

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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EDITORIAL

Have you ever read Alice in Wonderland? Do you remember much about it? I don't, except that I have a vague recollection that that adventurous young lady in an idle moment, nibbled a mushroom or some sort of fungus (for the sake of SCIENCE and TRUTH, I'll not attempt any botanical name), and then found herself growing and growing until she reached alarming proportions. Well, I don't know who's been nibbling strange fungi among the staff of the Sydney Bushwalker but there has been an extraordinary growth in cost of production and we've been wondering what we could do about it. It was decided at the last monthly meeting to increase the price to sixpence for clubroom sales and six shillings (plus postage) for subscribers but to leave the price to the Services Committee at fourpence. In this way we hope that increased expenditure will be met while there will be no danger of making any profit. When you read the letter in this issue from the Production Staff you will realise that rising costs are the least of their worries and the dreams that follow the day's struggle with paper, ink and the Infernal Machine are more frenzied and fantastic than any of Alice's strange adventures.

OUT TINAGROO WAY

By Allan Wyborn.

Scone was our destination, with the Easter holidays in front of us, in new country for all but the leader. Travelling was not so good - twelve people in a tiny guard's compartment - but nobody minded, as discomfort was expected. John Hunter spent an unusual night in a sleeping bag perched between two railway platforms.

At Scone railway station in the early hours of the morning, a warm fire claimed our attention till half of the party was taken by car out to Thomson's Creek at the foot of Mt. Tinagroo. After picking up Joe Turner from Armidale, the other half followed them. The route up Thompson's Creek lay through W. H. Mackay's station, typical of the fertile country of the Upper Hunter Valley. By the lovely park-like land it was easily seen from where the wealth of the property came.

Leaving the creek we began the 2,600 ft. climb toward the top of Mt. Tinagroo, battling against a wind of gale proportions which made the going doubly hard. By lunch we had reached a shelf 1,100 ft. below the top, where the leader, Fred Kennedy, decided to camp after having found a spring. Certainly a unique camp with a nice panorama towards Scone. But a much better view was to come. Leaving packs we finished the climb to the top of Mt. Tinagroo, 4,100 feet high. This peak is part of the Great Dividing Range, here called the Liverpool Range. From it grand views of the Liverpool Plains on the west, and the Hunter catchment area on the east were enjoyed. Looking down the Kingdon Ponds Valley the towns of Scone, Aberdeen and Muswellbrook lay white and glistening in the afternoon sun. That night the wind freshened still more, and ten of us lay in fear of the tents being blown away. Next morning we did notice one tent blown down, but the occupant had not even stirred.

Going northward along the main range we climbed Murrurundi Trig, which although only 100 feet higher than Tinagroo, offered a much more extensive panorama of at least 5,000,000 acres. To the north west beyond the Liverpool Plains, the sharp peaks of the Warrumbungle Range were silhouetted against the skyline. Southwest the Liverpool Range offered some alluring peaks, distinctive amongst which were Oxley Peak and the huge Moan Rock, virtually unknown to walkers. To the north were the approaches to the Nandewar Range, while eastwards Barrington Tops and the rich Hunter and Goulburn valleys completed the cyclorama.

Proceeding north about one mile we left the Dividing Range, turning east toward Mount Murulla, which we hoped to pass before making camp. But not so; we spent all that day without water, climbing from one peak to another. The lack of water, however, was alleviated by the lovely weather and glorious views. On reaching the plateau before Murulla Trig, we were very fortunate to find one tiny pool of water, so camp was made beneath a full moon. Later we saw the twinkling lights of the valley towns far below.

Murulla Trig proved to be the last big mountain of the range. From

here we could look down on the Kingdon Ponds Valley. At the western end the town of Murrurundi nestled close to the pass over the Main Dividing Range, here only 2,500 feet high. In bygone days all traffic for the northwest of N.S.W. and southern Queensland passed over this route, after coming from Sydney to Newcastle by packetboat. Opposite Murulla a white patch could be seen through the binoculars, with blue smoke rising from it. This was The Burning Mountain, our next objective in the trip.

