

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A Monthly Bulletin devoted to matters of interest to
The Sydney Bush Walkers, 5 Hamilton Street, Sydney.

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S.B.W.'S "SEARCH FOR TALENT".

The day was a scorcher (nearly 102) and the night was close. The doors opened at 7 p.m. for the S.B.W's twelfth annual concert -- the concert that so nearly wasn't, because a group of older members said the Club no longer possessed sufficient talent to provide an evening's entertainment. The opening of the doors of the New Theatre League Hall on 12th December proved that, at least, there were sufficient enthusiasts willing to carry on the Club's traditions to the best of their ability.

By 7.30 p.m. not more than twenty seats were occupied, and cast and organisers were probably getting a bit jittery. Would you blame them? However, about ten minutes later a steady stream of members and friends started to climb the stairs, and by 8 o'clock the hall was well filled. Though a different shape, this hall is only about the size of the Club Room and, even before the show started at 8.5pm the right atmosphere had been created as friend greeted friend, and all felt -- "Here we are in the fillage hall, with the local talent about to do its best, or worst, to entertain us." The audience was ready to play its part - but the performers did not know that. With all his experience, Edgar Yardley, who opened the show, was obviously nervous, expecting a critical audience - but it wasn't, it was enthusiastic about his prim "Miss Thompson".

No programmes were issued, but Mary Stoddart prepared a set of placards announcing the items, and paraded wearing them as billboards. "The Sydney Bushwalker" secured and now publishes the programme so that all who saw the

results of Fitzie's successful "Search for Talent" may be reminded item by item of the fun they enjoyed the night Dorman made Club history by giving an encore. The boys held up the performance until he did. Gordon Pritchard's unsuccessful search for "a Mr. Fiddlebowl in the audience" was an unrehearsed bit that added considerably to the fun of what may best be described as a genuine, old-time bushwalkers' concert. Incidentally, one mother was heard to say to her son afterwards:

"You told me that it was just going to be an ordinary concert, and I expected that people would just stand up on a platform and sing or recite..." She sounded as though she had thoroughly appreciated the bushwalkers' variety. One member commented that by the interval "all the strangers present were looking absolutely stunned."

Like all the old-time concerts, this one was right up-to-date so we had

TONGUE-TWISTER JACKPOTS.

Big Burley Bushwalkers Busily Boiling Billies Before Breakfast.
Ten Tents Tautly Tied Try To Turn The Torrents.
Typical Tough Tiger Trips Test Timid Triers.
The Crisp Clear Crystal Creeks Keep Cool.
Shimmering Sunlight Swiftly Shifting Shady Shadows.
Grisley Gaunt Giant Gangerang Joins Great Majestic Kanangra.
Whether The Weather Was Wet Or Warm The Walkers Would Wander Where Will O'Wisps
Were.
Bring Back Two Blue Black Blazer Buttons.
Filly Floral Cross Over Curtains.

That was where the audience, or, rather, eight members of the audience, came right on stage. And the interval was where seventy percent of the audience stampeded to the soft-drink shops at Circular Quay. After the interval, Stage Manager Tom Moppett had to go down there with a tincan and a hammer to round them up so that the show could go on!

Special mention must also be made of the Accompanist; she had to work overtime, pulling up the keys as well as pushing them down!

About the search for talent, the programme shows several old favourites in the cast as well as a number of new names, and a widespread interest in the concert. There can be no doubt that among the new talent Edna Stretton was outstanding, in fact "Sloper" was the find of the evening. We simply must have a repeat performance of "Slow Curtain". --- And that is not to belittle any of the other items.

Now for some criticism. Next time it would be a good idea to get a new piano, preferably one that was in tune. Another good idea would be to sort out the seats so that the highest ones were at the back and the lower ones in front, not all mixed up, then perhaps the audience would be able to see the feet of the dancers.

