visitors are invited to visit the Club any Wednesday.

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## MAY - 1990

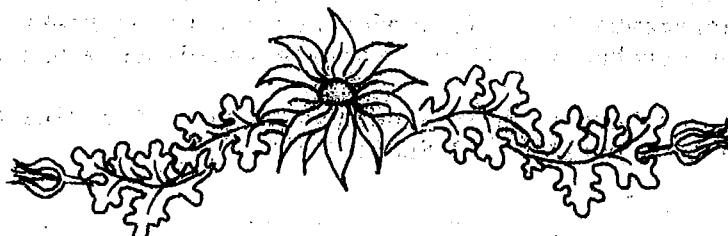
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### WHILE THE BILLY BOILS.

I spent a slightly damp Easter in the Watagans. It was the first time I had walked in State Forest - which the Watagans are - full of old logging roads, all open to 4WDs. A narrow band of undisturbed forest lined each road - driving through you would imagine the area almost untouched. Once behind this, it was a very different scene.

Little marketable timber is left - mostly turpentine is taken - it makes good fence posts and pit props. To obtain it, huge felling machines are simply driven through the small timber, and the devastation is considerable. Very old stumps measure 1 metre or more across, trees taken now are only 50-60 cm. across. When they are gone, I wonder what the Forestry Commission will do for the next 50 years, while the saplings grow to a marketable size.

"Thank heavens for our Fanatical Greenies," I thought, "who work so hard to protect our National Parks from logging." Without them, our best walking areas would be decimated within a few years.

See you on the track....

*Monay*



### NO DRINKING IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS?

THE TRUTH AT LAST.... After years of official silence, the Water Board has at last admitted that most of the creeks and rivers in the Blue Mountains are unfit to drink. In an article in the Sydney Morning Herald on 23rd April, Mr. Smith, project manager for the Water Board said that he doubted if streams within 4 Km of a township would ever again be guaranteed safe for drinking. Mr. Tweedie, spokesman for the Water Board, said "The Grose River is not too good, the Cox River is pretty poor and the Fish River....is pretty poor".

Streams contaminated by effluent include Fitzgerald Creek, Hazlebrook Creek, Katoomba Creek, Leura Falls Creek, Wentworth Creek, Woodford Creek and (of course) Kedumba River.

It's interesting to contemplate that most of these waterways eventually feed into Warragamba Dam. No wonder our tap water reeks of chlorine - if it did not, probably half of Sydney's residents would expire.

So don't say you haven't been warned. When you drink Blue Mountains water - 'Boil or purify - OR ELSE!'

## TWO WEEKS IN SOUTH WEST TASMANIA

JANUARY 26th - FEBRUARY 11th, 1990

**Part One:- Eastern Arthurs and Federation Peak.** Leader - Ian Wolfe  
Followers - Chris Perry, Bob King, Jeff Niven and Paul McCann.



The Arthurs

by Jeff Niven

I had been looking forward to a return trip to Tasmania ever since doing the Cradle Mountain - Lake St. Clair overland track a few years ago. After a week's cross country skiing with Ian and Chris on the Bogong High Plains in August '89 my opportunity came up when Ian asked if I'd be interested in going with them to Tassy in Jan/Feb '90.

We had a pre-trip meeting at Ian's home to sort out the group gear, food, etc. A two-man and a three-man tent would be used with each tent group being self-sufficient in food, stove and fuel, while general group-gear was divided between the five of us.

Our flight arrangements did not run as smoothly however, with all five of us having our flights cancelled or changed several times due to the pilots' dispute. Eventually we all met at the "Woodlands" Youth Hostel in Hobart on Thursday night as arranged. The pre-booked Tagalong Bus arrived promptly at 8 am on Friday and by 10.30 am we were at the start of the Huon Track, in warm fine weather.

It wasn't long before the first of many snakes encountered was seen, Chris nearly stepping on one, while further on it took a good five minutes of stone throwing to move another rather large and cantankerous one from the track.

Our approach to the Eastern Arthur Range was via the aptly named Yo-Yo Track, it doesn't skirt any hill but goes dishearteningly up and down every hill without fail. A welcome but cool swim was enjoyed in the Huon River at lunch and camp was made for the night on the track itself around 6 pm.

