

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



Established June 1931

ON THE AXEHEAD

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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JUNE - 1990

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WHILE THE BILLY BOILS.

Recently, I was talking to a non-member about our magazine. "Oh," they said, "Do people really bother to write about their walks?"

Do we? Judging by the fresh and lively trip stories which filled the April issue, we ought to be called the Sydney Bush Authors! It's good to see that, despite the dampish weather, so many are going out and doing interesting walks. Better still, they are taking the time to tell us of their adventures.

Does a trip have to be long and/or hard to be worth recording? Does it have to be in some new and/or distant place? Definitely not! People have been climbing Cloudmaker for umpteen years, but for each person climbing it for the first time, the experience is new and exciting.

The struggles and triumphs of a beginner bring back to all of us vivid memories of our own early efforts. There is an instant rapport which comes from shared difficulties and joys - and the excitement of discovering wild, unspoilt country.

So 'hurrah!' for the adventurous Bush Author, whose stories remind us what life is really about. Reviving happy memories - and cheering us when we're confined to the city.

See you on the track....

Wanda



STOP PRESS!

ADDITIONS TO THE WINTER PROGRAM

CROSS COUNTRY SKI TRIPS

- (1) 27 - 30 July (3 day) - Mungyang, Disappointment Ridge, Mt Gungartan, Tin Hut, Bar Ridge, Bolton's Hut, Finn's Swamp, Disappointment Ridge, back to Mungyang.

Maps: 1:50,000 Kosciusko, 1:31,680 Mt Jagungal & Brassy Mts.

Grade: MEDIUM/HARD (1A)

Leader: IAN WOLFE (H) 411 5251, (W) 227 2751, Fax 227 2747

- (2) 17 - 19 August (2 day) - Introductory XC Ski Touring and Alpine Navigation trip. Route: Thredbo, Twin Valleys, Stilwell's Restaurant Ruin, Trapyard Creek, Bett's Creek, Mt Weatley Saddle and Perisher Valley.

Maps: 1:50,000 Kosciusko, 1:25,000 Thredbo Ski Touring

Grade: EASY/MEDIUM (3B)

Leader: IAN WOLFE (H) 411 5251, (W) 227 2751, Fax 227 2747

* * * * *

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

FOX, Peter - 27/76 Orpington Street, Ashfield 2131 (B) 218 6576 (H) 799 3981
 GILL, John - 25 Sydney Street, Willoughby 2068 (H) 958 0119
 SMITH, Vincent - 9 Brodie Street, Yagoona 2199 (H) 645 4870

LILLOING DOWN THE GUY FAWKES RIVER

BOB KING'S CHRISTMAS TRIP - 1989

Part One: December 26th to 30th

By Michele Morgan

Tuesday, 26 December

Departure Day: Sydney to Armidale, but I am still sick with a 48 hour virus which hit Christmas morning - I got the opposite to fat this Christmas! As there are only three others going on the trip, Bob decides to delay one day to see how I feel tomorrow. Back to bed.

Wednesday, 27 December

I am just OK, so we go: myself (Michele) with Ilse Sandner and Michael Huggett in their car up to Armidale in air-conditioned comfort. 9.00 am start from Sydney, we get to Ebor Falls - an hour from Armidale - at about 5.00 pm to meet up with Bob and his chauffeur (his dad, David King). We all check out the views from the lookout: the falls are really loud and look great, lots of sure-to-be-colder-than-cold water raging down the falls; our path of the next week wending its way through lots of steep, wild looking bush and many sharp turns. The guys do a car shuffle and leave Ilse and me at the "No Camping" sign to set up camp. We do. The guys get back at about 7.15 pm to be greeted by a cosy fire and after several fishing stories, we say goodbye to Bob's Dad.

Thursday, 28 December

Up and packed by 8.30 am (some of us anyway). Beautiful hot sunny day, Ebor Falls look great and sound busy and full of water. The descent to the river is really steep, gruesome and fairly hard. Everyone (except Bob) have horrendously heavy packs. We started in the river about $\frac{1}{2}$ km at most from Ebor Falls, descending straight down between the two picnic area lookouts.

We get to the river, waterproof all, blow up our lilos and hit the water by 10.30 am - it's freezing! We struggle through pools and walk, carrying the lilos more often than floating on them - this part of the river is not user friendly.

After about $\frac{1}{2}$ km hard going in the river we get to a series of drops which are too big and so pack up our lilos and become mountain goats - up the side of the extremely up-and-down river banks. Our packs are heavy (full of many "Happy Hour" supplies) and you could ski on the slippery grass! Going uphill is bad - we suffer, but finally get to a flatish piece, then walk a bit and rest a bit and walk a bit and rest a bit. We are on top of the ridge now and hit a vague dirt track - cattle or wombats?

Then of course, it's time to go down - straight down in parts! Ilse has troubles with her heavy pack as she hurt her back several days before we left and she thought the lilo was going to be doing all the work - we found out later that she was carrying about a dozen oranges. One part going down we have to lower some of the packs by rope, as the ground cover is very steep and loose. We get to the bottom - onwards!

Walk, swim, lilo, swim, walk for about $\frac{3}{4}$ hour and then we arrive at a flat rock. Camp, says Bob. Well, at least it's flat, but where do you put a tent up? The sky is now overcast, it could rain?

