

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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Editor: C. Kinsella
Asst. Grace Jolly
Bus. Manager: Alex Colley

Production: Yvonne Rolfe
Asst. Alice Wyborn
Subs. Marie Kinsella

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Visitors to Era and Bushwalkers generally who have known him on the beach and at re-unions will be grieved to learn of the death of Ross Duncan, son of Anice and Frank.

After a long illness following an accident last year, he died on Sunday 17th October, at Castlecrag.

Anice and Frank will know how we all sympathise with them in their tragic loss.

4/30

WINTER AT KANANGRA

Bert Whillier.

We had been toying with the idea of doing a winter trip out Kanangra way, so when the firm requested I take my holidays earlier, we found ourselves in next to no time aboard the Jenolan Caves bus on Saturday afternoon 1st August. We arrived at the Caves House about 2.45 where we were closely questioned by numerous people and last but not least the Manager, none of whom seemed to grasp the fact that a man, woman and a small child of 2 years 4 months, were going to camp out in winter weather for a week in the rough country that lies between Jenolan Caves and Katoomba via Kanangra. Anyway although the Manager was sympathetic he couldn't let us light a fire on the reserve, which extended 5 miles on the Mt. Victoria side and 2 miles towards Oberon. There being no point in camping without a fire we pushed on up the mile hill, which as everyone knows, rises 1,800 ft. in the 2 miles.

Eve had the baby in my "patent not applied for" carrier, which had gunny sacks attached. These contained 2 tins of full cream milk in each sack. The baby weighs about 36 lbs so my wife had all together about 45 lbs. I had 2½ sleeping bags, tent and other gear as well as food for 2½ persons, the whole weight being 75 lbs.

We battled on over the brow of the hill, myself a few hundred yards in the lead, having gone on to look for a camp spot. I passed a house but by the time Eve got there the occupants, the Payne Brothers, had come out and offered us the use of the empty house next door, for which we were very grateful, as it was nearly dark.

Next morning, leaving my pack, we walked back down the hill, in the light snow, to the caves, where we inspected the Orient Cave. Lynette insisted on walking through herself, and in places where the cave was about 5ft. high, most people had to duck, and to see our hopeful who is no taller than 34" ducking too, had to be seen to be appreciated. The inspection over, we again climbed the mountain to find snow covering almost everything around.

After lunch we said good-bye to the Payne Brothers and their little grandson, who made us promise to let them know when we got to safety. We had heard that the men working on the Kanangra Road, had left 2 or 3 huts behind them but we had no idea where or how far out these were. However we found the first one about 1½ miles from the turn off and as the time was about 3.45 we decided to stay the night. We busied ourselves getting wood in, Lynette of course carrying in her little bits of firewood.

Next morning putting our heads out of the door, what a sight, everything was covered under about 9" snow.

"Sand" said Lynette and out she rushed to play, only to discover that the "sand" hurt her hands.

We were ready to move off at 8 a.m. the road ahead of us a beautiful white carpet and snow still falling. I thought longingly of my skis lying at home, as I trudged heavily along. About every three or four steps I had to give a gigantic kick to knock a ball of snow 3 or 4 inches thick off my heel. My wife at least didn't have that worry but she must have felt very uncomfortable because all Eve wore on the trip was a pair of leather shoes with rubber soles.

The baby presented a queer sight sitting in the pack with the double headed groundsheet covering both her and the wife. We rugged Lynette up well

on these occasions, finding it a good plan to put her in her sleeping bag, up to the armpits and letting her wear two thick sweaters. As we hadn't reckoned on snow, we couldn't let Lynnette walk as much as we intended, as she only had a pair of sandals.

As we trudged on we often surprised a herd of wallabies and saw a few wombat tracks. We came abreast of a hill and looking to the South West along the Hollander's River Valley we could see miles of beautiful snow covered tops. Passing through Cunningham's about 11 a.m. it was too bleak to stop at the old bark hut so we kept on and about 600 yds further on we found another road maker's hut in a nice sheltered position. "This will do" we said, so gladly I dropped my pack and lifted Lynette out of her seat. Lunch over I looked around for a piece of tin to make a sledge but I couldn't find a suitable piece. We pushed on and after hours of hard walking and feeling about all in, we were relieved to see a hut at Morong Creek. This hut is the best on the road, having a wooden floor four bunks, table and stools.