"SEARCH FOR TALENT"

1. "Miss Thompson" Edgar Yardley
2. "Prelude" Joan Savage, Olive Greenacre, Laurie Greenacre, Yvonne Rolfe, Nora Ankerson, Grace Edgecombe, and Alice Collins.
3. "Grandfather's Clock" Ray Bean and Ada Frost.
4. "Harmonists" Mrs. Stoddart, Mary Stoddart, Joyce Dummer, Ruth McLaren, Edna Stretton, Nora Ankerson, Alice Collins, May Boyd, Dorothy Hasluck.
5. "Saint-Joan" Ethel Hansard.
- 5A "Ole Man River" "Dorman" Hardy (& "Lord Randolph" by request)
6. "Fashions" Gordon Pritchard, Grace Edgecombe, Edna Stretton, Yvonne Rolfe, Jean Trimble, May Boyd, Joyce Trimble.
7. "Japan" Nora Ankerson (better known as "Topsy").
8. "Tongue Twisters" Bill Mullins and 8 Members from the Audience.
9. "Pale Moon" Joyce Dummer.

INTERVAL OF TWELVE MINUTES

10. "Sea" Joan Savage, Olive Greenacre, Laurie Greenacre, Yvonne Rolfe, Nora Ankerson, Grace Edgecombe and Alice Collins.
11. "As You Like It" Gordon Pritchard, Win. Chardon, "Dorman" Hardy, Nora Ankerson, Bill Mullins, Edgar Yardley.
12. "Devon" Peter Page
"I pitch my lonely caravan at night".
13. "Gumtrees" Joan Savage ("Fitzie")
14. "Slow Curtain" Win. Chardon, Edna Stretton, Yvonne Rolfe, Grace Edgecombe, Joyce Wilkins, Nora Ankerson.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Accompanist Lyn Way. Stage Manager Tom Moppett Lights Maurie Berry

Producer Joan Savage. On the door Harold Chardon and Jack Debert.

-----oOo-----

Congratulations, all of you! And many thanks for a good night's fun.

OVER MT. SOLITARY

By Wal. Jones.

Accompanied by two friends, I left Wentworth Falls at 3.45 p.m. The day was hot, and low clouds around the horizon gave indication that a thunderstorm was working up. The walk out to Kedumba Pass was made at a steady pace, and by the time we reached the top our mouths were dry. On the way down Kedumba we expected to find some water just off the track, but our hopes were unfounded. In Kedumba Creek there was a good flow of water which could be smelt at least fifteen yards away (the sewerage from Katoomba flows into this creek).

We crossed but could not find any fresh water, so we camped at the junction of a storm water channel and Kedumba Creek, at the bottom of a slope. We pitched the tent and collected firewood. By this time the clouds which we saw earlier were banking up, and we knew that we were in for a storm. We decided to boil some water for a drink before we dug the trench around the tent, and, with plenty of wood on, we soon boiled the billy and made tea. This was poured out into the cups, before we had time to taste it, there was a deafening clap of thunder, which was immediately followed by a vivid flash of lightning. A few drops of rain made us hurriedly carry everything into the tent, and down it came in torrents. A water bucket was filled in a minute from the tent, and now we had bucketsful of water while only a few moments before we could not find a trickle. The water then began to flow down the slope. It flooded our tent, and we cursed not having dug the trench before, so we stripped and went out in the now torrential downpour and dug the trench. After half-an-hour of this rain the storm channel was a roaring torrent and up about 4 ft., and kept on rising until it was a foot from our tent. We had just decided to move when the rain suddenly stopped and the water started to fall. After cooking our tea, we went to bed and slept with the sound of light rain pattering on our tent.

Next morning we were up early and moved off in sunshine although the mists were still hiding the mountain tops. We climbed the ridge on to the top of Mt. Solitary and were rewarded by a sudden break in the mist and by a grand view of the Kedumba Valley and, further out, the Burragorang. After quenching our thirst with some water which we had saved from the previous night, we moved off. The mist was again thick and hid all the views.

Dinner time found us at the creek near the west end of Solitary. By this time it was extremely hot and muggy, and we knew that we were in for another storm.

About half an hour after we left the dinner site it started to rain heavily again. It was too hot to wear the groundsheets, so we left them in the packs. We climbed off Mt. Solitary, took the track past the old mines, and followed it towards the scenic railway. When we reached the turn-off to the Golden Stairs it was raining, not "cats and dogs" but "tram cars and double-decker buses", and the mist was thick again. As the track winds around the foot of precipitous cliffs we had to walk through half-a-dozen waterfalls which only fall in exceptionally heavy rain. Once we had to form a chain with our hands as the force of water on our feet made it hard to keep our footing, and if anyone had slipped, the water would have taken him at least 500 ft. down the steep slope below.