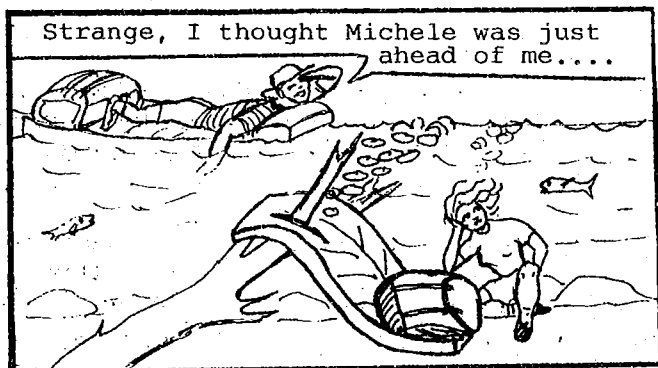
A superb Happy Hour and fire - Camembert Cheese, Fish Paste on bikkies, Nuts, Hot Rum and Lemon Barley, Hot Rum and Tang, dinner, Port, talk, bed, snooze. It didn't rain!

Friday, 29 December

Up and at it, packed and fed by 9.10 am, we step off our rock into the water and we are cruising. The water is cold - 15°C. ****FREEZING! Where are my fingers - you jar your wrists every time you push off a rock because your hands are frozen solid.

We have a good start and enjoy each patch of sun as we wait for Mike. Mike's pack and Mike's lilo appear separately after each rapid. (See note at end on "Tips for future Liloists".)

10.30 am we have warm-up morning tea and Bob says "No Fire". Horrors! What's morning tea without a hot cuppa? (Where's Dave McIntosh?) You can't hug rocks as the rocks aren't even warm! (A habit picked up on last year's lilo week.) We get going again - the water must have got colder while we were out of it, I'm sure! A little bit further and Bob



has to walk - a small hole that lets a lot of air out on a wear spot. Bob's lilo is very used, and in places you can see some of the original lilo through all the patches.

A few more rapids and both Mike and I are walking. My rip is about one foot long and Mike's is a bit shorter but has two side turns as well - oh well, lunch soon. We have a very long lunch - hot and sunny - patching lilos - mine done OK, Bob's done to perfection, Mike's

doesn't work. Two half hours later we set off, Mike walking and waiting for a second attempt patch to dry. Mine has a slow leak, patching appears to have gone rotten! But I get along OK. We stop one hour later to camp.

A pleasant camp spot - I have the flattest spot next to a tree for hanging wet clothes on. A wonderful Happy Hour of Brie Cheese, Mussels and Hot Rum and Lemon Barley follows watching Bob go for a swim! Then dinner, Cheese Cake, Halva and Port.

Saturday, 30 December

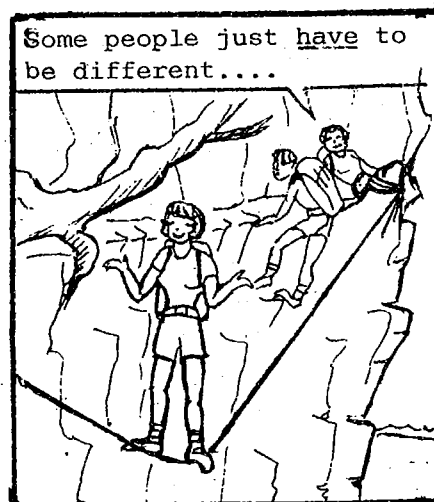
Our last half day on the river liloing - as we started one day late and have made slow time, we have too far to go to make it to the next exit point in time for Bob's annual dentist appointment on 2 January.

The day is perfect, the sun shining, the water cold and fresh (brrrrrr) and it's just wonderful. Bob gets two big punctures in his lilo - through old patches. So he walks and talks of perhaps buying a new lilo for next year. The rest of us have a great time - occasionally Bob partly inflates his lilo and goes down really good rapids. The others stop to take photos and I go on ahead to check out the next rapid and see three fishermen in the distance, also taking photographs of each other. We keep going - such a good day we don't want it to end.

We stop for lunch (the last of our liloing) at a big, deep pool in a hot sunny spot and Bob and Mike spend half an hour going down this rapid over and over again, we all take lots of photos, I have a swim and then we depart the river and head uphill (no, I don't mean uphill!).

The going is incredibly steep with really loose rocks. We stop often to "check out the view". Eventually we have to rock climb as the way is really steep, then more slog and another rest and then a really hard bit. We can't go over it - too thin and crumbly with a tree growing in the middle of the thinnest bit and sticking out on each side, wider than the ledge it is on - so we go around the bottom with help of a rope and extremely loose thin footing with a long way to fall! Loose stones slide away from under your feet, and you can hear them falling for ages. This horrid section is about 20-25 feet and then more uphill slog and it's hard - gripping grass with your hands as your feet slip from under you and dodging rocks those from above are "accidentally" aiming at you! Eventually we reach the top - instantaneous farm country with cows and bulls.

We see a pond, an old sawmill and an old car in the distance, then another house and two cars. We make our way to the landowner in the



in the hope that he will let us camp a bit further along on his property (and also feed us scones, Christmas cake and tea). He is disappointing (looks a bit wild) and his look says - four overloaded donkeys trudging through the heat and FLIES are a mite strange. No scones and tea here.

We trudge on another two or three kilometres - just crossing onto the next property where we find empty cattle yards and a tank full of fresh water. Bob trudges off packless (did I mention his sprained and badly bruised and bandaged left ankle?) while Mike lays down to rest in a field and we girls catch up with Mike. I make friends with two local horses. Bob never gets within sight of the farmer and comes back, but we change camp sites (twice) as there were several bulls in the paddock we were in at present.