Next morning with snow still falling I looked for a piece of tin and finding a good piece, I set to work with a will and wired a wooden box to the tin and made a sledge. We put the babe in with just her head showing and she showed her approval by demanding to be dragged all around the hut. I put some of my gear out of the pack in with Lynette and we set off both pulling the sledge, which slid very easily over the snow. However after about four miles the snow petered out on the road, having been blown off by the terrific wind.

Soon we arrived at Kanangra Walls where icicles 3 to 5ft. long were hanging from ledges over the cave. We found it too cold and windy on the dancing platform side, so we retreated to the Western side of the small gully where we found quite a comfortable little cave. The baby was very interested in the small birds that constantly flittered into the cave.

Next morning we set off down to the Kowmung and on the narrow neck leading to Scrubby Top we had a severe struggle to keep on our feet and found that we had to hold on to each other. I found myself muttering into my five day old beard and saying some hard things about winds, narrow necks, heavy packs etc. "Anyhow it will be better on Scrubby Top and then we'll soon be down on the Kowmung" I said. "Man proposes and God Disposes". True works as we were to find out, for on getting a footing on Scrubby Top, we found the wind and snow just as bad if not worse. This was the time the baby picked to ask plaintively for Coc-Coc (chocolate) which we carry for her good conduct. I think Lynette thought I was a cross between Mandrake and a Himalayan porter and that my pack had elastic sides, for the amount of chocolate she asked for even till the seventh day was amazing.

The Kowmung presented a very welcome sight and after walking a few miles downstream we camped near a big pile of driftwood. These piles of driftwood were numerous all the way down the Kowmung making it hard going, the Cox was not nearly so bad.

Lynette was now in her glory with the multi-coloured stones that lined the river banks. "Look there is a blue one Daddy, I want that one". She got a great deal of pleasure out of throwing them into the water to hear the plonking sound. The babe walked and climbed quite a few miles down the Kowmung and up the Cox and Breakfast Creek, always making for the hardest places and climbing like a mountain goat. We arrived at Carlons about 3 in the afternoon, and were fed and cared for in the usual Carlon manner. Carlon's was something quite new to

Lynnette, who had never seen so many turkeys, fewls and ducks. She crawled under a cow that Mrs. Carlon was milking to see where the milk was coming from and why. On Sunday morning about 11 a.m. we regretfully said goodbye to the Carlons and pushed on up Megalong valley and up Devil's Hole arriving in Katoomba to catch the 4-5 train all well and happy; Lynnette with apple cheeks and brimming over with good health.

We could see snow clouds still rolling over the mountains out Kanangra way as we left (Kook-a-tooma) (baby talk for Katoomba).

We have since had a letter from the Payne Brothers telling us that never in history has the snow been so heavy. In their own back yard it was 8ft. deep and on the road down to the caves 2 and 3ft deep.

 "SADLY MIST"

By "Mumbadah".

Sproggo and I lurched across the road to Harrington's Corner from Katoomba Station, and depositing our groaning rucksacks on the weighing-machine to be found there, for the expenditure of the sum of 2d. that our respective loads were 59 and 60 pounds. Not deigning to walk out upon the road to the Explorer's Tree, we were comfortably and speedily conveyed thereto by a taxi, and then commenced the long descent to Old Man Cox via Nellie's Glen and the Six Foot. It was growing dark when we reached the old hotel site, and although we understood Harold Chardon's party had come up on that morning's "Caves", we could see no sign of them nor any fresh footprints, so camped forthwith on the firewood on the "far" side of the creek. Next day, with 43 meals still in our Paddymades, we wended our way slowly downstream, resting at frequent intervals as we had tons of time on our hands (and feet). Late in the afternoon, just below the big bend where Gibraltar Creek comes in, we were overtaken by the worthy Harold, with whom we naturally joined forces, and camped that night at the junction of Little River. It was upon this occasion that I heard Dorothy Lawry first recite her now-famous "hippopotomus" poem for the first time. Early on the following forenoon, we all climbed the steep hills which rise up from Jack Kirby's homestead, and were rewarded with a new and magnificent view of the Dogs. I afterwards learned that this was Bald Hill and that wild goats abound on top thereof, which undoubtedly accounted for our irresistible urge to climb the particular hill. Sproggo and I said goodbye to Harold and his caravan and proceeded once more down the Cox, only to find, that due to an amazing burst of energy we were again overtaken whilst enjoying a late lunch. They waited for us to finish, and shortly afterwards, we came upon a large eagle sitting on the grassy bank for no apparent purpose. Investigation revealed it was caught in a rabbit-trap, and throwing a ground-sheet over its head, released it, whereupon it just stood and looked at us. Apparently it had been there some time and was about all-in from pain and hunger. Some weeks afterwards I was derided for not having killed the bird, and had a difficult task to convince my friend of the principles of the walkers. Once more we had the pleasure of the congenial company of the previous night on the triangular flat at Harry's River. We had arrived there early and attempted to find a camp site up through the Canyon, but the winter sun left likely spots damp and chilly. For late May, it was a beautiful night, and the flat resounded to the harmony of our voices in choir. Here our trails parted, Harold going on down to return to Katoomba via the White Dog, whilst Sproggo and I were going up the Jenolan, so on breaking camp the following day we said goodbye and said we'd see them in the Club the following Friday fortnight.