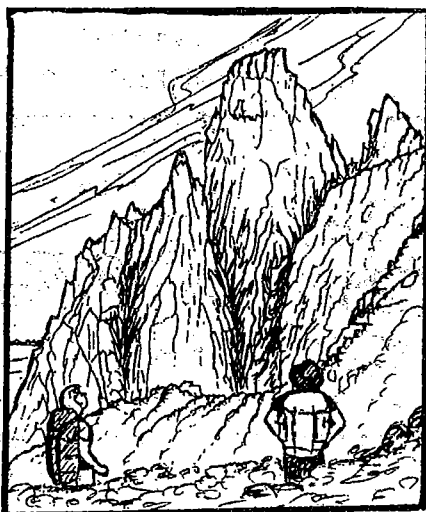
We were walking by 8 am on Saturday and soon came to Cacroft Crossing, then across a muddy plain to have morning tea on the Razorback with fine views of the Eastern and some of the Western Arthur Ranges. We spotted another party of walkers in front and soon caught up with them at Pass Creek. Leading this group was John Chapman who had written the guide book on S/W Tassy walks which we had been referring to for track information.

To ascend the E. Arthur Range via Luckman's Head was the afternoon's objective, a very steep, long climb. By around 5 pm we had reached Stuart Saddle in deteriorating weather, and with very little tent space available, camped under a large rock in cold, wet, misty conditions.

Sunday morning was similar and a cold damp start was made by 7.45 am. Some steep scrambling with a couple of pack hauls took us past The Needles and onto Goon Moor where we huddled behind a large rock, to have morning tea out of the wind, rain and occasional sago snow. Moving on we worked our way past the Four Peaks with more scrambling, but unfortunately no views due to the thick mist. By 2.30 pm we were being wind and snow blasted across Thwaite's Plateau to our campsite for the night, in thick scrub which gave good shelter.

During the afternoon the weather eased and by early evening only the top 100 metres of Federation Peak was being concealed from view by a shroud of mist. Chris had brought

an aneroid barometer/altimeter along and throughout both trips it was useful in determining the potential weather. With the air pressure rising we were hopeful of a chance to climb Federation the next morning. By 10 am on the Monday we were on our way to the summit with day packs in mild clearing weather.



The track notes tell of incredible exposure on the direct summit route which as the way we had chosen, so 50 metres of 7 mm rope was brought just in case. Lake Geeves lies some 600 metres directly below and one slip would give you the world's high diving record without any question. We reached the top without using the rope or having any trouble.

Bob and I bagged the peak for Ian who (even though wanting to bag it for the last ten years) was too captivated by the 360° scenic vista with serene dark lakes below and endless ranges of mountains to concentrate on the task.

Lunch was eaten before making the descent, where on one section we did use the rope as a precaution. On this section Chris decided to

go for the world day-pack throwing record by accidentally knocking his pack off a ledge. Incredibly it stopped in a steep chute and was retrieved only about 150 m below.

We continued on to Geeves Bluff, an easy scramble to the side of beautiful Hanging Lake where we were compelled to have a swim. On the way back to camp Ian climbed the Devil's Thumb, Bob and Jeff joined him and another peak was squeezed into Bob's day pack.

Early Tuesday morning we retraced the previous day's journey to the direct summit turn-off on Federation, but instead of going up, traversed around to the other side of the mountain with a couple of airy gully climbs before descending onto the Beechervaise Plateau for morning tea.

Moss Ridge was the way down and it took most of the afternoon before we passed Cutting Camp to stop for the night at Paper Camp. Chris entertained us that evening, reading an account of his recent trip to Nepal where he climbed Mira Peak - over 20,000 feet.

Mud, glorious mud on Wednesday, 'till we reached camp at Judd's Cavern, a huge cave out of which the Judd River flows. It is apparently of significant aboriginal importance and a sign requests people not to enter.

Rain and more mud saw out the final day (Thursday) as we walked out, and along Farmhouse Creek to the road where our pre-booked bus arrived on time, 12.30 pm. By 4 pm we were back at the Y.H.A. in Hobart.

TO BE CONTINUED.

\* \* \* \* \*

### A LITTLE PIECE OF HEAVEN AT A BARGAIN PRICE....

35 days in the land of the gods, culminating with an unobstructed view of the whole of Everest, from the top of Kala Patar (18,200 ft)

There is still room for 3 lucky people on Jan Mohandas's walk in Nepal. A total cost of \$3,900 for the experience of a lifetime. But ring him NOW on 872.2315 (H) - he has to finalise the bookings immediately.