We camp in some trees, across the road from the yards, near a wonderful supply of firewood. Bob and I went back to get water as Ilse and Mike lay down to study the colour of the sky. Ilse's back has been worrying her, so Mike has been carrying a very heavy, large pack with extra stuff in it. I feel much better when I take off my pack - I could almost fly! A Happy Hour follows - Hot Rum and Lemon Barley, Oysters, Camembert Cheese, Egg Noodles and Port later. I am too full for dinner as only Mike and I eat oysters; I munch on some cashews and drink lots of tea and water. Everyone is very thirsty, even though we have been drinking lots throughout the day.

Ilse made damper which started out looking like runny pancake mix - so she added half the flour from tomorrow night's damper - it looked quite good when cooked. Mike burnt his fingers seeing if the damper was hot, and we talked till 11.00 pm, thence to bed.

TO BE CONTINUED

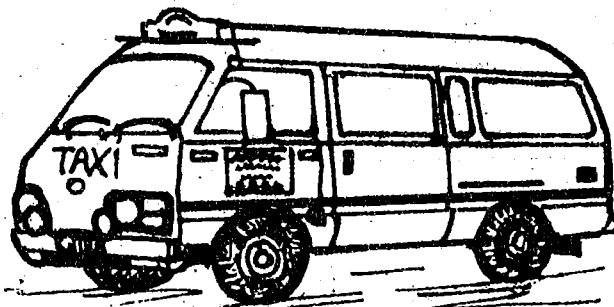
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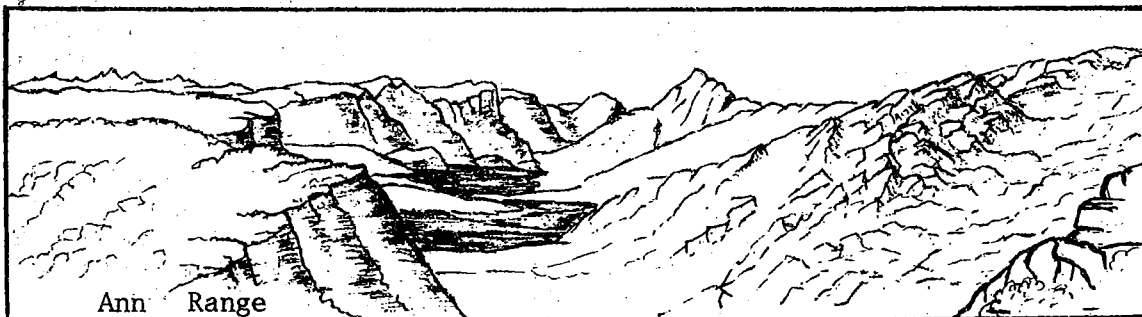
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TWO WEEKS IN SOUTH WEST TASMANIA

JANUARY 26th - FEBRUARY 11th, 1990

PART TWO:

The Mount Ann Circuit.



by Jeff Niven

We were to have Friday as a rest day and start the Mount Ann trip Saturday but the wet weather didn't let up and as we had allowed two other spare days, decided to postpone the start till Monday. Friday was spent doing the tourist traps of Hobart, then we hired a car and headed for Port Arthur and its sights, staying at the Port Arthur YHA Saturday night and returning to Hobart for Sunday night, via every Devonshire tea house we passed.

8 am Monday we were in the bus heading for Condominium Creek on the Scotts Peak Dam Road. By 10.30 am we were heading up to High Camp Hut on the side of Mount Eliza, a stone structure with room for four down and a loft for 5 or 6 upstairs. The new toilet scored a strong 10 by all of us on the Loo-with-a-view scale. After lunch in the hut we went for a walk to the top of Mount Eliza but only for the exercise, as we walked into thick mist and had no view from the summit.

In residence at the hut was John Chapman who we'd met on the first trip, but on his own this time, and with his vast knowledge on Tassie we had a very pleasant evening. Tuesday morning we headed back up Mount Eliza with full packs and across the plateau to a saddle where packs were left while we did a side trip to the top of Mount Ann, an airy climb but not at all hard. Bob and Jeff bagged this peak for Ian also, and after photos and a snack we returned to the saddle, picked up packs and moved on to have lunch at Shelf Camp.

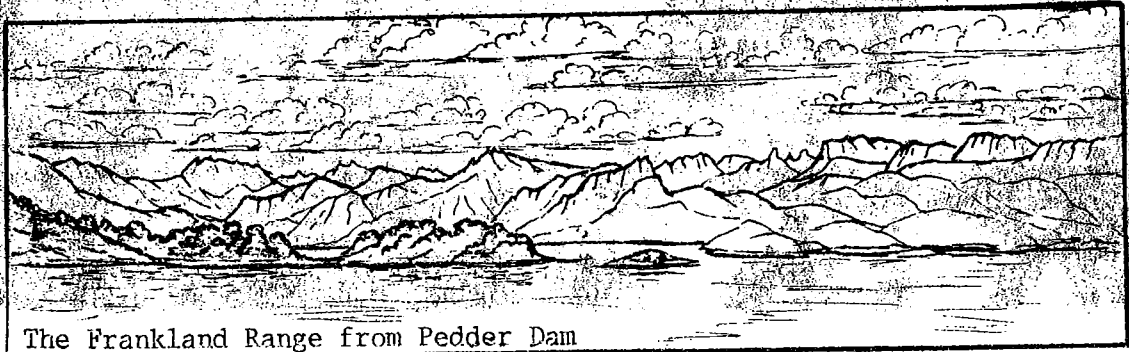


A very interesting traverse and scramble brought us to the summit of Mount Lot and a view of several beautiful lakes and tarns below, this area was to be our campsite for the next two nights but first Lightning Ridge had to be descended; it is a most spectacular knife edge indeed.