It was the first occasion either of us had been up the Jenolan and we enjoyed breaking country then new to us. We turned up what we rightly judged to be Mumbedah Creek, taking our cue from the M.T.C. blaze on the big casuarina at the junction of that watercourse. We had been following a very large hoof-print in the soft parts of the creek-bed, and just as we topped the jumble of boulders which bar the way a few miles up, we received a rude shock to see a great bovine head glaring at us a few yards distant. Rucksacks were slipped off in record time, and jumping aside, we directed a few small rocks at the huge steer, who made off up the mountain side. Despite his thick neck, buffalo horns and bulk, he was extremely nimble of foot and we were not at all displeased he was a bit shy of our company, and didn't stay for lunch. Norbert Carlon afterwards related to me that this same steer had strayed away from his mob years ago, and had not been seen for a long time. He created a nuisance by attracting tame cattle away from the Cox.

There was quite a flow in the stream, and we kept going until the sides closed in and the way lay over and round moss-covered rocks, very slippery underfoot, particularly with our 37 meals still loaded up. Into the bargain, light rain began to fall, the mist obliterating the upper parts of the ridges, so we back-tracked to a beautiful oval-shaped flat which opened up on the creek, bracken-covered, with towering blue gums on the lower slopes, and a tranquil peacefulness about it. I consider it is in such spots as the one described, deep in the mountains, that we can really appreciate the peace and quietness which can only obtain in such wild country far from the main tracks, and where we seldom tread, except at odd intervals. These are the places which we are fighting to preserve for all time, and our knowledge of them should make us work harder to have the Greater Blue Mountains National Park a reality.

Originally we intended to make a direct assault on Gouougang, and in the club room Myles had talked us out of doing so on the grounds of the going being too steep, so we had decided to make the ascent on the opposite side of Mumbedah Creek, to reach the table-land. Rolling up the wet tent next a.m. we took a long draught of water, and reckoned on our next drink at Cunningham's at tea-time. Up we went, up and up, the very short, steep and not so sweet ridge leading up to Moorara Heights, which are nothing less than a ridge-capped mountain, nearly as high as Gouougang, enclosed by the triangle formed by Jenolan River, Mumbedah Creek, and backed by the main plateau. We came upon a couple of shallow saddles apparently winter cattle-camps from the ornamentation, and as we rested thereon, obtained grand views of the lower Jenolan, with the Gouougang Range on the right. High up Mumbedah Creek we could make out several waterfalls, which we mentally noted to visit - some day. The going had been extremely steep in parts, although open timber, and to record the grade, I took a photo of Sproggo coming up towards me on all fours. The printed result afterwards made it appear he was about to take off on a hundred yards sprint at an S.B.W. sports carnival, and I had to discard the photo in my attempts to impress my walking friends of our feat. Rain again set in, and with it crept down a billowing mist weaving in and out the gullies and valleys, and soon we were enveloped in its soft mantle which deprived us of further scenery, and dulled our sense of height. We halted for "lunch" and although we had no water, lit a fire for company and enjoyed the celery Sproggo produced from his capacious pack. Celery is to be recommended for "dry" meals as it contains a fair amount of moisture and may be soaked before leaving camp. Then up again, and in fifteen minutes we were standing on a stony top and gave vent to a hearty cheer to signify our conquest of the mount. The mist was now in the pea-soup category