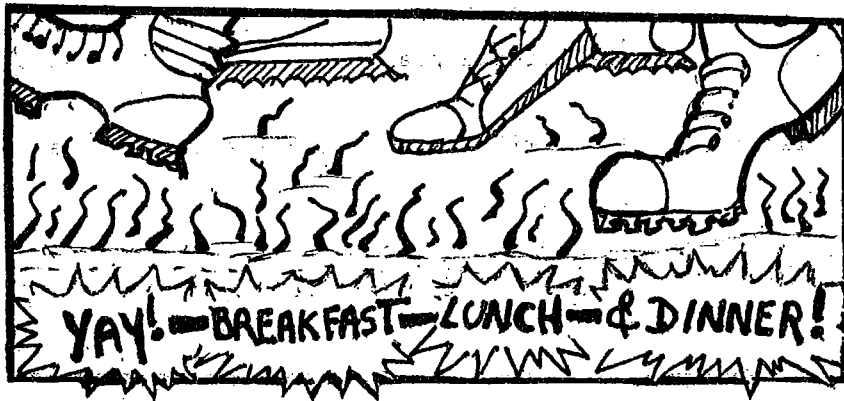
## WANDERING THROUGH THE WATAGANS

### EASTER 1990.

By Patrick James.

Sitting in the warmth and comfort of a modern double-deck train on our way back to Sydney I started to muse over the past few days. As I dozed, the Easter days started to separate from one long walk-camp-walk-camp conglomerate to a series of events each with a ray of brightness or spot of cheer.

The Watagan Mountains to judge from the Forestry Commission brochure are idyllic with leafy trails through beautiful bush and pristine streams. The Watagan Mountains are also home to a hoard of bloodthirsty leeches. Leeches that range from tiny thin ones to big fat juicy ones all with yellow GT stripes down their sides, which descend on any warm foot, boot, volley or unprotected skin with remarkable speed. We had a "leech problem" from the start of the walk to the very end, a couple even came home with me but were not so quick after being through the washing machine. The walk was the occasion for field trials of 'Rid' and tropical strength 'Aerogard'; conclusion: Aerogard appears to be better. We had mozzies and bull ants too, but they were almost kids stuff compared to the leeches.



Our camp sites varied. The first on the Thursday night was just a place to sleep. We got there at about 10 pm, set up the tents and flies and went to bed. The next morning we awoke at 6 am amid wet grass and cow poo ready to start the walk.

Friday's camp site in a grassy clearing in the forest was different. It was the first where we could indulge in happy hour. Drinking water was only about 50 metres away, unfortunately we had to pass through a bed of stinging nettles to get it. On Saturday night we camped, with permission, on private land. We were at the farmer's own picnic area with plenty of wood, a barbeque plate and logs to sit on, what luxury! There were even a couple of house bricks for Greta to stand on. That night we ate well, happy-houred and sang. For Sunday night we were back in the forest in a spot well hidden from the road. It was here that I saw phosphorescent fungi for the first time; strange little blobs softly glowing in the dark. They reminded me of walkers after a good happy hour. Our huge fire was no match for the might of Hughie; for about 9 of the 10 hours of night Hughie bucketed down with all he had.

Each morning our benevolent leader, "Ian the Navigator", would ensure we woke at 6 am to give plenty of time for breaking camp. Breakfasts were usually quite meals with the main thought being who would be the second last person ready to move out. On Easter Sunday the Easter Bunny came visiting and in place of the normal rabbit-scats, left chocolate eggs for each of us.

Lunch times were well deserved rests usually with a pleasant view when we could dry and air our feet, remove the excess leeches and re-apply liberal quantities of leech repellent. At one lunch stop a dog came wandering out of the bush, liked the look of us and stayed with us for the next hour or so. Someone had left her bright yellow bowl on the ground, this was assumed by the dog to be a dog-bowl, and it proceeded to lick the bowl clean.

Really the walking was easy, well not too easy, except for one shortcut through a few hills and gullies containing a spaghetti of lawyer vine. The vine tended to raise blood pressure and prompted one charming lady to question "Why am I doing this?". For two of the party this was their longest walk to date in terms of both days and distance. They completed the walk without incident and one has been heard to say, "What's all the fuss about extended walks?".

Our party of 14 passed over hill and dale, through forest, fern and brook and along path, track and road encouraged by the skill of our benevolent leader, his magic another "400 metres" and those flat stretches of track which "tended upwards". In town "Ian the Navigator" hides his compass and becomes mild mannered Ian Rannard who has the thanks of his 13 followers (Greta Davis, Valerie Douglas, Christine Floyd, George Floyd, John Gill, Bob Jaeger, Patrick James, Victor Llewlin, Jim Percy, Glad Rannard, Morag Ryder, Denise Shaw and Jo van Sommers) for an enjoyable Easter walk.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SOCIAL NOTES

by Greta Davis

**DINNER** before the meeting: Every second Wednesday (before the General Meeting) Club members are invited to join others at "IL POZZETTO PIZZERIA" restaurant, 147 Ramsay Road, Haberfield - quite near the Clubroom. 6.30 pm. Pasta as well as pizzas and salad. Come along on 13th June.