We approached Judds' Charm campsite in the mist and found it to be a most salubrious setting. The lake sitting like a jewel surrounded by beautiful mountains was a superb place and brought to mind the poem by the naturalist John Muir.

"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings,
Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into
the trees,

The winds will blow their freshness into you
And the storms their energy,
While cares will drop off like autumn leaves.



The Frankland Range from Pedder Dam

There was still room in our packs to fit a few more peaks, so on Wednesday we climbed Lot's Wife, passing Lake Picone on the way and in the afternoon a jaunt out to climb Mount Sarah Jane.

Thursday we bade farewell to this lovely area, re-climbing Mount Sarah Jane before lunch then a long descent to Lake Judd, another most congenial campsite. Swimming and sunning filled the afternoon; it gets dark and very cool by 9 pm, so early nights tend to be the norm.

A perfect sunny day, Friday, saw us leave Lake Judd and climb Schnell's Ridge, giving views of both the Eastern and Western Arthur Ranges, Lake Pedder and more. Our last camp was on the Ann River and on Saturday morning we walked out to the road, met the bus and were back at the Hobart YHA around 4 pm.

SIX FOOT TRACK IN A DAY - Leader: JAN MOHANDAS

Crossing the roaring 3½ metre deep Cox might have been a newsworthy event, but getting your name in the papers isn't much fun if it appears in the obituary column. Jan very sensibly decided not to drown his trusting followers, so the walk set down for 21st April last will be held on another day:-

SATURDAY 25th AUGUST - Let's hope the Cox isn't in flood!

NOTES ON CONFEDERATION OF BUSH WALKING CLUBS SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING & COMMITTEE MEETING - 15 MAY 1990

by Deborah Shapira

The special general meeting was called to discuss the resolution on proportional representation by affiliated member clubs - 1 delegate/50 members up to a maximum of 4 delegates. This was carried.

The committee meeting then commenced. During the past few months the organisation has experienced some difficulties which resulted in:

1. Minutes not being circulated, because the secretary was overseas.
2. No publicity given for either the Reunion or the S & R Bush Dance. Only two families attended the Reunion at Coolana. It seems no attempt was made to inform people how to get there, nor was anyone delegated to organise transport for those needing it. Fortyone people attended the Bush Dance, which would have been a financial loss had not someone donated the hall hiring fee.

S & R REPORT: There is a possibility that the existing trailer will be exchanged for a lighter version, which can be towed by a vehicle with a 2 litre engine. The S & R Rogain is to be held on 23/24 June, in the Yalwal area.

CONSERVATION: Sand mining is taking place on Wollongambe and Bungleboori plateaux. A motion opposing it was passed.

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MEDIA WATCH

by Frank Rigby

Last night I happened to watch that admirable ABC television program "Media Watch" in which the astute Stuart Littlemore tears strips off the media in general. Great stuff. Then I read the April issue of The Sydney Bushwalker and its Editorial words "If you ever read the magazine ---". Dear Editor, how could you possibly doubt OUR interest in OUR magazine? To prove that I for one DO read the magazine it occurred to me that an SBW style Media Watch was the way to go. Mind you, I have no intention of subjecting our esteemed journal to the Littlemore treatment, I'm far too gentle a soul for that (do I hear some guffaws in the background?). Well, anyway, my readers may judge for themselves.

"While the Billy Boils" provided, as usual, some well-timed, pithy comments in nonsense language from our Editor. Please keep up the good work.

It was only natural that Joan Rigby's "Four Memories of a River" brought back some memories for me also, especially that adventure in the Apsley Canyon at Easter, 1967. This walk, the first ever through the Canyon, was one of the great SBW classics and deserves to be recorded before all the participants die of old age or something worse.

Not much to be said about Jeff Niven's wholesome story about "Walking and Skiing" except that optimists (ski touring in late November?) are usually nice people to know. Thick scrub between Illawong Bridge and Little Twynam? Wasn't that bit almost at the treeline years ago? Greenhouse Effect?

After another historical masterpiece by Clio we have Jim Brown asking "Who is Clio?" He then goes on to say that he now knows who Clio is. Or does he? Him has discovered a Greek Goddess who couldn't possibly have learned English (it hadn't been invented when she was a schoolgirl), could not possibly know anything about Aussie bushwalking while spending her entire life on the heights of Mount Olympus. No, Jim, I can't buy your conclusion on the evidence. Actually, in a rare moment of insight the true answer to this puzzling question was revealed to me. CLIO is not a person but is merely an acronym for the Covert Literary Intelligence Organisation. It is obvious that this body has had bushwalkers under surveillance for many years now but, unlike ASIO, in a benign sort of way born of curiosity about such queer creatures and their doings. However, it is possible that files exist on the more adventurous members of our sect. You have been warned!

Turning now to Greta Davis' story of the Reunion, the most interesting part for me was the last paragraph:- "This was my first reunion. Thanks to all of the members who were there for making it a most enjoyable weekend." In view of last year's mini-debate about reunions not being what they used to be I hope Greta might write another story telling us why, after many years of membership, 1990 was her first reunion and why she found it most enjoyable. Perhaps the answers might enlighten us all as to why so much of our membership has yet to sample a reunion.

The Gourmet Grub Ditty? Hmmm, Mirium Challis, bushwalking or fringe benefits?