and visibility was limited to about 30 feet. According to the map, the ridge ran a few points west of south-west, about 230°, and was connected with the tableland by, apparently a saddle-back. There was abundant rocky-outcrop, all on the fault, and where it wasn't stoney, saplings grew in profusion following a recent bush-fire, so that when we pushed through them our rucksacks became caught, and we were showered with drips off the leaves. After going a while, we found ourselves losing height without sign of a saddle, so we stopped and cogitated, peering this way and that into the solid white deathly silence. Even the rush of the water in Cam's Creek had died away and the whole world seems to stand still. There were several likely leads-off which might take us across the elusive saddle so we tried them in turn, each time losing height rapidly and ending up in the beginnings of groves of tree-ferns, so we back-tracked time and again only to find it was the same everywhere. We halted on a little flat with the firewood laid out, and decided to call it a day, and made camp where, I am certain, no one had camped before, nor since. As the reader is aware, we had no water, nor was there any possibility of drawing any from the nearest creek, about 1000' below, so in true bush-walking manner arranged the "Abdul" to drain into the bucket. The trees only dripped occasionally with condensed mist, but by half past four we had a bucket a yellowish fluid with a variety of objects floating therein, mainly from our camp-site of the previous night. However, nothing loth, we soon knocked up a pemican stew (yes, it was obtainable then) and a brew of golden tea and were as happy as sand-boys. After a short debate, unanimous agreement was reached that this would not be a likely popular camping spot, and therefore did not hesitate to have a man-sized after-tea fire without thought of leaving a few logs for the fellow to follow us, which of course is part of our code (1). We were forced to the most remote corners of the tent to escape the heat, and had a most comfortable night despite the altitude and time of the year. We went to sleep wondering what the morrow would bring forth.

Peering out in the grey dawn, I beheld a sight which did credit to our navigation of the previous day, insofar that we were actually vamped ON the saddle. I drew Sproggo's yawning attention to the matter, and we up and doing forthwith.

Well, we were on the UPPER end of the saddle, and observed that it DID dip quite a bit in the centre and therefore it COULD have been mistaken for the beginnings of a ridge leading down to the Jenolan, particularly as we had been unable to SEE the further end. We consoled ourselves with the argument and recorded that we had only been delayed by the inclemency of the weather. There was evidence that this was an old cattle route by the weathered blazes on the trees which continued almost to Cunningham's, where we stopped for lunch. After passing men engaged in pulling down trees to "improve" access to the Walls, we spent the night at Morong Creek, and was it cold? We expected to wake up to see snow-covered earth in the morn but were only rewarded with rain. We hit the big cave for a late lunch, very wet and miserable, and after eating, as the rain had set in good and proper, scoured the neighbourhood for that scarce commodity known as firewood

(To be continued)



L. Sharp

TEST WALK

AT OUR OWN MEETING

Three new members were welcomed - Peter Jones, who was admitted last month, Hazel Firth and Bob Younger. It was announced that David McGoffin had been admitted, but was away in Brisbane.

A vote of thanks to Dorothy Lawry was passed, in recognition of all the trouble she has gone to to prevent the establishment of a sanitary depot on the Warrah swamp. Dorothy, in reply told us the present position. She has, at the request of the Woy Woy Council, found an alternative site and is going up there to show it to the Council. She said that in any case the Council couldn't go ahead at Warrah without the consent of the Park Trustees, one of whom was Miss Crommelin.

It was announced that somebody had broken the padlocks on our map drawers, though no maps had gone. Bill Hall offered to repair the damage.

Renee Brown said that due to rationing and other difficulties arising from the war, the children's Christmas treat might have to be abandoned this year. It was decided to attempt to organise it and to apply to the Rationing Commission for the necessary supplies. Members were asked to save some potatoes for the event.

The Bushwalkers' Services Committee has been very active. The Committee has posted a copy of "Australia - Official Handbook and a collection of scenes entitled "Australia" to the lads overseas, so as to help them "to answer some of the staggering questions which they are asked by folks on the other side". The Rover Ramblers' barbecue yielded £6 for the Committee, and the S.B.W. Dutch Auction £3. In addition to the above publications 116 S.B.W. Magazines, 116 "Wildlife" magazines and 15 letters each containing a photo were posted in September.