**20th June** - Mid-winter FEAST. Please bring a plate of party food - the Club will provide drinks.

**27th June** - Australian wilderness slides will be shown by The Wilderness Society.

\*\*\*\*\*

## *Kakadu - Wet Wonderland*

See it when it's green  
See it without the winter crowds

Why wait until June or July when the waterfalls are nearly dry? In February and March they are at their magnificent best. Wildflowers are at their most prolific. Those few bushwalkers who visit will have the wilderness all to themselves.

February and March are among the most comfortable months for walking. Daily maximum temperatures of 30-35° are the norm but this is true 12 months a year. Cloudy days feel cooler than sunny ones. It does not rain all day every day. The normal pattern is for short sharp bursts which are a welcome relief during the heat of the day. Many days have no rain at all.

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IN THE WET!  
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1990 programme.



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Picture yourself walking in a Kakadu that few people other than the original aboriginal inhabitants have ever seen. The land is lush and green. Beautiful swimming pools abound. You stop to admire the art in a rock shelter then turn around and watch the rains come down just as the original inhabitants have done for thousands of years.

Evening comes and after a hot meal you settle down to sleep in a dry bed, needing nothing more than a sheet to keep you warm. The cares and worries of the urban world seem a million miles away as you drift gently off to sleep.

*Willis's Walkabouts also offers extended bushwalking trips to Central Australia, the Kimberleys, Alaska & the Yukon and even South America. Write for details.*

## SEND HER DOWN, HUGHIE.

By. Jim Brown.

At a Reunion campfire gig, the theory was advanced that the recent erratic weather was specifically designed by the Weather Gods to frustrate bush walkers. We depicted Hughie, who holds the franchise for rainfall over South-east Australia, being summoned before Jupiter Pluvius, God of the Rain, who has had "certain complaints". Hughie admits he has released heavy rains on the Sydney region in an attempt to succeed where his forebears failed in 1950 to "stop those donkeys going into the bush".

His two principal assistants, Indra (Hindu Goddess for Rain and Thunderbolts), and Aquarius (The Water Carrier) explain that they have helped diligently by pouring a normal year's rain on Sydney in the six months January to June. [In 1988 - 1210 mm: in 1989 - 1213 mm - compared with an annual average of 1221 mm.]

They sing (ironically to the tune "Happy Wanderer"):-

We always tried to do our work  
To do as we were told.

The toughest tasks we never skirk  
We've been as good as gold.

Good as gold... good as gold... good as gooooo-old  
And done as we were told.

If rain was ordered we would race  
To get our clouds unrolled;

Their tanks topped up and set in place

To drench both young and old....Young and old...Young and old...  
We did as we were told.

If Hughie asked for thunderbolts

The Power House we cajoled

To let us have a million volts

And they were good as gold... Good as gold... Good as gold...  
They did as they were told.

On cloud-wrapped peaks those walker freaks

We hit with wet and cold,

With tent-fly leaks and rain for weeks

Their gear went grey with mould... Grey with mould... Grey with mould  
We'd done as we were told.

After hearing them out, and viewed the Sydney scene in his "crystal ball", J. Pluvius decides, for all the wrong reasons, to support their efforts. He instructs Hughie (in a song to "Click Go the Shears"):-

Send her down Hughie.... Send her down!

Dump 20 inches around Sydney town.

Flood all the houses and block all the drains.

Let 'em see that we're the mob that doles out the rains!

Out where the road ends at Newhaven Gap

A party with rucksacks is reading a map.

Let's wash 'em out and we'll see if they flap.

How about we try it? Hughie..... TURN ON THE TAP.

(Chorus)

Down on the Kowmung they're bombing the pools,

Seeking the water that quenches and cools.