Then came the landslide at Katoomba, 50 yds from which we stopped and looked. There were three falls of water coming over the top down on to the top of the slide and rushing down across the track to the bottom. Not only water was coming down, but rocks, some as large as a big melon, were falling from the top or on or near the track, and, gathering others on the loose surface of the slide, were rolling down to the bottom. We decided to try it. No chance of going along the track so we took the only possible way across, that was by climbing down a couple of hundred feet and crossing there. The surface was just clay and loose rocks and it was difficult to dodge the various rolling rocks. Crossing the three streams of water was easier than we had thought it would be. The water brought with it rocks, but, by some miracle, the rocks came down in groups with just enough time between each group for one person to get across. Just as we crossed the second stream, we noticed an almost round rock, about six or seven feet high, start to move down the third stream. It passed about ten feet in front of us, splashing us with mud and water, and then crashed its way down to the bottom.

We climbed back to the track after we left the slide, and went around to the scenic railway. Here we met a man who was wet through and was ringing up the driver of the carriage to come down and get him. Unfortunately, on the telephone the driver could understand him but he could not understand the driver. After pressing all the bells about the place, including the emergency bell, and telling the driver that there were four down below, he came down. He told us that we would get wet going up as he had to take us through a waterfall. Fancy warning us that we would get wet - after walking for four hours in the rain without groundsheets!

We changed in a shed on top and got into a bus, which the driver told us was starting for Katoomba immediately. The bus would not start. After cranking the engine for a while, he asked us to give him a hand to push the bus so he could start. This we did, but without success, so we decided to walk. When we reached the scenic roadway, about 100 yards from the bus which we had left, we were told we had just missed another bus by a minute! What luck! And we had been pushing the first bus for the past ten minutes without knowing of this other one! So we walked.

If you're feelin' tired and blue,
And you don't know what to do,
Do nothin'.....
If you can't see far ahead,
And just wish that you were dead,
Stop thinkin'.....
If your nerves are all askew,
There is one good thing to do,
Go walkin'.....

-----Grenville Kleiser.

"H I G H L I G H T S"

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ON FOCUS

One has often noticed the apparent bend of a stick when it is partly immersed in water, an appearance caused by the extra density of water over air. This phenomenon causes an eye which is in focus in air to be out of focus when submerged beneath water. In those creatures which live partly in and partly above the water, Nature has evolved various methods of giving them efficient vision.

The eyes of fresh water amphibians, such as the otter, the beaver and the water rat are very long sighted and therefore have developed their focussing muscles to a very high degree; excessive power is thus obtained when submerged and the eye again becomes efficient.

In the eyes of marine mammals there is an entirely different mechanism. The lens system of the eye has different powers in the horizontal and vertical meridians. The former meridian being used for vision when submerged and the latter for vision in air.

Again the whirligig beetles, which live most of their active life on the surface film of water, the eyes are divided into two parts, the upper for seeing in air and the lower for seeing down into the water. A fact quite similar to bifocal glasses which are often prescribed so that an individual can see distance and near with the one pair of glasses.

A HIGHLIGHT - ON CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Two members of the S.V.W. have found the perfect answer to the harassing question, what shall I give my best friend for Christmas?

After deep thought and serious mutual consideration of the problem, they have evolved this perfect solution, which has been working satisfactorily for three or four years now. Both give generously and yet neither exceeds his means. Each gives the other a very welcome present; neither spends more than the other on his friend's gift, and neither receives something he cannot really use and enjoy. It took brains to reach such a happy solution. Each year each gives the other a pound note with which to buy whatever he likes!

FEDERATION NEWS

From the November meeting of the Council comes news that the last weekend in February has been fixed for the first Federation Reunion Camp; and from the organising committee comes the request to book the date - February 24th and 25th, 1940 - and the place - Lower Grose River - for something new in Reunions - "details later".

The Council decided to celebrate Christmas by giving itself a holiday in December, but we have some other items of news from its November, 21st, meeting. (It is annoying the way these meetings happen just after we have gone to press.-Ed.).

Charles Pryde, Harold Rolfe and Rob. Morrison have been appointed Honorary Foresters for the purpose of protecting the timber in the Heathcote Creek area.

Alex Colley having resigned as Honorary Secretary of the Conservation Bureau, Arthur Salmon was elected to the vacancy.