It would appear that the light-weight walking debate requires two lists:- (1) David Rostron's 5-8.5 kg weekend pack to see what we should be carrying and (2) some heavyweight's 15 kg weekend pack to see what we should not.

Also in Mail Bag it was very nice to receive a personal mention from Kath Brown as "a bushwalker of those days" (1957). How fortunate I am to be still a bushwalker of these days also, thirty-three years later. I haven't a Three Peaks trip in me now but I guess that doesn't really matter.

The Annual Subscriptions Notice tells us that we pay just 58 cents per week for a single, and that INCLUDES the magazine. It must be one of the greatest bargains of all time!

Aha, to the last page and the anonymous Footnotes. Well, bless me, there's that girl again getting all the publicity. Now it's "WILD" magazine featuring the barefoot bushwalker and the autobiography is still to come! Where will it all end? But I still like that very modest morsel of publicity from way back. When Snow Brown, Henry Gold and I climbed Crater Bluff in 1957, there was a small glass jar containing an old professional card right at the summit. On that "Remedial Gymnast" card was written: "First ascent of Crater Bluff by Dr. Eric Dark and Dorothy English, 1936".

(Well, that disposes of the April Mag, Stuart Littlemore would say "See you next week", But not me. This is definitely a one-off watch on our own wee bit of the media. I promise.)

MAIL BAG

from Reg Alder

LIGHT WEIGHT WALKING

In my fifty plus years of experience in bushwalking the debate about light weight packs has been going on unabated. Light pack weights are quoted but what is omitted are the weather conditions, the risks and the dependence on fellow walkers that the proponent of light weight packs is not prepared to admit. In my early bushwalking days the extreme measures of cutting the excess of straps off, drilling holes in the handles of utensils and leaving essentials out were all the vogue. The few ounces saved by the first two instances were of little benefit.

There are many factors which govern what a pack will eventually weigh, the most important being the size of the walker as all clothing, sleeping bag, food, etc must be relatively heavier than that needed by someone of a smaller size. Smaller persons have a decided advantage and it is no use arguing that the larger person can carry it more easily. The amount of effort needed to carry a weight up an incline is the same no matter what the size of the person, what does count is the ability of that person to muster and sustain the necessary amount of energy. Larger persons need more food to fuel their bodies than smaller persons require.

Then there are the walkers who are prepared to gamble on the weather and other unforeseen circumstances for their comfort, safety and the goodwill of their companions by leaving items at home which most would consider essential. Only the clothing worn is taken, sleeping is under a fly which offers little protection in a real storm, or someone else carries the tent, the thought of water on a steep climb is discarded at the risk of heat exhaustion and the minimum of basic, uninteresting food is carried. Of course, they always have a bigger spoon to sample their companions more exotic dishes or left-overs with the remark, "That looks interesting" as they already have their spoon deep down in a billy. What is needed in a first-aid kit is a matter of personal choice, but some basic items are essential, such as plain and elastic bandages, adhesive tape and some antiseptic. I read only recently that one enthusiast advised walkers not to take anything because no matter what you had would be of no use in a serious accident. That may be so, but there are many minor mishaps where a basic kit can be of some help.

I recently went on a ten day walk which involved no food replenishments. There were seven in the party, three had kept their packs down to 40 lbs with some water, the remainder were in the mid-40 lb range and the heaviest 56 lbs. No one was short of food and all had adequate clothing for the exceptionally wet period with some heavy frosts. In my opinion, if I had cut down further, I would have been placing reliance on my companions and this is not the name of the game.

A cavernous pack may not be a great additional load, I recently bought a 70 litre monster to enable me to carry the ten days' of food comfortably without cramming. This new pack of man-made fibres weighs the same as my earlier, much smaller, two pocket Paddy pack with a supporting frame. I found the larger space a decided advantage in making packing easier.

And so finally - "Pull your weight by carrying your own weight".

EDITOR'S COMMENT

My basic winter pack, which includes a down jacket and metho stove, weights 10 kilograms. Adding one kilogram of food for each day is ample. If you value your knees, you won't carry more than one fifth of your body weight! On long trips all extra weight should be food, which soon disappears.

FOOTNOTES

The crazy weather we have had seems to have sent the bush flowers mad as well. Walking in The Royal recently, I noticed that not only were a lot of 'spring' flowers out - tea-trees, banksias and a perfect riot of gymea lilies - but on Curra Moors, Christmas Bells were blooming. Christmas Bells?..... in MAY?

Several years ago, the N.P.W.S. declared campfires banned in The Royal. So why was it I saw campfires everywhere during my last walk there? Garie, Eagle Rock, Curracurang, Little Marley, Deer Pool and Winifred Falls. Made me wonder why I bothered to take my stove.

THE EDITOR



COPLAND ICE

Crash!

Ropes tense, stop a further fall.
Temporarily forgotten, useless,
My ice axe sweeps the sky.
A giant beetle,
I struggle for my legs.
"Damn you!" cries the guide,
Where's up?

PEACE

The she-oaks bend
The sky is grey
Mozart sings his flute.
In the midst of
Non-sadness
I am content.

WOLLANGAMBE

Bickering leaves reflect the summer sun,
Gold cliffs, (sentries) stand,
The river rolls white
Into the deep, black pool,
A dragonfly floats in the haze.

'IKARUS'

October 1989

BUNDEENA TO OTFORD - THE FAST VERSION.

by Judith Rostron

I had thought vaguely of doing this walk for some years but it wasn't until I looked at the map a couple of weeks ago that I realised how far it is - 26.5 km from the start of the track, plus approximately 2 km from the ferry at Bundeena. It is a good length for a weekend walk but David said we could do it easily in one day.