Let's give 'em lots and we'll see if the fools

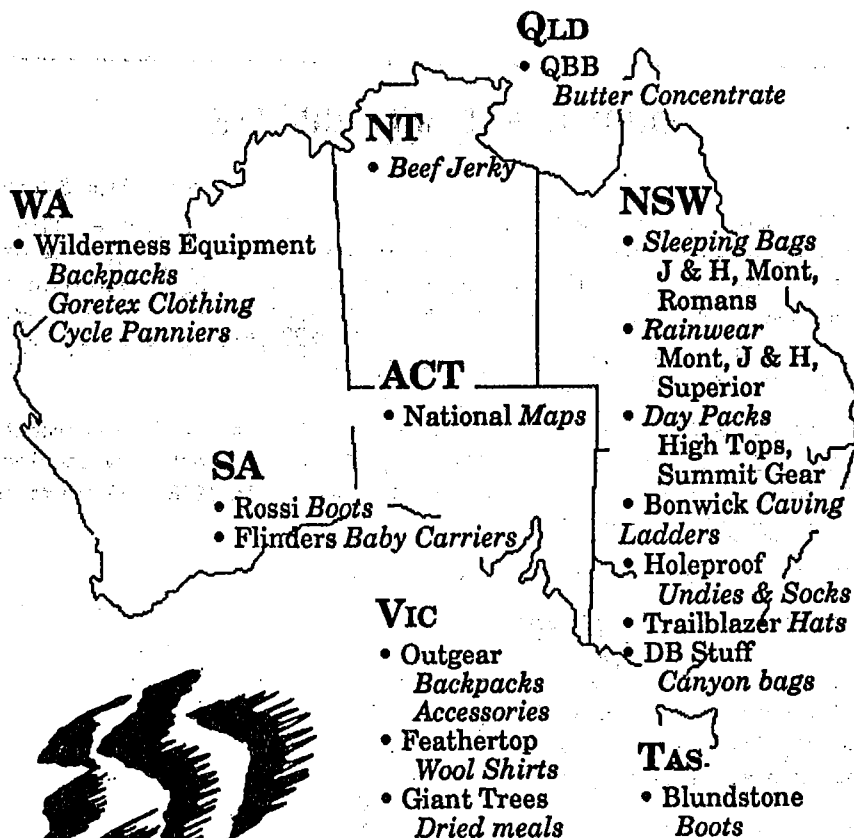
Recognise our mastery and holler - "HUGHIE RULES"!

(Chorus)

Since J. Pluvius' directive, we've had the hailstorm on the Sunday of the Reunion, plus about 300 mm more rain, bringing the 1990 total to 1023 mm as at Easter Monday, 16th April. SO IT REALLY IS DIRECTED AT US!

BUSHWALKERS! Don't let those Weather Gods beat you! Keep right on walking! Remember the old motto "Nil Illegitimately Carborundum" - never let 'em grind you down? Well, let yours be "Nil Illegitimately Lavarandum" - never let the B.....s wash you out.

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THE APRIL GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

The meeting began at around 2010 with the new President in the chair and some 18 or so members present. There were apologies for Kenn Clacher, Jeff Niven, Fran Holland and Les Powell. This last from Les Powell himself. New member John Carlson was welcomed into membership, with the President, new to the job I guess, dickering briefly over just how to welcome him. To John's obvious relief he settled for a handshake.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with the only matter arising being confirmation that we have indeed written to the S.R.A. asking them to open the gate at Engadine and let the milling hordes through.

Correspondence was somewhat sparse due to the Secretary, new to the job I guess, having left it all at home. We do know that Rosemary Baxter has resigned, and that we wrote to our new member and the S.R.A.

The Treasurer's Report was next. This will for the foreseeable future be based on year-to-date figures. The last time we did this, I for one found it more than somewhat confusing. Let's hope it's better the second time around. We started with a balance of \$1,784.00, our income was \$3,026.00, we have already spent \$3,395.00, and we closed the period with a balance of \$1,414.00.

The Walks Report began with the report on the annual re-union. There were few walkers, numerous ticks, and despite the reporter going home a tetch early, there were some good dampers.

March 23,24,25 saw Deborah Shapira leading a party of 5 on her Christy's Creek walk in rather damp conditions. Of the day walks, on the Saturday Nancye Alderson had 4 on her Medlow Bath area historical ramble and Jim Calloway led a party of 6 on a rapid dash from Engadine to Waterfall. On the Sunday Greta Davis took a party of 21 through fine conditions from Mount Victoria to Perry's Lookdown, and Errol Sheedy led a consort of ladies (or was that concert?) to program from Waterfall to Heathcote.

March 31, April 1 saw the F.B.W. S & R practice attended by 2 SBW members. Bob King cancelled his Kanangra abseiling trip, David Rostron aborted his Kowmung swimming trip due to car problems, and Bill Holland led a party of 13 through fine weather and numerous leeches on his Nattai-River-via-the-blue-markers trip.

The last weekend covered, that of April 6,7,8 saw Tony Marshall's Mount Guouogang trip cancelled. David McIntosh had 5 members on his Ettrema Creek trip, encountering rain on the Sunday morning, and Patrick James led a party of 11 from Cobbity to Brownlow Hill on his Camden area walk.