Descending from Murulla along Warland's Range we came to the old northern highway along which the coaches of Cobb & Co. clattered during the last century. Here stands a forgotten relic of the past - a monument to one Peter Clarke, who was shot dead by Wilson, the bushranger, while trying to effect his capture on 9.4.1863. exactly 81 years ago to the day.

To get to the Burning Mountain, we had to cross the main northern railway. Leaving our packs in a sheltered spot we rapidly made our way to the top, as the weather looked very threatening. There is no doubt that the burning of the underground coal seam is dying down. What little smoke was issuing was being blown along the ground by the high wind, so one enterprising member conceived the idea of helping along the fire with green leaves, so that it would look better in a photograph. The ground around the actual seat of the fire was too hot to touch, and was covered in white ash and beautiful sulphur crystals. In the wake of the fire the land had sunk up to 20 feet in places leaving some remarkably deep cracks and fissures.

Our visit was cut short by rain, and we had to make a dash back for the rucksacks. The remainder of the afternoon was spent walking in a heavy downpour, until we reached "Bickham", one of the big and cattle stations of the district. Our stay here had been previously arranged. Joe Turner and Taro had arrived earlier, and had a large fire in the kitchen of the shearers' mess room. We were glad of the warmth and shelter after a tiring day. Fresh bread, butter and a whole sheep were placed at our disposal by the kind generosity of the owner, Mr. Max Wright.

After passing the evening singing, accompanied by Taro's flute, around the great open fireplace, we retired to separate bunkhouses equipped with wire mattress beds. This was virtually the end of a well planned and enjoyable trip, as we caught the train from Blandford, only three miles away, at 10 a.m. next morning.

THE BUSHWALKER ANNUAL

Dorothy Lawry, the Editor of the Bushwalker Annual, announces that permission to publish has been given for this year. The same printer and the same paper will be available.

Contributions of prose, poetry, photographs and sketches are asked for.

A WEEK'S SOLITUDE

by Dorothy Hasluck,

Having wanted for a long time to spend a week alone, and the time and opportunity presenting itself, I found myself saying goodbye to the rest of our Kosciusko party with rather mixed feelings, we having had a very happy time together. We humans being such a mass of complexities and contradictions, I felt both glad and sorry. Sorry at the loss of the happy companionship and glad that I was about to experience that to which I had long looked forward.

I had previously decided to camp on the Snowy River near Jindabyne and with that idea in mind I had left a pack of food at the Post Office. But on arrival at Rose's hut on the Thredbo, I was so delighted with its situation that I decided to stay there instead. Jack, one of the stockmen, kindly offered to get the pack and bring me some fruit. The Gods as usual looked after me but--(there is always a but) on making enquiries at the Post Office the pack was not forth coming. Still on examining the food left by the others and being able to get some eggs, onions and apples from a farm (eggs a shilling a dozen) I found I could manage, with just a shortage of tea and no milk. I decided these items were not worth a 22 mile walk, but the Gods once more came up to scratch and along came real milk per Jack on his way to Dead Horse Hut. Several more bottles followed per Jack's father who was quite sure I hadn't enough food and even brought matches along in case I was short. But the crowning kindness was, now hold your breath, a large tin of Captain SARDINES!!! I was almost speechless at the appearance, out of the blue as it were, of this almost forgotten item of diet.

The hut was on a grassy slope facing the east, a small creek wound its way nearby; the first rays of the sun woke me from sleep and gradually dispersed the soft-downy mist. While having my evening meal, there was always a feast for my eyes also; a lovely pageant of changing colour, red, gold and indigo as the sun sank below Groggin Gap. Each day I went for a swim in the Thredbo and then sunbaked amidst the sally trees high on the ridge, breathing in their strongly aromatic perfume and meditating, no-not on my sins as you might think- but on the graciousness of living amidst nature, far from the hurly-burly and strife of the world. All the people living round about the mountains have lovely, soft lilting voices like the Welsh in "How Green Was My Valley". I think they must imbibe the spirit and calm beauty of the hills and manifest it in their speech.