FEDERATION NOTES

At the Annual Conference it was recommended that the Federation should wholeheartedly support the Youth Hostels Movement in such matters as active instruction, help and advice; and not limit support to the conservation aspect, as was moved at the Conference by Mr. Kenyon.

The Hon. Secretary was instructed to write to the Premier, Mr. McKell, congratulating him on his decision to have over a million acres of Southern N.S.W. dedicated as a Show National Park. At the same time the suggestion was to be made that Trustees to manage the park should be appointed as representatives of interested bodies for short terms instead of an individuals for life.

In connection with the proposed Blue Mountains National Park the Conservation Bureau suggests that three Wilderness Areas should be advocated as follows:-

1. Cox's River country from Breakfast Creek to Cedar Creek or Kedumba Creek.

2. The Blue Labyrinth between the Warragamba River and Bedford and Glenbrook Creeks, from the Kings Tableland Road to Emu Plains.

3. The Wentworth Creek country from Linden Creek to the Mt. Hay ridges. These recommendations were endorsed and the Hon. Secretary was instructed to write conveying them to the Blue Mountains Shire Council as sponsors of the proposed park.

T H E L I B R A R Y

Many members probably don't realise that we have in the Club one of the cheapest libraries in town and one in which you will probably be able to read good new books long before you would stand a chance of getting them out of an ordinary library. Here are the rules.

"The Librarian may purchase any book when nine people sign a petition for its purchase and pay a fortnightly subscription in advance. It shall be the duty of the proposer of the book to collect the subscriptions and hand them to the librarian.

Non-fiction books of interest to walkers are to be purchased by the librarian when five people sign a petition and pay a fortnightly subscription and the Committee votes the balance of the purchase price. The Committee shall not, in any period of six months, vote more than £2.10.0 for the purchase of such books.

The charge for new books shall be 1d. per fortnight (or part thereof) per 2/6 (or part thereof) of the book's purchase price.

The charge for books at present in the library (that is at the time of the formulation of these regulations) shall be 1d. for the first fortnight and 2d. per week thereafter."

This means that if you want to read any book, all you have to do is to collect a fortnight's subscription from 8 others and hand their names and subscriptions, together with your own, to the Librarian. If the book is popular it will take about 10 minutes to do this. If the book is non-fiction and of interest to walkers (e.g. Elyne Mitchell's "The Australian Alps" you need only collect four other names and subscriptions) If you do this you will be the first to have the books.

I have done this for a couple of books I wanted to read and had no difficulty whatever in getting the necessary subscribers. And when the book is bought it is there for good for you, or any other member, to read.

B I R T H

H. M. Green

I heard a voice in the night, the green night, the warm night;
"Wake, for the earth wakes; hear its birth."
I listened and hark, through the thick dark, the quick dark,
I heard the green sprouts sprouting all over the earth.
As I crept, soft-stepped, while the world slept.
Lo, from her grey dream, heavy and cold
Earth broke, and the hills woke, and the plains woke.,
And out of the swelling seas in the east, light rolled
Then like a child the day smiled, and the year smiled, and my
heart smiled,
For over the tomb of buried gloom
Spring ran wild.

AS I WAS SAYING !

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Rolfe have been promoted to PARENTS. Reason for such promotion being the arrival of a son to their establishment. We would like to take this opportunity while congratulating them on this happy event of thanking them and Alice Wyborn for the hard work they do for the magazine behind the scenes. These hard working people have the unenviable job of Roneo-ing the pages every month on an old and cranky machine. We have seen the machine and are convinced it is a conscientious objector.

Further additions to the junior section of the Bushwalkers. A daughter to the Iredales, Ken and Merle, and to Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Yardley also a daughter. The bush is going to be pretty crowded in about twenty years time.

We hadn't seen May Boyd in the club for some months so were pleased to renew our acquaintance with her when she came in the other night. She has married lately and is now Mrs. Jack Simpson. Now this is off her mind we hope to see her more often.

Another lass to join the married women's union is Joyce Kennedy. We haven't seen Joyce lately to extract any information from her so we can't tell you his name.