The Conservation Secretary reported that the remaining naturally vegetated area of Rio Park property looks likely to be added to the Warrumbungles National Park, that the Transcendental Meditationists wish to build a 450 bed centre on land above Nellie's Glen, and that a Victorian 4 WD Club arranged a protest gathering of around 400 4X4 vehicles at Cowombat Flat on the upper Murray River over the Easter weekend. Alex is to write to the Victorian National Parks body concerning this action. Bob Hodgson has advised that Mr. Buchanan is proposing to sell his property adjacent to the Deua National Park and Bob suggests that we take the opportunity to try to improve and secure access to the park. Alex will write to the Director N.P.W.S. regarding this.

There was no F.B.W. Report.

There was no General Business offering when the call was made and for some obscure reason we moved on to incorporate the evening's social activity into the meeting, or at least the meeting did. I went home. Who knows what time it all finished? Just for once, gentle reader, you must make an ending up to suit yourself.

\* \* \* \* \*

NEW PHONE NUMBER - Kenn Clacher has a new business phone number -  
(B) 968 0059

## THE FLYING TENTS OF ABBOTT RANGE

OCTOBER 1989

by Chris Perry

Last October long weekend seven intrepid ski-tourers set off from Eagles Nest Restaurant at the top of Thredbo to make a second attempt on my Abbott Range traverse. The first attempt one year earlier had to be aborted due to high winds and rain on the first day. It looked like we might be luckier with the weather this time.

Highlight of the first day was a close inspection of a descent into Leather Barrel Creek made from the Swampy Plains side, a little way down stream from Cootapatamba Hut. This run is short, steep and well worth while.

We made camp in a rather drafty location between the North West side of Kosciusko and Wilkinsons Creek. After camp was established Norm White and I decided to investigate some slopes on the south side of Wilkinsons Creek overlooking the Murray River. A series of long schusses took us to the tree line. On the last schuss, I disturbed a fox which ran off down hill. We gave chase, nearly catching the animal as it darted this way and that through the trees. I can't say who had more fun the fox or me, but we had to give up the chase when it jumped a creek and made off up hill.

Chasing the fox had taken us down hill to about 1800 metres further than we planned to go. The area we were now in was ideal for snow camping with sheltered bowls, a handy water supply and gently undulating slopes for practicing telemarks. We also had good views of the spectacular craggy west end of the Abbott Range. It would be a good venue for intermediate level ski-tours if one didn't have to brave the steep slopes and dismal weather of the upper Main Range to get there. A long climb saw us back at camp just on dusk.

Next morning we set off for the North West side of the Abbott Range under the threat of a descending cloud cover. By the time we had topped the South West end of the Abbott Ridge, the cloud had descended, making a traverse of the NW side of the Range fairly pointless. The main attraction of the traverse off course is the steep runs heading off into the depths of the Geehi Gorge.

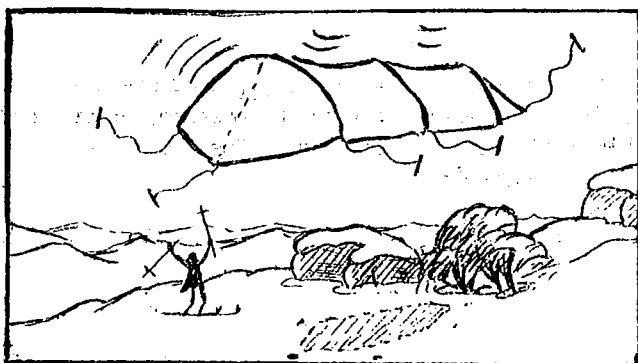
Eventually we felt our way through the murk on the South East side of the range to Race Course Gully below the outflow of Lake Albina. Camp site selection was tricky. We didn't want to spend another night in a continuous draft like the night before, so a more sheltered location was found. The tricky part was that the sheltered spot Ian located was afflicted by a short duration microburst once every five minutes or so. In between times there was no wind at all. We opted for the microbursts.

The fun began just after Norm and I had set up my tent and were about to attach the fly. A microburst struck and sucked my tent straight off the ground in a fully erect condition with the pegs still attached, launched it 20 metres into the air and down Lady Northcotes Canyon.

"Gee, doesn't my tent fly well." I thought as the tent disappeared from sight. I

calmly nailed the fly to the ground with an ice axe, even more calmly jumped on a pair of skis and gave chase with visions of having to dig a snow cave to sleep in for the night.