On the Wednesday I set off about 9.30 down the Thredbo to the Creel at the junction of the Snowy. After about $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours walking I came to the conclusion it was more than 5 miles, the distance I had been given, so I had lunch and a swim and then relaxed. The river is even more beautiful in its lower reaches. At the junction of the Little Thredbo it broadens into quiet still reaches flanked on either side by some magnificent blue gum. Every now and again it descends in sparkling cascades and rapids and then divides and flows round a wooded island onward to a gorge of rocky ramparts. Little robins flitted in the trees, their scarlet breasts looking like vivid flowers or autumn leaves.

A hushed silence pervaded all, broken only by the twittering of birds and the murmur of the river, when with dramatic suddenness came a clap of

thunder effectually arousing me from my daydreams. Heavy clouds banked up in the sky and rain began to fall all in the twinkling of an eye, clinching my half-made decision to give up looking for the Creel and return.

On nearing the junction where stands Dr. Bullock's hut (his refuge from the madding crowd) I was hailed by two men across the river. Seeing a stump burning, I brightly asked them were they doing a little burning off, quite the wrong thing to have said as they turned out to be from Sydney on a fishing holiday.

Well, in spite of everyone's pessimism, I thoroughly enjoyed my week alone and left with many regrets for the farm where I had been asked to stay the night. On the following morning when I reached the mill from where I was to be given a lift into Jindabyne, there were about nine of us to pack onto the unfortunate car. The owner was, however quite unperturbed and by dint of packing and squeezing and standing on the running board we and the luggage were duly accommodated.

With a grand flourish I finished up at the races at Jindabyne resplendent in green japara slacks and scarlet cardigan. A fitting finish to a week of solitude!

LETTERS FROM THE LADS AND LASSES

The following members of the Walking Fraternity wrote to us during May:-

Peter Allen
Doris Allden
Chas. Jones

Frank Gentle
Ruth McLaren
Rita Stanford.
Arthur Austin.

Rita Stanford - Coolangatta, 13-5-44.

Received the photos of the Reunion and it seems just the same as before, if anything though a bit larger family. The folk all look very happy although how else could they look at a S.B.W. Reunion. These have great memories for everyone. Sat down and picked out all the old faces. Felt quite happy to recognise so many of them. The membership seems to be growing very rapidly. I have been out on numerous picnics but cannot talk the girls into going for week-ends. There would be only two of us and the parts up here are not like down home where you can rush off and settle into the bush and not see anyone. There are too many people about. It is one of Queensland's main beach resorts and the Yank army and navy have rest camps near by. Never mind it may all blow over soon and we will return to our usual places and then:- "Look out Sydney here I come". You do not really miss your home and the bush till you are away from it.

Ruth McLaren - Maryborough - 4-5-44. Thanks for the photo of the Reunion they certainly made me homesick to see all the familiar faces in the camp fire light, glad you got May Boyd in the photo even if she has got a look on her face like the Queen of Sheba, but don't tell her I said so.

They have moved me up to Queensland and I am making the most of the sunshine while it lasts before the powers that be discover I'm too happy here and hop me back to some ice box of a station in Victoria.

Frank Gentle - 7-5-44.

Frank is expecting to be sent home any day now and has asked us not to send any more mail to his present address.

Arthur Austin - New Guinea - 30-4-44.

Arthur wrote to thank us for the Reunion photos and to tell us he is back with his unit after a very enjoyable 24 days leave topped off with a spell in hospital with malaria when he went back.

Doris Alden - H.M.A.S. "Magnetic" - 25-4-44.

I am finding my work here full of interest and satisfying. Just wish I could drop into the Club Rooms on Friday and arrange a trip on a Sunday, but that will have to wait a while. Some very interesting hills about here but I am told they are rather forbidding close to, later on I may have a chance to get nearer and find out. At present spare time is infrequent. I have been very busy and also have the laundry problem ever with me, have had to initiate myself into the secrets of starching. Fortunately we wear open neck shirts but the heat makes at least one and sometimes two a day necessary to keep me looking somewhat near what all good WRANS should look. I staked my all in the laundry last week-end and managed to emerge with some reasonably smart garments. Taking my youth and inexperience into account! add to this my bed linen and so on, and if this war lasts long enough there may emerge "One WRAN reasonably domesticated". Perhaps you would prefer to see me when I do my spot of deck scrubbing. On those occasions the modish garb is overalls, sea boots and a long broom. Anyone sliding full length has no sympathy only derision. Perhaps it is as well I have had some experience falling into streams with a pack on my back, for so far I have remained upright in this new form of water sports.