Was it malice aforethought that prompted the Social Committee to stage a "Back to Childhood" party the other night. (We had better be precise, Friday the 22nd) or hadn't they thought. The results were quite startling. Some people thought, apparently that the addition of a bow, or shall it be beau, was sufficient to transport them back to those so called happy days. Some leaped back and others crawled back to childhood.

For instance, there was one costume that simply shrieked for attention but we took the kind view that it was meant for camouflage, So !!

Rapunzel certainly let down her hair, gorgeous plaits they were too, but as we left rather early in the evening we don't know if anyone took advantage of the offer.

Jean West was a bewitching child with an enticing view of gingham bloomers, or bloomer, as the trouble seemed to be confined to one leg.

The men found it harder to get back to childhood. They couldn't kid us or themselves, and we were almost sure that the exponents of the "Jitter-bugging" is that right? would be thrown into the press seats but no luck. There seemed to be a lot of energy going to waste there. Haven't they heard of Bushwalking?

We are now looking forward to the Back to second childhood party, when we hope to be well to the front.

later editions of that "tonic magazine" The Sydney Bushwalker. Not being a Shakespeare, I'm afraid that it is beyond my power to adequately put my feelings into writing. All I can say is, that it is wonderful to feel that I have not been forgotten by my "civil street adventurers" and that I'm only looking forward to the day when we will be able to go on those walks together again. It brings back many sweet memories when I read the earlier editions of the S.B.W. and sets me "adreamin'" of the days when this ruddy war is over. At present we are camped in a very pretty spot, surrounded by bush which looks very beautiful all dressed for spring. All is very quiet and life is a wee bit slow and quiet but we are lucky in that we have plenty of work to do and the time flies by almost unnoticed. Ah! there goes "Lights Out", so I guess it's time to say cheerio for the present and thank you again for all the magazines etc. Happy Bushwalking to all, I'll be seeing you.

R.H. Smith 19th October 1943. Adv. L.H.W. Sigs. It is with regret that I cannot find sufficient time to suitably reply to your frequent parcels and reading matter. I can only say that I appreciate your work immensely, and I must admit that the most enjoyable reading matter that I get, are the magazines from you and an occasional "Into the Blue" from my Sister. F.S. Mail just in. Another S.B.W. Thanks again.

Bill Burke 7th October 1943. You can consider yourself exceptionally lucky in getting this letter. Was right out of paper with prospects of further supplies exceptionally bleak when a couple of War Correspondents strolled through the ward. This is part of one of their notebooks.

No doubt by this time my name will have occupied a line in the leading dailies. Nothing to it actually; my little guardian angel got lost in the jungle and while he was absent the Jap took the opportunity of landing a mortar a bit close to me. Heard it fired; but my hole wasn't up to its usual high class standard - was put down rather hastily - and my long legs would insist on sticking out the end. Just far enough to catch a bit of mortar shrap at the back of the knee. To quote the medical word "B.W., left knee, track appears to be superficial".

We were in a bit of a hot spot at the time; he got five out of the six in the section; killed my best pal with M.G. fire, but only slightly wounded the other three. They are already back with the lads. My only regret is that I didn't put my brand on enough of them; however, the company attended to that the following day; just tore straight into them, killed over sixty and would have got the rest only they were too fleet of foot.

Getting the wounded out up this way is a pretty filthy show. I was in the battalion R.A.P. for 23 hours before I could be evacuated as they had to wait for a jeep track to be cut through to us. At that we were lucky; the majority of us expected to spend at least another day there. Can't say I enjoyed the stay as he was still dropping mortars around the area - one landed in the middle of the R.A.P. which meant that we all had to lie in holes in the ground with the dirt falling in at the slightest movement. It's a funny thing that, one can lie in all the filth in the world for weeks and not notice it; get wounded and you develop a passion for cleanliness. I saw one chap so badly wounded he died within the hour and yet the filth on him was all that worried him. The great moment dawned at last, however; one of the orderlies just slung me over his shoulder and the first stage of my trip commenced.

LETTERS RECEIVED FROM THE LADS AND LASSES

Letters were received this month from:-

Arthur Austin.....S.B.W.
Ted Paterson.....Rucksack
R.H. Smith.....Rucksack
Bill Burke.....S.B.W.
Jean Ray.....C.M.W.