"That's the ultimate sign of rejection, Chris," quipped Ian Wolfe as I sped off. "Your tent leaves you."

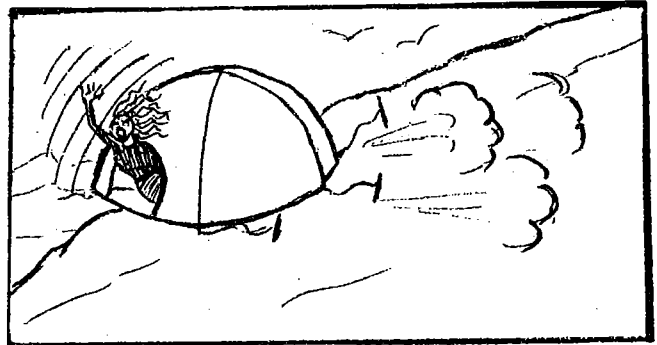


Fortunately the tent was sucked into an eddy behind a large rock where it collapsed and fell to the ground unharmed.

Just after I got the tent up and secured with two large packs inside to keep it under control, another microburst struck. Like magic Ian's tent rose into the air and commenced a flying act. Unlike mine, Ian's tent was full of gear which spewed out the tent door and rained down on the ground under the tent as it flew off. I could laugh since it wasn't my tent this time and seeing billies, Trangias, pegs and Karimats falling out of the sky was quite a sight.

Ian's tent was chased, scolded and secured with more pegs. Iris Odlum and three large packs were placed inside to keep the tent under control.

Iris was settling down in the tent to a relaxing slice of fruit cake as yet another microburst set its sights upon us. As it struck all the pegs in Ian's tent popped out of the snow and the tent with Iris and three packs with a combined weight of 120 kg sped off across the snow like a locomotive on a down hill run. Iris's face appeared at the tent door, visions of Dorothy and the Wizard of Oz written all over it.



The novelty of flying tents was fast wearing off and we were becoming less lackadaisical about the way our tents were fastened to the snow.

This story makes amusing reading but poses some problems if you don't fancy yourself as a Dorothy. Both Ian and I were using medium sized snow pegs which didn't work well under the warm conditions and associated sloppy snow. Using a larger peg would not solve the problem and wind erosion of the snow would leave almost any peg exposed after a night of wind.

I resolved that one possible method of holding one's tent down in warm windy weather is to attach approx. one foot of cord to each of the peg points on the tent and pass it through a hole in the peg (pre-drilled about halfway down the peg by yourself at home) and then burying the peg in a horizontal position about a foot under the snow. If this doesn't work then get down on your bended knees and pray!

An obvious drawback of burying the peg in this fashion is extracting the thing next morning if (as happened to us) the temperature drops over night and the snow freezes solid. Your pegs could be extracted by digging for it with your mates portable jackhammer which you plug into your other mates portable air compressor.

Needless to say, we all survived to return to Thredbo the next afternoon after enjoying a cold sunny day.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### HANDY HINTS

Leech repellent. Tried and proved effective - Aerogard Tropical Strength Lotion. Apply liberally to feet and legs before putting on shoes and socks. Works well.

A leech remover. Tried and proved effective - Methylated spirits. Put in a small container, carry in pocket. Use finger to dab metho on offending leech. Causes leeches to drop off instantly. Good for quickly de-leeching shoes.

Tip from a theatre sister - Clean dirty wounds with hydrogen peroxide. Frequently used before surgery, the foaming action cleans bacteria from dirt and ragged skin (as in a muddy graze). Will also clean up wounds that are festering.



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## A DIFFERENT WAY TO THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

By Geoff Grace.

Train or car - but how about CANOE?

My friend of many years, Fred, and I decided to explore the possibilities of canoeing the waterways and portaging the relatively narrow land bridges between Sydney and the Royal National Park. Unfortunately we did it at a time when the rains came, so it was a very wet trip, but never-the-less we did it!

The plan was to leave at a time to suit high tide in Cook's River. Because of future commitments and the peculiarities of the tides, this meant leaving Hunters Hill in the evening.

Hell! One of the portaging wheels failed before we even got into the Lane Cove River! Fred went looking for replacements and came back with two interesting looking large diameter metal handwheels. Remarkably, they fitted the axles. They were noisy on the road but otherwise strong and very effective.

We paddled out of the Lane Cove River, around Cockatoo Island and into Iron Cove. With a rising tide we went up Iron Cove Creek to where it passes under Parramatta Road at Ashfield. On with the wheels and after a portage of one and a half hours, we were sliding the canoe into Cook's River at the Brighton Avenue bridge at Canterbury.