I watched a fierce fight between a shark and a stringray a few days ago. It rather dampened my enthusiasm for swimming. The shark won of course. There are a few enclosures about but they don't look very inviting.

Please give my good wishes to all the S.B.W.'s. Will get around to some personal letters in time, looking forward to the magazine for more news. Why not have the next reunion up here where there are bigger and better stars and a brighter sky? Hope the new Committee is settling down to some steady late meetings or have they found the secret of starting late and finishing early!

Peter Allen - England 11-4-44.

Our winter is just about over, the worst is anyway. About two months ago we had 18 inches of snow, just 18 inches too much. For days after we were shovelling it off the runways etc. We now have double summer time, the clock is put forward two hours in mid summer it is still daylight at 11.30 p.m. Remember me to the Club members and I wish I was back there among them again.

"The art of writing is the art of applying the seat of the pants to the seat of the chair". Bushwalkers - please note! and apply this art towards writing an article !

TO DORIS A. IN THE FAR NORTH

Are you still a White Collar girl, or did the starching of the wretched things finally get you down. We are waiting to hear what you do when you are not starching collars or holeystoning the deck. There is a marked interest hereabouts re the progress of your Crime Sheet. Let's hope it makes impressive reading on New Years Eve. We will be very glad to print it in the magazine, so do send a copy. But make it good.

Nothing spectacular has happened in the club since you left, nothing that would make the headlines anyway.

We are sorry to report that Arthur Gilroy is not the boy we thought he was. He is flitting from flower to flower. His fancy this time has alighted on an artistic piece of streamlined beauty. In this respect, at least, he shows some consistency. Arthur, in his garrulous way doesn't say much, but you know the way things get round, and we have heard that his latest is rather, shall we say - - "speedy" passionately fond of the water, takes to it like a duck, and Arthur admits that she is "easy to handle". Makes you wonder about Fiffille doesn't it?

Marian Ellis's daughter has become a Mother, and to twins. This did make the headlines, in the Sun, photos and all. Wait till this mag. can print photos. Everyone thinks and asserts that Marian is the youngest looking Grandmother they have seen. She herself, thinks that she had better stay at home a little more as it will be rather awkward if the grandchildren fondly ask for their Grandmother and are told that she is out "over Gangerang".

We seem to be reporting rather often lately that Jack Debert "was in again" but it is true. He came in on Friday but didn't stay for the meeting. He is looking rather thin though.

The meetings have all been very quiet lately. Though last week they did put the chairs and President's table round the other way. It still didn't start anything. And there don't seem to be so many outside the door meetings either. So don't get too homesick Doris. We'll let you know when things start happening again and then you can get leave!

Tuggy has not as yet recited her poem about the fairy, but we are all waiting for the day.

Roley is still being very insular. Tim visits us now and again and acts like Royalty. There are two many Test walks on the Walks programme and there is still the same trouble and touching appeals for Leaders, appeals which are still met with the same wooden look from everyone. But we are cheerful Doris and we manage.

Oh we nearly forgot to tell you. Jean Moppett has had her photo taken at Noel Rubie's and does she look glamorous. Her lounge room is completely lined with these photos and we have all been asked up there to admire. By the way there is a new one of Tom there, but you don't have to look at that.

We are looking forward to an article from Ray Bean on his tonsil operation, we trust he thinks more kindly of Doctors than he does of Bushwalkers. They can't be more ruthless.

Well, so long, Doris. Our love to the Sun.

AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE PRODUCTION STAFF

Dear Readers:

Over the past few months, no doubt many of you have opened your magazine and wondered why the printing is so inconsistent. The main reason for this is the shortage of paper. As you already know we have had to limit the numbers of subscribers to make our quota spin out, and to get as many copies as possible we have to use pages which we would otherwise reject. You will notice also that the quality of the paper varies and is unsuitable for printing on both sides. The ink soaks through if very much pressure is put on the machine. We therefore have to gauge the ink and pressure to suit whatever paper we have on hand at the time. Sometimes we get two or three qualities of paper in one ream! This brings us to another problem, the INK!