Brian Harvey now being in the Navy, Council decided to ask Jack Debert to convene the Corral Swamp Well-digging Sub-committee.

The Publicity Bureau came up for re-election and (Frank Duncan not having any time available at present), Horrie Salmon (Convenor), Dorothy Lawry, and Doug. McKeller were appointed. Horrie keeps the Bureau working and is all the time trying to add to the number of helpers known to be available for special jobs. This month he and his Bureau asked for articles on various aspects of bushwalking, trips, etc., a continuous supply is required for the monthly page given to the Federation in the magazine "Physical Fitness", which is the official organ of the State Government's fitness campaign.

Of course, the call for lecturers and bushcraft instructors is as continuous as the Benelong siren on a foggy morning, and the demand for their services should be increased by the window display in the Tourist Bureau, Martin Place, during November and December, and the Federation's advertisement in the annual report of the Parks and Playgrounds Movement.

Some members of affiliated clubs have said they have not volunteered as lecturers because they have no slides to show, so the Publicity Bureau has now obtained Council's permission (and a grant of £5) to establish a Federation Slide Library; and now walkers are being asked for the loan of suitable negatives from which good slides can be made, or for the donation of slides.

Stocks of the pamphlet "An Introduction to Bushwalking" are reported to be almost exhausted and the Publicity Bureau and Publications Committee have been requested to get together and consider the question of revision and reprinting. Anyone with bright ideas on this subject should let some member of either the Bureau or the Committee have them as soon as possible.

For several years the Federation has been holding a Garawarra Trust Fund, and, on the motion of Theo. Atkinson, Council decided to place this

money under the control of the President and Honorary Secretary of the Federation and the two Federation Representatives on the Garawarra Trust. The fund, amounting to about £40, is to be used for the administration of the area, for increasing it, and for financial assistance to the Garrawarra Park Trust. It was pointed out that the funds of the Trust are low, and that well timed assistance by the Federation might be of great value in preserving the area as a separate park administered in the interests of bushwalkers.

.....

In November the Search and Rescue Section of the Federation sent out one of its bright and breezy circulars inviting members to attend a Mutual Instruction Weekend at Norton's Basin on December 2nd and 3rd.

Jean Trimble (Hon. Secretary of the S & R Section) reports that there was a good roll up of members, and that it was a "marvellous" weekend. Careful plans had been made so that everyone could get the greatest possible benefit, as well as fun, from the trip -- and everyone co-operated so wonderfully with the organisers that all the plans were carried out completely. On the Sunday evening the "skippers'" launch carried back to Penrith a happy crowd who had learned quite a lot about how to make improvised stretchers, splints and rafts, and how to use a rope to descend to an injured person, etc. etc. etc. and had had a jolly good time in the process.

.....

The flowers bloom along the road

That has no end.

Cool breezes blow, the gum trees sway

And bend;

The wild doves woo and softly coo

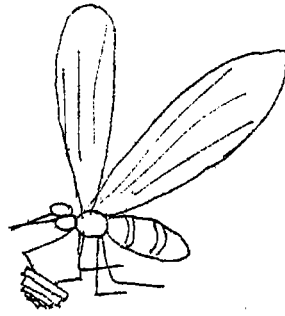
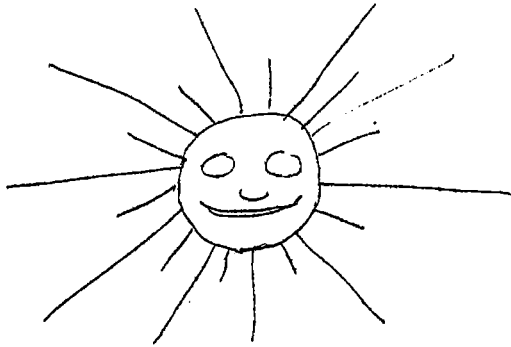
Their soothing notes,

And mend

Heart's throbbing pain to sweet content.,

And peace lights on the mind's sad trend.

----Joseph Burrows.