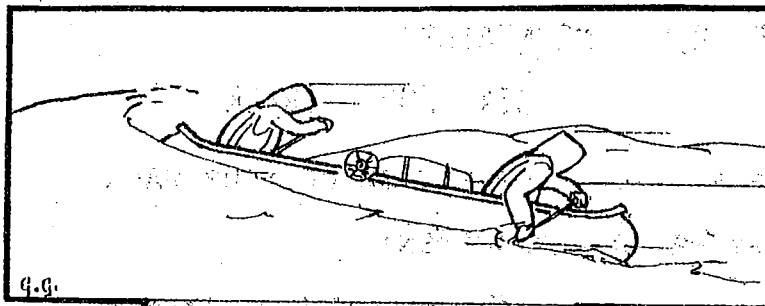
We paddled downstream and after a kilometre or two, feeling pretty tired, camped under a kindly old weeping willow. After a few hours of sleep we pressed on, trying to make the best use of the tail end of tidal run-out.

Into Botany Bay. With conditions pretty frightful, we paddled alongside the vastness of the existing airport runway jutting out into the Bay, then to the east a kilometre away where environmental vandals would fill the Bay with a third runway, then to Port Botany. Making sure our buoyancy vests were secure, we made a bee-line across Botany Bay to the very pleasant Cook's Landing Place.

Cook's Landing would be a very nice place to camp if condoned. However, we managed a good night's rest without upsetting officialdom. Next day, we paddled west alongside Kurnell Beach to Towra Point which we found a pleasant place for a cuppa. No camping there either.

Into the maze of oyster farms in Woolloomare Bay and with some guidance from an oyster farmer, found a muddy way out to Captain Cook Drive at Cronulla where again our wheels were put to use. Two meat pies and an hour and a half later, we slipped the canoe into Gunamatta Bay off the well-known wharf. The weather was wild and as we approached the open water inside Port Hacking we could see foaming breakers on the nearby sand bar.

Both Fred and I felt the adrenalin running as we cautiously nudged around Burraneer headland and past the bar a short distance to our left. We ran to the west with big swells lifting us and wind buffeting us about. We quickly came in sight of Gray's Point by which time conditions had eased somewhat. With the tide falling and sand banks appearing on all sides we headed into the southern shore and landed at a first-rate campsite in the Royal National Park.



The Port Hacking Adrenalin Rush

No problems with water at that camp. It bucketted down. Next day, leaving our gear in the tent, we paddled up the Hacking River to visit the weir at Audley. It was a new and pleasant experience to view the shoreline of our National Park from the water. There are a great many aboriginal middens along the shore.

Just short of Audley we were stopped by an impassable rapid with about a two metre fall delivering the results of two days and nights of rainfall on the Hacking catchment. We could go no further.

We had made arrangements for a vehicle to pick us up for the return journey if needed, but because the trip had been so easy, we decided to paddle and portage back home.

We left the campsite at 7.00 am and working the tides to advantage, after temporarily losing a paddle, an efficient camp at Canterbury, and various debates about who was pulling the most, we paddled into the Lane Cove River 24 hours later.

It was good fun - most of the time!

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### COME DANCING WITH THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY....

THE DATE - Friday, June 15th  
THE PLACE - Sydney Town Hall, at 8pm  
THE BAND - Skewiff



COME AND KICK UP YOUR HEELS AND GIVE THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY THE SUPPORT THEY DESERVE!

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

DIGANCE, Justine - G.P.O. Box 2053, Sydney 2001 (B) 212 1244

ELLIS, Stephen - 78 Oxford Street, Epping 2121 (H) 86 3458

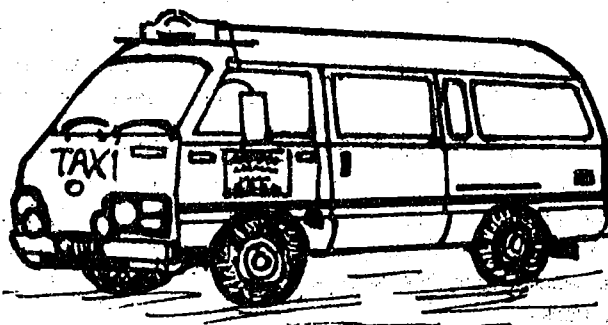
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CLEAN-UP DAY - Sutherland Bushwalking Club are organising a clean-up in the Royal National Park on Sunday, 22nd July. Other bushwalking clubs are invited to join and give their help. Contact ANTHONY JACKSON 520 2784.

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