Previously all the ink for this type of work was imported from England - now it is being made here and like many other things these days it needs improving and perfecting. It does not dry quickly and we now have to inter-leaf most pages to prevent the undersides getting dirty.

The stencils too are of local manufacture and leave much to be desired. They do not cut as cleanly as of yore.

Add to all this the fact that the machine is older than the club itself and very temperamental and you will be able to appreciate our difficulties.

We hope this explanation will be accepted by you in the right spirit, and we will look forward to the day when we can purchase a NEW MACHINE and turn out a job to our own and YOUR satisfaction.

Yours etc.

YVONNE ROLFE and ALICE WYBORN.

If anyone feels they could do a better job and would like to try, please ring LX1035. Bring your own aspros! Solvol provided free!

(Yvonne and Alice have been giving up one whole day a month for the printing and sorting of the magazine. It is hard work and dirty work even if the machine goes comparatively well, but when there are break-downs the job becomes exceedingly difficult. Yvonne has her young son Christopher who demands a great deal of her time but we believe that already he has developed a taste for Printer's ink. I am sure we are all very grateful to the Production Staff for the work they have been doing - Editor).

OUR OWN MEETING

At the monthly meeting held in the clubroom on Friday, 12th May there was considerable discussion on the proposed purchase of land at Era. Marie Byles reported that the value of the land as rated by the Valuer-General was less than the price asked by the vendor. She asked for direction from the members as to whether she should pay ten guineas for a further valuation by another valuer. The members present voted against this. It was then decided that Miss Byles should write to the Solicitors for the vendor proposing a lower price.

David Stead reported having spent Sunday 5th May in fighting a fire which

had broken out in National Park and which had apparently not aroused the interest of rangers or trustees although the smoke of the fire was visible for many miles.

FEDERATION REPORT - Meeting held on 18th April, 1944.

The National Park - Suggested Bushfire Fighting Organisation: The letter of the S.B.W. to the Trust was approved and Federation is also writing to the Trust supporting the Club's suggestion.

Shoalhaven River: A report was received that shooting and the blasting of fish had been going on in the Shoalhaven valley between Badgery's Crossing and Bungonia Creek. It was decided to write letters of protest to the Shire Council and the police, also to the Trustees of the Mark Morton Memorial Reserve if investigation showed that the area is in that reserve.

Another Request for Leadership on Bushwalks was received from Miss Saunders, Welfare Officer at St. Mary's munition works, where they are forming a club. Her address is: Miss Saunders, Hon. Sec. Merrylands Walking Club, The Hostel St. Mary's. Will members, particularly those living in the Western Suburbs, please note the address and that this new club would be grateful for any assistance?

Kosciusko State Park Bill. The recreational Areas Committee of the National Fitness Council is one of the bodies that is very disturbed at many of the provisions of the Bill recently before the State Parliament for the dedication of the Kosciusko State Park. This Committee feels that the Bill needs four amendments, at least. These would provide for -

- (1) scientific and recreational bodies to be represented on the Park Trust;
- (2) agistment rights for trail-riders for their horses;
- (3) return to the Forestry Department of control of State Forests and plantations within the area;
- (d) restrictions of leases to prevent sawmilling.

In addition provision should be made for fire-fighting, re-forestation, and the financing of such work and the regular maintenance of the Park so that the Trustees will not be tempted to exploit the natural resources of their area commercially.

Federation decided to support the Recreational Areas Committee in its protests and recommendations in this matter.

Proposed reclassification of the Classification of Reserves: A conference was held recently between representatives of the N.P.P.A.C., the Parks and Playgrounds Movement and the Linnean Society at which a sub-committee was appointed to receive and correlate suggestions. It is requested that suggestions be set out under headings to show --

Title: definition of that title; conditions considered essential; required areas which would come under this classification.

After considerable discussion on this matter, Council of the Federation decided to drop its submission of the terms "Protected Roadless" area and "Wilderness" area. It is submitting "Improved Roadless Area" as already defined by the Council, and is agreeing to the N.P.P.A.C.'s terms "Primitive Reserve" and "Primitive Area" (within any reserve), subject to the proviso that both such regions are to be kept as far as possible in their virgin state.

KOSCIUSKO STATE PARK ACTPoints of interest to the Recreational Bodies.