Even though I have been walking about 5 kilometres most mornings for the last few years I haven't done any serious bushwalking for some time. Husband David seemed sure I would have no trouble but I was concerned his desperate need to do a bit of walking (after so much wet weather) was making him exaggerate my capabilities. So it was with a few misgivings that we set off on Saturday April 28.

It was a beautiful day. The prolonged period of wet weather had made us all appreciative of fine weather. Waiting at Cronulla for the 8.30 am ferry to leave I watched the sunlight dancing on the water and thought about how long it had been since I had seen sunlight dancing on anything. No wonder people in the Northern Hemisphere spend as much time as they can outdoors after their long winters.

Our group was small - David and I with our son Leigh, Spiro and his niece Yvette, and Ray and Fusae Dargan. We had mentioned the possibility of the walk to Ray and Fusae earlier in the week, but to Spiro it was a last minute proposition on Friday night.

The weather, while sunny, was tempered by a sea breeze which made for delightful walking conditions. The first couple of hours were easy and we made good progress along a well-graded track. The view of the coast and along the cliff tops were magnificent. If only the weather had been like this when I was showing some Canadian visitors around last year. It was really Australian scenery at its best.

Leigh unfortunately slipped in some mud and twisted his knee slightly. He was a reluctant starter anyway and this just made his day a little more uncomfortable, though fortunately he was still able to continue at a good speed.

A brief stop was made at Curracorang Pool. I was the only one who went for a swim. The water was freezing but looked so beautiful - like a sparkling green jewel - I couldn't resist it.

Morning tea at Wattamolla. It seemed like real luxury to be able to buy a nice cold iceblock on a bushwalk. Although there was almost no rubbish along the track, once we neared "civilisation" there were paper scraps, bottles and cans everywhere. At some of the beaches accessible by road in the Royal National Park I believe there is a problem with wildlife knocking over bins. Of course the inevitable pieces of polystyrene and plastic are washed up on the beaches.

Lunch at North Garie. With getting such short notice of the walk, Yvette's mother had made sure her little daughter would not starve by providing her with a whole chicken, a whole packet of muesli bars, a huge bar of chocolate and about 10 mandarins!! We all helped lighten her load. Spiro produced one of his delicious spinach pies and shared it around. Our sandwiches looked a bit dull, but Leigh tidied them up.

The surf at South Era was impossible to pass. It wasn't too rough and it was especially enjoyable as the water at this time of year is almost as warm as the outside temperature. Just the thing we needed before attacking the steep ridge up to the cliff track and on to Otford.

Leigh and Yvette had walked so well all day but I'm sure would have appreciated a helicopter ride home at this point. However, the ridge wasn't so bad really. It only took about 30 minutes before we reached relatively level ground.

This track high up along the cliff edge was very scenic as well as being very pleasant walking. Occasional glimpses of the sea and tall, newly "peeled" angophoras bending over the pathway strewn with soft leaves. There was the odd muddy patch but nothing like what it must have been like a week or two earlier.

We made good time along this section even though Yvette, Leigh and even "Tiger Walker" David had blisters by this stage. Ray and Fusae have been doing a number of marathon walks from Vaucluse to La Perouse covering the 50 or so kilometres in about 8 hours so this walk wasn't proving at all difficult for them. Amazingly I didn't have any blisters - usually I get blisters thinking about them! For those who have seen the truly awesome blisters I have had on occasions this was nothing less than a miracle.

There were a few delays with the trains on the way back, but we finally made it home by about 8.00 pm. It was a great day and I look forward to going again.

* * * * *

THE MAY GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

The meeting would have begun at around 2016 if the President had remembered to bring the gong. The omission was noted and duly rectified, and the meeting began. There was a certain amount of anxious head counting until we had 16 members mustered for the event. It seems we were blighted by a combination of "Chess" the play, and football the state-of-origin clash/fixture. There was one apology, from Fran Holland. New members, Justine Digance and Stephen Ellis were called for welcome, with only Stephen present to answer the call. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with no matters arising.

Correspondence was comprised of letters to Mr. Crawford of Conjewai re Ian Rannard's walk in the Wattigan, to numerous others thanking them for access provided for Patrick James' Camden area walk, two letters to new members, a letter of reproach from the N.S.W. Chief Secretary's Department advising us that we must seek his permission in future before we remit moneys outside the SOVEREIGN STATE OF NEW SOUTH WALES, and in passing granting approval for our earlier transgression in investing money outside the state. (Pause here for breath.)

There was also a letter from Reg Alder requesting permission to access and use articles from early Club magazines as part of material he is preparing on the history of walking activities. We took this one on the run so to speak, with a motion that permission be granted, subject to the material carrying attribution notes in some form or other. A letter from Brian Harvey provided light entertainment on the subject of subs. as well as a blank cheque in payment. Brian pointed out the problem of non-active members who do not receive the magazine and therefore do not know the rate for subscriptions. (Fear not, they will receive renewal notices when the first set of reminder labels are printed.)

There was a letter from the Colong Foundation asking that they be permitted to print material using the Club's printer, subject to suitable financial arrangements. A motion that the Colong Foundation be permitted use of the printer subject to them paying the direct cost of paper and consumables was moved and carried. Letters to the Director N.S.W. National Parks & Wildlife Service regarding possible improvements to access to the Deva N.P. and to the Victorian Alpine Planning Project Officer regarding destruction in the Cobberas area brought correspondence to an end.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we started with a balance of \$1,414.00, acquired income of \$5,769.00, spent \$4,140.00 and closed with a balance of \$1,629.00.