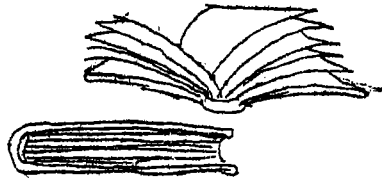
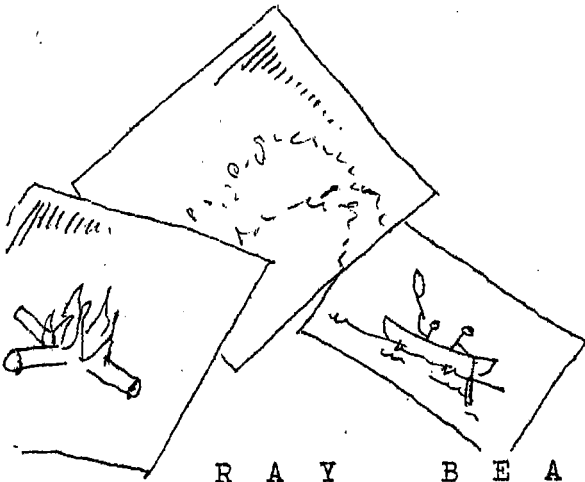
'Tis Summer and Shutter-Bugs fly
Much further and wider afield
Than in days when Grandmamma
Used her camera
On Grandpapa and his bow tie.



Now she-oak and waterfall high,
Camp sites where brooks gaily spill,
And ways which walkers take
Many good pictures make
Our photograph albums to fill.



.....



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3rd floor

HARDY'S CHAMBERS,

5 Hunter Street, Sydney.

BW 4789.

SAME

DAY

DEVELOPING

AND

PRINTING

AT OUR OWN MEETING

New members welcomed at our December meeting were:-

Miss Lola Bennett
Miss Joan Hocking
Mrs. Marjorie Croker.

Notification was received that the following members of the S.B.W. have been appointed Honorary Rangers under the Wild Flowers & Native Plants Protection Act:- Mary Stoddart, John Harvey, Bill Hall, Tim Coffey and Geoff Parker.

A letter was received from Dorothy Song, Hon. Secretary of the Rucksack Club, (Sydney, N.S.W.) advising the S.B.W. of her Club's new officers -- President, Oliver Wyndham; Vice-President, A.F. Watkins (Watty); Treasurer, John Reardon; and Social Secretary, L. Maddison.

The President announced that the Committee had decided to waive the subscriptions of all members while serving with the A.I.F. or permanent forces.

The meeting decided it agreed with Alex Colley that the Club was not in favour of reprinting the pamphlet "An Introduction to Bushwalking" unless it was revised and designed primarily for the use of prospective members of bushwalking clubs, and laid stress on the conservation activities of the Federation. On the suggestion of the President, Alex agreed to draft out something constructive to be submitted to the Federation.

Under the Club's Constitution Honorary Members can only be elected for a period of one year at a time, which explains why the Hon. Secretary announced the re-election for a further twelve months of Messrs. D.G. Stead, R.F. Bennett and L. Plimmer.

Another announcement was that a special sub-committee had been appointed to go into the question of conservation at "Morella-Karong", as the main camping area was looking very worn and a certain amount of damage had been done on the lease by strangers. Notices that it is a reserve are being printed.

On Maurie Berry's motion, the meeting decided that the Club should purchase the five parish maps of County Ward, Queensland, which cover Lamington, National Park so that these will be available in the club room for the information of the steady stream of members who visit this area for their annual holidays, honeymoons etc.

The meeting closed to the sound of good wishes for a Merry Christmas with plenty of good walking and camping - and of course, good EATING !

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SOME HOLIDAY IMPRESSIONS

by Dorothy Lawry.

The other evening Maurie Berry remarked that he thought it would be a good idea if some mention were made from time to time in "The Sydney Bush-walker" of the folk who had had holidays. I retorted, of course, that if only said folk would give me, as editor, short, snappy accounts of their holiday trips, I should be most happy to publish them. Maurie pleased for the modest, pen-tied folk, like Johnnie Wood and himself, who had been holidaying up the far North Coast of N.S.W. and in Lamington National Park, Queensland, during the early part of November, but were quite incapable of writing it up. They had a wonderful time in spite of 15 inches of rain in that area, 16 pretty girls at the boarding house, and Bernard O'Reilly's absence in camp.

.....

Well, there you are, Maurie! And if other folk will give me the highlights of their holiday trips, their names also will appear in the Club magazine.

.....