By Abores Australia.

- (1) Section (4) 3f. Two members of the Trust shall be nominated by the Minister for Lands but the Bill does not state that these members shall represent any of the Recreational Bodies. Consequently the recreational bodies could be left without any representation on the Trust.
- (2) Section (4) 6. All meetings of the Trust shall be called by the Chairman (Minister for Lands) or Deputy Chairman (Lands Department Officer). Consequently the activity of the Trust is entirely dependent upon these two and an active policy desired by the Recreational interests might never materialise on account of this inactivity of the Chairman or his deputy.
- (3) Section (4) 12. Deputies for members (in case of sickness or absence) can only be appointed by the Governor. Meetings could therefore be called during the absence of certain members and business put through without their being given any say in the matter.

Sale of Timber - Section 15-ii and Section 17 (2b).

The Trust has power to sell timber and trees and the revenue from such goes into the Trust Fund.

The forestry influence on the Trust is limited to one - the vote of one forester in a total of nine.

This will mean that the cutting of the timber will be subject virtually to no technical Forestry control.

The Trust, in order to get revenue or for other reasons, may let sawmillers cut the choicest areas in a face and leave nothing but scrub.

In managed forests under the control of the Forestry Commission, all cutting is done in such a way that a new forest is regenerated as fast as the old one is cut out.

No provision is made for the following:

1. Care of the trout streams, breeding of trout, control of fishing. Consequently this will be left to another Department not represented on the Trust and not particularly interested in these trout streams. The present wholesale destruction of trout is likely therefore to continue.
2. The agistment of horses of trail-riders.
3. The care, perpetuation and breeding of native fauna.
4. The limitation of the extent to which the area may be leased.

The size of Primitive Areas is limited to one tenth of the whole. On account of the very rough topography it should be greater than this.

Bush Fires.

The one thing which destroys, and degrades this area is the repeated and uncontrolled bush fires. No provision is made for stopping the grazing interests from burning as they please during certain seasons, and they think grazing on this country cannot be carried out profitably unless the country is periodically burnt. The constitution of the Trust does not hold out much hope that a vigorous policy of fire-protection will be pursued. Consequently we can expect that the past unfortunate fire history will be repeated in the future, and in certain areas, be even more serious, because of the removal of the present fire-fighting services in the State Forests which are taken from the Forestry Department and added to the Park.

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BACKYARD BUSHWALKING

Lots of us cannot get into the bush for long trips as much as we wish these days. It is natural therefore that those of us who live on the fringe of the bush take every opportunity to slip away into it for brief periods. Paddy has a deep block of land the back half of which has been left largely untouched and this naturally has been the subject of increased interest lately. Naturally in common with similar land adjacent to settlement it has for long been subjected to despoilation. Nevertheless it is amazing what a wide assortment of vegetation can be found on such a small piece of rocky hillside (about 150' x 30'). In bushwalking we are rather more prone to use the telescope than the microscope (speaking metaphorically). We tend to look for "views" in the valleys and panoramas from the peaks.

It was an eye opener therefore to turn the (metaphorical) microscope on a tiny patch of bush and find what infinite variety of plant life there was to be found. A catalogue of the trees and shrubs would be wearisome (besides if we got the names wrong what would the president say?) but Paddy feels that bushwalkers may be interested to have some notes on this page as to the progress of this bit of Backyard Bush.

At the risk of being declared a vandal, Paddy has embarked on an improvement programme. Firstly two plants seemed to occupy an undue share of the space namely Casuarinas and Native Hops. Both of these being surface rooted, seem to resent the company of small plants and therefore a thinning out programme was embarked on. Secondly a rehabilitation scheme was started. For years seed gathered in the bush has been scattered around with almost negligible results. Acting on Dave Stead's advice, a frame has been built. It consists of a wooden box about 3'6" x 2'6" with sloping top and hinged lid. The lid is covered with oiled calico (glass was considered as too inviting to the youths of the neighbourhood). In this frame is hoped to raise bush plants. Progress will be reported from time to time.

x x x x x x x

Paddy still manages to get a little camp gear through.
Come up and see him some time.

PADDY PALLIN

Camp Gear for Walkers

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'Phone B3101.