The Walks Report began somewhat hesitantly due to the absence of the Walks Secretary, but someone took up the challenge, together with a copy of the Walks Program and away we went. Wendy Aliano's Easter walk in the Snowys was cut short due to rain, but Ian Rannard had 14 starters battling the leeches in glorious weather on his walk in the Wattigans. There was no report on Oliver Crawford's Wollongambe Traverse, Ian Debert had 13 bodies and some rain on his Namadgi area base camp trip, and although Bill Capon's Ettrema walk went there was no report. Maurie Bloom's Barrington trip met the same fate with only indirect report and hearsay when the call for details came.

The following weekend, April 21,22 had just two walks. On April 21 Jan Mohandas re-routed his Explorers Tree to Jenolan Caves trip to go from Jenolan Caves to Jenolan Caves due to flooding of the Cox River. On April 22 Bill Holland led a party of 34 through very wet conditons

in the Blackheath Blue Gum Forest area with some slight falling by the wayside on occasions. In any case they were all out while it was still light, just.

April 27,28,29 saw Carol Lubbers' walk to The Castle and Byangee Walls with a party of 9 substantially re-routed and truncated. Not only were they buffeted by the wild winds but they also experienced difficulty in locating Darri Pass. Kenn Clacher's Barrington Tops swimming and ropework trip was cancelled but Errot Sheedy's Heathcote to Engadine day walk went with a party of 34 to 36. (Well you know how it is on day walks.)

Greta Davis had 18 on her Red Rocks trip in good weather over the weekend of May 4,5,6 and Ian Debert reported 9.5 starters on his Tallowa Dam birthday canoe trip. Joe Marton's Faulconbridge to Springwood day walk was deferred to the following weekend, but as this is the end of this month's Walks Report you will have to wait a month for details. Watch this space.

The Social Secretary regaled us with the glory of social events yet to come, and the Conservation Secretary reported that there have as yet been no replies to our letters of last month. The Colong Foundation have had a meeting with Bob Carr, Leader of the Opposition and Tim Moore, Minister for the Environment, has announced a \$500,000 study of the Blue Mountains area with a view to assessing its suitability for World Heritage listing.

There were no S.B.W. delegates at the most recent F.B.W. meeting.

General Business saw the passage of a motion that we write to F.B.W. advising them that we prefer to stay with monthly meetings. We also passed a motion forming a Coolana Sub-committee to handle social events at the property and to arrange maintenance as necessary.

All of which brought the meeting to a close at 2123.

* * * * *

ALTERATIONS TO THE LIST OF MEMBERS

Lee, Gordon - new phone number - (043) 88 5589
 Webb, Rob - 2/27 Arcadia Street, Coogee 2034 664 2243
 (Apologies to Rob Webb, who was crossed off by mistake)

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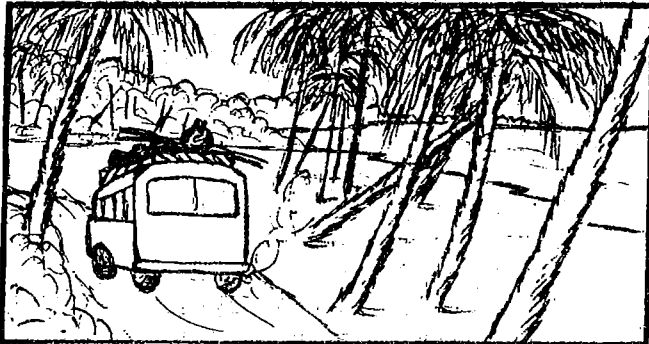


FIJIAN DREAMS

By Almis Simakevicius

PART ONE: LEVUKA

The warm rain is pelting down as I head for cover near Suva's GPO. The Saturday crowds unfurl their umbrellas and saunter along. This is where the bus to the island of Ovalau departs. The diesel bus arrives discharging its smelly fumes and a multitude of Fijians line up to scramble in. Most bus services are owned and run by Fijian Indians who are the business people on these islands. Each seat is allocated and the bus fills up fast. I sit with four other fair skinned tourists and pretty soon the jokes and banter are flowing. The bus swings around through the wide streets and up a mighty hill which gives a good view of this cosmopolitan city which started out as a colonial sugar mill surrounded by swampland.



It's hot and muggy and the "padded" seats soon flatten your backside. Sacks of taro roots and yams are squeezed into the aisle at the back. Soon the main highway 'Queen's Road' turns to dirt road and becomes very bumpy. The tropical foliage encloses us as we arrive at the jetty for the next part of the journey. In the distance the rather modern "MV Ovalau" hoves into view across the calm waters. On board we relax to the hum of the engines and water breaking across the bow. We

reach the landing on Ovalau as the sun sets amongst the rose tinted clouds.

The twilight feels quite mysterious as the dark jungle is punctuated by animal sounds and occasional lights during our bumpy bus journey around the island. The rain begins to fall as we wend our way into Levuka - the Old Capitol. This was Fiji's first capitol under British colonial rule. We had already decided to take lodgings at The Old Capitol Inn, a quaint old two storey building which reminded me of guest houses in Kathmandu. The Chinese dishes are served as the church bell chimes next door. A few bottles of Fiji Bitter add to our enjoyment of the evening meal.