Talking of holidays, I have just had some myself - which is probably why YOU missed me at the club room the night you brought in an article for this magazine! Next time you have an article, or some verses, or even an item of club gossip to offer, if you don't see the editor buzzing around, look for Tuggie, she is the actual, but unofficial, assistant editor.

Well, as I did not get all those articles you folk wrote while I was away I shall have to do some writing myself if we are to have a magazine this month, so here are some impressions of my holiday trips. Yes, I had two; the first week from the Abercrombie River over the Main Divide to Taralga with Ray Birt; and the second week from Berrima down the Wingecarribee River to the Wollondilly with Jessie Martin.

We went to the Abercrombie via Bathurst and Oberon, using my own car, and my first impression is that --- A car that boils and "boils" "is not so hot".

Jessie and I returned by hired car from Goodman's Ford to Moss Vale and so home by train, -- And our final and most lasting impression was that Moss Vale is just as dead as Mittagong (from which we started), and no wonder, when they both have such non-existent railway services: Imagine it! The only trains to Sydney on the week-end from Mittagong are the 2.40p.m. on Saturdays and the 6.45 p.m. and 7.13 p.m. on Sundays -- and the same, only a little earlier, from Moss Vale!!

To return to the Abercrombie River, Ray and I received an impression that one land-owner there is either friendly, a fisherman, or a reader of the "Sydney Morning Herald" preparing for an invasion as a result of Hec. Carruthers' article and picture of the Abercrombie River. Ray and I received our impression from two very new, and most convenient, stiles which enabled us to negotiate a couple of rabbit-proof fences with unusual ease. We wish more land-owners had the same idea.

From this trip also comes the thought that first impressions are sometimes wrong. There was a stench about the place, and I blamed the river water, which was muddy, and was glad to camp where we could get drinking water from a side creek. Next day I found the stench was intermittent and was certainly not coming from the water, which was muddy merely because the river was flowing through shale country. There usually seemed to be a tea-tree-like bush about when we smelled the offensive odour, so I transferred the blame to this bush, and told Ray it was probably fertilised by flies and was smelling like offal to attract those pests. Later we had to exonerate the bushes, too, for we met the stench again and again up on the hills where there was only grass and herbage, but we did not discover the plant that was responsible. Later still, a local resident told us it is just a small plant, difficult to see and identify, that emits this horrible stench. This herb is "a very bad weed" and its local name, the old man said, is appropriate but unprintable. No, he would not tell me what it was.

I was surprised to find that a well-pitched "A" tent, Paddymade, will keep out ordinary hail. Ray was even more pleased with the discovery; it was her tent.

When proceeding along an unfamiliar stream the wise walker checks up on every bend; the happy-go-lucky one guesses his position. Even the wise walker will find that his map is sure to omit the mere kinks, even if it is a good one. The south-western corner of the Blue Mts. & Burraborang Map certainly needs revising, but it is more pleasant to be lost in the ranges for a couple of days than to be on the right track, when that track turns out to be a fenced and metalled road in a closely-settled valley.

Last impression of that first week's trip is that the Taralga district must be a great place for gossip; the people in each farmstead can see everyone who enters or leaves the homes of at least four of their neighbours! Anyone wanting to bushwalk from Taralga must be prepared to make his way across these farms for at least four miles to reach any bush.

How many holiday trips are carried out exactly as scheduled, I wonder? Mine never seem to be, but it is quite good fun to change the entire trip whenever circumstances make the original plans look undesirable.

The main impression from the second week's trip is that the Wingecaribee River is one to be visited and re-visited. Incidentally, any parties planning to go right down this river should write early to the new owner of the sheep-station that straddles Joadja Creek as well as the Wingecaribee River and obtain permission to proceed through his property. He has been bothered by shooters coming in from the road and blazing away over his paddocks without any by-your-leave, and he fears campers would start bushfires. However, if all bushwalkers courteously ask for permission to pass through the property, and then are particularly careful to maintain all the best bushwalking traditions whilst in the area, it will not be long, I am sure, before the fraternity counts Mr. W.O. Simson of "Greenstead", Mittagong, as one of its friends. By the way, don't make the mistake of putting a "p" in "Simson".