Max Gentle writes from an island "somewhere in the Pacific".

"There are mountains on this island more than twice the height of "Kosy". In my locality I have been on a hike in off duty hours. By following a new road up a range higher than Guouogang I reached the present termination and then continued the climb up a ridge along a real jungle trail. It was incomparably gloomy, even on the narrow ridge, and the unfamiliar timbers were intermingled with Pandanus palms entwined with giant creepers. Strange ferns formed a background to brilliantly coloured butterflies. I haven't yet seen the world's biggest butterfly (troides Alexandrae) which inhabits the island; but those already seen would rival those of Brazil.

As for reptiles I haven't seen a crocodile yet, nor have I seen the green tree snake or the brown tree snake, the death adder or the taipan, the latter being the second largest venomous snake on earth. I don't want to see or feel any reptiles and as for the fauna, the bush rats are most troublesome. We have tried ingenious ways of trapping them and when the right method was found we caught 35 in our tent in three nights. Rats are considered dangerous here because they carry a bush mite known as "Trombicula Minor" responsible for scrub typhus.

The mosquitoes are not really bad here because the swamps are frequently sprayed with Malarisol. However we keep our bodies well covered at night, as a precaution.

Arthur Austin 15th October 1943. Today I received a copy of the July issue of the Bushwalker for which I am truly grateful. It cheers one up to read of the news from the members. You will notice by the above address I am in New Guinea once again. This time experiencing a much nicer climate than before. Strange to say the scenery is really magnificent. At present where I am stationed reminds one of our typical Blue Mountain country. You can rest assured I do as much walking as possible and really enjoy it. I hope to be able to contact Les Douglas before returning to the mainland also a few more of the lads whilst moving about. I hear regularly from George Archer and Bill Cawood who have not had such a fortunate time as I, but true to the real Aussie spirit are bearing up well as P.O.W. We are all looking forward to those happy days which were so enjoyable in the past and perhaps it will not be long before we are enjoying all those happy times again. Many thanks for the publication sent in the past and my sincere regards to all members of the Services Committee for their great efforts. Words can hardly express appreciation for their untiring work in keeping reading matter up to the lads away. Regards to all my friends in the club.

Ted Paterson - 16th October 1943. Today I received another magazine from you. I'm afraid I don't write to you very often to express my sincere appreciation of the way in which you have constantly kept me supplied with the earlier and

Walkers Want Weights Weduced.

At least some do and some walkers (like sailors) don't care. The ones who don't care are usually big hefty fellows with hairy chests and lumpy muscles and strangely enough the littliest frailest slips of girls who virtually disappear beneath a bulging pack.

Most walkers however make attempts of varying degrees intensity to reduce weight. There are various methods. One is the "bludging" way. The "bludgers" take practically nothing or even less on a trip. If it rains, some kind soul has a spare groundsheet and room in a tent. Meals are a problem and it is as well for these people to have at least subsistence rations on the principle of the blind beggar who puts a penny in his tin to act as "burley". Of course no real bushwalker would act thus. Or would he?

The other extreme is one who encourages "blidgers" the "just in case" type who totes along an entrenching tool, an axe, a saw and a coil of rope just in case.

Weight is an insidious thing. It won't stay put. As with Peace, the price of a light pack is eternal vigilance. In the first place a light pack is the result of a good deal of experiment and elimination by the tedious method of trial and error. It is not much use saying to Paddy "Listen Paddy, I'm sold on this lightweight racket, make up a lightweight outfit for me". Of course you might get a fairly lightweight set of gear that way, but the really truly lightweight outfit must be tailor made round an individual. For instance, some folks are so keen on saving avoirdupois that they will put up with a tent that is such a tight fit that they've got to be poured into it; whereas others suffer from a sort of tentophobia and must have lots of head and elbow room. Again a person will have everything super-cooper except the Rucksack which must be "good and strong."

But having achieved a lightweight outfit our camper must still be on his guard against such items as heavyweight towels, super sandshoes, and other gadgets. And even Paddy has been known to put a heavyweight patch on a lightweight rucksack.

PADDY PALLIN,

327 George Street

'Phone B3101.

SYDNEY

CAMP GEAR FOR WALKERS.