Ah, in the early morning under our mosquito nets, the sun begins to trickle through the quiet seaside air. The chimes from the church bell punctuate periods of sleep. After the bustle of Suva, this peacefulness is more like the Fiji you dream about. Warm showers and breakfast before our walk to the nearest swimmable beach, four kilometres away.

Heck! Dietmar's hungry again. Our tallest member is a growing lad and always takes some food with him to assuage his hunger pangs. Today it's dry biscuits, jam and some fruit. The road hugs the coastline. Cute little shacks, coconut palms and churches. Being Sunday, the church services are well attended and there's plenty of harmonious singing. Many of these South Pacific islands are not surrounded with beautiful white coral beaches, so swimming in the reefs is an art.

Janice and I go swimming over the reef, careful to avoid the exotic sharp sections. Lovely clear water. Goggles are recommended. Back on the beach Dietmar is hungry so we go coconut hunting, since that's the only edible fruit we recognise. A large green coconut is dislodged from its airy perch, we then proceed to split it open and share its juice. A sharp appetite has caught us all unawares and being Sunday, find that no food is available till six that evening. All eyes focus on Dietmar's pack which is soon emptied of its contents.

The famous Ovalau Club is closed. The Royal Hotel where Somerset Maugham stayed during his visit declined to serve us food since we weren't guests there. We wait around the waterside until our own Inn lets us back in.

Once in, we hasten to order the night's meal, over which we share lots of laughs about the differences of our nationalities. Cheryl, born in New Delhi, India, is based in London with Janice. Both were working hard before the travel microbe bit them and suggested they travel

longer term. Rhonda from Canada, with her inordinate love for small animals joined them later. Dietmar, obviously from Germany, met them on the flight over to Fiji carrying a full pack of camping gear. I joined the team on the bus, and Chris from East Grimstead joined us last night at the inn.

These mosquito nets really come in handy to stop the marauding insects from feeding on us. Downstairs over breakfast, a small advertisement with colour photos beckons us to spend a few days on the island of Leleuvia some five miles away. Basic facilities and lots of fun, and the price is right. So off to buy a few supplies in town. What a pleasant amble through this atmospheric old town. The stores with their faded paint and paper wrappings. No hurry here. Monday is just a tad livelier than Sunday.

Levuka was founded as a whaling settlement in 1830 and grew into a rough and noisy town with many hotels along its main street. The cotton boom boosted the population, with escaped convicts and debtors adding to the melee. A common saying was that you could find the reef passage into town by following the floating gin bottles. When the British annexed Fiji, Levuka became the capitol and respectability followed. However the colonists realised that the hills behind the town would limit expansion, so Suva succeeded Levuka as capitol.

Our hosts pick us up in a twenty foot runabout laden down with supplies for the little holiday island and we wave goodbye to the locals as we depart Levuka.

To be Continued

SOCIAL NOTES FOR JULY

18th July - Members Christine and George Floyd have been WALKING IN WESTERN USA. Come along and see their slides and hear their story.

25th July - The CLUB AUCTION with auctioneer Charlie Brown. Bring along your bushwalking gear or household items that you want to sell for the Club's benefit. Also beads, bangles or interesting junk! Don't forget your MONEY - you'll be able to get many bargains.

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NOTE BENE

by Patrick James
Hon. Secretary

Each month we receive walks programs and magazines from other bushwalking clubs and these are kept at the club. If you are going intra, or inter state or even venturing as far as Wellington N.Z. on your holidays, you might get some good ideas from these publications, which can be read at the clubhouse. I'm sure the other clubs will welcome you.

Hobart Walking Club

'Into the Blue', CMW

'It', Canberra Bushwalking Club

Kosciusko Huts Assoc. Newsletter

Melbourne Women's Walking Club Newsletter

Newcastle Bushwalking Club

'Splash', River Canoe Club of N.S.W.

Tararua Tramping Club, Wellington N.Z.

'Tandanya', Adelaide Bush Walkers

'The Brisbane Bushwalker', Brisbane Bushwalking Club

'The News', Melbourne Bushwalkers

The Walking Club of Victoria

There may be others - I'll let you know.

We still have stocks of Club T-shirts in various sizes in both vee neck and round neck styles. Copies of the book, "The First 80 Years" are also still available. Prices of T-shirts and the book have not changed but I cannot remember what they are!

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MAY 23rd was the night that Malcolm Noble led us by the slide to the peaks of India and Nepal via the lesser peaks of N.Z. and the much lesser peaks of Oz. Mountaineering is more than just vertical bushwalking. One needs strong fingers and toes to scale the seemingly impossible heights. One also needs a good tolerance to cold, heights, low oxygen, dehydration and most likely a good sense of humour. A most enjoyable and well-attended evening.

THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS INC - WALKS PROPOSAL FORM

Please supply information as appropriate:

Trip Date (inclusive):

Alternate Dates (if any):

General Area (National Park,
State Recreation Area, etc.):

Description of Route:

Grade: Easy / Easy-Medium / Medium / Medium-Hard / Hard / Test (Circle where appropriate)

Distance:

Maps:

Transport:

Train:

(S) Suburban
(I) Interurban

Leader's Name:

Contact Numbers

H:

W:

Special Information: e.g. swimming, liloing, canoeing, abseiling, bicycle trip, rock scrambling, instructional, exploratory, car swap, base camp, gourmet, bring water, party limit, suit families, contact early, phone before 9.30 pm, etc.

SPRING WALKS PROGRAMME FOR SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER
CLOSING DATE: WEDNESDAY, 25 JULY 1990

ANY ENQUIRIES TO MAURIE BLOOM

Phone: 525 4698 (h) 543 3637 (w)

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