In this district also Australia is a topsy-turvy land, with the high lands and hilltops cleared, grassed, and stocked with sheep, while the river flats are

neglected and over-run with bracken, nettles, thistles, and rabbits! But we did see one model farm (Mr. Newman's) in the valley, and two happy refugees who are employed on it. Many of the hill-tops, too, are given over to bracken and rabbits . . . There seems to be a lot of landholders in this "Wide Brown Land" who have more land than they can use, or, at any rate, more than they will work. And the way they ring-bark steep hillsides.... These men on the land call themselves primary producers; if it were possible to make an accurate assessment of the total production and the total destruction by each, I wonder on which side the balance would lie?

Jessie and I gathered some impressions about car proprietors, too. If Mr. Evans of the Blue Bird Garage, Mittagong, had not been more concerned for our pockets than for our immediate comfort, it would have been better for his business, and we would not have learned that the race of Good Samaritans still flourishes; that a successful businessman of settled figure and habits can play "fairy godmother" very effectively with the aid of a telephone; or that the "pumpkin carriage" (disguised as an old, seven-seater Hudson) which appeared in answer to the summons, was owned and driven by a real "white" man - Mr. Stan. Kennedy of Berrima. He knew the country and gave us some useful tips about it; he voluntarily added an extra four miles of third-rate road to the trip (without extra charge) in order to save us eleven miles of tough sandstone gorge; and, when he arrived at Goodman's Ford a week later to drive us back to Moss Vale as arranged, he came complete with blankets, extra food, and a friend to help with the job of searching for us if we had not arrived safely.

A. I. F.

It is with pride and pleasure that Paddy places on record that Officers and Men of the A.I.F. contingent shortly to go abroad will take with them Paddymade gear. Valises, sleeping bags, officers haversacks, map cases (design suggested by Capt. R.W.Savage). Buckets and wash bowls, all bearing the "Paddymade" Brand, will serve their owners faithfully and well under tropic sun, arctic cold or temperate clime.

Here's luck to all of them and a safe and speedy return.

F. A. PALLIN,
327 George Street
SYDNEY (opp. Palings).

'Phone B 3101.

FROM HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE

An item about food from the "Tararua Trampler", for November, 1939:-

"The thick roots of the common bracken were prized among the Maoris. When dug up the fern root was thrown into heaps and afterwards stacked and left exposed to the wind and rain until dried and then packed into baskets.

The dried roots were soaked in water, pounded and, after the stringy fibres had been removed, the mealy portions were eaten.

Sometimes cakes were formed from the meal and these were often steeped in the juice of the berries of the tutu shrub."

As to what the "tutu shrub" is, you will have to ask some New Zealander; Ray Birt might be able to tell you. Incidentally, she told me recently that, some years ago when she was living in New Zealand and was an active member of the Tararua Tramping Club, she was one of their out of town members to whom the T.T.C. officials gave wonderful service. Ray was living in a small town about a hundred miles from Wellington, and quite often on a Wednesday or Thursday she would receive a 'phone call from that city -- "The Club tramp this week-end will be somewhat in your direction - from A. to B. via C. Of course, there are no trains you could catch, but the X.Y.Z. Co., stock and station agents of M. (a town about six or seven miles from Ray's home), will probably have a buyer going across to a point within two or three miles of A. and you could, probably, get a lift if you 'phoned the company, and, if you could arrange to get to M. You will have to make your own arrangements about getting back." Sometimes the lift the club official thought she could get would be right from her own town. Sometimes Ray had other plans, but often she followed up the suggestions and so was able to go out with her comrades of the Tararua Tramping Club. These telephone calls, with all the previous enquiries they involved, were a regular service given by honorary officers to quite a number of out-of-town members.

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A local service given this summer to fellow-walkers was when Horace Salmon, (Trampers Club of N.S.W.) 'phoned Paddy Pallin, Myles Dunphy, Dorothy Lawry, and goodness knows how many others, that Jack Sharpe of "Branjan" had been in town for the day and had reported an extensive bushfire in the ranges between Kanangra Walls and the Kowmung. "On Monday (11th December) it was burning from the top of Christie's Creek to Cottage Rock, and, if the wind should get behind it, it will probably go right along Gingra and over Gangerang as this area was not burnt out last year."

The report continued that on the same day the smoke of a smaller fire was visible "apparently somewhere between Doris Creek and Mt. Shivering - but, of course, there are not likely to be so many walking parties going to that part of the district."

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Here is a spot of local gossip about walkers who are not members of the S.B.W.

Sgt. Jack Chisholm, R.A.A.F. of the C.M.W., is engaged to Miss Dorothy Price. Marj. Mason fixed Saturday, 16th December, for her wedding date, so next time you see her you will have to ask her name; our reporter did not know who the happy man was.

Alan Ward and Jim Rodwell are both proud fathers of sons.

Goldie Lawson of the Auckland Alpine Sports Club has reluctantly torn herself away from Sydney to keep her promise to be home for Christmas. Her ship was due on the morning of the 25th! We shall miss her.

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The Mapping Section of the River Canoe Club of N.S.W. is still on the job, as witness this letter from its convenor, Ted Phillips:-

"Very sorry to occupy so much of your valuable space of late, but my committee is a very active one. I now take pleasure to inform you that the following map has now been drawn and added to the club's library:-

Map No.12. 'Canoeist's Chart of Port Hacking' - (embracing every canoeable nook and cranny from Audley Weir to Jibbon Head)." -- Is anyone else making any special maps these days? We always like to know of them.

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From the October, 1939, issue of the "Bulletin" of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Washington, D.C., we lifted this poem, which they got from "Good Housekeeping" of March, 1939:-

Trails

Trails are not dust and pebbles on a hill,
Nor even grass and wild buds by a lake;
Trails are adventure and a hand to still
The restless pulse of life when men would break
Their minds with weight of thinking. Trails are peace,
The call to dreams, the challenge to ascent;
Trails are the brisk unfolding of release
From bitterness and from discouragement,
Trails are the random writing on the wall
That tells how every man, grown tired at heart
Of things correct and ordered, comes to scrawl
His happy hour down -- and goes to start
Life over with new eagerness and zest.
Who breaks a trail finds labor that is rest.

-- Helen Frazee-Bower.

CLUB GOSSIP

At the end of November Tom Herbert became the very proud father of a son and heir, who is beautiful and bouncing and everything he should be. "Just like his father", did you say? Maybe you haven't met mother? Anyway, we all say, "Congratulations, Tom and Jo., and welcome, young fellow."

At about the same time Wal. Roots made a flying visit to Sydney - unfortunately to bring Phil. down to the doctor, which rather dampened everyone's delight at seeing the Rootses again. Phil stayed here a few weeks under treatment, and before returning to Brisbane she was able to go to the Club Concert, Christmas Dinner, etc. etc., and visit and be visited by many members.

Incidentally, did you hear that several of our very sedate and dignified members (including Doris Allden and Kath. Breen) were discovered at different times early in December in the Ladies Lounge Bar of a Liverpool Street hotel? -'S all right -- they were only looking for the private entrance (which is in Nithsdale Street) on their way to visit Phil. Roots.

In the club room last month several girls were noticed very busy knitting A paid or socks for Dot. English so that these would be finished before she left for another trip to New Zealand.

A member who has not been seen at the club for some considerable time is Mamie McDougal, and we have just heard why she dropped out. She got married about a year ago to a Mr. Fryer. Apparently he is not a walker.

Early in December, Betty Mac (C.M.W.) and Basil Dickinson (S.B.W.) announced their engagement. There should be no danger of any tracks becoming overgrown, because they have entered for life's three-legged race, and "good walking"! continues to be our good wish for them both.

Have you noticed how you can rely upon seeing certain members at the club every Friday evening, while the appearance of certain other faces tells you there is a stormy general meeting in the offing, and still others have a way of appearing only at certain seasons of the year? In October and November a number of these were drifting around, renewing Club acquaintances and finding out what was doing about "the Concert". In December Rene Browne spoke severely to her obstreperous sciatic nerve, pulled up her socks, and came along to take charge of the usual "Kids' Treat". We have nearly forgotten what the second kind of face looks like. You see, these days we keep Jack Debert so busy working for the S.B.W., and the Federation, in all sorts of ways that he has no time to think up any ways of making a nuisance of himself - and, anyway, we cramped his style properly when we elected him a Vice-President, he can't fight the Committee as a Left-winger without fighting himself as a member of that Committee. I wonder if any of us do realise all the work Jack is doing for the Club these days, both indoors and out. And he is such a ball of muscle that he is growing his own vegetables, too! He will be away on holidays when you read these words of praise, so they won't embarrass him. Yes, Jack has been in his present job so long they are giving him a holiday!

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